Storm Situation Update:
January 2026

LEBANON Response Plan

GENERAL SITURATION

The winter season in Lebanon began with relatively mild climate before developing into more challenging conditions in early 2026. This period was marked by severe weather as a major storm affected the country, bringing heavy rainfall, snowfall at mid to high elevations, strong winds, and cold temperatures. These events resulted in flooding, ice formation, and road disruptions, exacerbating existing vulnerabilities and increasing risks for affected communities.

The storm's impact was most significant in the North and Akkar, extending to Beirut and Mount Lebanon (BML). By end of January, 727 households, composed of 3,600 individuals, were estimated to be affected in 184 sites across Beirut and Mount Lebanon (BML), and the North and Akkar regions. In the Bekaa, 224 sites were referred, primarily concerning shelter repair needs.

Preparedness actions at both household and community levels, particularly in high-altitude areas where winter conditions are most severe, have contributed to mitigating the storm's impact.

Figure 1. Photo Credit: Location: Medair Operated UNHCR Warehouse, Bekaa Valley. © Medair

PREPAREDNESS

The 2025–2026 winter response maintains a comprehensive, multi-sectoral approach, combining institutional preparedness and direct household assistance particularly in high-altitude areas prone to snow, and sub-zero temperatures, and shelters at risk of damage and to flooding. Drawing on lessons learned and best practices from previous winter seasons, there is a continued focus on preventing duplication through adherence to the geo-split model, mapping of informal settlements, and ensuring accurate partner alignment.

Building on previous winter responses, partners are prioritizing early preparedness at national, sub-national, and community levels, with targeted support for households in high-altitude areas, informal settlements, and substandard shelters where winter hazards are most acute. Partners are also coordinating closely with local authorities and institutions to strengthen capacity building, national response mechanisms, and ensure coherence. Interventions include winter cash and in-kind assistance, implementing municipal support projects, enhancing site infrastructure, conducting winter shelter repairs, and distributing essential winter items and clothing.

These comprehensive efforts are part of a wider inter-sectoral response documented in the Overview of Lebanon Winter Preparedness & Response for 2025-2026, along with the summary At a Glance, aiming to enhance preparedness and response in anticipation of the challenges posed by winter.

In addition, region-specific preparedness measures were adopted:

- **North and Akkar**: Updating the RNA geo-split and providing refresher trainings for partners, distributing shelter kits in informal settlements, conducting site improvements, and cleaning of river channels in flood-prone areas to mitigate flood risks.
- **Bekaa and Baalbek-El Hermel**: Prepositioning of emergency shelter kits and Core Relief Items (CRIs), early winter distributions, and reinforcement of drainage channels in high-altitude and flood-prone areas to ensure timely response during severe weather.
- **BML:** Winter cash assistance for vulnerable households, localized flood and landslide risk mapping, and coordination with DRM units to ensure readiness for power, fuel, and access disruptions.
- **South and Nabatieh**: Prepositioning of CRIs and winterization support for returnees and remaining displaced families in damaged shelters, alongside coordination with municipalities on drainage maintenance, and road rehabilitation.

Figures 2 & 3. Photo Credit: Location: Halat, Bybols, Mount Lebanon, 15 January 2026. © Save the Children

Storm Situation Update:
January 2026

LEBANON Response Plan

IMPACT OF CURRENT STORM ON INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

	Affected	Assisted
Sites confirmed	184	182
Estimated households	727	727
Estimated individuals	3,600	3,600

Figures are cumulative to date.

RESPONSE

North

The North region was affected by extreme weather conditions on 12 and 13 January that led to the overflowing of the Nahr El Kabir River, resulting in severe flooding. All nine informal settlements in Semmaqiye were completely flooded, prompting the relocation of approximately 1,200 individuals to the mosque hall, garages, and private homes of Lebanese residents in Semmaqiye. Additionally, around 50 Lebanese households from Hekr El Dahiri and approximately 300 Lebanese individuals from El Aarida were displaced and hosted by relatives in other locations. Agricultural lands belonging to Lebanese families in the affected villages were also impacted.

In response, partners provided CRIs and shelter kits, transportation support, hot meals and ready-to-eat rations, as well as mattresses, blankets, and bottled water to 93 families (482 individuals) relocated to the mosque hall in Semmaqiye. Partners also deployed a Mobile Medical Unit (MMU) to support displaced individuals in Semmaqiye.

Overall, in Northern Lebanon, 218 sites were referred, 161 sites were confirmed as affected and 692 HHs/ 3,514 individuals were assisted with CRIs and Shelter Kits. In total, 2,884 mattresses, 2,872 blankets, 2,065 sleeping mats, 266 solar lamps, 33 kitchen sets, and 462 shelter kits were distributed.

Beirut & Mount Lebanon

Following the deterioration of weather conditions on 12 January, RNA partners established contact with 215 informal settlements in BML through an initial phone-based assessment to evaluate storm impact. Of these, 190 settlements reported no impact or were deemed not eligible, while 38 reported varying levels of damage, including heavy leakages (21 sites), flooding (3 sites), minor water leakage (8 sites), snow accumulation (1 site), and extreme wind damage (5 sites). Once these settlements were visited, 23 sites were confirmed affected by the partners and assistance was provided to a total of 35 HH (86 individuals) through the distribution of 39 LRKs.

Bekaa

In the Bekaa, 224 referrals were received across 133 informal settlements through partner hotlines, outreach volunteers, and shelter frontline staff, primarily related to shelter leakages and torn plastic sheeting. Under the shelter response, partners assisted 70 families to date, mainly through the provision of plastic sheeting. For the CRI response, 11 cases were referred, of which two were found in need and nine were assessed as not in need. Given that the storm did not cause significant impact, and the reported needs were largely limited to shelter repairs, support has been provided however, the Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA) was not activated.

South

One informal settlement in Marj El Khokh, Marjayoun District, was reported as impacted. Due to security concerns related to the site's location, partners initially faced access constraints. Once access was possible, it was determined that no follow-up assistance was required, as no outstanding needs were identified.

KEY CHALLENGES

Winter preparedness and response efforts this year face a complex range of challenges, shaped by the prolonged economic crisis, protracted displacement, and the fragile ceasefire. Although certain conditions have stabilized compared to past years, the overall situation remains cautious and highly resource constrained. Persistently high fuel and food prices, deteriorating infrastructure, and limited household coping capacities have left many communities at risk, particularly in high-altitude and flood-prone areas.

Moreover, significant funding gaps persist for emergency preparedness and response activities, including site improvements, shelter and CRI assistance, and WaSH services. Reduced financial resources also hinder the prepositioning of essential supplies, restrict cash and in-kind assistance, and limit support to municipalities and civil defense units. Although municipal capacity has improved following recent elections, local authorities remain overstretched and under-resourced, particularly in relation to drainage maintenance, waste management, and emergency response. Infrastructure damage, especially in the South, Bekaa, and parts of Beirut's suburbs, further complicates access and continuity of assistance, underscoring the need for both immediate repairs and longer-term, resilience-focused investments.

Figure 4. Photo Credit: Location: Qoubbet Chamra, Akkar, 12 January 2026. © UNHCR

PARTNERS INVOLVED IN THE RESPONSE

CARE International, DRC, HAND, I'MPOSSIBLE, IRC, LRC, Medair, MoSA, MSF, NRC, RMF, Save the Children, UNHCR, UNICEF, UTOPIA, WeWorld, WFP.

Focal Points for Extreme Weather and Referrals:
Bekaa: Carine Maita, maitac@unhcr.org; Sara Al Farou, elfarou@unhcr.org
BML: Nour Fakih, fakih@unhcr.org
North: Elias Sawan, sawan@unhcr.org
South: Nour Fakih, fakih@unhcr.org