



Lebanon Situation Report

January 31, 2024

Background

Information about the current period of cross-border fighting is summarized in Anera's last [Situation Report \(December 2023\)](#).

Overview

Since October 8, hostilities have been on the rise between Israel and armed groups in Lebanon. The attacks on the southern parts of Lebanon include shelling, airstrikes, use of flares, incendiary bombs and phosphorus, and gunfire.¹ As of January 18, Israel conducted 3,600 strikes and 161 white phosphorus strikes inside Lebanon.² The confrontations on the border are the most violent between Israel and Hezbollah since their war in 2006 and have already littered the landscape with unexploded ordnance.

The Israeli attacks significantly impacted agriculture in the southern area of Lebanon; as of December 14, the attacks resulted in 340 fires, affecting 41 border towns in Nabatieh and 12 towns in the South Governorate. The attacks destroyed thousands of olive trees and a 600 square meter feeding warehouse, killed hundreds of thousands of birds, damaged hundreds of livestock and beehives, and affected 60 agricultural tents.³ Agriculture is a leading source of income and employment in southern Lebanon, and the interruption of agriculture and livestock value chains may have far-reaching consequences on the country's food security, a particularly unwelcome development in light of the economic crisis affecting Lebanon since 2019.

The conflict in southern Lebanon is disrupting tourism, a primary source of national income. It will exacerbate poverty, which is rising due to political and economic instabilities. Continued hostilities will deteriorate the infrastructure within the water, electricity, and transportation sectors, which are already weak.⁴

Violence at the Lebanon-Israel border

¹ [Gaza War: Preliminary Findings on the Socio-Economic and Environmental Impact on Lebanon, December 2023 | UNDP](#)

² [Lebanese-Israeli Border Escalation, January 2024 | AUB](#)

³ [Statistics on the attacks perpetrated by Israel on Lebanese territory, December 2023 | MoA](#)

⁴ [Lebanon Economic Monitor, Fall 2023 | World Bank](#)

On December 25, Hezbollah fired 30 missiles from southern Lebanon at Israeli military sites and officers; the group announced the killing of two members in the border clashes. In return, the Israeli army bombed several border towns with incendiary ammunition and phosphorus shells while tanks attacked Hezbollah infrastructure on Lebanese territory.⁵

On January 2, an Israeli attack killed senior Hamas official Saleh al-Arouri in Beirut,⁶ along with two other leaders, Samir Findi Abu Amer and Azzam Al-Aqraa Abu Ammar, and an additional four Hamas members in Beirut's southern suburb of Dahiyeh.⁷ The UN expressed concerns regarding a further escalation of conflict between Israel and Lebanon and the potential effect on regional stability, especially when humanitarian aid delivery remains constrained in Lebanon.⁸ UNIFIL also raised concerns regarding the possible escalation of violence and increased vulnerability for people living across the Blue Line, a border fence separating Lebanese and Israeli territories.⁹ The attack heightened concerns regarding the conflict's expansion from southern Lebanon to the nation's capital city of Beirut and prompted the Lebanese government to file a complaint against Israel to the UN Security Council.¹⁰

On January 6, Hezbollah announced that the confrontations with the Israeli army in southern Lebanon killed five of its members. The group also announced that it had bombed the Israeli Meron base with 62 missiles as part of what it described as the initial response to the assassination of Saleh Al-Arouri and his companions. At the same time, Israel responded by targeting sites in southern Lebanon, including the Sidon district, for the first time. The group announced that the hostilities killed 152 group members until then.¹¹

As the hostilities continued to escalate, Israeli fighter jets launched ten raids on the towns of Markaba, Talusah, and Kafr Kila, and Hezbollah announced on January 20 that the group carried out three attacks against Israeli military sites off the border.¹²

Displacement

⁵ [30 missiles from southern Lebanon hit Israeli sites. December 2023 | Aljazeera](#)

⁶ [Senior Hamas official killed in Beirut. January 2024 | Al Jazeera](#)

⁷ [Senior Hamas official killed in Beirut. January 2024 | Al Jazeera](#)

⁸ [We Cannot See in Lebanon What We Are Seeing in Gaza. January 2024 | UN](#)

⁹ [UNIFIL Deputy Chief sounds alarm over escalation risks post Al-Arouri's assassination. January 2024 | LBC Group](#)

¹⁰ [Response to killing of Hamas leader in Beirut 'inevitable'. January 2024 | France 24](#)

¹¹ [South Lebanon is on fire..Hezbollah bombs an important Israeli base and mourns 5 fighters. January 2024 | Al Jazeera](#)

¹² [Two killed in an Israeli raid on a car in southern Lebanon and an escalation in cross-border shelling. January 2024 | Al Jazeera](#)

As of January 16, the hostilities along Lebanon's southern borders with Israel **displaced 83,117 people**, of which, 52% were female and 18% children under 18 years of age. Seven districts reported that some residents had fled, of which 1,120 internally displaced persons (IDPs) found shelter in collective shelters, 82% lived with a host family, 15% rented apartments, 2% lived in communal shelters and 1% lived in a second house. Three hundred forty-two cadastres (Lebanon's sub-district administrative level) reported the arrival of IDPs. Only, two thousand five hundred IDPs have returned to their communities.¹³

Environment, Livelihood, and Food Security

In December 2023, **3.1 million people needed food assistance** in Lebanon.¹⁴ A risk analysis by the World Bank indicates that the conflict will severely impact imports, leading to shortages in food and essential goods.¹⁵ According to statements by caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati, the current Israeli hostilities caused significant environmental deterioration in the south of Lebanon, where the use of internationally prohibited weapons like white phosphorus caused irreversible damage to over five million square meters of agricultural land and forest, as well as thousands of olive trees, causing damages to livelihoods and economic well being.¹⁶ Using such weapons pollutes soil, air, and water and could disrupt the ecosystem in the affected areas.

Agriculture is crucial to the Lebanese economy as a significant contributor to GDP and job opportunities. South Lebanon and Nabatieh constitute 22% of Lebanon's arable land, and agriculture is a key employer and source of livelihood in these regions, which are currently under active conflict. Due to the Israeli attacks on the area, different agricultural value chains have been interrupted, including forestry, honey cultivation, animal and dairy production, and aquaculture.¹⁷

According to the Lebanese Ministry of Agriculture, 351 fires erupted between October 7 and November 16, affecting 53 towns in the South and Nabatieh governorates and burning 930,000 square meters, including 60% forests, 30% agricultural land, and 10% grass area. The fires destroyed over 47,000 olive trees, including old trees dating back 100 years. The Israeli attacks resulted in the death of 200,000 birds and 700 heads of livestock and the damage of 250 bee hives.¹⁸

¹³ [Mobility Snapshot. January 2024 | IOM](#)

¹⁴ [WFP Lebanon Situation Report. January 2024 | WFP](#)

¹⁵ [Lebanon Economic Monitor. Fall 2023 | World Bank](#)

¹⁶ [Israeli military attacks southern Lebanon. December 2023 | Arab News](#)

¹⁷ [Gaza War: Preliminary Findings on the Socio-Economic and Environmental Impact on Lebanon. December 2023 | UNDP](#)

¹⁸ [The Minister of Agriculture talks about the fires and the emergency plan. November 2023 | MoA](#)

Additionally, perennial olive trees are paramount in Lebanon; they are an inseparable part of the culture and heritage and are local and sustainable sources of olives and olive oil, two staples in the two countries' cuisine. The attacks and displacement also affected the winter season's farming of winter vegetables and grains, meaning that the local communities and others who depended on food products from the South will continue to suffer food shortages and potentially increased food prices over the coming year.

Displaced farmers will struggle to grow their crops due to the use of prohibited weapons that will have a lasting impact on the soil and water, and they will also spend tens of years regrowing olive trees to be able to use their olives.

Economy, Education, and Healthcare

The World Bank projects that the conflict on Lebanon's southern borders will substantially affect the economy. As of November 30th, 28% of IDPs sought rental apartments across the country, which caused soaring real estate prices in some regions. The military operations also disrupted local economic production and activity. The flight reservation to Lebanon declined from 98.8% in early October to 63.3% on November 4, implying that the country's income from tourism declined significantly in less than a month.¹⁹

Internal displacement undermines IDPs' access to social services, including health and education. On January 11, the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) denounced an Israeli attack that targeted the Islamic Health Authority Center and its ambulance in the town of Hanine, which led to the death of two people and the injury of others.²⁰ In areas of ongoing operations, open healthcare facilities reported declined consultations.²¹

As of January 16, 7 health facilities closed their doors in Marjayoun and Bent Jbeil, and 50 public schools in border villages shut down either partially or wholly.²² Because of the heavy bombardment, IDPs are unable to collect their medical prescriptions. Displaced children show signs of anxiety and psychological distress.²³

Displacement increases health risks as it deprives people of prompt and secure access to healthcare and makes patients spend longer time without their medication. The attacks on healthcare facilities and health staff will leave these communities vulnerable upon the return of the displaced population. Conflict can also affect psychological and mental health in the long term.

¹⁹ [Lebanon Economic Monitor, Fall 2023 | World Bank](#)

²⁰ [MoPH denounces the targeting of the Health Authority Center, January 2024 | MoPH](#)

²¹ [Response and Readiness Emergency Situation, January 2024 | WHO](#)

²² [Lebanon: At a Glance - Escalation of hostilities in South Lebanon, January 2024 | UNOCHA](#)

²³ [Lebanon: Fighting threatens health system already on the Brink, January 2024 | MSF](#)

Anera's Response

Shelter

The bombardment in southern Lebanon forced people to leave their homes and belongings and to seek refuge in other parts of the country. The displaced populations needed shelter and warm clothes. Responding to that need, Anera produced 2,721 kits of warm garments and distributed 1,431 winter kits during December.

Food Security and Livelihoods

Anera partnered with UNRWA through December 2023. This project sought to reduce food insecurity and poverty among refugees in Lebanon. The project provided capacity building and technical support for Palestinian refugee women to reduce their poverty and food insecurity by creating gardens and starting income-generating activities. Seventy-five women established home gardens and grew their vegetables. They supported their households and acquired new skills, enabling them to develop income-generating micro businesses that offer sustainable livelihoods.

The project also developed the capacity of five women leaders who spearheaded the household garden initiatives in their communities. This will multiply the learned agricultural knowledge and micro-business management skills and guarantee sustainability within the community.

Anera is also implementing the Sustainable Rooftop Gardens Project, funded by the Citi Foundation. The six-month project started in early October 2023 and presents an innovative approach to the growth and harvesting of crops. It aims to build rooftop gardens for 126 families in Lebanon. This sustainable approach supports families to reach self-sufficiency, meet their nutritional needs, and generate income by selling or distributing the surplus to families and neighbors.

Employment

Anera is also implementing the Employment Promotion project, funded by Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). The six-month project targets 300 young people. The project addresses Lebanon's economic challenges, especially the loss of employment since the economic crisis started in 2019. It seeks to improve the employability of young adults between 17 and 35. Anera is implementing the project in Beirut and Mount Lebanon. It focuses on reaching women and persons with disabilities.

The project identifies employment opportunities for youth. It increases their employability through tailored activities and facilitates their transition to new jobs. The project supports micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises in selected job-creating

sectors to improve their competitive position in general. This leads to better working conditions, enhanced safeguarding of existing jobs, and the creation of new ones.