

STANDING IN SOLIDARITY WITH LEBANON

AUGUST 17 2020



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

SITUATION OVERVIEW

On 4 August, the city of Beirut was hit by a devastating explosion which flattened most of the city's port, damaging neighbourhoods and buildings across the capital. It left more than 200 people dead, 6,000 people injured, and a reported 300,000 people displaced. The government has declared a state of emergency. The explosions hit as Lebanon faces a multi-faceted crisis. In recent months, the socio-economic situation of Lebanese, refugees and migrant workers has continued to deteriorate, with the cost of basic needs exponentially rising as a result of the deep economic and financial crisis, exacerbated by the impact of COVID-19.

OVERALL

220
people dead

6,000
people injured

300,000
people displaced

REFUGEES

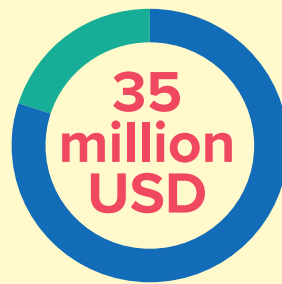
13
people dead

224
people injured

500+
Cases referred to UNHCR

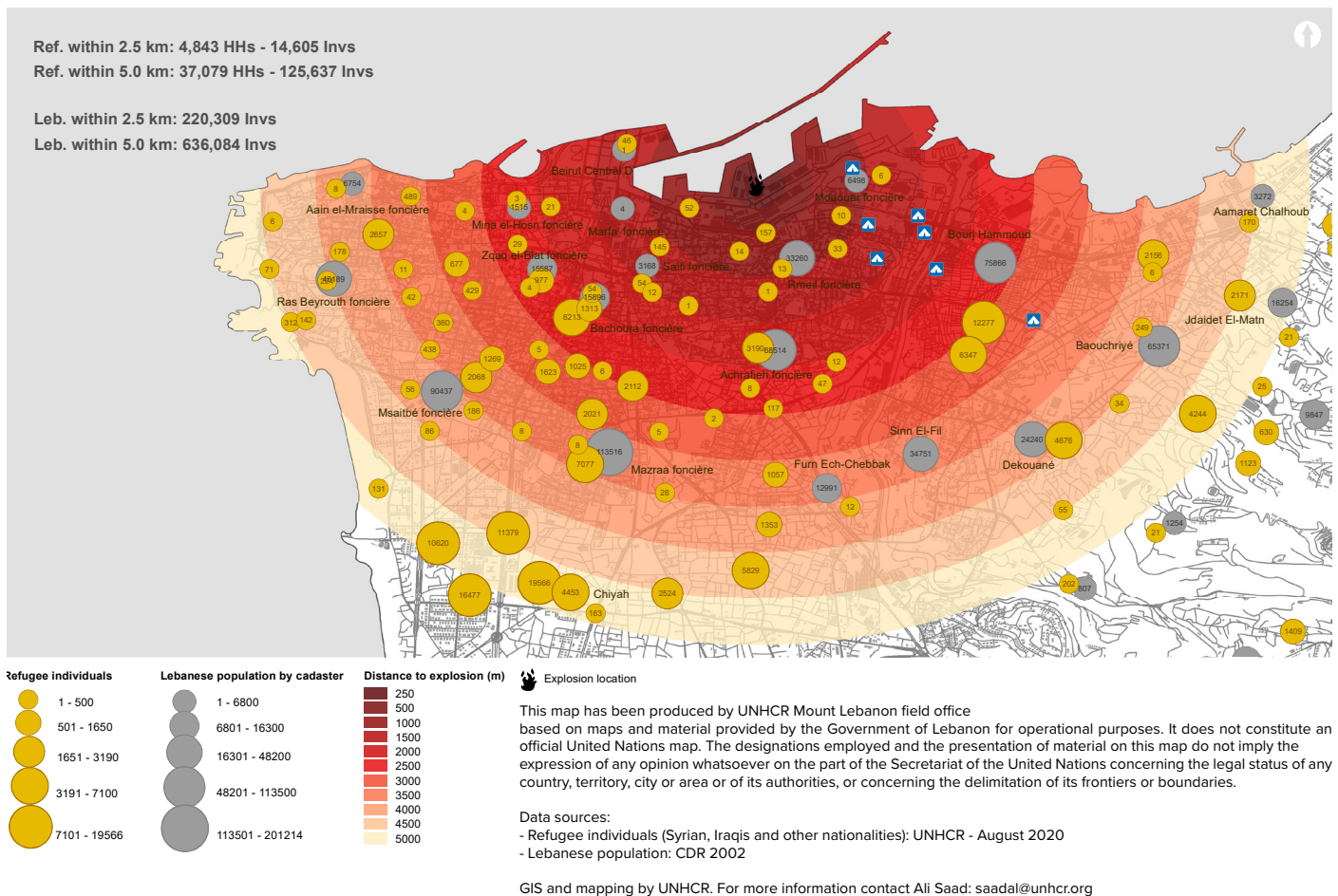
As part of the inter-agency Flash Appeal, UNHCR is mobilizing a total of USD 35 million for its contribution to the emergency response to the hardest-hit and most vulnerable households in Beirut. This includes USD 32.6 million for specific shelter interventions and USD 2.4 million for protection activities over the next three months.

USD 2.4 million
for protection activities



USD 32.6 million
for shelter interventions

UNHCR continues to call on the international community to stand by the people of Lebanon, show solidarity and provide meaningful support to this generous country that has hosted so many refugees even during a very difficult period.



UNHCR RESPONSE

UNHCR, sister UN agencies and partner NGOs are working closely with the affected communities and the concerned authorities to assess the damages and identify the best ways to help. Within the overarching Blast response strategic objectives of humanitarian relief and early recovery, UNHCR's response will focus mainly on (1) Shelter and (2) Protection, addressing pressing shelter and protection needs of the most vulnerable persons affected by the blast while paving the way for their recovery and rehabilitation in the medium term. The response adopts a whole-population approach, targeting the most affected and most vulnerable households and individuals, including Lebanese, refugees and migrant workers in Beirut and those displaced outside the city.

UNHCR's response builds on and complements existing programs within the Lebanon Crisis Response and aims to ensure that a protection lens is applied across all activities of in all sectors, that individuals and their rights are at the centre of the response, and that relevant and appropriate interventions and services are efficiently delivered, in a conflict-sensitive manner.

 **24,667**

initial estimates of vulnerable households severely affected and in need of urgent support.

SHELTER

UNHCR stockpile of emergency and shelter kits has been made available for the Lebanese Red Cross (LRC) and other partners on the ground. A household-level (door-to-door) assessment is underway in the most heavily impacted areas. Individual distributions to identified victims started on 9 August.

 **2,434**

shelter kits distributed to date

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE PHASE



The priority is to identify and get aid to those in need of **'Emergency Weatherproofing'**:

Plastic sheeting
Timber
Plywood
Associated tools



For those affected to

Secure external entrances
Cover damaged window openings
Provide a level of safety and security
Protection from the elements
Restoring privacy and dignity



The need for **cash for shelter** repair and rental payments is evident. Affected households will have to undertake rental/accommodation payments and shall face significant labour and material costs in making home repairs. Time is of the essence and given the liquidity crisis that Lebanon has been facing for the past months, multi-purpose cash remains the most effective option to provide immediate relief and to support rapid repair and reconstruction needs. It will also support other related needs (food, basic assistance and health) that affected populations may face.

MEDIUM-TERM PHASE



Minor Repair

Small-scale housing repairs to external doors, internal doors, false ceilings, windows and minor plumbing works



Extensive Repair

Rehabilitation and 'common area' improvements external building areas including reconnection to water, sanitation and electrical networks

PROTECTION

The people affected and their communities are at the heart of UNHCR's response, where existing community structures and partnerships are built upon and new ones are engaged to help identify individuals in immediate need and advise on the services and assistance required to secure people's basic rights and dignity, while laying the ground for emotional and material recovery and resilience against further shocks.

MAIN ACTIVITIES:



Community engagement, mobilization & outreach

People in need are identified and referred to services by trained Outreach Volunteers, community groups and UNHCR and partner staff in mobile units and foot on the ground, and through ongoing protection monitoring and assessments by the Lebanese Red Cross and other partner organisations. A dedicated blast hotline has been set up to increase the capacity of existing hotlines to provide information to any person affected by the blast and refer to specialized services.



Mental Health & Psychological Support (MHPSS) & Psychological First Aid (PFA)

People in the affected neighborhoods have endured multiple traumas and struggle with the pains of loss, feelings of insecurity and shattered dignity. Psychological first aid (PFA) and psychosocial support (PSS) is part of the response at all stages, from emergency to recovery, to help survivors recover and rebuild their self-confidence and resilience. Frontliners are trained in PFA to receive and appropriately respond to calls from persons in distress, and refer individuals in need to specialized services, including tailored MHPSS.



Individual case support

Some persons impacted by the blast are in a particularly vulnerable situation and in need of tailored support. This can be older persons or persons with disabilities who have lost family members in the blast and families trying to cope with trauma while struggling to find shelter and food. Emergency and Protection Cash Assistance (ECA and PCAP) as well as counselling is provided following an individual assessment, to capacitate these families to cover medical needs, burials, recovery of necessary belongings and other immediate survival needs.



Legal aid to secure basic documents

People living closest to the blast have lost all their possessions including IDs, property documents, residency permits and civil documents that are important to access health services, education, justice, and claim compensation, amongst others. Tailored legal aid is provided to help people obtain new documents promptly.

Do No Harm principles and conflict-sensitivity will permeate the design and delivery of all activities in the response to mitigate the risk of new or pre-existing tensions from rising. PSEA safeguards and mechanisms will likewise be integrated throughout the response.



We stand in solidarity with Lebanon in these tragic and testing times and remain committed to support the people of Beirut and all those involved in the response as they try to recover the city, overcome their pain and immense losses.

- UNHCR Representative in Lebanon Mireille Girard

ADDITIONAL LINKS



Statement attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General on the explosions in Beirut, Lebanon (4 August 2020)



Statement attributable to UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi on the explosions in Beirut, Lebanon (5 August 2020)



UNHCR supporting Lebanon's relief and recovery efforts following the devastating Beirut explosion (7 August 2020)

For more information, please contact:

UNHCR Lebanon
lebbe@unhcr.org

Anna King
Senior External Relations Officer, UNHCR Lebanon
kinga@unhcr.org



UNHCR Lebanon
S&K building, Nicolas Ibrahim
Surssock Street, Jnah
P.O. Box 11-7332
Beirut - Lebanon
www.unhcr.org