

Situation Report

Lebanon- Beirut Port Explosion



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Crisis in Numbers

170 Deaths

6000 Injured

300,000 Displaced

3,938 Pregnant Women

10,880 Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) were delivered

10,000 dignity kits are being distributed



Situation overview including Security Issues

On 4 August 2020, at approximately 18:00, a warehouse at the Beirut Port containing large quantities of ammonium nitrate exploded. The initial explosion was followed by a much more substantial blast that caused widespread damage, reportedly reaching more than 20 kilometres from the port area.

As of August 11, latest reports reveal that the death toll has reached 170 with over 6,000 injured and more than 300,000 people left displaced with many showing severe psychological distress. These numbers are continually expected to rise as more bodies are recovered from the surrounding wreckage, and dozens are still reported missing. The blasts sent shockwaves across the city causing widespread damage extending to the outskirts of Beirut, including several primary and secondary healthcare facilities. The National Primary Health Care (PHC) Network Central Drugs Warehouse was severely damaged, as well as 23 PHC Centers, four of which were completely destroyed in addition to six to 10 hospitals.

A report by the World Health Organization (WHO) indicates that more than 80 primary health care centres have been severely damaged. Preliminary assessments show that an estimated 15 hospitals were significantly impacted by the blast and a minimum of three have been rendered partially or fully inoperable. A rapid assessment of 55 primary health care centres found that 37 per cent sustained moderate to serious damage. Only 47 per cent of surveyed facilities can still provide full routine health services. Moreover, 120 schools, used by 55,000 Lebanese and non-Lebanese children, sustained various levels of damage. Humanitarian partners are conducting further damage assessments, in close coordination with relevant government authorities.

80 primary health care centres have been severely damaged

The Beirut Port, which processes up to 90 per cent of Lebanon's imports, is expected to remain inoperable for at least one month, pending repairs, debris removal, and safety clearances. Concerns are growing that damage to the Beirut Port will exacerbate food insecurity, which was already growing amid the COVID-19 pandemic and prolonged socio-economic crisis. All trade activities have been redirected to the Tripoli Port, located about 85 kilometres north of Beirut.



Humanitarian Needs

- More than 300,000 people are displaced as a result of the explosion, approximately 81,000 of whom are women of reproductive age (15 - 49 years). These women will need support to meet their health, protection and menstrual hygiene needs and overall sanitation, among other things. In addition, 3,938 women who are currently pregnant will also be in need of ante-natal and Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care (EmONC).
- As the Beirut blast has damaged both private and public health facilities, there is an immediate need to ensure first aid support and continuity of health care services, namely for pregnant women, lactating women, women and girls of reproductive age and elderly women, and women with disabilities.



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- With thousands of people displaced and suffering economically, gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual exploitation and abuse, which pose a serious risk, should be urgently addressed.
- Addressing the mental health of the affected population should be high on the immediate support agenda because of the trauma's implications on the psychological health of women and girls and the population.
- COVID-19 remains a major risk in the country. In the immediate aftermath of the explosion, protective measures, including social distancing and maskwearing were superseded by immediate obligations relating to disaster support, death and devastation. As a result, COVID-19 cases are expected to increase, noting cases hit a record peak of 309 on August 11. This is causing a significant increase in the needs for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for service providers as well as for the public.

UNFPA Country Office Contributions

UNFPA is scaling up its efforts to meet the emerging needs of nearly 81,000 women of reproductive age, including 48,000 adolescents, among the 300,000 people who have been displaced due to the catastrophe. An estimated 3,938 women who are currently pregnant will be in urgent need of ante-natal and emergency obstetric care services.

For the next four months, UNFPA Lebanon's response will focus on:

Meeting immediate sexual and reproductive health needs: To ensure continuity of services and at the request of Lebanon's Ministry of Health, UNFPA is recruiting and deploying additional surge personnel, including 25 midwives, to health facilities and two staff who will support centrally the MOPH to ensure proper coordination and communication. Furthermore, UNFPA is scaling up SRH service provision through existing and new implementing partners, will support more health personnel, and ensure wider services beyond immediate response needs. This will include helping women and adolescent girls meet their menstrual hygiene needs and, in light of COVID-19, their overall sanitary and hygiene needs.

Conducting Rapid Assessments:

UNFPA is currently working with local authorities and partner agencies to contribute to the joint rapid assessments of primary health care facilities that will determine the extent of the damage to sexual and reproductive health and maternity departments.

Providing Essential Medical Supplies:

Efforts are focused on replacing the lifesaving RH medicines and contraceptives damaged by the explosion. UNFPA is also procuring medical equipment and supplies for maternity departments and affected health facilities, and supporting the provision of 25 per cent of medical procurement needs for the next six months, as identified by the Ministry of Public Health . The response will include the delivery of Dignity Kits customized for women, adolescents, and pregnant and lactating women. These kits contain sanitary pads, soap, towels, toothbrushes and toothpaste.

Continuing GBV Services and GBV Risk Mitigation:

Given the escalating risks of gender-based violence during humanitarian crises, particularly in light of COVID-19 restrictions, UNFPA will continue working to ensure that women and girls receive quality GBV response services, including access to Women and Girls Safe Spaces, psychological first aid, and long-term counselling. As the lead on GBV, UNFPA will also ensure that risks of such violence are mitigated throughout the response. Safeguarding the physical and mental wellbeing of women and girls:

In order to safeguard the physical and mental wellbeing of women and girls in need, UNFPA will also engage a team of psychologists to work with implementing partners to ensure that mental health is adequately mainstreamed in the service package. UNFPA is coordinating with the MOPH national mental health department to support development of messages for pregnant women and to ensure capacity development of care providers in psychological first Aid, PSS etc



Implementation milestones

10,880 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) were delivered to the Ministry of Public Health's warehouse in Karantina, which was partially damaged. These include:

- 2720 boxes of Surgical Masks
- 2960 units of face shields
- 3000 boxes of medical gloves
- 2200 Gown PE material

Additional PPE will be distributed to health care providers at the primary health care centres (PHCs) in order to protect them and minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission.



- More than 10,000 dignity kits containing sanitary pads, soap, and towels among other items, are being distributed to women of reproductive age at Karantina, Al Khandaz Al Ghami', Mar Mikhael and Geitawi through UNFPA's implementing partners, including Amel Association, Akkarouna Association and Intersos.
- Two UNFPA-supported medical mobile units, Al Makased, provided first-aid services to vulnerable women of reproductive age affected by the blast.
- UNFPA has also supported Al Makassed Association in expanding RH services, including hiring a midwife to join the Mobile Medical Unit, who is conducting door-to-door visits to provide guidance and counselling for pregnant women, women who have newly delivered and lactating women.
- Training sessions were conducted for a group of young members of the Lebanese Medical Students' International Committee (LEMSIC) about the assessment tool and the online application used for the assessment of an estimated 80 dispensaries and primary health care facilities. LEMSIC will be involved in data collection to determine the extent of the damage, available resources and continuity of services in the primary health care facilities located within 5km radius of the explosion.

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