



Lebanon Situation Report

November 9, 2023

Background

Information about the recent clashes and ongoing economic crisis in Lebanon is summarized in Anera's last [Situation Report \(September 2023\)](#).

Overview

Since October 8, one day after Hamas fired rockets into Israel and war began in Gaza, Israel and Lebanese armed group Hezbollah have been exchanging fire across Lebanon's southern border with Israel.¹ Clashes have been constant since and increased in breadth, with Israel evacuating citizens from towns near the border and Lebanese civilians expressing fear – many families have also evacuated to the north of Lebanon.² Apprehension about potential escalation of fighting or war aggravates the already terrible economic crisis. The aftermath of the 2020 Beirut port explosion continues to be felt. And recent fighting in [Ein el Hilweh refugee camp](#) from July through September has elevated anxieties and lowered economic activity.

Violence at the Lebanon-Israel Border

Violence along Lebanon's southern border has been constant since the start of the war between Hamas and Israel.³ Hezbollah targeted rockets toward three Israeli settlements in the Shebaa Farms area on October 8 and released a statement of its intention of liberating "occupied Lebanese land... and in solidarity with the victorious Palestinian resistance and the steadfast Palestinian people."⁴ Anticipation of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah's speech on November 3 also increased tensions and fighting across the border.⁵

On November 2, fighting picked up as Hezbollah launched missiles toward 19 Israeli positions and Israel retaliated with tank fire and airstrikes.⁶ The retaliations killed four people in the Lebanese village of Hula, and two Israeli civilians were reported injured.⁷

¹ [Israel, Hezbollah exchange fire, raising regional tensions | Al Jazeera](#)

² [Israel to evacuate residents of town near Lebanon border after flare up | Reuters](#); [Will Hezbollah launch an all-out war on Israel? | Israel-Palestine conflict News | Al Jazeera](#)

³ [Lebanon fears regional war as Hezbollah-Israel fighting intensifies | Al Jazeera](#)

⁴ [Israel, Hezbollah exchange artillery, rocket fire | Reuters](#)

⁵ ['All scenarios are open': Hezbollah leader in first speech since Gaza war | Al Jazeera](#)

⁶ [Lebanon-Israel border fighting picks up ahead of Hezbollah leaders speech | Al Jazeera](#)

⁷ [Hezbollah, Israel exchange fire as violence spikes at Lebanese border | Reuters](#); *Ibid.*

Journalists have also been caught in the clashes: on October 14, clashes killed Reuters journalist Issam Abdallah and injured six others in southern Lebanon. And, on October 19, the Lebanese army reported the death of a journalist near the Israeli city of Kiryat Shmona.⁸ The city was evacuated the same day. A total of 42 Israeli communities have now been evacuated along the border due to increased fighting.⁹ While previously attacks stayed within an observed two to four kilometers from the Israeli border, on October 30 reports showed attacks nearly 10 kilometers across the border from both Israel and Hezbollah.¹⁰ The outskirts of the village of Blida in southern Lebanon were reportedly shelled on November 1.¹¹

Human rights organizations have also confirmed the use of white phosphorus by Israeli forces at the Lebanon border in at least three incidents between October 10 and 16, which is highly incendiary and puts civilians at unnecessary risk of burns. More incidents are under investigation.¹² Israel responded that the claim is false.¹³

Displacement and Economic Crisis

Escalations endanger the lives of the 600,000 people living along Lebanon's southern border. As of November 2, the UN reported at least 25,708 internally displaced persons. Of these, 974 are staying in 11 designated emergency shelters in the Sour and Nabatieh districts. The remainder are staying with host families, renting, or in a second house.¹⁴ Those leaving the south are moving closer to Beirut or to cities a little further north like Tyre, which puts additional strain on these communities that are still struggling under the ongoing economic crisis.¹⁵ The minister of economy and trade has warned against individuals stockpiling food; the ministry adopted some emergency measures that included expediting shipping and customs for imported goods to ensure they are not compromised in warehouses near areas of intense fighting.¹⁶

The 2019 economic collapse, which has since significantly devalued Lebanon's currency and drastically increased food and rent prices, means Lebanese civilians (including refugees) already rely heavily on international humanitarian aid and dollars sent from

⁸ [Reuters Journalist Killed and 6 Others Injured Near Israel-Lebanon Border | The New York Times](#); [Israel to evacuate residents of town near Lebanon border after flare up | Reuters](#)

⁹ [Israel strikes two Hezbollah cells in Lebanon, military says | Reuters](#)

¹⁰ [Is the trajectory of Lebanon-Israel border conflict changing?](#)

¹¹ [Israel-Hezbollah crossfire near South Lebanon border on Wednesday | L'Orient Today](#)

¹² [Israel: White Phosphorus Used in Gaza, Lebanon | Human Rights Watch](#); [Evidence of Israel's unlawful use of white phosphorus in southern Lebanon | Amnesty International](#)

¹³ [Human Rights Watch says Israel used white phosphorus in Gaza, Lebanon | Reuters](#)

¹⁴ [Displacement Tracking Matrix Lebanon Mobility Overview - Round 9 \(2 November 2023\)](#)

¹⁵ [More than 19,000 displaced in Lebanon as Israel border clashes escalate: UN](#)

¹⁶ [Israel bombs southern Lebanon in renewed fighting on the border | L'Orient Today](#)

family in the US and elsewhere.¹⁷ Displacement and reliance on host families and communities further north will stretch their limited resources even more thinly.

A spokesperson for Lebanon's fuel importation association reported that fuel and gas imports are still entering, but at a slower rate than before the current war in Gaza.¹⁸ The economic situation has also contributed to shortages of healthcare supplies, vital medicines, and specialized healthcare workers, all of which make it difficult to prepare for an increase in violence and displacement.¹⁹

The current escalating situation comes on top of the Ein el Hilweh clashes in August. Those displaced from Ein el Hilweh had begun to move back toward their homes in recent weeks, as the September 14 ceasefire held for several weeks. The last UNRWA shelter for Ein el Hilweh area residents closed October 6, just days before fighting began in Gaza and along Lebanon's southern border.²⁰ Many remained displaced, however, exacerbating the growing displacement of civilians throughout the country.

Education & Livelihoods

The economic crisis continues to have a devastating effect on education in Lebanon. Students have just begun classes in October. And schools only have enough funding to stay open for a few months.²¹

The recent movement of IDPs into Tyre has put a strain on the beginning of this school year. Teachers and other education officials fear that the increased number of IDPs in the area will mean schools turn into shelters, and therefore students will have to vacate the buildings.²² This has already happened along the southern border, with 50 schools closed since October 10. According to a Lebanese news source, students and teachers are relocating to whatever school is closest, further straining the resources in their new location.

Lack of internet and electricity is a major point of concern for education in Lebanon, as many teachers have turned to online teaching at this time. Setbacks or a total stall in teaching would compound the already sporadic access to education.²³ Schools reported

¹⁷ [Four years into crisis, Lebanon's leaders hope tourism boom will help bypass reforms in IMF bailout | AP News](#)

¹⁸ [Renewed tension in southern Lebanon; Blinken warns Iran at UN: Israel-Hamas war, Day 18 | L'Orient Today](#)

¹⁹ [WHO Regional Director Dr Ahmed Al-Mandhari concludes visit to Lebanon | WHO EMRO](#)

²⁰ [UNRWA-OCHA Joint Sit-Rep Report #13 on the situation in Ein el Hilweh camp, Lebanon \(As of 1600hrs, Friday October 2023\)](#)

²¹ [Lebanon: New School Year at Risk | Human Rights Watch](#)

²² [More than 19,000 displaced in Lebanon as Israel border clashes escalate | Al Jazeera](#)

²³ [Lebanon's schools prepare themselves for war | L'Orient Today](#)

feeling underprepared for a large-scale war and have received limited emergency plans from the education ministry.²⁴

Current displacement is also affecting livelihoods in border villages and beyond. October and November are the peak time for the [olive harvest](#) in Lebanon, and many communities rely heavily on olive farms to support their local economy.²⁵ Workers are fleeing olive-farming villages, leaving farmers without sufficient hands to harvest their crops; others do not have access to their crops at all in areas where shelling has occurred.²⁶

Anera's Response

Our team in Lebanon is preparing for an increase in attacks and displacement. We are prepositioning medical supplies and readying resources to quickly procure and distribute relief items.

Anera's technical and vocational training programs are designed to provide employability skills and job opportunities for young people, including training in the nursing and medical fields. Our multi-dimensional employability support package does this through career guidance, on-the-job training, and connection through our networks of local businesses.

With support from UNICEF, Anera is employing students from our vocational sewing program to make clothes for families from the south of Lebanon who have been displaced by the hostilities with Israel. The students are making 2,957 winter kits containing 21,230 items.

Anera continues to address food insecurity with rooftop gardens on 126 families' homes. The gardens yield large quantities of fresh produce and allow families to increase their income by selling surpluses.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ [Amid Hezbollah-Israel clashes, Christian village in Lebanon plans for war | Al Jazeera](#)

²⁶ [In Lebanon, war with Israel threatens the olive harvest | The New Arab](#)