



Lebanon: Beirut Port Explosions

Situation Report No. 3

As of 10 August 2020

This report is produced by OCHA Lebanon in collaboration with humanitarian partners. It covers the period from 7 to 10 August 2020.

HIGHLIGHTS

- At least 160 people were killed, and more than 5,000 people were injured in the Beirut Port explosions.
- A rapid assessment of 55 primary healthcare centres found that 37 per cent sustained moderate-to-serious damage. Only 47 per cent of surveyed facilities can still provide full routine health services.
- A rapid shelter assessment identified Gemmayzeh, Mar Mikhael, Ashrafiyeh and Qarantina as priority areas.
- Thousands of affected people require hot meals, food rations and other food assistance following the explosions.
- Concerns grow that damage to the Beirut Port will exacerbate food insecurity, which was already growing amid COVID-19 pandemic and prolonged socio-economic crisis.
- On 8 August, Beirut Port's Container Terminal resumed offloading ships after being partially affected by the blasts.
- Many families require sanitation and hygiene supplies until basic services can be restored in affected neighborhoods.
- The Ministry of Health continues to report increasing COVID-19 transmission rates.
- On 9 August, donors pledged hundreds of millions of dollars to assist Lebanon at a virtual international conference.



A damage assessment of Hôpital des Soeurs du Rosaire in Gemmayzeh. Credit: OCHA/Farid Assaf

160+

Reported deaths

5,000+

People reported injured

60+

People reported missing

SITUATION OVERVIEW

At least 15 medical facilities, including three major hospitals, sustained partial or heavy structural damage. An additional 120 schools, used by 50,000 Lebanese and non-Lebanese children, sustained various levels of damage. Humanitarian partners are conducting further damage assessments, in close coordination with relevant government authorities.

On 9 August, a total of 294 new COVID-19 cases were recorded, a new record for Lebanon. The emergency in Beirut has caused many COVID-19 precautionary measures to be relaxed, raising the prospects of even higher transmission rates and a large caseload in the coming weeks.

Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams have found no indication of acute chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) threats in the incident area so far. Only minor chemical threats resulting from destroyed storage facilities (paint, solvents, asbestos, etc.) have been reported up to date. Further assessments are needed to understand any actual or potential secondary/cascading risks as a result of damage to any sites of concern. An oil spill has been reported at the port.

On 8 and 9 August, anti-government protesters gathered in Beirut's Martyrs' Square, with reports of violence. One policeman was killed in the Beirut clashes on 8 August. According to the Lebanese Red Cross (LRC), 728 civilians were

wounded, of which 160 were transported to hospitals for treatment. Seventy security forces personnel were also reportedly wounded.

On 9 August, at a virtual international pledging conference, co-hosted by France and the UN, donors pledged hundreds of millions of dollars in assistance to Lebanon, mostly channelled through UN agencies and NGOs. UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed and France's President Macron called on leaders to act quickly and effectively to co-ordinate assistance.

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

Efforts are underway to support the national response to the explosions. Humanitarian actors continue to assess immediate humanitarian needs across affected areas following the Beirut port explosions. The United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) deployed 19 experts (10 UNDAC members and nine experts from five operational partners). Some 14 Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams from 11 countries have been deployed under the auspices of the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) to support search and rescue operations as well as structural assessment efforts.

A flexible coordination structure will facilitate the delivery of emergency assistance to the most vulnerable populations and support transition towards subsequent phases of the response.

Volunteers continue to clean the streets and remove debris from the streets as part of a wider clean-up operation. Numerous donors have dispatched relief supplies, mobile medical teams and field hospitals to support the medical response.



Health

Needs:

- At least 15 medical facilities, including three major hospitals, sustained partial or heavy structural damage. Additional support is required to ensure remaining medical facilities can continue to deliver primary health care, mental health support and manage the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic for thousands of patients.
- Additional maternal health support is required to ensure the safe delivery of the estimated 400 babies due to be born in Beirut in the coming month.
- In consultation with WHO, Connecting Research to Development (CRD), a Lebanese thinktank, completed a rapid health assessment of 55 primary healthcare centres (PHCs) in Beirut. The main findings showed that 37 per cent suffered moderate-to-serious-damage, 13 per cent had health workers injured during the blasts and 47 per cent are capable to provide full routine health services. Approximately 55 per cent of facilities expressed the need for equipment.
- As the COVID-19 situation remains extremely alarming with an increased resurgence of positive cases including among healthcare workers, extensive efforts are undertaken to link the response of COVID-19 to the blast emergency response in order to promote awareness and preventive measures.

Response:

- The Health Sector has prioritized three areas of support: 1. primary health care, 2. mental health and 3. mobile medical units (MMUs).
- Medical facilities and field hospitals continue to treat thousands of patients for trauma and burns.
- Damage assessments of affected health facilities continue. The damage assessment of the five most affected hospitals by WHO in close coordination with MoPH is due to start on 9 August and be completed by 11 August. The assessment of 15 PHCs in the area of the blast is ongoing.
- Since 5 August and for two weeks, MMUs cover Qarantina (operated by Amel Association) and Burj Hammoud, Geitawi, Karm El Zeitun and Gemmayzeh/Mar Mikhael/DT (operated by IMC). MMUs are linked to PHC and acting as an outreach to target people with specific needs and older people mainly.
- The Centre for Tuberculosis & AIDS treatment programme supported by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) at the Qarantina area was completely damaged. Fortunately, equipment, medications and medical supplies were saved. People living with HIV are currently directed towards partner NGOs, and tuberculosis patients are receiving medication via a network of volunteers and field coordinators.
- The relocation of all medicines and supplies from the damaged MoPH's warehouse in Qarantina near the blast site has been completed. Stockpiling has been ensured in a safe and adapted location inside the Rafik Hariri University Hospital premises and rehabilitation work is underway.

- NGOs are being mobilized to provide mental health and psycho-social support (MHPSS) services through the PHC network along with the full activation of the hotline to respond to the escalating number of patients suffering from depression and suicidal thoughts. A mapping is being conducted of available specialized and non-specialized MHPSS services.
- A rapid assessment is underway to determine functionality of the secondary mental health services. Funds are being mobilised to replace medication damaged in the explosions.
- In close coordination with the MoPH, WHO will implement the Health Resources and Services Availability Monitoring System (HeRAMS) to provide information on the damage and level of functionality of health facilities and the availability of essential resources and services.

Shelter

Needs:

- As part of a rapid assessment with the Governor of Beirut and the municipality of Beirut, LRC has identified Gemmayzeh, Mar Mikhael, Ashrafiyeh and Qarantina as priority districts. Door-to-door emergency needs assessment has been undertaken in several socio-economically vulnerable neighborhoods, including Burj Hammoud, Nabaa, Bachoura and Furn El Chebbek.
- The Governor of Mount Lebanon has identified Burj Hammoud, Jdeideh, Sin El Fil, and Jal el Dib (Seaside) and Zalka (Seaside) as in need of shelter support.
- Shelter partners are supporting a rapid humanitarian shelter needs assessment, prioritizing the most affected areas, mobilizing emergency weatherproofing materials and support repair and rehabilitation efforts. Some partners have been providing shelter kits over the past couple of days.

Response:

- In coordination with the LRC, UNHCR and UN-Habitat are coordinating the ongoing shelter response.
- The Shelter Sector is currently supporting the LRC in needs determination and humanitarian response in the most affected areas.
- The Shelter Sector is supporting the Governor of Beirut and the Beirut Municipality, which have established a task force with the Higher Relief Council and a coalition of consultancy firms, to conduct structural assessment of severely damaged buildings. UN-Habitat is starting a building and economic assessment of Burj Hammoud.
- Shelter Sector partners are mobilising in-country stocks of shelter kits (e.g., plastic sheets, timber and toolboxes), tents and core relief items for immediate distribution and use.
- UNICEF is mobilizing 200 to 300 Youth Volunteers to continue with debris removal across affected areas to facilitate peoples' return to their homes. Also, Youth Volunteers are sewing masks for frontline responders to be protected from COVID-19.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Needs:

- The explosion interrupted basic water and sanitation services in many neighborhoods. Many families require supplies until basic services can be restored. The Water Sector prioritized the WASH response to support vital water facilities, hospitals and PHCs and affected households.

Response:

- Assessments are ongoing by WASH partners in coordination with Beirut and Mount Lebanon (BML) Water Establishment for infrastructures. Ashrafiyeh main water network was assessed as significantly damaged.
- LRC is conducting household assessments. The WASH Sector is now assessing the water distribution lines up to the building roof tanks in coordination with BML Water Establishment.
- Initial results indicate that Gemmayzeh and Mar Mikhael are the most affected: out of 106 assessed buildings, only 58 were accessible, of which 50 were without water. Repairs will start early next week in coordination with the Water Establishment.
- The BML Water Establishment restored the Beirut Port pumping station the day after the blasts.
- A total of 80 hygiene kits and 20 baby kits provided by the WASH Sector have been distributed by the LRC and the Shelter Cluster.
- With UNICEF support, LebRelief is providing water trucking and desludging to three LRC support points.

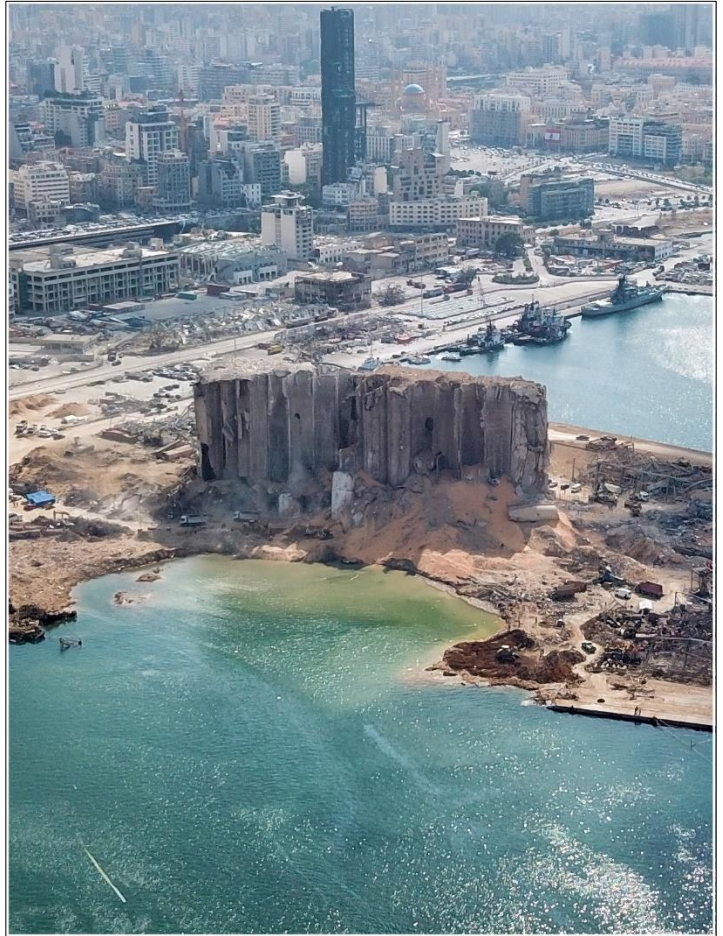
Food Security

Needs:

- Thousands of affected people, particularly displaced families, require hot meals, food rations and other food assistance following the explosions.
- Additional stocks are required to replenish national grain reserves destroyed by the explosions at the port.
- An assessment of Beirut's food supply status and market functionality/accessibility will be part of the multi-sectoral rapid needs assessment, including assessments of warehouses and mills.

Response:

- WFP has allocated an additional 5,000 food parcels for families affected by the blasts. Each parcel is sufficient to feed a family of five for one month
- On 8 August, SHIELD, a WFP partner, delivered 100 food parcels to Caritas, which will be used for cooking hot meals. Dry rations distributions will start in few days for targeted households able to access kitchens.
- WFP continues to provide 105,000 Lebanese with assistance via e-cards as part of the Government's National Poverty Targeting Programme. WFP is working on expanding its programmes to include more vulnerable groups including those affected by the explosions.
- In the wake of the damage to the grain silos and stocks at the port, WFP will deliver 50,000 metric tons of wheat flour to Beirut to stabilize the national supply and ensure there is no food shortage in the country.
- Current wheat flour reserves in the country are estimated to cover market needs for 6 weeks. An initial shipment of 17,500 metric tones is due to arrive to Beirut Port within the coming ten days to supply bakeries for one month.
- Humanitarian partners plan to scale up the cash assistance. WFP plans to expand its existing cash assistance programme in Lebanon to reach up to one million people across the country, including Beirut residents who have been directly affected by the blasts.



Remnants of Beirut Port Silos. Credit: OCHA

Protection

Needs:

- The explosions caused considerable trauma to thousands of people from Lebanese and non-Lebanese communities. Vulnerable populations, including women, children and the elderly, are among the most affected. Psycho-social support, family reunification and other protection services are essential.
- UNRWA reported that the vulnerability of Palestine refugees can only grow as a result of the combined economic and COVID-19 crisis now further exacerbated by the Beirut explosions. Two fatalities and few injuries were reported among the Palestine refugees.

Response:

- UNHCR reception centres across the country, including in Beirut, are open for critical and emergency cases, and the national call centre as well as regional hotlines across the country are fully manned to respond to requests for assistance.

Education

Needs:

- Extensive damage to more than 120 public and private schools may interrupt learning opportunities for an estimated 50,000 Lebanese and non-Lebanese children. Emergency repairs and basic supplies are required to minimize the delay in and disruption of school activities when the school year restarts.

Logistics

Needs:

- The Beirut Port is expected to be inoperable for at least a month. A temporary bulk receiving facility is needed for grain imports to ensure adequate national stocks. Augmentation of the Beirut Port facilities is essential to avoid interruptions and disruptions in food supply lines.
- Beirut Port's Container Terminal was only partially affected by the blasts. On 8 August, the facility resumed offloading ships.

Response:

- Three cargo flights have arrived with logistics equipment to enable the port to become operational, including mobile storage units and other equipment as a temporary solution for the destroyed grain silos.
- The Logistic Cluster will start assessing warehouses at the port and airport on 11 August. Assessment of Tripoli port is planned on 12 August.
- The United Nations and its partners are looking to adjust logistic networks to ensure sustained operations. Most humanitarian materials will be redirected through the Tripoli Port (80km north).
- Beirut International Airport remains open for passenger and cargo flights. Customs brokers at the airport are fully operational to facilitate the arrival of materials. No legislative changes have been announced on customs procedures for relief items.

Constraints:

- The change may have adverse consequences for some supply chains, as Tripoli Port has approximately a third the capacity of Beirut Port. Rerouted vessels may congest the port.

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