



February Storm: Situation Update 07 February 2023



Inter-Agency
Coordination
Lebanon

Aggravated by several days of heavy rain and snow, strong winds and cold temperatures, the harsh weather that hit Lebanon for the first time in 2023 on 31 January has resulted in road blockages, landslides, and damage to shelters, particularly in Informal Settlements (IS).

Coordinated Rapid Needs Assessments (RNAs) were activated by partners across all regions. Access issues were reported in Bekaa, BML and the North due to river flooding, coupled with snow accumulation that resulted in roads becoming inaccessible including roads in Aarsal which are blocked due to snow accumulation. 147 sites in the Bekaa (including in Baalbeck, Zahle, Al-Marj and Bar Elias) were confirmed as affected and in need of assistance from response partners, including to desludge flood waters and provide shelter kits and essential winter items. 124 individuals were supported to temporarily relocate to alternative sites. In the South, 69 affected sites were confirmed (including Babliye, Aaddoussiye, Insariye, Saida, and Mansouri), with some families also requiring relocation, while 22 affected sites were confirmed in BML. The RNA in the north was launched on 6 February, with severe weather hitting later in this area, with assessments ongoing.

IMPACT OF CURRENT STORM

	Affected	Assisted
Sites confirmed	342	194
Estimated households	722	331
Estimated individuals	4250	2001

Figures are cumulative to date. Assessments are ongoing. Additional numbers will be reflected in an updated sitrep.



Photo Credit: MEDAIR, Sara Nasser. Location: Katermeya 001 IS, BML.



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PREPAREDNESS

In advance of the winter season, partners worked together through Inter-Agency coordination to prepare for the onset of storms at the household and site levels, as part of a wider inter-sectoral winter season response.

Winter preparedness actions included: revising the Emergency Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), reviewing the RNA tool and online dashboards, updating the geo-split of organizations responding in different areas, conducting RNA refresher trainings for partners around the country, updating prioritization maps, risk matrix and contingency stocks, distributing shelter weatherproofing and kits and winter cash assistance and clothing, conducting site improvement, providing fuel for institutions, and activating communication trees and linkages with Disaster Risk Management (DRM). Warning notifications were sent to partners, informing them about the RNA activation and weather forecast from the Disaster Risk Management Unit and Inter-Agency prior to the storm.

In addition, region-specific preparedness measures were adapted:

- 12 relocation sites were identified in the **Bekaa** in 6 municipalities, and flood-prone sites were shared with partners to anticipate needs like desludging.
- In **BML**, shelter kits were distributed to 324 households for 1,219 individuals in preparation for the winter season.
- In the **North**, 15 site improvements were conducted in 2022 for locations near rivers that are typically at high risk of flooding each year.
- As mitigation measures in the **South**, partners provided informal settlements (ISs) with weather proofing kits and solar lamps, and thermal clothing in high altitude areas in anticipation for the winter season.



Before and after site improvement. Location: Ouadi Jamous 053 IS, North Lebanon.



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RESPONSE

Bekaa

The RNA was activated on 1 February in the Bekaa. As of 7 February, 247 IS have been referred, 193 assessed and 147 are confirmed to be affected with an estimated 455 HH/2,617 individuals. The majority of referrals are concentrated in Baalbek and Zahle.

Three sites flooded including grey water in some cases and there is a risk of additional flooding in ISs in Bar Elias and El Marj due to the rising level of the Litani river and limited drainage. The WASH and Shelter sectors are liaising on risk mitigation measures. Another site, GhazzeH 003 had serious flooding but residents were able to reduce the water levels and avert relocation with the use of a drainage kit.

All confirmed sites have been supported.

- ✓ 124 individuals were supported to temporarily relocate from Al-Marj & Bar Elias to Saadnayel
- ✓ 220HH received shelter assistance: 45 Medium Repair Kits (MRK), 110 Light Repair Kits (LRK), and 24 Floor Raising Kits (FRK).
- ✓ 24 HHs received Core Relief Items (CRIs): 137 blankets, 137 mattresses.
- ✓ Dewatering is ongoing in flooded sites.



Photo credit: UNHCR | UNHCR Field Officer Muhammad Ilyas conducting distributions in Dalhamiyet 079 in response to the storm. Location: Central Bekaa.

Beirut & Mount Lebanon

BML activated the RNA on 1 February. By 7 February, partners have assessed 182 sites by phone surveys, out of which 101 were reported as affected. Partners are conducting site visits, and 22 sites have been identified as confirmed affected so far, with an estimated 74 HH, 490 individuals.

To date 14 sites have received assistance.

- ✓ 28 Light Repair Kits (LRK) were distributed to 28 families (171 individuals).
- ✓ Distribution of shelter kits is ongoing at the time of reporting.



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South

Since the RNA was activated on 1 February in both South and Nabatiyeh governorates, RNA partners have assessed and confirmed 69 sites affected where 135 HH/ 892 individuals reside.

33 sites have received assistance so far.

- ✓ 25 individuals were relocated from Darb Es-Sim to Saida and Ghaziye.
- ✓ 56 HH/ 349 individuals received CRIs: 110 mattresses, 110 high thermal blankets, 23 hygiene kits, 12 baby kits, 4 kitchen set and Shelter Kits: 20 MRK, 32, LRK, and 2 New Arrival Kits (NAK).



Photo credit: ACF | Kassem Bachour, South Team. Location: Sarafand, Saida District

North

The RNA was activated on 6 February in the North. 104 sites are confirmed to be affected with an estimated 58 HH/251 individuals. Assessments visits are ongoing to confirm affected sites and support accordingly. Naher-El-Kabir may be at risk of flooding affecting many refugees as well Lebanese houses/shelters.

KEY CHALLENGES

Limited **municipal capacity** to prepare for and respond to the winter season is reported to be the main preparedness challenge across governorates. In terms of response, access remains the key barrier for partners particularly in mountainous icy and snowy areas. For **Bekaa**, most of the municipalities have drained canals, however due to financial challenges, limited cleaning of channels is taking place. Municipalities' capacity for road opening is either limited to main roads only or none, leaving movement barriers for most residents and hampering the response. Municipalities continue to request support with stock of anti-freezing salt for road opening, fixing potholes and fuel and heating for municipal buildings. In the **North**, requests for support were received from the civil defense and included new equipment, financial support for fuel provision and maintenance of existing equipment, and protective gears for volunteers. In the **South** local authorities have requested support to access fuel and equipment to dislodge storm water and to clean canals, as in other parts of the county.

PARTNERS INVOLVED IN THE RESPONSE

ACF, AVSI, DPNA, Hand, INTERSOS, IRC, Kayani Foundation, Medair, MoSA, NRC, PU-AMI, SAWA Group, SAWA for Aid & Development, Save the Children, SHEILD, WV, UNHCR.

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