



Lebanon Situation Report

September 16, 2021

Background

The immediate background to the compounding crises and increasingly dire humanitarian situation in Lebanon is summarized in Anera's last [Situation Report \(August 21\)](#). Information on Anera's work on food insecurity in Lebanon is available in Anera's blog post, [Combating Food Insecurity in Gaza and Lebanon](#).

Overview

On Thursday, August 26, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres called on Lebanese political leaders to form an effective government urgently in order to address the deteriorating socio-economic situation.¹ The same day, EU Ambassador to Beirut Ralph Tarraf urged Lebanese leaders to form a government immediately after meeting with Lebanese President Michael Aoun. EU leaders are concerned with Lebanon's financial, economic, social, and security crises.² These compounding crises continue to deteriorate the humanitarian situation for Lebanese households, causing significant challenges to livelihoods and limiting access to fuel, electricity, water, and healthcare.

After 13 months of political deadlock, Lebanon's Prime Minister Najib Mikati and President Michel Aoun formed a new government on September 10, 2021. The two signed a decree in front of Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, and Mikati addressed the press. He stated, "The situation is very difficult. But it's not impossible if we united as Lebanese. We have to put our hands together. We are all going to work together, united with hope and determination."³ With the formation of a new government, the International Monetary Fund will likely hold talks about a rescue package for Lebanon.⁴ In order to secure foreign aid, the newly-formed government must enact reforms to address the issues that created the economic crisis, such as corruption.⁵

Poverty

On Monday, August 23, Lebanon's government agreed to accept a loan from the World Bank in US dollars that will be used to provide cash assistance to tens of thousands of families. The Lebanese Parliament approved the \$246 million loan in March, but it was stalled due to the government's insistence on paying the money in Lebanese pounds. The caretaker Finance Minister confirmed with the World Bank on Monday that

¹ [UN chief calls on Lebanon leaders to form effective government | Reuters](#)

² [EU worried at Lebanon's fast deterioration | Reuters](#)

³ [Lebanon's presidency announces government formation | Al Jazeera News Network](#)

⁴ [Lebanon gets new government amid deepening crisis | BBC News](#)

⁵ [Lebanon agrees new government to tackle economic collapse | Reuters](#)

Lebanon was willing to distribute the money to its beneficiaries in US dollars. Currently, the US dollar is worth 20,000 pounds on the black market, which is detrimental to the purchasing power of much of Lebanon.⁶

According to a policy brief published by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA) on September 3, the multidimensional poverty rate in Lebanon has reached **82 percent**. Households categorized as multidimensionally poor are deprived of at least one dimension under the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), which includes education, health, public utilities, housing, assets and property, and employment and income. From 2019 to 2021, the rate of multidimensional poverty doubled, and around 1 million households now fall under this classification. Households that are deprived of two or more dimensions on the MPI are considered to be facing extreme multidimensional poverty, which affects 34 percent of the population.⁷

Fuel and Electricity

Throughout Lebanon, the governorates experience interruptions to electricity that can exceed 22 hours a day. **Fifty-four percent** of households now lack electricity entirely, and alternatives such as private generators and the scarce diesel that runs them are too expensive for many households to afford.⁸

In response to the electricity crisis, Lebanon's wealthy are turning to solar power. A boom in solar power has resulted from wealthy residents and industries installing solar equipment to supplement the gaps in the expensive and scarce state- and private-supplied electricity. Solar power provides electricity for eight to ten hours after sunset, and the equipment lasts 10 years or more. A new solar system for home use costs between \$4,500 and \$6,000, however, and solar companies are only accepting payments in "fresh" dollars, or US dollars from outside Lebanon. Unfortunately, the majority of households in Lebanon cannot afford the initial costs of installing solar panels and equipment. Due to the skyrocketing demand, the components necessary for solar power are increasingly difficult to secure, and customers have to wait up to three months for their solar panel systems to be installed.⁹

Water

As a result of the worsening fuel crisis, water companies are being forced to cut their production, as they cannot operate trucks or bottling plants. The majority of Lebanon's population relies on bottled water, and its limited production leaves many families without enough safe, potable water. In the past two years, the price of bottled water has increased to **five times** its original price, making it even more difficult for Lebanese families to access potable water. Households are unable to turn to domestic tap water, as most tap water is unfit for consumption due to contamination, and many households are out of range of Lebanon's tap water. As more families are forced to use impotable tap

⁶ [Lebanon agrees to pay World Bank loan to the poor in dollars | AP News](#)

⁷ [Multidimensional poverty in Lebanon \(2019-2021\) | UNESCWA](#)

⁸ [Multidimensional poverty in Lebanon \(2019-2021\) | UNESCWA](#)

⁹ [Solar 'boom' times as Lebanon's fossil fuels run dry | Al Jazeera News Network](#)

water, there will likely be an increase in waterborne diseases. According to the UN, three-quarters of the population of Lebanon is at risk of losing access to water.¹⁰

Healthcare

The healthcare sector in Lebanon continues to deteriorate in the midst of fuel and medicine shortages and a lack of medical staff as people flee the country. Hospitals are forced to prioritize patients in order to ration their services, leaving people to manage conditions that can lead to death if left untreated. Due to the collapse in purchasing power of the Lebanese people, most cannot afford private healthcare. More and more people continue to turn to NGOs and aid organizations for treatment and medical care.¹¹

According to UNESCWA, only 9 percent of the population of Lebanon lacked access to healthcare in 2019. In 2021, **33 percent** are deprived of healthcare, which amounts to around 400,000 households. Fifty-five percent of the population lacks health insurance, which would exacerbate the diminishing healthcare situation in Lebanon if subsidies continue to be lifted. **Fifty-two percent** of households in Lebanon, or around 630,000 households, are unable to obtain medicines.¹²

On September 1, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) announced its allocation of \$10 million in humanitarian funds for the Lebanese healthcare sector. \$6 million will go toward supporting 65 hospitals, primary care centers, cold storage facilities, and dispensaries with fuel, while the remaining \$4 million will be used to supply fuel for health centers, water stations, and the four facilities providing water for over two-thirds of Lebanon's population.¹³

COVID-19

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been 615,532 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 8,274 deaths in Lebanon. An average of 987 new cases are reported each day, which is equivalent to 21 percent of Lebanon's peak daily cases. As of September 16, Lebanon has administered 2,668,692 doses of COVID-19 vaccines, which is enough for around **19.5 percent** of the population to be fully vaccinated.¹⁴ While COVID-19 is not currently as significant of an issue as it has been for Lebanon, the continued collapse of the healthcare system will likely create a barrier in access to care for COVID-19 patients.

Anera's Response

Food Parcels and Hygiene Kit Distribution

In August, Anera began a program to deliver food and hygiene kits to vulnerable families in Beirut. The project is funded by UNOCHA and serves **805 families**. The deliveries include six rounds of food parcels and two rounds of hygiene kits. Along with

¹⁰ [Lebanon's fuel crisis is causing a drinking water crisis | Middle East Eye](#)

¹¹ [Healthcare system in Lebanon disintegrates as political vacuum persists | MSF](#)

¹² [Multidimensional poverty in Lebanon \(2019-2021\) | UNESCWA](#)

¹³ [UN allocates \\$10M to ensure fuel for Lebanon hospitals, water stations | The Daily Star](#)

¹⁴ [Lebanon: the latest coronavirus counts, charts and maps | Reuters](#)

the food parcels, Anera is delivering \$50 vouchers for families to purchase produce at grocery stores.

Livelihood Opportunities

Early in 2021, Anera refocused its youth cash-for-work programs to meet the needs of those affected by COVID-19 and the economic and humanitarian crises. The programs now aim to enable Lebanese youth to enter the business market and provide short-term paid employment opportunities for a period of one to three months. Anera's cash-for-work opportunities target students and graduates of Anera's vocational education programs. In 2020, Anera's employment programs created **2,600 paid-on-the job training positions**, through which Anera facilitated the preparation and delivery of 96,000 meals, production of 1.6 million face masks, installation of plumbing in homes, repair of homes damaged by the Beirut blast, and establishment of COVID isolation centers and sanitation gates at entrances to camps and towns. So far in 2021, Anera has supported **1,742 youths** through cash-for-work opportunities in the sewing, healthcare, IT, construction, agriculture, and environmental and community mobilization sectors.

WASH

In Partnership with UNICEF, Anera implemented a WASH program within Palestinian refugee camps. The program aims to improve the WASH practices of residents through community mobilization activities implemented through local sub-partners and mass media. In 2021, Anera utilized mass media to promote COVID-19 precautionary measures and awareness of COVID-19 vaccine administration, environmental hygiene, and menstrual hygiene. To date, Anera distributed **2,900** COVID-19 prevention kits, **7,000** hygiene kits, and **8,500** cloth menstrual pads to camps in Lebanon.

Medical Donations

Between June 1 and August 31, Anera began delivering **\$4,335,255** worth of medicines and medical supplies to Lebanon, donated by institutional donors such as Americares and Direct Relief. In addition to much-needed medications, the shipments include PPE such as face shields, masks, surgical caps, gloves, and gowns; disinfectants; IV solutions; and laptops.