

UNHCR Flash Update on Lebanon: Beirut Port Explosions

23 August 2020

Situation overview

- The UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, concluded a [visit to Beirut](#), from 18 to 21 August, to listen to the plight of all those affected by the devastating port explosion on 4 August and to provide support. He affirmed UNHCR's immediate support to more than 100,000 people who were severely impacted by the blast.
- The High Commissioner also visited refugees who have been severely impacted by the economic downturn and COVID-19, and assessed an isolation facility and the expansion of hospital bed and ICU capacity in a public hospital, which are supported by UNHCR.
- Over the past week, UNHCR conducted 395 assessments with affected families in three heavily damaged areas: Karantina, Borj Hamoud and Mar Mikhael. Cumulatively, Lebanese and refugee communities made up 98 per cent of all respondents (54 per cent Lebanese; 44 per cent Syrians). Across all areas, three main needs were highlighted: shelter rehabilitation (31 per cent); household items and other basic needs (17 per cent); and food (16 per cent). Expressions of interest for health and legal assistance were low. Assessed families urged UNHCR and other actors to: (i) conduct an impact assessment to quantify the effects of the explosion; (ii) provide a consolidated view of the impact of the explosion on different sectors; (iii) reduce duplication in the mobilization of resources; and (iv) support a cash programme targeting those in need.

Impact on refugees

Refugees of all nationalities who were living in areas surrounding the location of the blast have been severely affected. UNHCR continues to identify refugees affected through multiple channels to ensure that none of them is left behind in the response.

14 refugees
confirmed dead

62 refugees
remain to
be found

250 refugees
confirmed
injured



UNHCR High Commissioner Filippo Grandi looks at damage caused to the apartment of Syrian refugee Makhoul at his home, in the aftermath of the Port Explosion, in Beirut, Lebanon, on August 19, 2020. Makhoul's six year-old daughter's eye was badly injured in the blast and the family's apartment had its windows blown out. The family of six fled to Lebanon in 2016 to escape the war in their home country, Syria.
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UNHCR response

- As part of the inter-agency humanitarian appeal, **UNHCR is mobilizing USD 35 million** to provide immediate emergency response to the most affected and most vulnerable households and individuals in Lebanon. This includes **USD 32.5 million for shelter interventions and USD 2.5 million for protection activities** for the next three months. Affected people displaced outside the Beirut area will also be targeted with assistance.

Protection

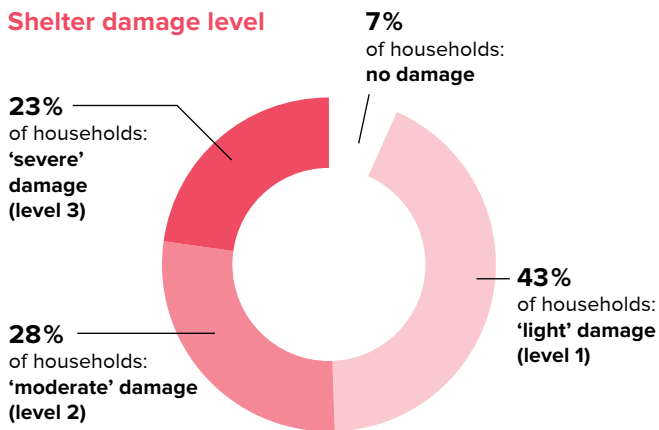
- UNHCR and partners are engaging with all communities affected by the blast to identify men, women, girls and boys in need, and provide protection services together immediate assistance interventions as part of a holistic protection response.

- Psychological first aid, medical and psychosocial support services were provided together with immediate assistance interventions, including emergency cash assistance and food distributions; cleaning debris for Lebanese houses or businesses; providing health kits and assistance; and providing dignity kits to women and girls.

Shelter

- Since the blast, UNHCR has supported the Lebanese Red Cross (LRC) and the Shelter Sector to undertake almost 6,000 household multi-sectoral needs assessments in the most affected areas. Findings to date indicate that 85 per cent of most affected households are Lebanese and 10 per cent are Syrians. In terms of shelter needs, 63 per cent of households experienced a level of damage to external doors, 52 per cent experienced shattered

glass of windows / doors, with 23 per cent of households experiencing damage to key structural components such as columns (13 per cent) and beams (10 per cent).



- The Shelter Sector response started with the assessment and determination of eligibility for shelter assistance, which commenced with the distribution of emergency weatherproofing kits to permit households to reinstate a level of safety, security, privacy, dignity and protection from the elements.
- UNHCR and shelter sector partners have to date distributed more than 4,100 UNHCR shelter kits (assisting an estimated 14,000 individuals) in affected areas including Geitawi, Mar Mikhael, Gemayzeh, and Karantina. Some 85 per cent of beneficiaries are Lebanese, 12 per cent Syrians and 3 per cent of other nationalities.

UNHCR Lebanon operation



Funding:

USD 607.5 million requested for the UNHCR Lebanon operation in 2020

41% funded as of 18 August 2020
(USD 249.6 million received)

Additional links

- [UN refugee chief pledges support for people of Beirut on visit to city](#) (20 August 2020)
- [UNHCR Flash Update on Lebanon #3: Beirut Port Explosions](#) (17 August 2020)
- [UNHCR Flash Update on Lebanon #2: Beirut Port Explosions](#) (11 August 2020)
- [Briefing Note: Beirut blast death toll includes dozens of refugees, emergency response ramps up](#) (11 August 2020)
- [Statement by UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi at virtual briefing on the humanitarian situation in Lebanon](#) (10 August 2020)
- [UNHCR Flash Update on Lebanon: Beirut Port Explosions](#) (7 August 2020)
- [Briefing Note: UNHCR rushes support for Beirut in the aftermath of massive blast](#) (7 August 2020)
- [Statement attributable to UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi on the explosions in Beirut, Lebanon](#) (5 August 2020)
- For further information, please visit – [UNHCR Lebanon website](#).
- Support UNHCR's emergency response in Lebanon:
<https://donate.unhcr.org/sg/stand-with-lebanon/~my-donation>

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