Inter-Agency Meeting

3 November 2023

10:00 – 12:00

Inter-Agency Coordination Lebanon

Inter-Agency Coordination Lebanon

Opening Remarks

Dr. Ola Boutros
LCRP General Supervisor, Ministry of Social Affairs

Agenda

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1. Opening Remarks
2. Emergency Response to Escalation in the South
3. Protection and Tensions Trends Overviews (Q3)
4. Winter Preparedness
5. AoB

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Emergency Response to Escalation in the South

Camilla Jelbart
Senior Inter-Agency Coordinator, UNHCR Inter-Agency

Contingency Planning
Large Scale War Affects the Entire Country

Population Movement (as of 21 October 2023):

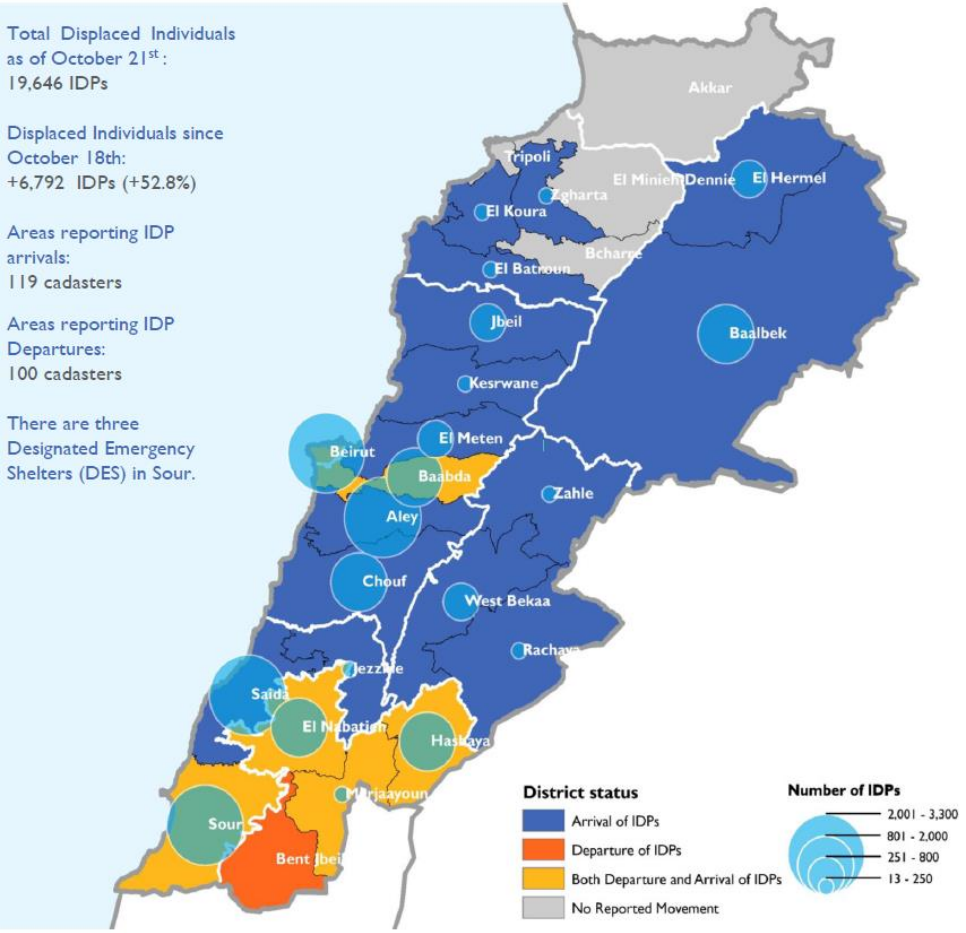
- 19,646 IDPs from South & Nabatieh Governorates.
- Response is ongoing to the displaced people in Tyre & Hasbaya using existing funds.

Planning Assumptions

3 months

33% of the pop. in 12 distr. -1 Million IDPs

80% hosted by families 20% in Emergency shelters



National Intersectoral MHPSS Emergency Preparedness Plan

In the Context of the Escalating Risk of Armed Conflict

(DRAFT 2)

23/10/2023

National Intersectoral MHPSS Emergency Preparedness Plan

Background

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- This MHPSS EPP is being developed by the **National Mental Health Programme** at MOPH in close collaboration with **WHO**, **UNICEF, UNFPA** and many other Governmental, UN agencies, Scientific bodies, and local and international NGOs.

- The full list of partners will be added once the document is finalized.

- For information and coordination please contact us at:

  aya.harb@nmhp-lb.com

National Intersectoral MHPSS Emergency Preparedness Plan

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As Lebanon grapples with an increasingly complex and uncertain geopolitical landscape, there is an ever-pressing imperative to proactively plan and prepare for potential conflicts and wars. Given Lebanon's historical experience with recurrent armed conflicts, which have imposed a considerable toll on the mental health of our population and increased vulnerabilities in our national resilience, the call for a comprehensive and enduring Mental Health and Psycho-Social Support (MHPSS) Emergency Preparedness approach is more urgent than ever before.

To address this, we introduce the Intersectoral MHPSS Lebanon National Emergency Preparedness Plan, a holistic and multidisciplinary approach aimed at safeguarding the mental health of our citizens and communities. This strategic plan outlines key areas for immediate intervention and resource allocation, setting the stage for a proactive and comprehensive response to any future emergencies.

National Intersectoral MHPSS Emergency Preparedness Plan

Aim

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To respond effectively to the mental health and psychosocial needs of all persons (including boys, girls, adolescents, women men and older adults) living in Lebanon that would be affected by a potential armed conflict in line with the below core principles.

Core principles for MHPSS response in emergencies (IASC guidelines)	Effective coordination	Building Back Better Sustainable Mental Health Care after Emergencies
• Human rights and equity • Participation • Do no harm • Building on available resources and capacities • Integrated services and multilayered support systems • Impartiality and non-discrimination against nationality, religion, gender, or other	• Maximizing timely and effective responsiveness to the need • Engaging all stakeholders • Ensuring complementarity and avoiding duplication	• Ensuring support for the mental health reform and the mission of building a sustainable mental health system accessible for all persons living in Lebanon.

National Intersectoral MHPSS Emergency Preparedness Plan

Domains of Action

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- Coordination
- Response to the needs of affected population
- Continuity of Services
- Dissemination of information

National Intersectoral MHPSS Emergency Preparedness Plan
Status of Implementation

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☑ = done

🌀 = in progress

❌ = Not or just initiated

National Intersectoral MHPSS Emergency Preparedness Plan
Coordination

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1. **Update the MHPSS services mapping** on the online 4Ws platform ☑
2. **Mainstream MHPSS** in other relevant sectors' preparedness plans 🌀
3. **Update the lists of available trainers** on Psychological First Aid (PFA) ☑
4. **Ensure information about MHPSS services is available** in all information points (i.e leaflets, QR codes posters, emails to information center operators, etc.) 🌀

National Intersectoral MHPSS Emergency Preparedness Plan

Response to the needs of affected populations (casualties, displaced, and host populations)

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1. **Select and plan for the most impactful and relevant PSS interventions** targeting children and adults among displaced populations and hosting families (if any), once safety is ensured ✕

2. **Scale up PFA training for all frontliners and first aid responders in all relevant sectors** (i.e. shelter, protection, etc.) who are likely to be mobilized for response in the case of an emergency ⊛

3. **Prepare key messages** for affected populations (including caregivers of children, persons with pre-existing mental health conditions, etc.) on how to access basic needs and available services including MHPSS services ⊛

4. **Train healthcare providers** who will potentially be working with the wounded in PHC centers and hospitals on PFA, mental health red flags, and referral pathways to mental health services ⊛

National Intersectoral MHPSS Emergency Preparedness Plan

Ensure continuity of mental health and substance use response services and safety of service users

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1. **Monitor and secure the stock of psychotropic medication** distributed through the YMCA ☑

2. **Address the current reported shortage of psychotropic medication administered via injection** in inpatient mental health units ⊙

3. **Prepare a contingency plan for the accessibility to OST treatment** for persons currently receiving it to prevent abrupt discontinuation ⊙

4. **Coordinate with long-stay facilities** that are in higher-risk areas to ensure they have stocks of food, non-food items, water, medication, and an evacuation plan ☑

5. **Finalize and disseminate the guidelines** for mental health professionals on the provision of remote mental health support ⊙

6. **Develop a contingency plan** for the national hotline for emotional support and suicide prevention 1564 for continuity of operations ☑

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7. **Develop a contingency plan** for the national e-mental health service "Step by Step" to ensure continuity of services ☑

8. **Estimate and mobilize resources needed for ensuring self-care support** for frontliners (relief workers, healthcare professionals, media professionals, etc.) ✕

9. **Develop a roster of psychiatrists and psychologists** who can be mobilized for the emergency response as needed ⊙

10. **Develop a roster of PFA-trained social workers** who can be mobilized for the emergency response as needed ⊙

National Intersectoral MHPSS Emergency Preparedness Plan

Dissemination of Information

1. **Identify ways and channels to promote access to general information** related to basic needs, health and protection services; available MHPSS services for families; and referral systems 🌀

2. **Disseminate tips and guidelines for media reporters** on child protection, professional and ethical coverage following a traumatic event, and on ways to engage with displaced persons, families of missing people, and the wounded ☑

3. **Prepare and disseminate key mental health-related messages** that are gender-sensitive, inclusive, and accessible to all persons living in Lebanon through social media, TV and Radio appearances, communication trees and information points (CwC) 🌀

National Intersectoral MHPSS Emergency Preparedness Plan

Annex I: List of national public awareness material available

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a) Do's and Don'ts when supporting persons affected (Eng/Ar).

b) Tips for volunteers in clean-up (to respect and preserve privacy of affected person (Eng/Ar)

c) Expected common reactions following a traumatic event in adults And How to cope (Eng/Ar)

d) Expected common reactions following a traumatic event in children And tips for caregivers to support them (Eng/Ar)

e) How to support children cope with the current situation (Eng)

f) Tips for persons with a pre-existing mental health condition on how to cope (Eng/Ar)

g) Tips to cope with panic attacks (Eng/Ar)

h) Tips to cope with Depersonalisation and Derealisation after a traumatic event (Eng/Ar)

i) Tips to cope with insomnia which is normal after a traumatic event (Eng/Ar)

j) Tips for pregnant women and new mothers following a traumatic event (Ar)

k) Tips to support a loved one who is grieving (Eng/Ar)

l) When to seek support from a mental health professional after a traumatic event (Eng/Ar)

m) What do you need to know about specialized mental health interventions (Eng/Ar)

South Response: Initial Displacement

- **Government-led response** – where DRM/DRR emergency cells have been activated in **Nabatieh and DRR in Tyre Union of Municipalities** and in **Baalbek** (as a preventative measure) IA focal points interface with Governors/DRM and UoMs/DRR; direct coordination on referrals of needs (across sectors/partners).

- **Inter-Sectoral coordination** support this set up through the South Inter-Sector / Inter-Agency (IA), co-chaired by UNDP, UNHCR and MoSA

- **25,708** total displaced individual across the country (48% Male; 52% Female) *as of 01 November.* 11% decrease since 26 October. Displacement has been reported in **280** cadasters. **Rented** arrangements (42%) are the most common shelter setting among the displaced population. Out of total, **16,717** (65%) fled to safer areas within South & Nabatieh governorates (Source: DTM, IOM).

- **968** individual have sought refuge in 11 collective shelter (**Tyre**: 3 schools, 1 university; **Nabatiyeh**: 1 school, 1 sports club, 1 hotel, 1 monastery, 1 municipal center & 2 NGOs).

- **Operational response** focused on collective shelters currently, with some partners expanding to HH level in liaison with local authorities. All sectors involved in preparedness & response. **Basic Assistance, WASH, Food Security & Agriculture, and Health for immediate response** (Core Relief Items (mattresses, blankets), hygiene kits, hot meals, mobile medical units).

- Cross-sectoral **Rapid Needs Assessment** launching today in collective shelters.

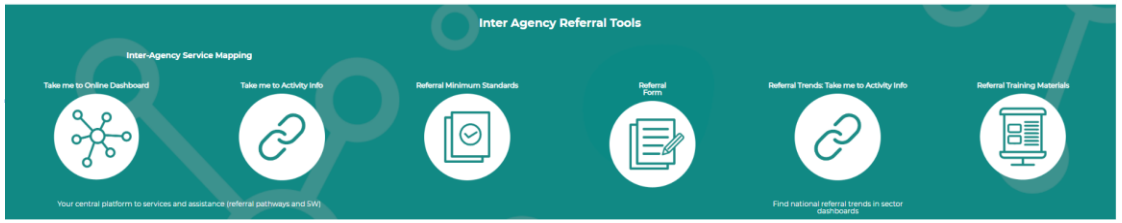
- Focus also remains on ensuring ongoing **critical LCRP activities**.

Kawkaba Youth Club Collective Shelter
Nabatieh Governorate, 1 November 2023

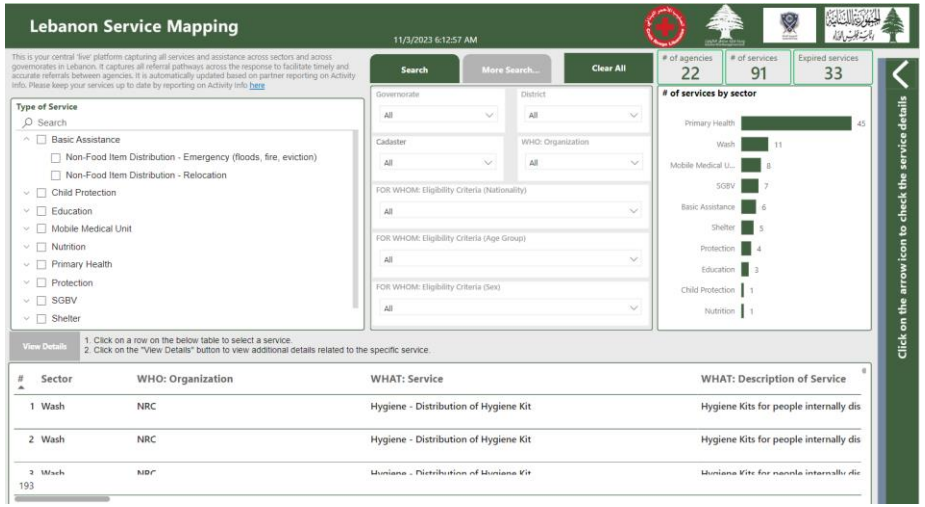
Emergency Response to Escalation in the South - Tools

1. Service Mapping/ActivityInfo

In the existing IA Service Mapping platform (ActivityInfo), We agreed to capture the services provided by partners across different sectors during emergency responses.

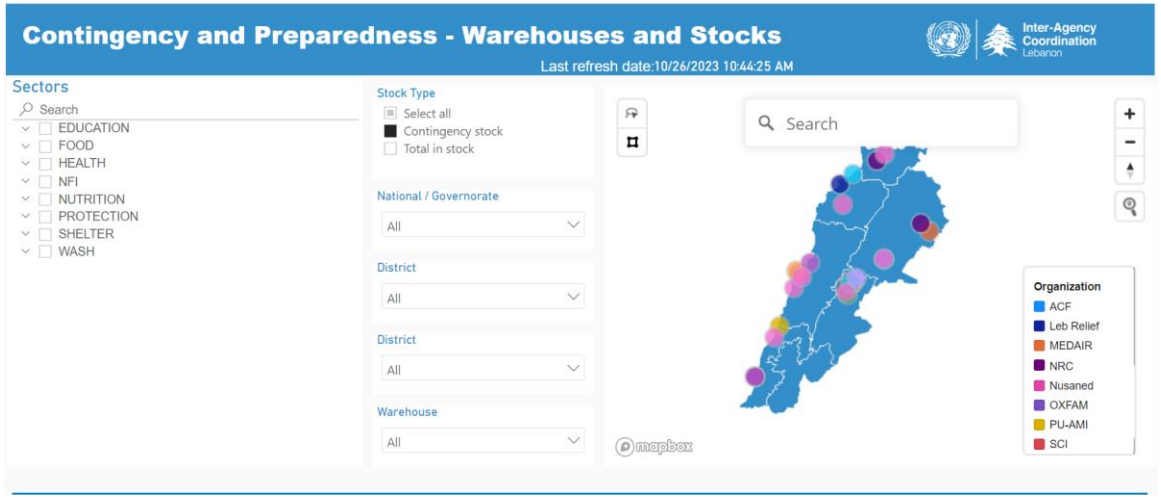


Lebanon Information Hub (unhcr.org)



2. Contingency Warehouses and Emergency Stocks/ ActivityInfo

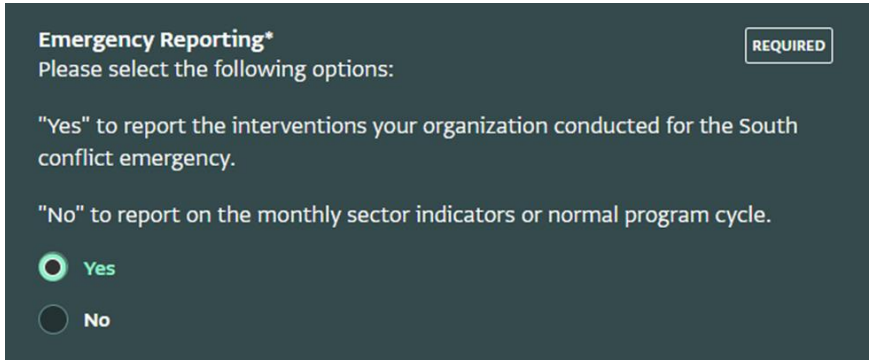
The objective of having warehouses and stocks data is to ensure efficient and effective emergency response. We will be using the current IA Continency Warehouse and Emergency stock form hosted on Activity Info.



Emergency Response to Escalation in the South - Tools

3. Emergency Response Reporting

In the current Sectors Reporting forms, we have introduced a new field called "Emergency Reporting." This field enables you to specify whether your organization's intervention is specifically directed at addressing the emergency.
It features a straightforward "YES" or "NO" question:



4. Rapid Needs Assessment

A coordinated Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA) tool has been developed in collaboration with national and South-level sectors for use in collective shelters located in the South and Nabatieh governorates. The purpose of this unified tool is to help us gain a comprehensive understanding of the different needs of IDPs in collective shelters.

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Protection and Tensions Trends Overviews (Q3)

Hassan Baalbaki
Analysis Associate, UNDP

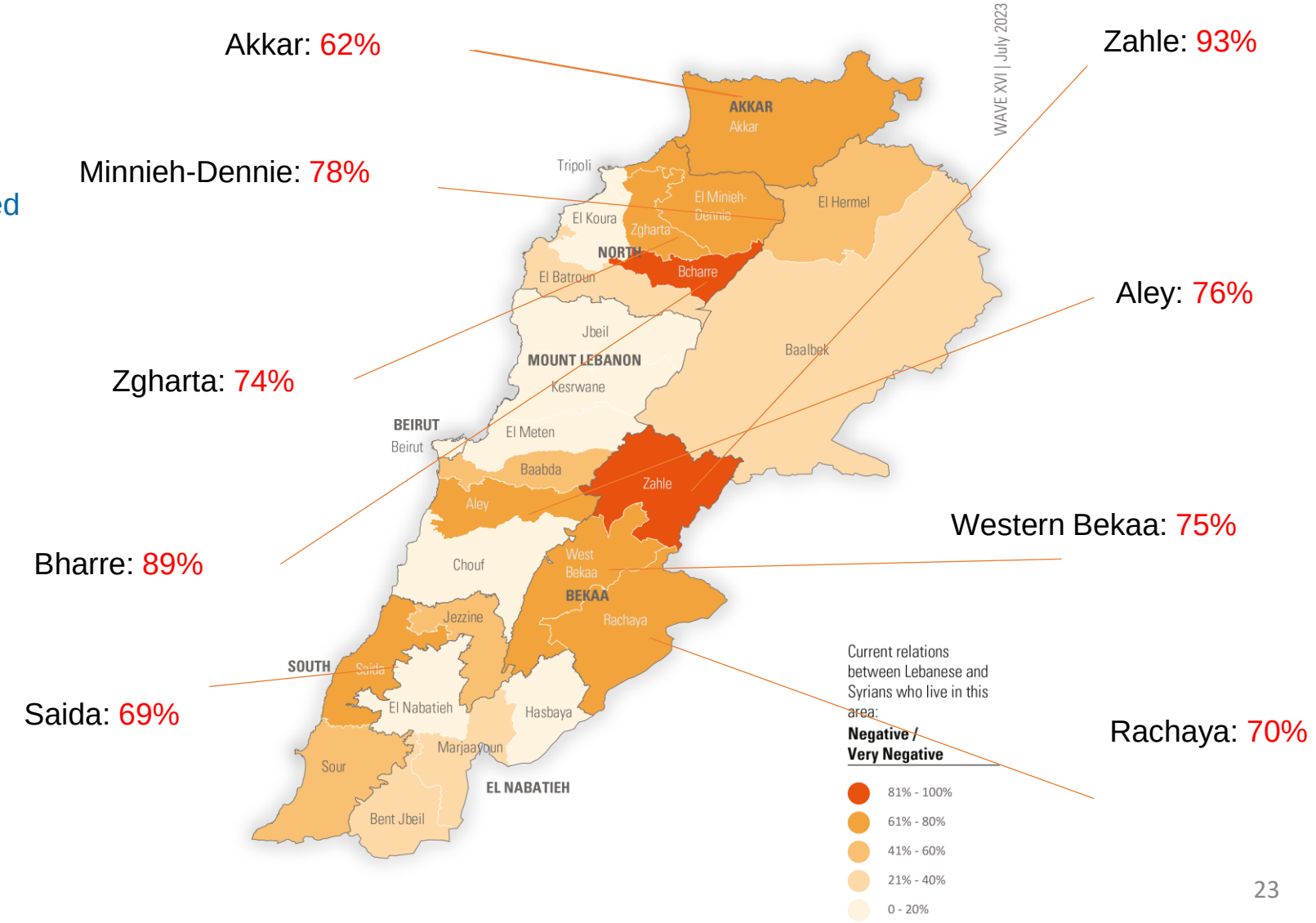
Sophie Etzold
Protection Sector Coordinator, UNHCR

Tensions Landscape

Tensions Monitoring System – November 2023

Inter-communal relations remain complex with vast geographical differences

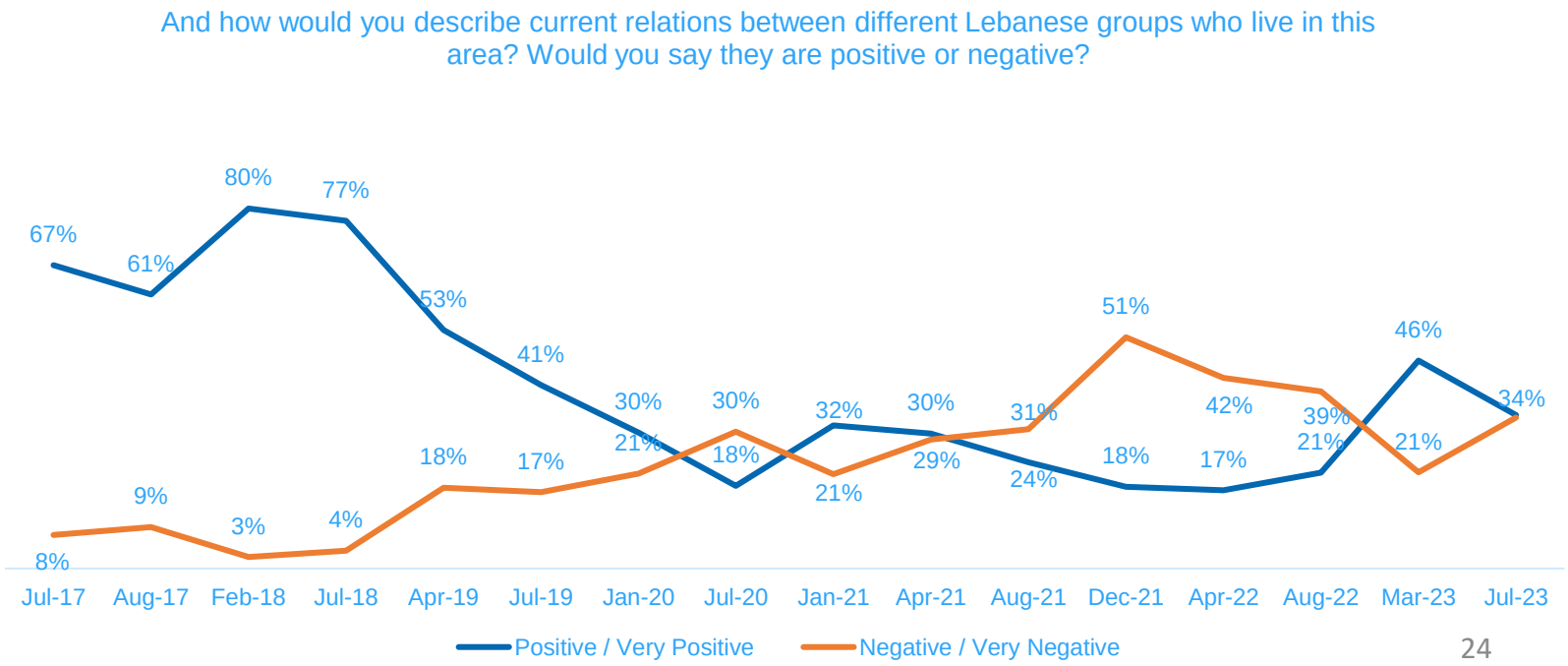
- **Over the last four years, refugee-host community relations in Lebanon have been on a negative trajectory.**
- In July 2023, 34% of respondents reported negative inter-communal relations, as compared to 21% in July 2018 and 36% in August 2021.
- Tensions seemingly eased during the summer after a peak in March-June (46%), such sentiments are expected to further deteriorate during the next wave of surveying in October.
- 'Competition for lower skilled jobs' remains the most-frequently cited source of inter-communal tensions.



Intra-Lebanese relations continue to fluctuate and remain highly reactive

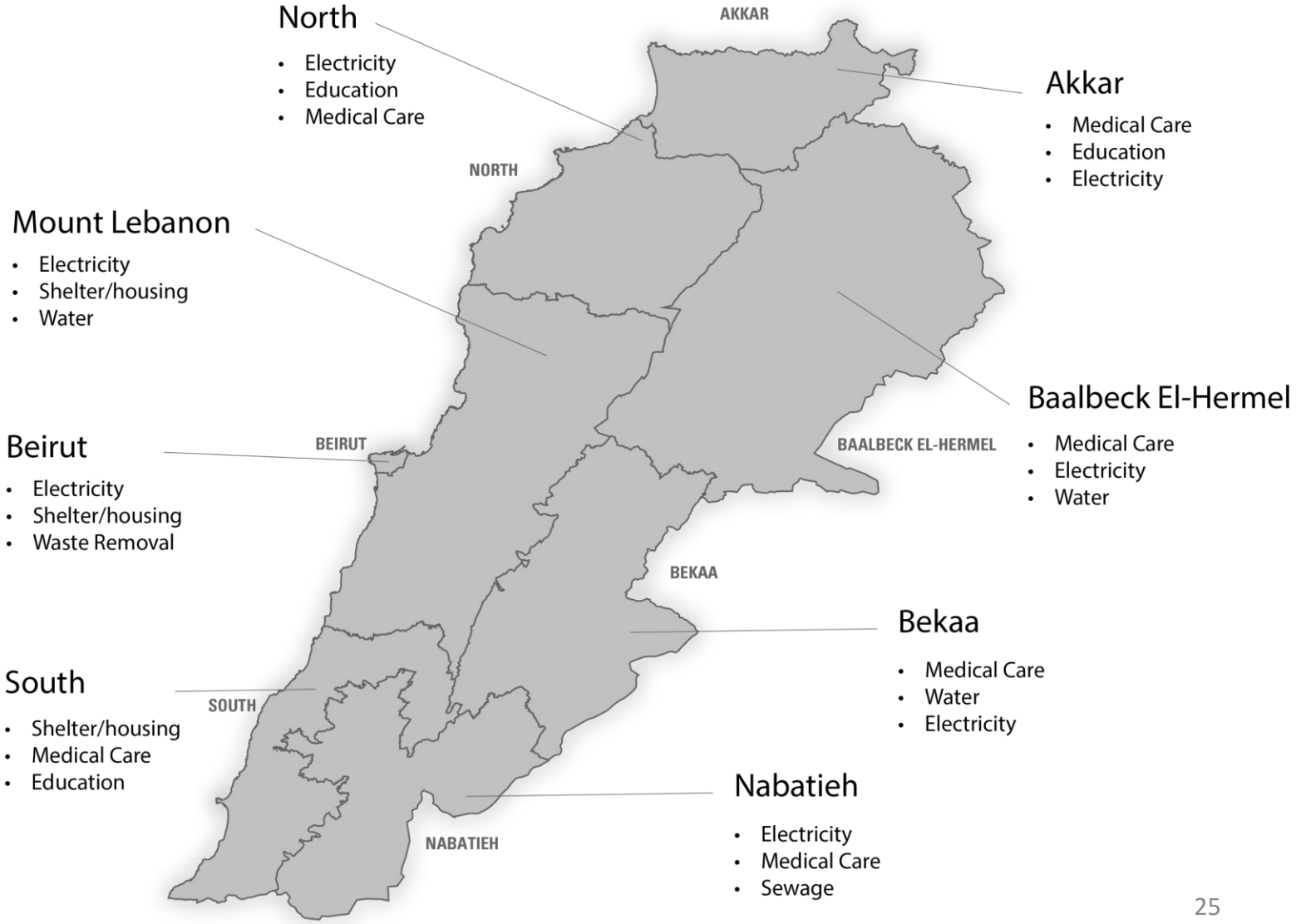
- Simultaneously, intra-Lebanese relations, which were previously quite positive, have deteriorated.
- In July 2018, 4% of Lebanese cited negative relations between different communities. As of July 2023, 34% of respondents now report negative relations with some regional differences.
- Intra-Lebanese relations are most negative in Aley (60%), Baabda (52%), Beirut (61%), Western Bekaa (88%), and Saida (71%).

- Tensions are generally more political in nature however, in July, for the first time since the beginning of the perception monitoring in 2017, economic competition was the most cited tension, cited by 58% of respondents, followed by political and sectarian conflict at 51%.

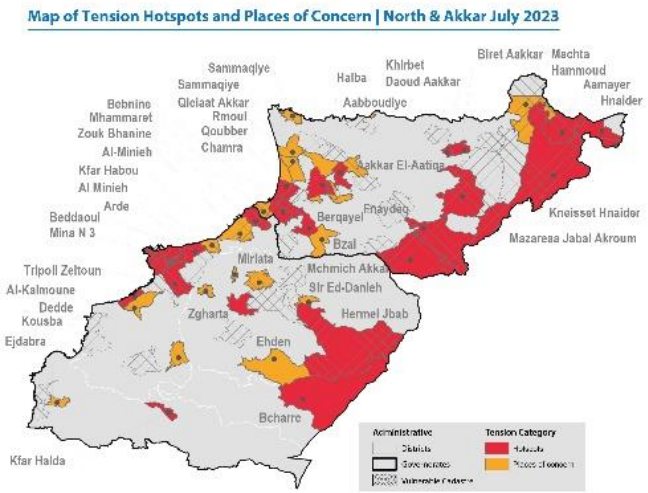


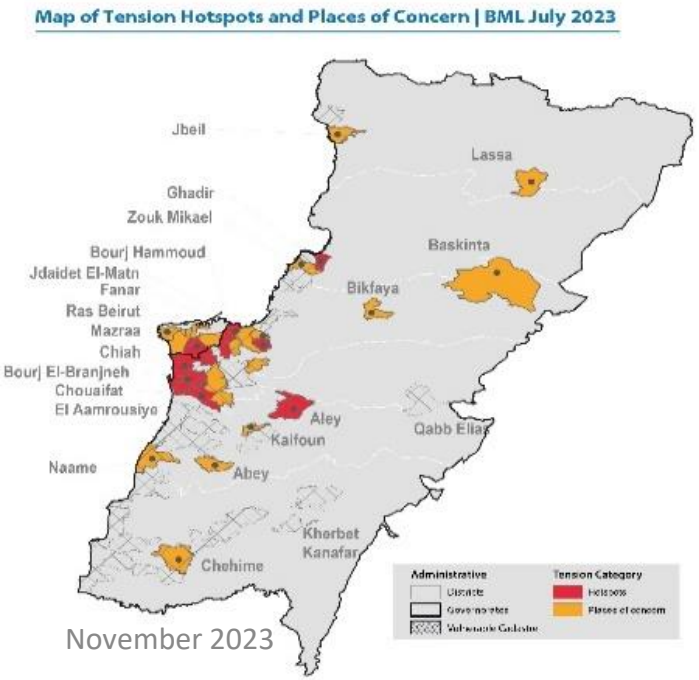
Access to services are increasingly driving tensions across populations

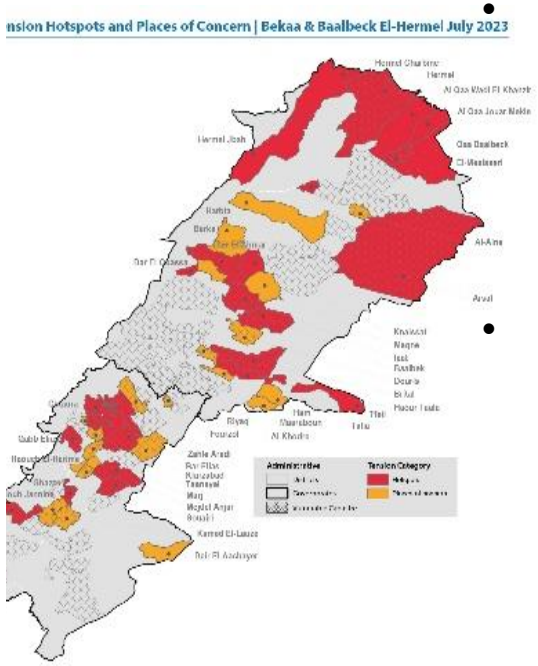
- **Electricity is the service that is perceived as driving the most tensions,** followed by shelter/housing and medical care.
- **Most service-related incidents are vertical,** as people directed their anger over failing services at the state and ruling class. More than half of vertical service-related incidents were related to electricity, including both state-provided electricity and generator power.
- **However, some incidents were horizontal,** as ordinary people clashed over access to water or generator power.



Escalation in the South
Forward looking risks for Inter- and Intra-communal tensions







- **Tension driver: Internal displacement**
  - Expected to mainly take place from South, Bekaa, and Beirut Southern Suburb toward Beirut, Mount Lebanon, Baalbek-Hermel, and North.
- **Tension driver: Political and sectarian differences**
  - Intra-communal tensions are expected in historically-polarized regions where the endorsement of engaging in the conflict is minimal.
- **Tension driver: Anti-refugee sentiments and actions**
  - Inter-communal tension is expected to rise especially in areas of high-tension areas such as Akkar, North, Aley, and some areas of Beirut.
  - Higher adherence with recent MoIM circulars on restrictive measures mainly taken up by local authorities (governorates and municipalities).
- **Tension driver: Aid Bias**
  - Inter- and intra-communal tensions could take place within and between communities – main drivers will likely include access to cash, fuel, NFIs and medical care, resources that are already scarce.

November 2023

Escalation in the South

Increased intra-Lebanese tensions on social media since day 1 - evolving over time

Phase 1

Four main groups of engagement

- Intervention in support to Hamas or against
- Blaming non-interventions
- Stating that Lebanon's various crises can't accommodate another war
- Debating the willingness of residents outside the South to host displaced families. The opinions are polarized with one group allegedly refusing to host families from the South and another group showing support despite the political divisions.

Phase 2

Six main groups of engagement

- Decision of war and inter-sectarian conflict
- Statements by regional powers about involving Lebanon in the war / Role of the government in war decisions
- Internal displacement and hosting IDPs: Lebanese and Syrians
- Reported thefts in certain areas in the South after families are displaced. Anti-refugee rhetoric
- Attacks on American franchise and embassies / UN sites
- UN and international community's role in the conflict

Conflict Sensitivity Considerations in the Response

- With significant time pressure, urgent needs, a wide range of actors and a preexisting complex tension landscape, there is a high risk of assistance contributing to tensions

- This risk will increase with factors like active conflict, mass displacement, protracted crisis

- Key pressure points to date have been:

1) **Lack of engagement, coordination and communication with local authorities**, leading to frustration by authorities as they perceive that support given is neither efficient nor sufficient;

2) **Lack of communication of aid criteria/prioritization**, in particular reg. partners' inability to support outside of collective shelters, leading to frustration by communities and authorities

3) **Perception of aid bias on two levels**; between beneficiaries and partners (with a perception that partners are providing support in a preferential approach that is not based on needs)

4) A high number of visits by NGOs, UN, media – with much pressure on authorities and beneficiaries – taking photos, interviewing and doing independent assessments

Protection and Tensions Trends Overviews (Q3)

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Tightening Protection Space – Restrictive Measures

Gradual tightening of protection space with increase and officialization of restrictive measures, arrests and deportations in the Bekaa, increased social tensions and hostilities between host and refugee communities.

- **A sharp uptick in raids** by LAFI was reported in Q3 mainly in the Bekaa and the North on ITS.
- **Curfews**: According to the latest Protection Monitoring findings, the number of households impacted by curfew as a restrictive measure has increased since the beginning of the year.
- **Pushbacks** at the Lebanese-Syrian border: Q3, LAF reported several thousand pushbacks in September, however, in October a decrease in pushbacks on the Northern borders with Syria and raids targeting Syrian communities in the Bekaa was observed.
- **Onward movements**: up until end of September, **56 boats departed from Northern Lebanon/the southern coast of Syria toward Cyprus** in 2023 carrying around 2,300 passengers from different nationalities namely Syrians.
- **Increased negative public rhetoric on Gender and GBV** issues was reported resulting in programmatic challenges and amendment of work modalities for gender and GBV programs. Media attacks and threats against actors or centers providing reproductive health services and other recreational and PSS activities for women and girls.
- **South**: protection concerns mainly around physical safety and access to population; protection services ongoing and implemented in collective sites - relocation challenges for most vulnerable population groups

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Winter Preparedness

Stephanie Laba
Inter-Agency Coordination Officer, UNHCR Inter-Agency

Winter Preparedness & Response
Recap: Winter Season 2022-2023

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Site Improvements

Support to Municipalities

Cash Assistance

Shelter Kits

1,000

Core Relief Items

1,400

Temporary Relocation

149

Winter Preparedness & Response
Standard Support Package

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Level	Winter Preparedness	Winter Emergency Response
Household	• Distributing **winter cash assistance**. • Distributing **core relief items and food parcels**. • Providing **shelter weatherproofing** kits through distribution in informal settlements. • **Relocating** individuals to safer sites. • Engaging in community **communication** efforts. • Mapping **tension risks** and implementing mitigation measures. • Establishing communication channels with relevant authorities.	• Providing **shelter kits** to support damaged shelters or assist relocating households. • Distributing **floor-raising kit**s. • Distributing **in-kind food parcels**. • **Referring** individuals and families through IA channels, hotlines, and on-site assessments.
Site / Institutional	• Enhancing **site infrastructure** (addressing flood risk and access obstructions) specifically in Informal Settlements. • Providing **fuel to institutions**, including health centers and schools. • Support to **municipalities** on local infrastructure and emergency response.	

Winter Preparedness & Response Challenges

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Funding Shortfall

Securing adequate funding remains a persistent challenge for winter preparedness efforts.

Resource Scarcity

Shortages of essential resources, particularly energy and fuel, create significant hurdles in ensuring winter readiness.

Infrastructure Damage

Damage to critical infrastructure, such as roads and river sides, poses a substantial obstacle to effective winter response.

Access to Remote Areas

The ability to reach and provide assistance to remote and isolated regions during winter conditions remains a pressing challenge.

Protection Space

Balancing the need for protection space for vulnerable populations with managing social tensions presents complex challenges during the winter season

Municipality Capacity

The capacity of municipalities to efficiently respond to winter-related issues is a critical concern that needs addressing

Current Situation/ Escalation

Depletion of stock

Access/ security challenges

Winter Preparedness & Response Recommendations

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- Ensure a clear understanding of the **overall nature of the winter response** and communicate to donors and response leadership on complementarity of actions.
- Prioritize **advance preparations**.
- Conduct regular **RNA Tool** training with simulations.
- Update the **Geosplit** on routine basis.
- Maintain and update **contingency stocks** in the field.
- Continue preemptive **distribution** of shelter weather proofing kit distribution, high thermal blankets and winter cash assistance.
- Harmonize **Post Distribution Monitoring** regionally.
- Automate **RNA reporting** for Emergency Focal Points.
- Increase support to **municipalities**.

Winter Preparedness & Response
Sectors Inputs

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SECTOR-Specific inputs on the current status of the response, the anticipated challenges and gaps and how the sector is managing to overcome the challenges <u>considering the current situation</u> *(ex. depletion of some stocks for displacement)*.

- Shelter sector
- Basic Assistance sector
- WASH sector
- Social Stability sector

Winter Preparedness & Response
Area Inputs

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Area-SPECIFIC inputs on how lesson learnt from previous years shaped the preparedness and response for this winter season. What might be the implication of the current situation on the preparedness and what measures are being taken to overcome the challenges?

- North & Akkar
- Beirut and Mount Lebanon
- Bekaa & Baalback El-Hermel
- South & Nabatieh

NORTH

BML

BEKAA

SOUTH

Winter Preparedness & Response Recommendations

Inter-Agency Coordination Lebanon

Recommendations and Ways Forward		
Coordination	**Implementation/ Partners**	**Advocacy/ Donors**
Maintain a pre-season **preparations and active planning**. Focus on **preventive activities**. Success story: River cleaning.	Continue **preemptive distribution of shelter weather proofing kit distribution, high thermal blankets & winter cash.**	Maintain and expand **funding for preparedness**. Cost of Preparedness v/s. Response cost → Lower
Review and update the RNA Tool by The EFPs on annual basis considering lessons learned from last year.	Update the available **contingency stocks.**	Provide **flexible funding** to be utilized based on needs (informed by data and lessons learnt).
Conduct refresher training sessions on the RNA Tool (with real-life simulations).	Implement and learn from harmonized **Post Distribution Monitoring** across the regions.	
Keep the National Level **RNA SOP** updated.	**Increased support to Municipalities**. Municipal capacity for Emergency Preparedness and response	
Maintain and update the **Geo-Split**.		

AoB

Thank you

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