

UNHCR Flash Update on Lebanon: Beirut Port Explosions

17 August 2020

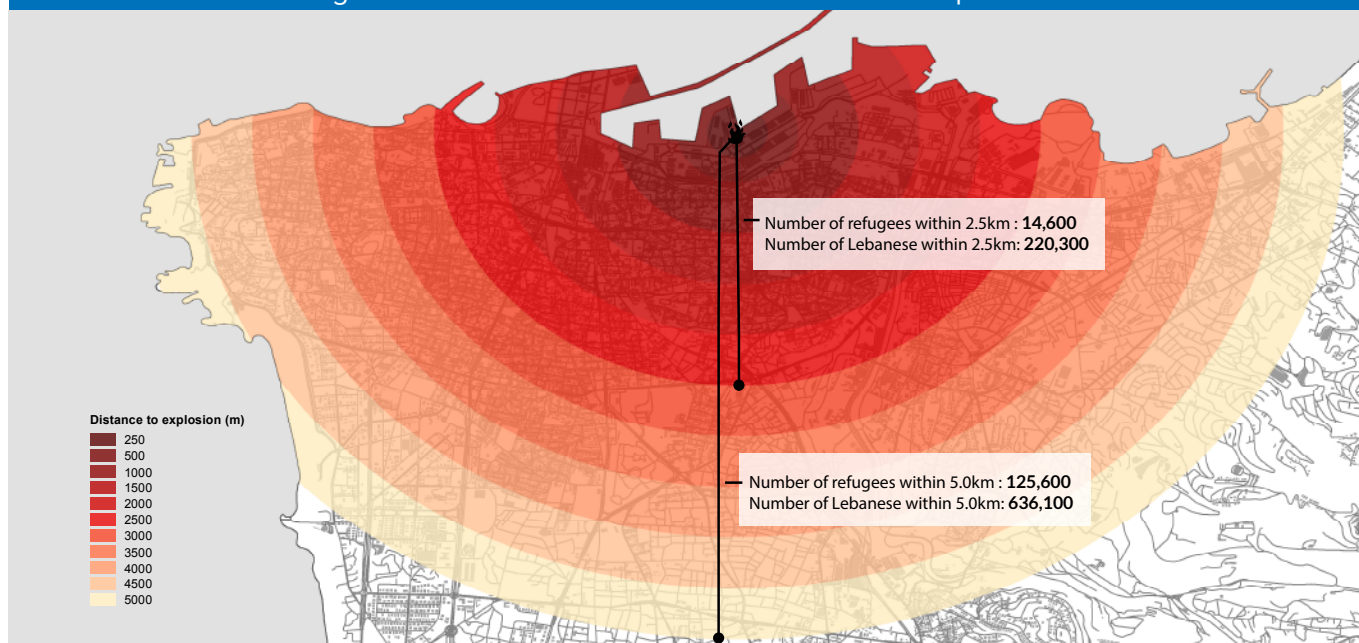
Situation Overview

- UNHCR, together with other humanitarian partners, has ramped up its emergency assistance to people most in need following the blasts in Beirut on 4 August. We continue to work with the rescue teams and other humanitarian partners to identify the victims and are extending support to the families. The explosion has affected everyone, regardless of nationality or status.
- Refugees have been significantly affected by the blast. UNHCR is contacting all refugee households residing in affected areas and referring persons identified to appropriate onward support. We continue to receive calls daily through hotlines and call centres.
- As of 14 August, the total number of confirmed refugee deaths are at 13 individuals; 224 injured; 69 missing or reported deceased and unreachable; 46 homeless; and 30 in urgent need of relocation.

Since 5 August, UNHCR Mount Lebanon Helpline handled 6,197 calls and 561 direct referrals from refugees, outreach volunteers (OVs), and partners regarding refugees in need of assistance. UNHCR is supporting these families by ensuring they have access to basic assistance and services, including psycho-social support, emergency cash, shelter kits and any interventions related to child protection or sexual and gender-based violence. Emergency cash has also been provided to 10 refugee families directly affected by the blast during the period.

- In his [statement](#) at the virtual briefing on the humanitarian situation in Lebanon on 10 August, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi expressed condolences and solidarity to the people of Lebanon and emphasized that UNHCR's response covers the entire community – including Lebanese, refugees and migrant workers.

Distribution of All Refugees within Five Kilometres of the Beirut Port Explosion



Data sources: Refugee individuals (Syrian, Iraqi and other nationalities): UNHCR - August 2020; Lebanese population: CDR 2002

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 32.6 million for shelter interventions and USD 2.4 million for protection activities**, notably community-based protection and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS). While assessments are still underway, initial estimates indicate that at least 84,000 vulnerable individuals (24,667 households) have been severely affected by the blast and are in need of urgent support. Affected people displaced outside the Beirut area will also be targeted with assistance.

Protection

- UNHCR and Caritas are co-leading the Protection sector for the emergency response, with UNICEF as Child Protection co-lead. UNHCR, Caritas and UNICEF are finalizing the 3W mapping of services available to those affected by the blast. UNHCR is liaising with the Governors of Beirut and Mount Lebanon and with the Municipality of Bourj Hammoud on the coordination of the response at the field level. A Protection monitoring system has been set up to collect, verify, and analyse information in order to identify protection risks encountered by affected populations and calibrate interventions.
- Beyond its coordination role, UNHCR prioritizes community engagement and outreach, psychological first aid and referrals. It has mobilized a wide network of OVAs from among the community and deployed emergency teams to assess and immediately respond to the urgent needs of the most vulnerable with targeted assistance. Priority interventions target older persons living alone, persons with disabilities and those severely traumatized by the blast, regardless of nationality or status. UNHCR project partners are providing Psychological First Aid (PFA) and support for children and adults, case management and referral to specialized services.
- Assessments: UNHCR and the Lebanese Red Cross (LRC) are coordinating their respective interventions in the field. The protection sector provided inputs to the LRC assessment form to ensure protection and PSEA are mainstreamed, including psycho-social support and information needs of all populations affected by the blast.
- Through the sector coordination, 8 protection partners expressed interest to participate in the LRC assessment in the affected areas, including UNHCR partners INTERSOS and Caritas. In light of the urgency, several partners are conducting additional rapid assessments including ABAAD (Rmeil area and Karantina) and INTERSOS (Achrafieh, Geitawi, Karantina and Bourj Hammud). Results will be fed back to the relevant sectors.
- Psychological First Aid and Community Outreach: hundreds of PFA sessions have been conducted for adults and children by UNHCR and protection sector partners including ABAAD, Borderless, Caritas and INTERSOS. Partners are also working with communities to identify additional needs, and facilitate referrals to specialized services, including MHPSS.
- Targeted Emergency Assistance to the most vulnerable: UNHCR, Borderless, Caritas and other protection sector members are responding to the immediate needs of vulnerable men, women, girls and boys, as part of a holistic Protection response, assisting over 40,000 individuals. Interventions have included hot meals, food kits, clothes, shoes, mattresses, child-appropriate non-food items (NFIs), first aid and cleaning of buildings.
- UNHCR protection teams have a roaming presence in the affected areas, disseminating contacts of the established dedicated hotline contacts, sharing information and identifying referrals through foot patrols, notably for persons unaware or unable to reach the info points or services.

Shelter

- UNHCR is co-leading the Shelter Sector with UN Habitat, and liaised with local authorities to secure support with access to the affected areas.
- UNHCR and shelter sector partners continue to provide and distribute shelter kits in Geitawi, Mar Mikhael, Gemayze, and Karantina. A total of 2,434 UNHCR emergency weatherproofing kits have been delivered so far. NGO partners include ACTED, CWW, INTERSOS, Medair, SCI and Solidarites.
- UNHCR continues to work with LRC on household assessments and zoning; more than 5,500 emergency needs assessments have been undertaken to date. The Shelter sector has used the zoning of affected areas developed by UNHCR for LRC and the sector to assign shelter partners to specific areas. This is key to ensure effective coordination and reduce duplication of assistance. The Protection sector is building on this experience to map protection partners and ensure systematic coverage of affected areas. This will facilitate follow up and referrals of individual cases.



Distribution of shelter kits in areas affected by the Beirut blast is ongoing. We have distributed more than 1,200 shelter kits so far. Our teams are on the ground reaching families in need of urgent support.
© UNHCR

UNHCR Lebanon Operation



Funding:

USD 607.5 million requested for the UNHCR Lebanon operation in 2020

40% funded as of 11 August 2020
(USD 245 million received)

Additional Links

- [UNHCR Flash Update on Lebanon: 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 more details, please contact:

UNHCR MENA Regional Office in Amman at MENAreporting@unhcr.org
 Anna King, Senior External Relations Officer, UNHCR Lebanon, at.kinga@unhcr.org