



Middle East Situation

Lebanon – Flash Update #7

13 – 19 April 2026

UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Barham Salih, visits together with Director General of the Lebanese Civil Defense, Brigadier General Imad Youssef Khreich, the destruction left by an Israeli airstrike in Beirut on 8 April. ©UNHCR / Houssam Hariri

Key figures

1,049,328

displaced people registered through Lebanon's government relief platform (MoSA 1 April)

111,577

internally displaced people hosted in collective shelters (DRM 17 April)

659

operational emergency collective shelters (DRM 17 April)

7,544

injuries since 2 March (MoPH 17 April)

2,294

fatalities since 2 March (MoPH 17 April)

250,961

Syrians who have crossed back to Syria between 2 March – 18 April (Syria GAPC)

47,803

Lebanese have crossed to Syria between 2 March – 18 April (Syria GAPC)

Overview

- **Ceasefire announced amid ongoing uncertainty:** A 10-day ceasefire brokered by the United States between Lebanon and Israel came into effect at midnight on Thursday 16 April, aimed at halting hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah and paving the way for a lasting peace agreement. Welcoming the announcement, [the UN Secretary-General reaffirmed the support of the United Nations to all efforts to end hostilities and alleviate the suffering of communities on both sides of the Blue Line](#) and said he hoped the ceasefire “will pave the way for negotiations and the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) towards a long-term solution to the conflict”.
- **Fluid movements and continued access constraints:** Following the announcement, limited and uneven return movements were observed, with an estimated 26% of displaced people having left collective shelters in the first 48 hours. Many of these involved short visits to check homes or retrieve belongs, with some families then coming back to their places of displacement. Access to areas South of the Litani River, including 55 villages, remains restricted as Israeli authorities released a map with a ‘Forward Defense Line Area’ in which IDF soldiers are operating. Overall, the Lebanese authorities as well as Hezbollah advised IDPs to exercise caution if considering return.

UNHCR response

The renewed escalation and displacement have driven widespread fear, anxiety, and psychological distress, particularly among communities already exhausted by years of instability and repeated displacement. While the ceasefire has instilled hope in an eventual end to the conflict and prospects for return, humanitarian needs remain acute. UNHCR and its partners are delivering lifesaving protection services, shelter assistance, core relief items (CRIs), and cash support to displaced Lebanese and refugees. Alongside the emergency response to internal displacement, UNHCR continues to implement its essential protection interventions, including community-based protection, shelter, multi-purpose cash assistance, and durable solutions programmes for refugees.



Spotlight: High Commissioner’s visit to Lebanon

At a time of large-scale displacement and escalating humanitarian needs, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. Barham Salih, undertook his first official mission to Lebanon from 13 to 15 April 2026, reaffirming UNHCR’s solidarity with the Lebanese people and calling for urgent international support for the Government-led response. Over three days, he travelled to Beirut and the Bekaa Valley, meeting displaced families, central and regional authorities, Ambassadors and humanitarian partners, and observing the response to internal displacement first-hand.

Immediately upon arrival in Beirut, the High Commissioner travelled through conflict-affected neighbourhoods, including areas where displaced families were sheltering in temporary tents along the seafront, underscoring the scale and visibility of displacement in the capital.

In Beirut and the Bekaa, the High Commissioner visited government-designated collective shelters hosting displaced families. He engaged with displaced communities, who described sudden displacement, overcrowded living conditions and growing protection concerns. In the Bekaa, he met Syrian refugee families displaced from southern Lebanon, highlighting the compounding impact of the crisis on populations already affected by years of instability and displacement.



UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Barham Salih meets with Lebanese President Joseph Aoun at the Presidential Palace in Beirut. ©UNHCR / Elie Arja

During meetings with Lebanon’s President, Prime Minister, Speaker of Parliament and key ministers, as well as governors and national Disaster Risk Management authorities, the High Commissioner stressed the urgent need to protect civilians and sustain international support for the Government-led response. He also met donors and humanitarian leadership in Beirut, underscoring that the scale of displacement is placing severe strain on national systems and humanitarian capacities.

Reflecting on what he witnessed, the High Commissioner warned publicly that the situation in Lebanon constitutes a rapidly deepening humanitarian crisis, with more than one million people displaced and shelter capacity stretched nationwide.

Coordination

Under the leadership of the Minister of Social Affairs and within the Lebanon Response Plan (LRP) framework, UNHCR Lebanon co-leads the Inter-Sector Coordination Group with the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA), OCHA, and UNDP. UNHCR also co-leads the Protection Sector with MoSA and Oxfam; the Shelter/Core Relief Items Sector with MoSA and the Norwegian Refugee Council, and co-chairs the Cash Working Group (CWG) alongside MoSA and World Vision International. In situations of internal displacement, UNHCR plays a coordination and response role within the sectors the Agency co-leads with the Government and NGOs, while maintaining overall responsibility for the refugee response in line with its mandate.

Protection

Intensified airstrikes leading up to the ceasefire, forced evictions, and secondary displacement heightened protection risks for displaced Lebanese and refugee communities, particularly women, children, and newly displaced families. The days following the ceasefire have been marked by uncertainty and fluidity of movements. As some family members returned to check on their homes and conditions in the community, others remained in displacement. Protection actors are increasingly identifying family separation, child supervision gaps, psychosocial distress, and heightened GBV risks. Reduced visibility of displaced families outside formal shelters is further constraining timely identification and referral of high-risk cases.

How UNHCR and Protection Sector partners are responding

113,276

people reached by protection, child protection and gender-based violence partners

52,896

people reached by information sessions, awareness, and community engagement activities

41,091

people who joined mental health and psychosocial support interventions

- **Since the escalation, UNHCR has identified, counselled and referred more than 18,000 refugees displaced by the conflict for urgent protection, shelter and cash assistance**, with around 90% of referrals completed. In parallel, UNHCR and partners continue supporting large numbers of internally displaced Lebanese across collective shelters and host communities.
- **UNHCR and partners have provided Emergency Protection Cash Assistance (EPCA) to over 6,500 displaced refugees** to help address urgent protection risks linked to injury, family separation and loss of livelihoods. In recent airstrikes in the Tyre area early last week, Syrian refugee households were directly affected. In one incident, the death of a refugee father and severe injuries to his wife and daughter, led to their other five children temporarily relocating with relatives. UNHCR and partners carried out immediate medical referrals, EPCA for the injured individuals, and referrals to specialised protection services.
- **UNHCR and partners have reached over 3,400 displaced, including 2,100 children and caregivers, with child protection and GBV prevention services.** This includes targeted interventions like those implemented through Terre des Hommes, supporting community-based psychological support and positive parenting sessions in two informal tented settlements in North Bekaa, reaching almost 200 women and children. The activities identified heightened risks of neglect and abuse, underscoring the importance of sustained child-focused and caregiver support in displacement settings.
- **UNHCR and partners have reached over 41,000 displaced people through community-based protection services** delivered via Community Development Centres and outreach volunteers, providing information, counselling, psychosocial support, and referrals to essential services. For example, psychosocial support and recreational sessions across Central, West, and North Bekaa reached 98 Syrian adults and children, including 83 newly displaced, while a further 46 individuals participated in digital skills activities – all designed to support emotional expression, stress relief, and coping skills amid prolonged displacement.
- **Following the ceasefire, UNHCR strengthened risk awareness messaging and individual counselling to support displaced families navigating uncertainty around movement and return within Lebanon.** Through outreach volunteers and community-based protection teams in collective shelters and host communities, families received guidance on risks linked to hasty returns to conflict-affected areas, such as unexploded ordnance, loss of shelter access, and security constraints, as well as available assistance options. This approach supports informed, voluntary decision-making and mitigates protection risks as population movements become increasingly fluid and difficult to track. In parallel, some Syrian refugees continue to return to Syria under force majeure, citing limited viable alternatives. Since 1 April, UNHCR has **supported 4,519 returning refugees with counselling and cash assistance** to help reduce risks and mitigate harm during their movement under current conditions.

Top 3 needs reported by displaced refugees in Lebanon


82%
 Cash support

45%
 Food aid

30%
 Shelter / accommodation

Shelter and core-relief items

Following the ceasefire announcement, displacement patterns have become more fluid. Some displaced households have returned temporarily to check on their homes and villages while retaining shelter space as a back-up strategy, while others are adopting a wait-and-see approach and have not attempted to return at all. In several locations, families who initially left collective shelters have since returned after finding homes destroyed or security conditions too uncertain, while some displaced families previously sheltering in open public spaces – including along Beirut's Corniche – have sought accommodation in collective shelters with available capacity. As a result, shelter and other assistance needs are diverging in an increasingly complex and uncertain environment.

How UNHCR and Shelter Sector partners are responding

196,888

people assisted through the distribution of core relief items (46% support by UNHCR)

236

collective shelters with ongoing repair activities (20% supported by UNHCR)

140

collective shelters with repair works completed (8% supported by UNHCR)

- Shelter needs amid fluid and partial returns:** Following the ceasefire, the Lebanese authorities advised UNHCR, as the Shelter Sector lead, to inform partners to temporarily pause repair works in collective shelters to allow authorities and partners to reassess occupancy levels and shifting needs as families began leaving shelters in uneven and often reversible patterns. Collective shelters remain open, while assessments continue to inform consolidation planning and ensure remaining displaced families, including those unable to return due to destroyed or unsafe homes, continued to access shelter support.
- Core relief item deliveries:** UNHCR continued CRI assistance for families who remained displaced, including through humanitarian convoys to southern Lebanon. On 16 April, UNHCR delivered mattresses, blankets, sleeping mats, kitchen sets and solar lamps to approximately 231 displaced families living outside collective shelters in Nabatiyeh, while on 17 April, UNHCR delivered UNIQLO clothing kits to Hasbaya, targeting around 2,900 families in collective shelters and host communities, with distributions facilitated by municipalities.

The road home and the risks along the way

Following the announcement of a ceasefire, [the road from Beirut to Saida was packed with families rushing to return](#) and see the state of their homes and villages after 46 days of intense hostilities.

As movement accelerated, families often travelled in stages, with some members moving ahead while others remained behind. In this context, UNHCR and partners intensified case management and follow-up for families experiencing separation linked to displacement and these shifting movement patterns. In Beirut and Mount Lebanon, 13 separated children were identified, **10 were successfully reunited with their families**, and ongoing case management continues for missing children, highlighting continued risks for children as families navigate the uncertainty and reassess their options. ©UNHCR



Cash assistance

The case for cash assistance remains strong, as markets continue to function in many areas, including major IDP-hosting locations, allowing households to access goods and services. Cash is the preferred modality where markets are functional, as it enables rapid, dignified, and cost-effective support for essential goods. Cash assistance is central to meeting not only food and basic consumption needs, but also rent, transport, medicines, disability-related costs, communication, and emergency coping for displaced families outside shelters, including in hard-to-reach and high-vulnerability areas such as the South. However, cash remains significantly underfunded relative to needs, underscoring the urgent requirement for more flexible financing and stronger harmonisation across the response.

- Since the escalation began, approximately 336,000 displaced people have received Emergency Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (E-MPCA) through the government-led Shock-Responsive Safety Net (SRSN) and complementary humanitarian cash programmes.** WFP has been the primary provider of E-MPCA to displaced Lebanese households through the SRSN and, together with UNHCR, has also supported **110,000 displaced Syrians and refugees** of other nationalities.

How UNHCR and Cash Sector partners are responding

336,000

people reached with Emergency MPCA (including 110K displaced refugees)

12,000

Lebanese and non-Lebanese households reached through the National Disability Allowance Emergency Assistance programme

950

people reached with unrestricted cash-based food assistance

UNHCR Emergency Appeal for Lebanon USD 61 million

The **Lebanon Flash Appeal** calls for **US\$ 308.3 million** to provide lifesaving assistance and protection to one million affected people over three months, from March to May 2026. Within the framework of this appeal, **UNHCR requires US\$ 61 million** to reach **600,000** displaced people with protection, shelter, core-relief items, and cash assistance. These programs are aimed to reinforce and complement the Government-led emergency response, and the funding for the appeal should enable humanitarian partners to rapidly scale up assistance across priority sectors over the three-month period. Confirmed funding and projections against the emergency appeal reach approximately a **third of needs** to date.

As of end of March 2026, UNHCR in Lebanon was only **around 20% funded** – with overall needs totalling US\$ 472.3 million. Flexible and timely contributions are essential to:

- Maintain live-saving protection services;
- Improve and scale-up collective shelters so they are safe, dignified, and accessible;
- Provide financial support to the most vulnerable displaced households, especially those outside shelters;
- Replenish essential supplies so that UNHCR can respond quickly to further waves of displacement.

UNHCR is grateful to donors who have already stepped up to support and welcomes additional flexible contributions that enable teams on the ground to adapt quickly as the situation evolves. Special thanks to France, the EU, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland for their swift support to UNHCR's emergency response.

UNHCR and partners presence

UNHCR maintains presence in Lebanon through its Country Office and three Field Offices (Beirut, Tripoli, and Zahle) with a workforce of more than 300 personnel. We deliver our programmes with 13 I/NGO partners (9 national, 4 international) and in close coordination and collaboration with the Government of Lebanon.



UNHCR is grateful for the support from our donors who contributed to this operation

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