

# Lebanon

## Protection Monitoring summary report (February-June 2025)

### Situation of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Lebanon, cross-population

#### Introduction

This report summarizes **key findings and protection risks identified through Protection Monitoring (PM) of the situation of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and returning IDPs, covering the period post-ceasefire, from 1 February to 30 June 2025.** As outlined in the Protection Sector Analysis of March 2025<sup>1</sup>, despite the announced ceasefire, civilians in border areas continued to be exposed to physical violence<sup>2</sup>, displacement and limited return opportunities.

The monitoring exercise was coordinated by the Protection Analysis and Monitoring Task Force (PAMTF) under the Protection Working Group. The findings of the report are premised on the analysis of **1,078 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and 117 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)** carried out by CARITAS, DRC, INTERSOS, IOM, IRC, SHEILD and UNHCR in six governorates: Beirut and Mount Lebanon (BML), Bekaa, Baalbek-El Hermel, South, and Nabatiyeh governorates. Data collection was not conducted in North and Akkar governorates due to the low number of IDPs present following the announced ceasefire in November 2024. A geographical split was used to ensure systematic coverage and avoid duplication. The report is further supplemented with insights from other protection assessments, core group members and the Migrant Working Group.

#### Key Findings

**While nearly one million IDPs rapidly returned to their places of origin following the ceasefire, the pace of returns has since slowed.** By end of May 2025, at least 80,000 IDPs remained in their current places of displacement, with many facing ongoing challenges or an inability to return. According to 63% of KIIs (76% in South, 68% in BML, 33% in Bekaa/Baalbek-El Hermel), the primary reason for continued displacement is a **lack of suitable accommodation** due to the destruction of infrastructure and houses in areas of previous residence. Another contributing factor is ongoing military activity and the presence of the Israel Defense Forces in Lebanon, particularly in areas near the southern border.

**Healthcare and food remain critical needs while legal protection needs are rising significantly.** More than 70% of KIIs indicated healthcare (72%) and food (71%) as top priority needs for IDPs, while legal needs have been continuously rising, reaching 25% of KII responses at the end of June, up from 6% in February. Shifting priorities may require programmatic adjustments to scale up legal aid, documentation support, and case management.

**The unaffordability of services is a major barrier, as availability alone is not enough.** During FGDs, IDPs highlighted that high costs and financial constraints remain primary barriers to accessing services, while healthcare stands out as the most commonly unavailable service, confirmed as a critical gap by 44% of KIIs, whereas 88% of KIIs

<sup>1</sup> Lebanon Protection Sector Analysis Report: December 2024-March 2025. 16 April 2025. <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/115744>.

<sup>2</sup> According to OHCHR, between 1 February to 30 June 2025, at least 28 civilian fatalities were reported following airstrikes.

reported that services were accessible when available and affordable.

**Displacement and financial strain are key drivers contributing to emotional and psychological stress.** 41% of KIIs indicated psychological distress is a main consequence of prolonged displacement and ongoing financial hardship.

**Humanitarian aid remains a critical source of assistance and support.** 51% of KIIs flagged that relying on humanitarian assistance was the most frequently reported coping strategy of IDPs, while increasing protection risks drive harmful coping mechanisms, including child labor, signaling growing vulnerabilities of IDPs, especially among children.

**Displacement dynamics continue to evolve.** information collected during the PM exercise has captured **three patterns of internal displacement** in Lebanon, flagging the need to consider more tailored approaches in planning and delivery of humanitarian and protection responses. These include:

- IDPs who **remain in displacement**
- IDPs who are now **returning home or reintegrating**, and
- IDPs **displaced in the post-ceasefire period.**

Each group of IDPs has distinct needs. IDPs remaining in displacement face prolonged challenges, such as limited access to services, high levels of psychological distress due to continuous insecurity and lack of durable solutions. Returning IDPs – to varying degrees - are likely to need reintegration support, particularly those who could not return home but instead relocated elsewhere in the country. Newly displaced IDPs may require emergency assistance, although the size of this population is small and the nature of their displacement temporary, as most return home shortly after the cessation of airstrikes or hostilities in their area of residence. Nevertheless, the continuation of airstrikes and hostilities may lead to permanent displacement of some families, while factors such as better livelihood or more affordable housing opportunities might further influence the choice of IDPs to move inside the country.

## IDPs remaining displaced

According to the IOM Mobility Snapshot, the number of IDPs across Lebanon has decreased from 98,986 in February to 82,632 in May.<sup>3</sup>

**IDP movements declined between February and June**, as those intending to return have likely already done so. According to 89% of KIIs, the main reason for return was the ceasefire and relatively improved security situation. Additionally, 89% reported that most arrivals in various locations were returning IDPs.

Among those remaining displaced, the **primary barrier for return was damaged and destroyed housing**, cited by 63% of KIIs. This barrier was reported at nearly double the rate of others: lack of financial means (33%), safety concerns (30%), and awaiting political developments in Syria (30%).

Importantly, however, the proportion of KIIs identifying damaged housing as the main obstacle to return dropped from 88% in February to 46% in June, suggesting many IDPs with these issues may have returned, found new accommodation, or decided to permanently settle in their current areas.

## Intentions and decision-making for return

Overall, KIIs and FDGs indicated that the majority of the IDPs who remain in displacement plan to stay in their current locations, and this intention has grown over time. According to 56% of KIIs, Lebanese **IDPs intend to remain where they are**, while 59% reported the same for secondarily displaced Syrians. The declining movement of IDPs between February and June, combined with the growing intention to remain in their current locations, suggests a shift from temporary displacement toward **permanent settlement at their current places of residence**. Many IDPs appear to be settling where they are, either due to improved conditions or lack of viable alternatives.

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<sup>3</sup> [IOM DTM](#). Mobility Snapshot – Round 87 (May 2025).

Additionally, similar shares of Lebanese IDPs (56%) and secondarily displaced Syrians (59%) intending to stay suggest that **displacement dynamics are converging across nationalities**.

KIIs also highlighted that a significant share of IDPs **remain undecided about return**, reflecting the complex and highly individual nature of return decisions depending on several variables including safety, stability, housing and access to services. For secondarily displaced Syrians, factors such as the security situation in Syria and availability of job opportunities—both in areas of displacement and origin—play a critical role in shaping intentions. Displaced migrant women expressed a strong desire to return to their home countries. However, they face significant barriers such as missing documentation, travel costs, debts in Lebanon and a limited amount of voluntary return assistance—challenges that have further worsened due to funding cuts after March 2025.<sup>4</sup> Also noteworthy is a trend among secondarily displaced Syrians to return to Syria beginning in March 2025, with greatest interest expressed in May (16%).

## Housing situation

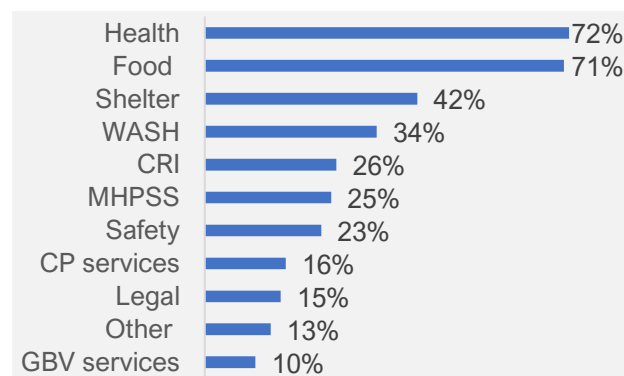
According to 75% of KIIs, IDPs encountered no restrictions based on nationality in accessing their current places of residence, while noting most IDPs live in rented accommodation or are hosted by family or friends. Following the closure of government and other collective shelters, the number of IDPs living in rental accommodations has increased, particularly in BML and South. In Bekaa, however, the rate of private rentals was more stable, as many IDPs opted to reside in informal settings due to the perception that they would be more likely to receive humanitarian aid.

Although rented accommodation options provide more privacy, dignity and often safety, it also encompasses risks such as eviction threats, rising rental costs, and increased debts. These

vulnerabilities are further compounded for IDPs without legal residency, who face higher risks of exploitation and homelessness. This was highlighted during FGDs with Syrians, where those lacking legal documentation often indicated increased vulnerability to abuse and exploitation. Further, they reported being unable to report abuse and/or exploitation due to their irregular legal status. Despite these challenges, 92% of KIIs reported that facilities in their area were accessible to all, regardless of status.

## Priority Needs

Throughout the assessment, key informants consistently identified health (72%) and food (71%) as top concerns among IDPs.



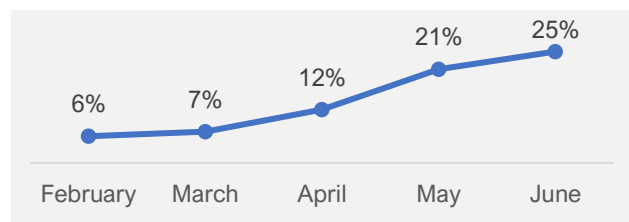
Priority needs for IDPs

While food was initially the most reported need, by **June it was overtaken by health**, likely due to high and rising costs of medication, particularly for those with chronic illnesses.

As the situation stabilized for the majority of IDPs after the ceasefire, the **legal protection needs** saw a significant increase from 6% in February to 25% in June. These needs are particularly important for secondarily displaced Syrians and Palestinian refugees, as well as migrants who face significant challenges due to the lack of legal documentation. This complicates and restricts their mobility, access to housing, education and livelihoods

<sup>4</sup> As the IDP PM has not collected sufficient data on migrants, complementary sources—such as evacuation data from IOM and embassies/consulates, along with ACTED’s Rapid Contextual Analysis South—provided relevant insights.

Among **Lebanese IDPs**, the primary concern reported was the cost of **renewing legal documents such as lost or expired civil documentation or property documents**.



*IDPs expressing Legal Protection as a growing need throughout their displacement*

## Availability and Accessibility of Services

From February to June, KIIs consistently reported **healthcare and medication** (44%) as the service most lacking for IDPs. Although healthcare facilities are available in areas of displacement, the primary barrier to access was **cost, particularly for IDPs with chronic illnesses**. The issue with access to healthcare was especially pronounced in BML, where KIIs reporting an unavailability of healthcare rose dramatically from 19% in February to 79% in June, indicating IDPs who remain in the area are unable to afford high costs of care.

In contrast, KIIs in the South and Bekaa indicated increased availability of healthcare, while FGD participants in those locations flagged **difficulties affording medication**. Some FGD participants stated they travel to Syria to purchase medication at a more affordable price. While KIIs generally suggested services were accessible to all IDPs regardless of gender or nationality, FGDs with secondarily displaced Syrians and migrants indicate unequal access persists, particularly for these more vulnerable groups.

## Protection Risks and Needs

### Safety and security concerns

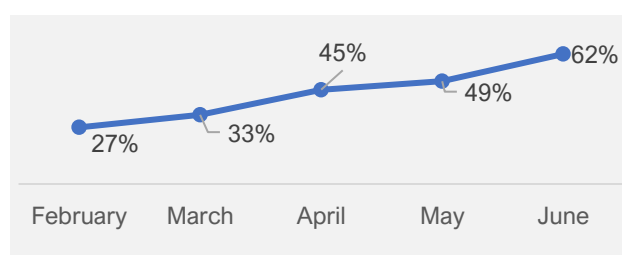
**Security-related risks increased from February to June**, particularly for secondarily

displaced Syrians without legal documentation. Many Syrian men reported self-restricting movement, fearing arbitrary arrest and deportation.

For women, the most commonly reported concerns were verbal harassment (14%), economic violence (12%) and household violence, while for men main concerns include economic violence (12%), risk of deportation (11%) and verbal harassment (10%). Through the GBVIMS data, increasingly GBV concerns have been disclosed post-ceasefire with requests to access specialized GBV Case Management services as well as PSS.

**Child labor** in the South (23%) was more frequently reported by KIIs than in other assessed locations, while most risks related to legal and civil documentation were reported in Bekaa. **Unequal treatment and stigmatizations** towards non-Lebanese IDPs were also reported, especially in South. FGDs revealed non-Lebanese IDPs frequently face **exploitation, verbal abuse, and physical abuse**.

**Psychological distress** was consistently reported as the most significant consequence of displacement, cited by 41% of KIIs. Contributing factors included prolonged displacement, financial hardships, job losses, and ongoing instability. In BML, psychological distress had the sharpest rise from 27% in February to 62% in June.



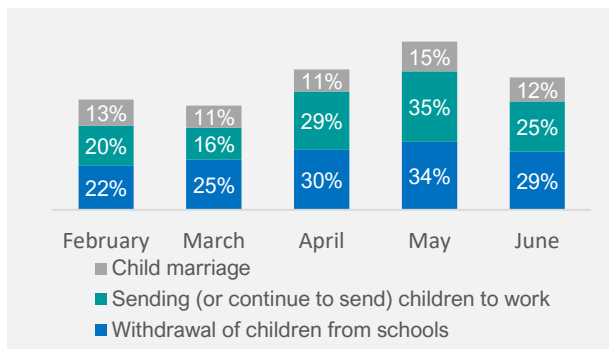
*Rise in psychological distress in BML*

**Worsening mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of children** were also cited by KIIs. Distress among children is often linked to prolonged displacement and lack of understanding of their current dynamics. In addition to emotional strain, psychological and physical violence was also reported for children.

## Coping Mechanisms

Over half of KIIs (51%) reported IDPs continue to **depend on humanitarian aid**, indicating ongoing vulnerability and limited self-reliance. KIIs cited several coping mechanisms, including reliance on savings (37%), reducing meal frequency (37%) and reducing overall expenditures (29%).

Of note, selling personal assets as coping strategies have significantly declined—from 32% to 11%—suggesting IDPs face depleted resources. KIIs confirm these concerns, particularly for secondarily displaced Syrians.



*Coping mechanisms related to children*

KIIs also report a gradual and consistent rise of **school withdrawals and child labor**. The primary reason cited for children leaving school is the government's decision **requiring valid legal residency or UNHCR registration certificates** for enrolling children in schools. FGDs further highlighted that many Syrian children are pulled from schools to work and contribute to household income. The most **concerning trends were observed in Bekaa**, where the percentage of KIIs reporting children withdrawn from schools rose from 14% to 46% and reporting child labor from 11% to 42%. Child marriage also saw an increase from 9% to 30%. Such harmful coping mechanisms severely affect children and are contributors to the psychological distress.

## Recommendations

### Shelter and Infrastructure Rehabilitation:

Prioritize shelter rehabilitation and reconstruction in pre-conflict areas to enable voluntary, safe, and dignified return.:

- Strengthen partnerships with local authorities to assess damage and begin phased rebuilding.
- Advocate for funding to support housing reconstruction and infrastructure repair.
- Explore transitional shelter options for IDPs unable to immediately return.
- Prioritize targeted housing assistance for IDPs with damaged or destroyed homes.
- Support shelter and protection integrated programming, prioritizing the most vulnerable.

**Protection-Focused Programming:** Scale up legal protection services in response to rising needs:

- Expand legal aid, civil documentation support, and case management services for IDPs remaining in displacement.
- Train field staff and community focal points on legal rights and referral pathways.
- Integrate legal protection into multi-sectoral programming, especially in South and Nabatiyeh - areas with the highest numbers of IDPs and returned IDPs.

**Healthcare and Food Security:** Strengthen healthcare and food assistance, with a focus on affordability and availability:

- Health sector to enhance protection-sensitive targeting and enhance access to health services for IDPs, including to MHPSS services.
- Deploy mobile health units and subsidized clinics in displacement areas.

- Coordinate with food security actors to ensure regular and equitable food distribution.
- Explore existing cash-based interventions for improving the purchasing power of IDPs for essential services and medication for chronic illnesses.

### **Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS):**

Address emotional and psychological stress via specialized programs under the health sector or through community-based MHPSS:

- Maintain or expand safe spaces and peer support groups for IDPs.
- Train community health workers in basic psychosocial support.
- Integrate MHPSS into health and protection services, especially for children and caregivers.

### **Gender-based violence, Child Protection and Education:**

Strengthen available child protection mechanisms, to prevent and respond to child labor and other risks and prioritize access to education:

- Maintain information sessions to survivors of GBV in areas still affected by conflict and displacement, including on access to life-saving services and safe spaces.
- Launch awareness campaigns on child rights, including access to primary education and protection.
- Provide targeted support to families at risk of resorting to harmful coping strategies, including vocational training for restoring household income/livelihoods.
- Enhance information sharing on procedures to access legal services, specialized CP programs and education to parents.

- Collaborate with education actors and advocate for access to education to all children irrespective of their nationality and legal status, also explore alternative learning pathways.

**Advocacy and Coordination:** Advocate for sustained humanitarian funding and improved coordination among actors:

- Engage donors with evidence-based appeals highlighting urgent needs and vulnerabilities.
- Strengthen coordination platforms to ensure harmonized responses and avoid duplication.
- Promote inclusion of IDPs in national recovery and development plans, and advocate for inclusive, multisectoral and comprehensive assistance that addresses the needs of all IDPs, regardless of nationality or legal status.

### **Tailored Response to Displacement Patterns:**

Design flexible and adaptive programming based on evolving displacement dynamics and outcomes of the protection monitoring findings and protection needs assessments:

- Conduct regular protection assessments and surveys to better understand the intentions of IDPs as well as implement awareness programs in the South and Nabatiyeh to combat discrimination and abuse against non-Lebanese IDPs, such as secondarily displaced Syrians and migrants.
- Ensure IDP protection monitoring is maintained as part of the sector's cross-population monitoring exercise, feeding into the protection response as well as mainstreaming efforts across sectors.