



Mass messaging on winter preparedness to refugees living in informal tented settlements and urban/rural shelters took place across Lebanon ahead of anticipated storms in January 2022. The arrival of storms on 19 January saw the activation of a Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA) in the North only, with monitoring in other regions, as temperatures plummeted. The reported damage to shelters from high winds, rain and snow increased dramatically with further storms from 23 and 26 January. Freezing temperatures drove calls from people living in precarious conditions for additional winter support including fuel. Access to potentially affected areas is a concern as bad weather continues, with some municipalities indicating a lack diesel to fuel snow ploughs and partners and residents encountering issues with phone networks. Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) partners continue to provide assistance across affected sites.

IMPACT OF CURRENT STORM

	Cumulative Total
Sites confirmed affected	477
Households affected	742
Individuals affected	3,903



Photo: Mazareaa Jabal Akroum, North Lebanon, captured by resident

RESPONSE

North

- The 'orange' RNA alert in the North was activated on Tuesday 18 January 2022, based on the weather forecast. RNA partners received referrals of flooded and collapsed tents from different sources and conducted phone surveys to the sites prone to flooding within their areas of intervention.
- A total of 156 sites were reported and all were assessed, with the exception of one site with confirmed COVID-19 cases, where a follow-up plan was made by the RNA partner. Of the referred sites, 67 sites were found to have been affected requiring a response (52 informal settlements and 15 urban/ rural shelters). Assistance was provided to all 122 affected households.
- Following the storm on 23 January, 101 sites were referred to RNA partners (92 ISs and 9 urban/ rural shelters), with assessments finding 59 informal settlements and 8 urban/ rural shelters affected. In response to both storms, assistance included the provision of shelter repair kits, high thermal blankets, mattresses, sleeping

mats, hygiene kits, baby kits, kitchen sets. Assessments of referrals are ongoing.

South

- The first storm in the South saw limited immediate damage to shelters, while a number of sites were reported in the following days from Saida and Sour districts, with 25 sites assisted.
- From 26 January, the RNA was activated in South and Nabatiyeh governorates after the heavy rainfall with a significant drop in temperature, extreme wind and snowfall reported in areas above 600m. 14 sites were confirmed affected containing 46 households, 328 individuals. The response is ongoing.
- To date, partners have distributed shelter repair kits, high thermal blankets, mattresses, hygiene and baby kits.



Photo: Ongoing shelter kits distribution, Bekaa, Save the Children

Bekaa

- The RNA was activated on the morning of 27 January in the Bekaa, with the snowstorm contributing to disruption of electricity and telecommunication systems, largely restored by early afternoon.
- 4,004 tents in 568 sites were reported to have been damaged, with a concentration in West and North Bekaa. 263 tents were confirmed affected by Friday, with assessments ongoing. One site consisting of three households and 22 individuals was supported to relocate.
- Assessments by shelter partners have been affected by the inaccessibility of roads. Municipalities have consistently indicated that they do not have diesel for machinery to clear snow or salt the roads. UNHCR's main warehouse was damaged due to high snowfall, and the team is working to recover core relief items (CRIs).
- UN agencies, INGOs, national NGOs and other operational partners have been responding with fuel, blankets, mattresses and other critical CRIs, however in the Bekaa fuel seems to be a critical gap.
- Prior to the significant snowfall, 159 shelter kits were distributed by shelter partners including floor raising, post-flooding and drainage kits.
- A range of additional assistance in Aarsal provided by NGOs includes fuel, stoves, winter boots and clothes, blankets, duvets and mattresses, kitchen sets, buckets and fuel support to a school relocation site.

Beirut/Mount Lebanon

- BML activated the RNA on 24 January. Partners contacted 319 permanent and seasonal informal settlements through an initial phone survey to assess the impact of rain.
- 33 out of 235 sites contacted reported being impacted by floods, extreme wind, heavy leakages and snow accumulation. An additional 30 sites reported minor water leakages. A total of 45 sites have been visited, with assessments ongoing. Shelter kits and blankets are being provided as part of the ongoing response.
- While field assessments did not identify significant shelter needs, refugees highlighted severe challenges related to the dropping temperatures. While families confirmed that they are benefitting from seasonal cash assistance, they noted that assistance was prioritized for other basic needs, including to pay debt, and they could not allocate the necessary resources for adequate heating solutions.



Photo: UNHCR and INTERSOS joint visit to affected site in Jiyeh, El Chouf

OVERALL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED

- 133 light repair kits (LRKs)
- 422 medium repair kits (MRKs)
- 568 high thermal Blankets (HTBs)
- 155 medium thermal Blankets (MTBs)
- 816 mattresses



- 3388 blankets
- 381 sleeping mats
- 88 hygiene kits
- 321 kitchen sets
- 261 buckets
- 2000 boots
- 527 coats
- 42 stoves
- 48 baby kits
- 1 Jerry Can
- 138 post-flooding kits and ONM kits (drainage kits)
- 159 Shelter kits

LESSONS LEARNED

- A key success identified by field teams in this storm response was the preemptive widespread distribution of winter cash assistance, fuel, shelter kits, and thermal blankets. Each region provided a dedicated winter response prior to the season as part of mitigation measures linked to lessons learned from the previous years. This was coupled with site improvements in areas that were previously affected by flooding in order to curb the impact of future storms. Nonetheless, the dramatic depreciation of the Lebanese lira and steady increase in prices (including for fuel) means that this assistance does not fully meet people's needs. Transfer values and assistance have not kept pace with inflation and refugees and Lebanese alike are struggling to make ends meet.
- During these storms, access restrictions have arisen in most regions. This is primarily linked to municipalities' inability to operate the required equipment to clear roads. Municipalities' lack of capacity could create future access issues if the winter storms increase in severity in the upcoming weeks. Partners not equipped with appropriate vehicles struggled to access sites in high altitudes due to snow and ice accumulation.

- In the face of mobile network problems, offline data was compiled in order to track required assessments and to follow up on the distribution of assistance.
- Coordination meetings between partners and local authorities supported in resolving access issues with Al Chaft Union.
- Several partners did not follow the RNA cycle process for online reporting. This led to discrepancies between the WET tool and the offline data gathered by RNA Focal Points. Further communication and close follow up occurred to ensure that all partners follow the RNA process.

PARTNERS INVOLVED IN THE RESPONSE

NGOs and UN agencies involved to date in the January 2022 response include: ACF, Amal Organization, Athar, AVSI Bassma w Zeitouna, DAF, CWW, DPNA, DRC, Damma, Dar Al Salam, Edinburgh Direct Aid, Free shop organization, HAND, Humanitarian Cooperation Association, IRC, Intersos, Leb Relief, Lost, Makhzoumi Foundation, Medair, MoIM, MoSA, Mulham Team, NRC, Oshaka, PU-AMI, QRC, Qatar Charity, Response Agency, SALAM LADC, Sawa for Aid and Development, Sawaed El Kheir, Save the Children, SCI, SI, SHEILD, UNHCR, UNICEF, URDA, WFP, WVJ.



Photo: Distribution in Loubiye, Saïda. ACF, Omar Saleh.

Focal Points for Extreme Weather and Referrals:

North: Yasser Waris, WARIS@unhcr.org

BML: Bruno Stolze, stolze@unhcr.org

South: Arash Behazin, behazin@unhcr.org

Haydar Hadad, HADAD@unhcr.org

Bekaa: Marguerite Nowak, nowak@unhcr.org

Yara Atallah, ATALLAHY@unhcr.org