

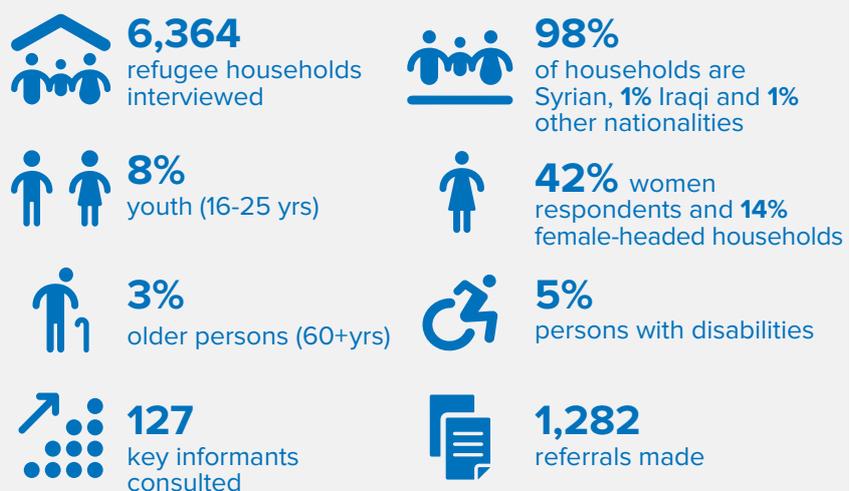
# Protection Monitoring Findings

Lebanon – 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2022

## Key highlights

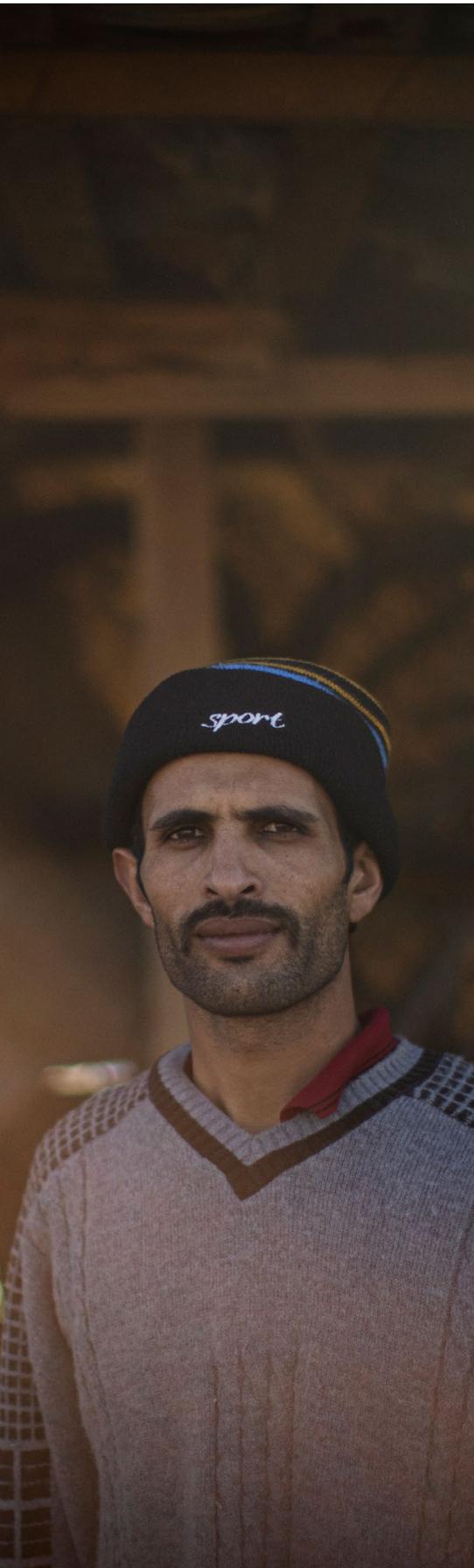
- **Refugees continue to struggle to meet their basic needs** in the face of Lebanon's deepening crises. Against the backdrop of diminishing livelihoods and increasing consumer prices, nearly all refugees report difficulties feeding their families and affording increasing rent. Record high rates of debt and rising reliance on negative coping strategies are also reported in the refugee community, such as deprioritizing health needs and education for children.
- **Rates of legal residency have further lowered** this quarter. A lack of financial resources and inability to find a sponsor remain the main barriers for most Syrians lacking residency.
- Factors that negatively affect refugees' ability to secure stable housing and sustain it over time are increasing, while landlords' leniency to negotiate around rent is declining. Eviction risks also stem from issues such as landlords repurposing land plots hosting refugees and incidents of community tensions. This quarter there has been a **substantial increase in actual and threatened collective evictions** in most regions.
- An uptick in anti-refugee rhetoric by state officials has corresponded to **more frequent restrictive measures and discriminatory practices**, such as local curfews, raids and other restrictions. This has contributed to rising levels of tensions around access to bread and has exacerbated the existing challenges that refugees face in meeting their basic needs.

## Key numbers April to June 2022<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> UNHCR conducts protection monitoring with partners on an ongoing basis to analyse trends in the protection environment and risks facing refugees. UNHCR's protection monitoring partners Interos and SHEILD conduct interviews with refugee households to elicit their feedback on the overall protection environment in Lebanon. The sampling of households and findings presented are representative both at the regional and at the national level. In addition, partners conduct a number of interviews with key informants of different profiles to complement the quantitative analysis from the household interviews. When needs for specific services, assistance or information are identified during interviews, UNHCR's protection monitoring partners refer the individuals concerned accordingly.

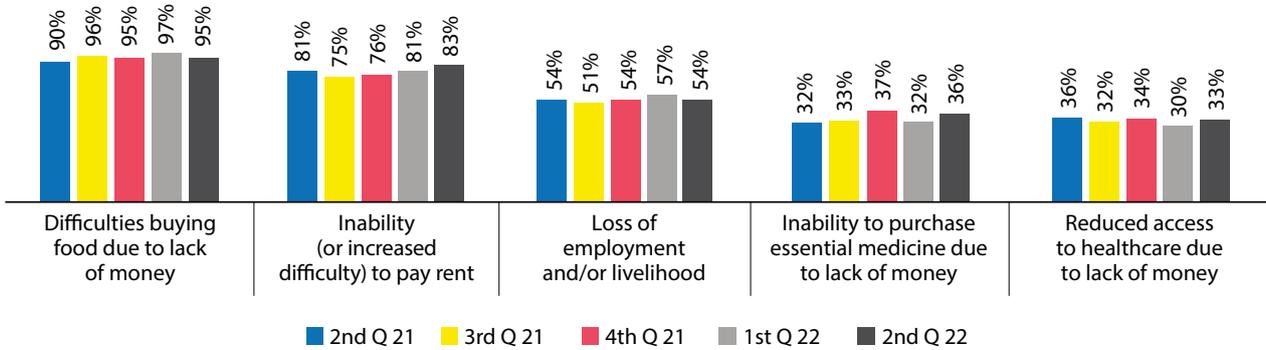
This report provides a summary of the protection monitoring findings from all regions of Lebanon in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter (April to June) of 2022. The feedback from refugees is used to inform UNHCR's advocacy, and programmatic interventions with the aim of improving refugees' access to protection and essential services, assistance, and information.



## Impact of the socio-economic situation

- From April to June refugees' struggle to meet their basic needs continued to intensify and nearly all indicators point towards broad gaps and a highly precarious situation during the reporting period.

Most widely experienced impacts of the socio-economic situation



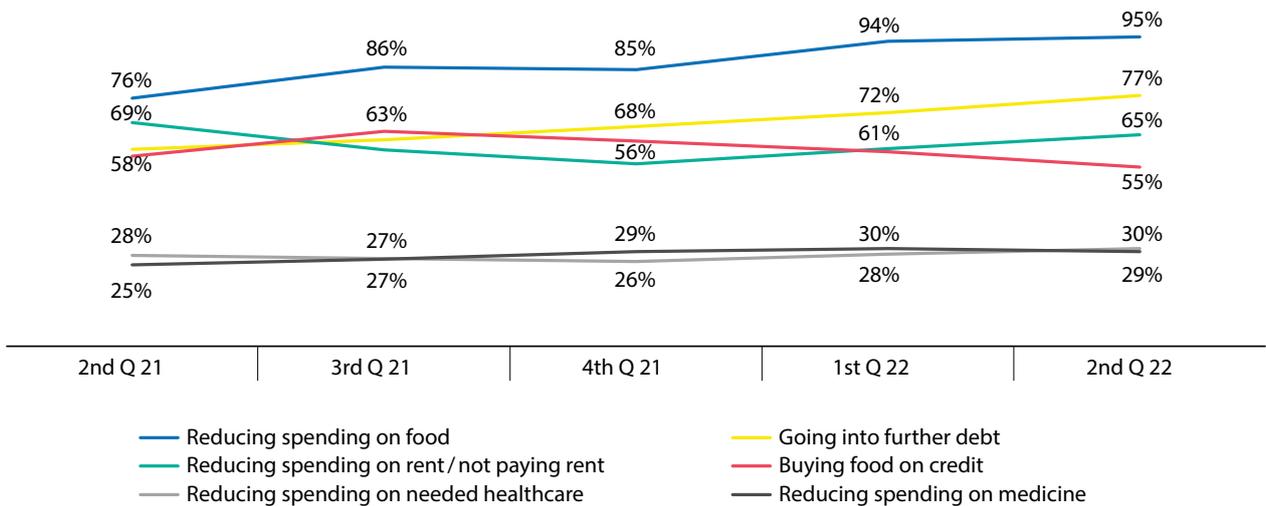
- Nearly all respondents are facing difficulties feeding their families and approximately 8 in 10 are struggling to afford their housing; a third are forced to forego medical needs. Nearly 9 in 10 households continue to rely on borrowing, and in this context over half of all households are experiencing diminished livelihoods.



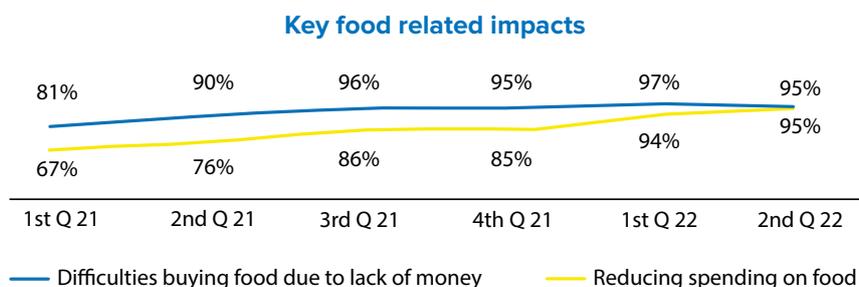
**We must work long hours to afford rent, as having shelter is a priority, and when there is no work, we are obliged to borrow money to pay to the owner.**

- Syrian refugee, Abbessiyet Sour

Most reported coping mechanisms



- As seen in the chart above, general borrowing is increasing, while buying food on credit has slightly decreased. Information from key informants suggests that refugees are being put in the difficult position of choosing between food and rent, and most often prioritize borrowing to pay rent in order to secure a roof over their head as the more immediate need.

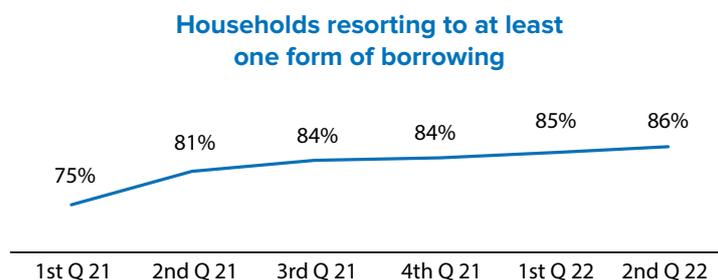


- Monitoring shows that refugee household income falls short of the survival minimum expenditure basket (SMEB) needs. During the quarter the average monthly income for refugee households was 1,428,763 LBP, which is just 25% of the SMEB<sup>2</sup>.

**1,428,763 (LBP)**  
average monthly income for refugee households

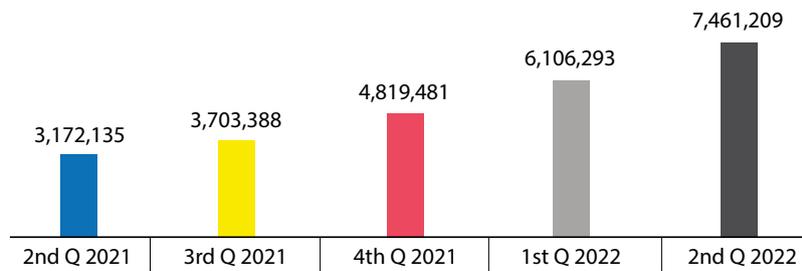
**22%**  
of refugee households earned no income in the past 30 days

- To help cover this significant gap in basic needs, a record high rate of refugee households relied on borrowing (86%).
- The average household debt as of June was 8,214,290 LBP (with a 7,461,209 LBP average for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter). This marks a 168% increase since May 2021 when UNHCR began tracking this data.
- As of June, the average income for refugee households was only 20% of their overall debt. These alarming debt levels are likely unsustainable particularly when we consider that an average of 55% of households have reported losing pay and work since the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2021.
- These significant financial gaps have meant that approximately one-third of all respondents have faced barriers in accessing healthcare. More specifically, 30% of all persons requiring medical care this quarter were unable to access the needed services. For nearly all of these respondents the financial barriers, including transportation costs, prevented them from receiving needed care.



<sup>2</sup> Pending SMEB figure for June.

### Average refugee household debt (LBP)



**Those who cannot afford the costs of medicines have stopped it permanently which caused many health issues especially for chronic disease patients. And, pharmacies are no longer able to give medicines for refugees on credit.**

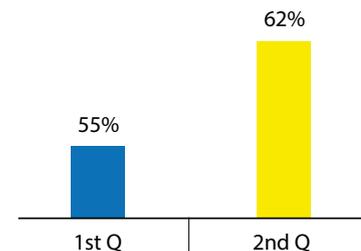
- Syrian refugee, Nabatieh

- A lack of electricity is causing significant hardships for struggling refugee families. Over 1 in 4 refugee households have less than two hours of electricity a day (26%), nearly two-thirds of all households are unable to meet their basic needs because of a lack of electricity (62%) and 4 in 5 cannot afford their current power costs.

- According to community sources, a lack of electricity impacts all aspects of refugees' lives. Refugees reported that living without power has meant living in the dark, with children unable to complete homework and food unable to be stored. One refugee noted that *"In Ramadan, we had no choice but to eat in the dark, which added more frustration caused by our bad situation."*

- Access to water is impacted by a lack of electricity because there is not enough power to maintain water systems. As a result, families are facing added expenses of purchasing water, or are forced to travel to collect water from communal sources.

### Households without enough electricity to meet their basic needs



- Rising costs of transportation have meant that 32% of refugee households were unable to reach essential services in the last 30 days. These services include healthcare (35%), work (19%), groceries (16%), humanitarian assistance (6%) and school (6%).

- Mental health issues continued to be reported by 25% of households, and 6% of households with children reported mental health issues amongst children.

## Education and child labour



**My three children did not go to school for the past 20 days because we cannot afford the transportation cost. The driver is asking for 40,000 LBP daily for each child. We depend on my husband's work, so when he is unable to work the priority is buying food for my children instead of sending them to school hungry.**

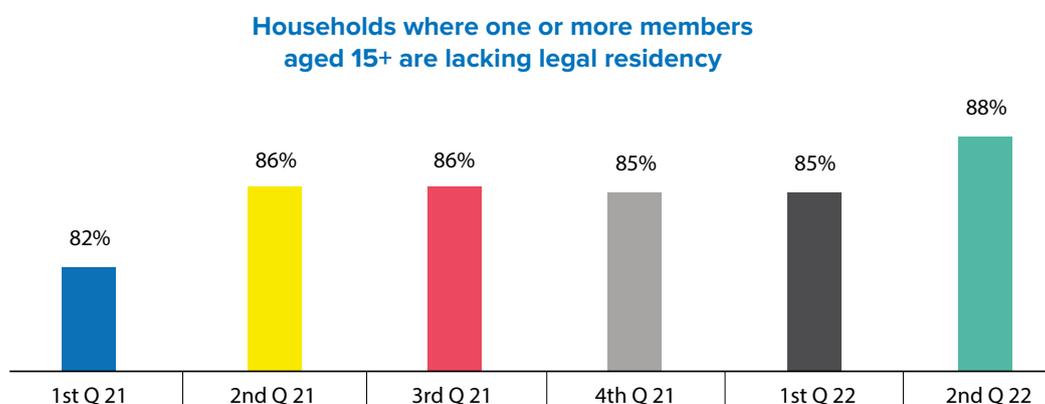
- Syrian refugee, Ghaziye

- In 5% of households with school-aged children, at least one of these children dropped out of school in the past 30 days, and concerning in 98% of these households parents were not planning on sending children to school again. In addition, 27% of these households reported already having children who were not attending school. Thus, 32% of households with school-aged children report children not attending school.
- Dropouts were mostly caused by families being unable to afford transportation to school (53%). Less common reasons include: education-related costs becoming unaffordable (32%); the child needing to work (14%); to avoid bullying (5%); and because of class overcrowding (5%).
- The percentage of households with children reporting child labour increased between the first and second quarter (from 4% to 6%).
- The large majority of children involved in child labour continue to be boys (77%). Children continued to be most commonly working in agriculture (37%); in wholesale and retail (21%); in street selling (14%); in construction and manufacturing (10%); and with mechanics (7%).
- Key informants continue to highlight that child labour is becoming increasingly pervasive in their communities. Child labour has a strong regional dimension in both the prevalence and the type of work they are doing. Children in more rural areas continue to be heavily employed in agriculture, while in urban settings begging, street selling and public waste sorting and resale for recycling purposes are more common.

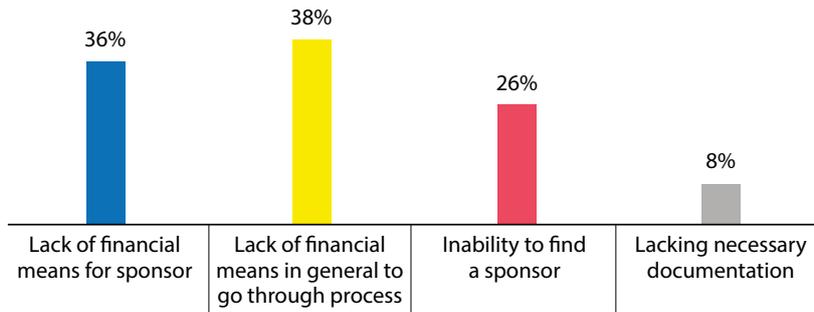


## Legal residency

- Rates of legal residency hit a new record low this quarter, with 88% of households having at least one member 15 years and older lacking legal residency.
- A lack of financial resources continues to be the main barrier for 74% of households to access legal residency. Another commonly reported reason for a lack of residency is the inability to find a Lebanese sponsor, which has increased from 13% in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter of 2021 to 26% this past quarter.



### Leading factors causing lack of residency



## COVID-19

**79%**

of refugees reported knowing the MoPH hotline number

**80%**

of refugees knew that costs of testing and treatment were covered

**99%**

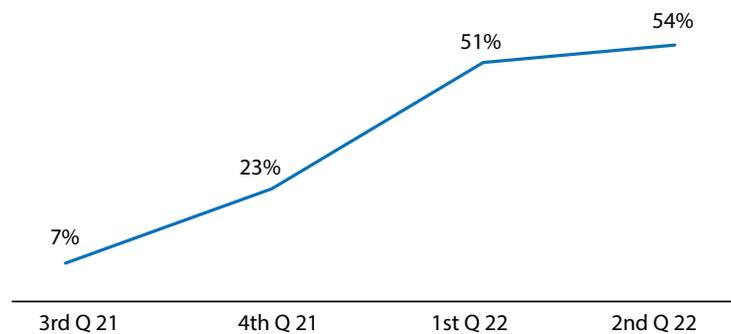
of refugees reported having knowledge of preventative measures to protect against COVID-19

**96%**

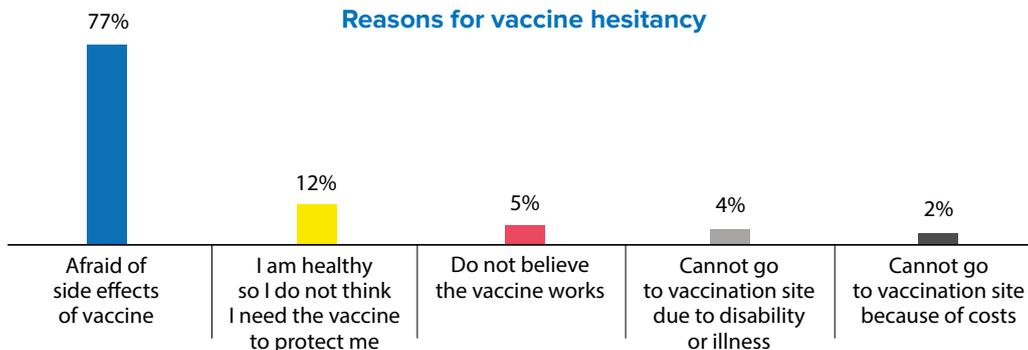
of refugees reported having knowledge on how to access testing in case of suspected COVID-19

• Increases in refugee households reporting being vaccinated continued: from just 3% of refugee households having some or all members vaccinated in June 2021 to a 54% this past quarter. However, the vaccination growth has been considerably slowing down this year, and a record high rate of vaccine hesitancy was reported this quarter, with 86% of persons currently unvaccinated not planning to get vaccinated in the future. This likely means that the plateau in vaccination rates seen between the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter and 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter this year will likely continue in the future.

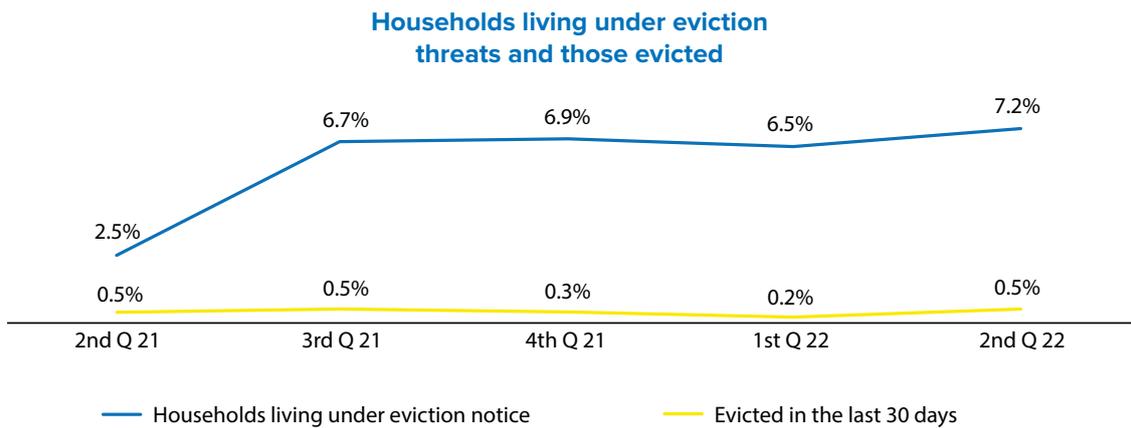
### Households where all or some members have received COVID-19 vaccination



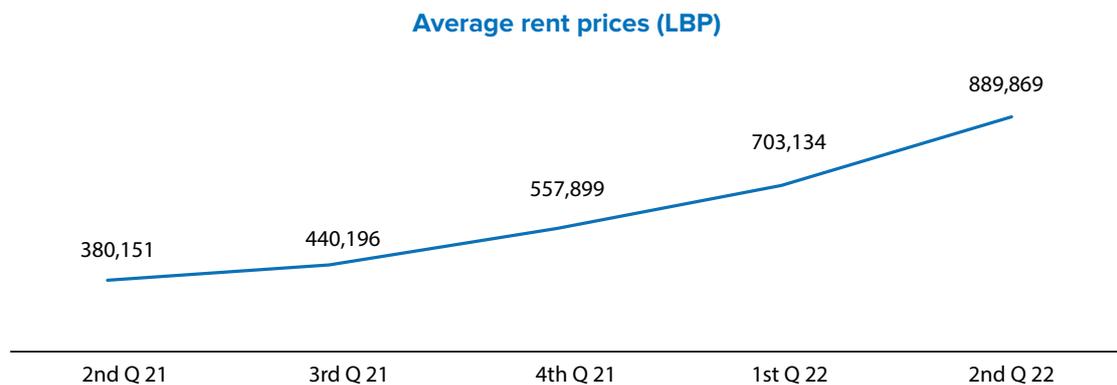
### Reasons for vaccine hesitancy



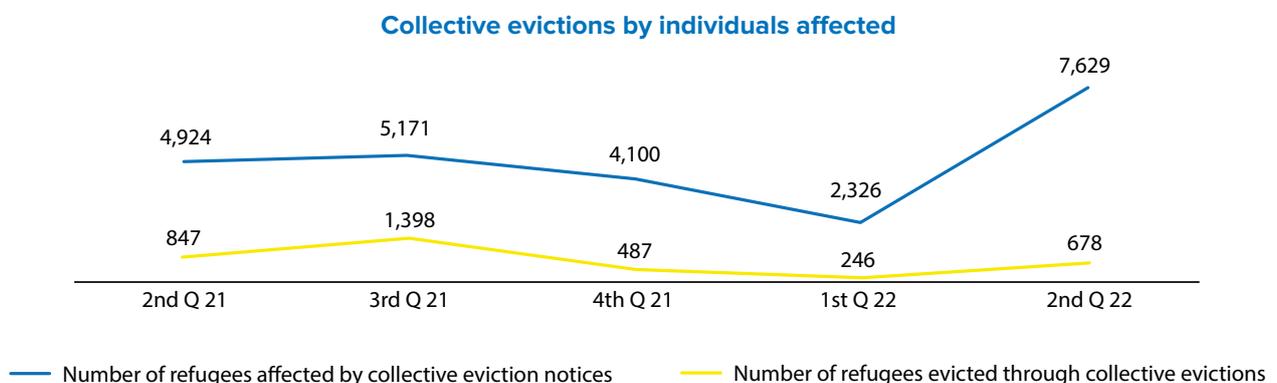
## Evictions, restrictive measures and protection space\*



- The percentage of refugees reporting to live under eviction threat has increased from 6.5% in the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of this year to 7.2%. Anti-refugee rhetoric growing in the second quarter likely contributed to increasing eviction threats. In the South, eviction threats are increasingly linked to requests for payment of rents in dollars, as a result of misperceptions created by statements of public figures that Syrians are getting aid in dollars.



- Increased pressure caused by the perception among host community members that Syrians are receiving large amounts of aid is coming at a time when refugees are also increasingly unable to afford rent. In this quarter a record high rate of refugees indicated not being able to make their last rent payment (60%). This is up from the 53% average recorded during 2021. Further, rental prices reported by refugees have increased 27% this quarter alone. Thus, anti-refugee rhetoric seems to be putting additional pressure on refugees already struggling to afford shelter.



\* Please note that information in this section also includes sources outside of the regular protection monitoring household and key informant survey, including reports from community source and protection partners.

- Refugees in regions with informal tent settlements have experienced substantially higher rates of collective evictions compared to previous quarter. In 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter UNHCR recorded one of the highest incidence of threatened collective evictions for the past three years, corresponding to the period of increasing anti-refugee rhetoric.
- In addition to housing pressure, anti-refugee rhetoric could also be contributing to the increase in restrictive measures which affect all aspects of refugees' lives. In Bekaa for instance, there was a significant increase in raids targeting Syrians in June.
- An increasing number of curfews targeting Syrians are being imposed. Illustrative is the situation in the South, where at least four municipalities imposed such measures in just one week.
- UNHCR continues to receive reports of restrictive measures which seek to limit the economic opportunities of Syrians. For example, in some locations Syrian domestic workers salary was capped well below the actual market rate, while other municipalities were prohibiting refugees from working in locations which might offer higher wages by threatening them with eviction.
- Further, tensions across the country were seen rising over accessing limited bread supplies. When attempting to purchase bread, Syrian refugees were seen experiencing verbal and physical harassment, as well as other discriminatory practices. For example, community sources reported that in some locations refugees were required to wait in deprioritized lines, only being allowed to purchase bread once all members of the host community have purchased, or even fully refused to buy bread. In this context, tensions in some locations were also fuelled by unsubstantiated allegations that Syrians were reselling bread from bakeries for inflated prices.
- All these developments, including increasing risks of evictions, barriers in accessing affordable food and measures that limit mobility and livelihoods, have increased the existing challenges that refugees face when meeting their basic needs.