

# Public Notice

## Reducing gender-based violence and inequality through lifesaving wash and protection in the middle east: an integrated response to crisis-affected communities in Yemen, Lebanon and Syria (2024-2026) – Public Comments Invited

### The Proposed Project

In **Lebanon**, the target communities in the informal settlements rely on construction of temporary latrines and the desludging of latrine pits. Oxfam will construct temporary latrines to ensure safe access for women and girls to safe sanitation facilities and, as a result, prevent gender-based violence (GBV). The emergency latrines will be made of zinc sheet, and porcelain Arabic seats, and connected to holding tanks. The location of the latrines will be selected in coordination with the community and landowner. Latrines will be constructed at a suitable distance of no less than 30 metres from any water source to ensure no contamination occurs. The holding tank will be deslugged regularly in coordination with the local authority. Oxfam in Lebanon will rehabilitate water infrastructure to ensure a reliable water supply for the community. The rehabilitation may include repairing water pumps, electrical components, and solar water pumping systems. The selection of water supply systems for rehabilitation will be conducted in coordination with the water establishment. In all locations, Oxfam will rehabilitate water supply systems which provide water to both Lebanese and Syrians. Oxfam, in coordination with the landlord and municipality in Bekaa in the informal settlement, will construct 80 latrines made of zinc sheet (size 1.2m width, 1.2m length, 1.2m height). Arabic toilet seats of porcelain will be installed in it and connected to an underground plastic holding tank (1 m<sup>3</sup>). Desludging of the holding tank will be conducted regularly in coordination with the local authority and dumped in wastewater treatment unit managed by the local authority. Oxfam in Lebanon follows the sector standards in the implementation of the activity, and monitor it at site level, during transfer, and at dump site level.

In coordination with the water establishment, Oxfam in Lebanon, in Bekaa and in the south will rehabilitate four water supply system infrastructures. This will include, but not limited to, repairing or replacing water pumps, repairing electrical components, repairing solar water pumping system by changing solar panel or other items. No changes will be made to the existing infrastructure, only repair will be conducted to ensure that the system is functional. Oxfam in Lebanon, in Bekaa and in the south, will rehabilitate 3 existing water points for people to collect drinkable water, in coordination with the municipality and community. The water points will have four water taps with a trench below with gravel (soak pit) 1m<sup>2</sup> to collect wastewater. The repairs will include installation of 1 m<sup>3</sup> plastic tank, water taps, and water treatment system, and repair of drainage system. As per its standard procedure, Oxfam in Lebanon will obtain the landowners' written approval before commencing any latrine construction activities. To ensure the effective execution of its project activities, Oxfam is engaged in collaborative efforts with the municipalities, water establishments and communities in the target regions, where it provides humanitarian assistance. The selection and approval of the water infrastructure for rehabilitation and upgrading will be conducted in coordination with the water establishments.

The climate in Lebanon is typically sunny, dry and with relatively short rainy season. The areas are prone to both drought and floods, and rain patterns tend to be erratic. The annual precipitation is between 700 and 1,000 mm. Therefore, water scarcity remains a pressing issue, and this situation is expected to worsen, affecting agriculture, food security, and public health alike. According to the Köppen-Geiger Climate Classification, Lebanon falls primarily under the Hot-Summer Mediterranean Climate (Csa). However, due to its diverse topography, the country has multiple climate zones. In Baalback Bekaa region, the Köppen-Geiger Climate Classification, is BSh – Hot Semi-Arid Climate – with hot summers, cooler winters and low precipitation. In Nabateih (South), the climate is classified as Csa Hot-Summer Mediterranean Climate, hot dry summer and mild, wet winter and higher precipitation compared to Baalback Bekaa region. Extreme weather events are expected to have severe impact on Lebanon's food sovereignty, while energy poverty continues to limit access to reliable and affordable energy. A few bouts of rain during the last several winter seasons were enough to cause flooding and property damage because of ill-maintained infrastructure, while fires have led to the burning of many green forests and refugee settlements due to poor safety and care measures. Displacement and migration from agricultural regions to urban centers are expected to increase, placing additional strain on infrastructure, governance, and resources. Lebanon's already fragile infrastructure, weakened by inadequate investments and poor governance, is scarcely equipped to cope with the escalating frequency and intensity of extreme weather events.

In **Syria**, the project will address urgent humanitarian needs in Aleppo (As-Safira) and Rural Damascus (Maliha, Kafr Batna) by implementing multi-sectoral interventions focused on WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene), Protection, and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) risk reduction. These interventions will ensure that communities affected by conflict and displacement have access to essential services, safe infrastructure, and sustainable solutions that enhance their resilience. Oxfam will rehabilitate water supply infrastructure, including boreholes, pumping stations, and main pipelines. This will involve repairing or replacing damaged pumps, electrical components, and filtration systems, ensuring a safe and consistent water supply. Solar-powered pumping systems will be installed to mitigate energy shortages. The project will also rehabilitate existing sewage systems and support desludging services to prevent contamination and health risks. New latrines and septic tanks will be installed where necessary, particularly in schools, health centres, and communal areas. Communities will also receive hygiene kits, including menstrual hygiene management (MHM) items, soap, and water purification tablets, while awareness campaigns will be conducted to promote safe hygiene practices. To ensure smooth implementation, Oxfam will coordinate with the relevant Syrian authorities, including municipal offices, Local Water Establishments (LWEs), and line ministries. Specific actions required include obtaining permits for infrastructure rehabilitation and water network repairs, facilitating technical collaboration with water and sanitation departments for system assessments and maintenance, and engaging local community leaders and governance structures to promote ownership and long-term sustainability of interventions. Oxfam will work closely with local community committees, women's groups, and youth networks to ensure that interventions are tailored to community needs. Training sessions will be provided to Water Management Committees (WMCs) to oversee water distribution and maintenance of rehabilitated infrastructure. In addition, women-led initiatives will be supported to enhance participation in decision-making processes related to WASH and protection services.

Syria has a predominantly Mediterranean climate, characterised by hot, dry summers and cool, wet winters, with significant sub-regional variations. The coastal areas experience higher humidity and precipitation, while inland and desert regions have arid to semi-arid conditions with extreme temperature fluctuations between day and night. The country's annual average rainfall varies from 800–1,000 mm in the western coastal areas to less than 200 mm in the eastern desert regions. The targeted areas are characterized by semi-arid climatic conditions, with water scarcity exacerbated by prolonged conflict and damage to existing infrastructure. The degradation of sanitation networks has led to frequent sewage overflows, contamination of groundwater sources, and increased risks of waterborne diseases such as cholera, leishmaniasis, and diarrhoea. In addition, the energy crisis and fuel shortages impact water pumping operations, making renewable solutions like solar power crucial. As-Safira (Aleppo Governorate) is classified as semi-arid, with limited rainfall and high evaporation rates. Drought conditions and

groundwater depletion have reduced access to potable water, while high summer temperatures (often exceeding 40°C) increase the demand for cooling and water resources. Maliha and Kafr Batna (Rural Damascus Governorate) experience a continental Mediterranean climate, with hot, dry summers and cold winters. The winter season brings occasional snowfall and frost, which can disrupt water infrastructure and increase energy needs. Meanwhile, prolonged dry periods in summer lead to water shortages and poor air quality due to dust storms. The ongoing climate crisis has intensified environmental degradation in Syria, compounding the effects of conflict and economic instability. The key challenges include water scarcity and desertification, rising temperatures and heat waves, extreme weather events, and increased risk of disease outbreaks. Additionally, limited access to renewable energy solutions makes communities reliant on fuel-based generators, further exacerbating air pollution. Implementing solar-powered water pumps under this project will mitigate dependency on diesel-powered systems. To address these climate-related risks, the project will rehabilitate climate-resilient water and sanitation infrastructure, ensuring efficient water distribution and sustainable wastewater management, introduce solar energy solutions for water pumping stations, reducing reliance on fossil fuels and ensuring uninterrupted water access, enhance community awareness and capacity-building on climate adaptation strategies, including water conservation and sustainable hygiene practices, and strengthen early warning systems and disaster preparedness to mitigate risks from climate-induced hazards such as floods and droughts. By integrating climate adaptation into project design, the intervention aims to enhance community resilience, ensuring that the most vulnerable populations in As-Safira, Maliha, and Kafr Batna can withstand and recover from the increasing impacts of climate change.

**In Yemen**, the project will target affected internally displaced persons (IDPs) integrated in host communities as well as the hosting communities in Al-Qubaytah (Lahj) and Maqbanah (Taiz), addressing ongoing severe water scarcity, inadequate sanitation facilities, and heightened public health risks, including the spread of cholera. The project will also mitigate heightened gender-based violence (GBV) risk faced by women and girls due to inadequate sanitation facilities. The project will improve Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) services through capacity building of Water Management Committees; will support community WASH management plans; will work on construction and rehabilitation of water and sanitation infrastructure, as well as hygiene promotion. Oxfam in Yemen, in coordination with local authorities and community representatives, will construct a total of 140 household latrines (40 in Lahj and 100 in Taiz) for the most vulnerable households ensuring accessibility for people with disabilities and gender-segregated facilities where necessary. Additionally, 110 latrines, (80 in Lahj and 30 in Taiz) will be rehabilitated. This will include pit repairs and improved drainage systems. All latrines will have brick superstructures, fitted with Arabic-style porcelain toilet seats and lined substructures to prevent groundwater contamination. Furthermore, Oxfam will rehabilitate 6 water supply schemes (5 in Lahj and 1 in Taiz), including the repair and extension of pipelines and the installation of three community tap schemes to improve water distribution. Oxfam will implement quick fixes on three water supply schemes in Lahj, ensuring that each undergoes a yield assessment to determine sustainable groundwater extraction. In addition, two community water harvesting tanks will be constructed in Lahj, and 140 household water storage tanks (40 in Lahj and 100 in Taiz) will be distributed to vulnerable households to improve water access and storage capacity. Finally, solar-powered water pumping systems will be rehabilitated or newly installed where possible, to ensure sustainable energy use for water supply. In order to address solid waste management, two community-led solid waste collection points will be established in targeted areas, improving waste disposal and public health conditions. These initiatives will be implemented in coordination with local authorities and community-led initiatives to ensure sustainability. Additionally, drainage and flood prevention structures will be reinforced in high-risk areas to mitigate environmental contamination and protect water sources. The selection and approval of the water infrastructure for rehabilitation and upgrading will be conducted in coordination with the GARWASP - General Authority for Rural Water Supply Projects - the government body responsible for overseeing rural water supply initiatives, infrastructure development, and water resource management in rural areas. Oxfam will obtain the landowners' written approval before commencing any water and sanitation facility construction activities.

Yemen has an arid to semi-arid climate, with extreme variations in temperature and rainfall across different regions. The project areas of Al-Qubaytah (in Lahj) and Maqbanah (in Taiz) experience hot summers and mild winters, with annual precipitation ranging between 200 and 500 mm. According to the Köppen-Geiger Climate Classification, the project areas fall under the hot semi-arid and arid desert climate zones. Lahj, particularly in Al-Qubaytah, has a dry, mountainous landscape, while Taiz, including Maqbanah, features rugged terrain with wadis and seasonal watercourses that are prone to flash floods during heavy rainfall events. Rainfall is erratic, primarily occurring during two short rainy seasons, and is often insufficient to replenish groundwater resources. Water scarcity remains a critical issue, exacerbated by high evaporation rates, prolonged droughts, and unsustainable water extraction. These challenges directly impact agriculture, food security, and public health, increasing reliance on alternative water sources, including unsanitary open wells and unsustainable water trucking. The region faces a persistent water deficit, with many communities relying on deep boreholes or surface water, which is often contaminated due to inadequate sanitation infrastructure. Extreme weather events, such as droughts, sandstorms, and seasonal flash floods, pose significant risks to infrastructure, livelihoods, and public health. Poorly maintained drainage systems and unregulated solid waste disposal contribute to environmental degradation, leading to the contamination of drinking water sources.

### Geographic coordinates

Name	Location	GPS Coordinates
Lebanon	Bekaa region (Informal settlement in Saaide village)	Lat: 34.029349 Long: 36.083668
Lebanon	South	Lat: 33.369339 Long: 35.444740
Syria	As-Safira, Aleppo Governorate	Lat: 36.08315 Long: 37.369106
Syria	Maskana, Aleppo Governorate	Lat: 35.96426 Long: 38.043306
Yemen	Al-Qubaytah District, Lahj Governorate	Lat: 13.274500 Long: 44.312200
Yemen	Maqbanah District, Taiz Governorate	Lat: 13.747500 Long: 43.635400