



# Lebanon Situation Report

May 23, 2024

## Background

Information about the current period of cross-border fighting is summarized in Anera's last [Situation Report \(April 2024\)](#).

## Overview

Seventy five percent of children in Lebanon face the threat of poverty — a situation made worse by the escalation of hostilities since October 2023 — with every aspect of their lives severely affected. Civilian infrastructure, including schools and health facilities, has been destroyed, exacerbating lack of access to education, water, and healthcare. The hostilities compound Lebanon's existing challenges, leaving 75% of children vulnerable to poverty and affecting their access to education and healthcare.<sup>1</sup>

On March 22, the Government of Lebanon officially filed a complaint with the United Nations Security Council, alleging Israeli interference with navigation systems at Beirut's Rafic Hariri International Airport. This interference poses a threat to civil aviation safety and security.<sup>2</sup>

The 2024 Lebanon Response Plan — a framework led by the Government of Lebanon and the UN designed to coordinate humanitarian response efforts through 2025 — highlights the urgent need for \$72 million to provide a three-month response, aiding up to 200,000 individuals requiring humanitarian assistance. This includes approximately 140,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) and 60,000 individuals residing in frontline areas. Despite constrained funding, humanitarian organizations persist in delivering life-saving aid to meet the critical needs of affected communities. However, challenges persist, particularly in supporting those in frontline areas, due to funding shortages, limited access, and security concerns.<sup>3</sup>

Human Rights Watch has condemned an Israeli airstrike on a humanitarian center in southern Lebanon on March 27, 2024, labeling it an unlawful attack on civilians who failed to take necessary precautions. The strike, utilizing US-made munitions, targeted a residential structure in the Nabatieh village of Hebbariye housing the Emergency and

<sup>1</sup> [Children in Lebanon are Paying the Price of 6 Months of Increasing Conflict, May 2024 | UNICEF](#).

<sup>2</sup> [LEBANON: Flash Update # 15 Escalation of hostilities in South Lebanon, April 2024 | OCHA](#)

<sup>3</sup> [LEBANON: Flash Update # 16 Escalation of hostilities in South Lebanon, April 2024 | OCHA](#)

Relief Corps of the Lebanese Succour Association, killing seven relief volunteers. There was no evidence of a military target at the site.<sup>4</sup>

### Violence at the Lebanon-Israel Border

Since October 8, Israel has launched nearly 4,000 attacks on Hezbollah along the 120 kilometer (75 mile) border. Over the same period, a total of 4,733 attacks were exchanged between Israel, Hezbollah, and other armed groups in Lebanon. Israel conducted about 83% of these attacks, amounting to 3,952 incidents. The attacks comprised 65% artillery or missile attacks, 25% air or drone strikes, and 10% armed clashes or other methods. Hezbollah and other groups averaged five attacks on Israel daily, while Israel conducted approximately 25 attacks on Lebanon daily—the hostilities caused extensive damage to infrastructure and housing units.<sup>5</sup>

A recent UNICEF report highlighted that six months of hostilities in the southern part of Lebanon killed 344 people, including eight children and 21 women, and injured 1,359 people, including 75 children.<sup>6</sup>

At least 75 civilians have been killed to date. On April 23, an Israeli airstrike in Bint Jbeil killed a woman and her 10-year-old niece. Four other children and their grandparents were wounded in the attack.<sup>7</sup> On May 5th, an Israeli airstrike in Mays al Jabal killed four civilians and injured several others. The strike occurred while residents were inspecting damage from previous attacks during months of clashes between Hezbollah and Israeli forces.<sup>8</sup>

Southern Lebanon faces a significant threat from landmines and other explosive remnants of war, with over 1,200 contaminated areas spanning more than 6.9 million square meters of land. This poses a long-term danger to an estimated 200,000 people, endangering people's lives long after hostilities come to an end.<sup>9</sup>

The Norwegian Refugee Council reports that Israeli attacks in southern Lebanese villages have caused extensive damage to agricultural lands, disrupting farmers' sole income source. Displaced individuals often end up in overcrowded shelters, facing loss of livelihoods with insufficient aid. These attacks worsened existing crises in Lebanon, compounded by a 90% currency devaluation since 2019. Humanitarian aid cuts deepen

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<sup>4</sup> [Israel: US Arms Used in Strike that Killed Lebanon Aid Workers, May 2024 | HRW](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Mapping Israel-Lebanon cross-border attacks, April 2024 | AlJazeera](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Caught in the Crossfire: The Impact of Six Months of Conflict on Children in Lebanon, April 2024 | UNICEF](#)

<sup>7</sup> [LEBANON: Flash Update # 17 Escalation of hostilities in South Lebanon, May 2024 | OCHA](#)

<sup>8</sup> [Israeli strike kills 4 civilians in southern Lebanon, May 2024 | AP News](#)

<sup>9</sup> [Mine Action Cannot Wait, April 2023 | UNIFIL](#)

suffering for vulnerable refugees and Lebanese nationals, impacting food, medical, and sanitation services for families already struggling to survive.<sup>10</sup>

Israeli airstrikes in southern Lebanon caused \$1.5 billion in damage. The Southern Council estimates \$1 billion in building damage and \$500 million in infrastructure damage. 1,700 buildings were destroyed, 14,000 damaged. Lebanon accuses Israel of using white phosphorus bombs, damaging farmland. Reconstruction amid economic crisis remains uncertain.<sup>11</sup>

### Refugees, Displacement and Irregular Migration.

Of the 93,040 registered IDPs, approximately 84% are currently staying with host families, 12% rent houses, and 2% relocated to secondary residences. Among those staying with host families, 24,207 are co-living with their hosts, while 54,591 reside separately. At the same time, 20% of those in host settings live in overcrowded conditions. Around 1,557 displaced individuals (2%) are currently hosted in 18 collective shelters, with five located in Tyre, seven in Hasbaya, four in Nabatieh, one in Saida, and one in Bekaa. Children under 18 years old make up 32% of the IDPs, while 36% are female adults and 32% are male adults.<sup>12</sup>

UNOCHA highlighted that the ongoing protection risks persist for displaced populations, including the threat of physical harm from explosive ordnance and family separation. Concerns about gender-based violence, accessibility for persons with disabilities, and potential instances of sexual exploitation and abuse for those lacking support remain prevalent. Transportation challenges further limit access to vital services such as safe spaces, counseling, and medical assistance in hard-to-reach areas, exacerbating the impact of gender-based violence incidents. Discriminatory practices persist, with certain groups facing barriers to accessing collective shelters and essential assistance.

Additionally, restrictive measures and significant delays in residency renewal and civil documentation appointments, compounded by high demand and limited capacities, pose further obstacles. Displaced women, in particular, face challenges such as a lack of privacy. **Access to clean and safe toilets, as well as consistent access to feminine hygiene products, is a significant concern for women in collective shelters.**<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> [Cross-border hostilities deepen suffering for refugees and local communities in crisis-hit Lebanon. April 2024 | NRC](#)

<sup>11</sup> [Lebanon body puts Israeli bombardment damage at \\$1.5 bln. May 2024 | Al-Monitor](#)

<sup>12</sup> [LEBANON: Flash Update # 17 Escalation of hostilities in South Lebanon. May 2024 | OCHA](#)

<sup>13</sup> [LEBANON: Flash Update # 16 Escalation of hostilities in South Lebanon. April 2024 | OCHA](#)

A delegation from the UN Refugee Agency informed Lebanon's health minister of a drastic budget cut, halving healthcare coverage for Syrian refugees. The minister expressed concern over the decision, criticizing the international community for not shouldering its humanitarian duties despite Lebanon's significant refugee burden. He urged international support for a comprehensive solution to facilitate refugees' dignified return home.<sup>14</sup>

**Many people, primarily Syrians, are leaving Lebanon by boats en route to Europe.** The surge is driven by economic deterioration, limited job prospects, and heightened violence against Syrians in Lebanon. Cyprus has emerged as a preferred destination due to its proximity and affordability, witnessing a significant increase in arrivals from Lebanon. Between January and April 17, the United Nations Refugee Agency verified 59 boats carrying 3,191 passengers departing from Lebanon's shores, compared to only three boats with 54 passengers during the same period last year — reflecting nearly a 60-fold increase. However, Cyprus recently suspended processing asylum applications from Syrians and tightened sea patrols. Consequently, many are now turning to Italy as their desired destination.<sup>15</sup>

**April 2024 was the most dangerous month for Syrian refugees in Lebanon since their arrival in 2011.** Recent incidents in Lebanon have highlighted a concerning trend of violence against Syrian residents. This surge in violence has coincided with heightened tensions following the abduction and killing of a prominent Lebanese official, prompting a wave of retaliatory actions against Syrians. Amid calls for calm from political figures, there has been a disturbing rise in discriminatory practices, including deportations and restrictions on Syrian refugees.<sup>16</sup>

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, during her visit to Beirut with President Nikos Christodoulides of Cyprus, announced a €1 billion financial assistance package for Lebanon spanning 2024 to 2027. This support will strengthen basic services like education, health, and social protection, contribute to urgent economic reforms, and aid the Lebanese Armed Forces with equipment and training.<sup>17</sup> The aid, stretching from 2024 to 2027, primarily focuses on assisting Lebanon in caring for its refugee population, particularly Syrians, with approximately €736 million allocated for this purpose. The remainder of the aid aims to enhance Lebanon's border and migration control. However, this deal has sparked controversy within Lebanon, with some accusing the EU of attempting to keep Syrian refugees in the country to prevent

<sup>14</sup> [UNHCR Inform Abiad of the Reduction in Health Coverage for the Syrian Refugees. May 2024 | MoPH](#)

<sup>15</sup> [Cyprus is favored route for thousands of Syrian migrants escaping Lebanon. April 2024 | Al-Monitor](#)

<sup>16</sup> [If they see a Syrian, they beat them up: the refugees living in fear in Lebanon. May 2024 | The Guardian](#)

<sup>17</sup> [President von der Leyen reaffirms EU's strong support for Lebanon and its people and announces a €1 billion package of EU funding. May 2024 | European Commission](#)

migration to Europe. There are worries that this deal may exacerbate tensions and lead to further insecurity for Syrian refugees in Lebanon, potentially pushing them toward Europe.<sup>18</sup>

### Food Security and Livelihoods

According to the World Food Programme (WFP), 24% of people in Lebanon are food insecure. WFP continues to advocate for addressing the root causes of food insecurity and strengthening institutional capacity in Lebanon. WFP emphasized that sustained donor support is crucial to ensuring continued access to vital assistance for the population.<sup>19</sup>

The United Nations food agency faces challenges in meeting Lebanon's growing nutritional needs amidst escalating hostilities along the Lebanese-Israeli border. With inadequate funding and donor fatigue, it's uncertain how these needs will be addressed. The agency fears its existing supplies could quickly deplete without a backup plan. Lebanon's severe food inflation exacerbates the situation. Meanwhile, funding for assistance programs is declining. Last year, the agency assisted 2.5 million people, but this year's estimate is reduced to supporting around 1.5 million.<sup>20</sup>

Between October 2023 and March 2024, an estimated **1 million people in Lebanon, comprising 19% of the total population, faced acute food insecurity**. This included 582,000 Lebanese nationals, 411,000 Syrian refugees, and 57,000 Palestinian refugees, with forecasts that over 20% of the country will experience crisis or worse levels of acute food insecurity between February and September. **Inflation is the primary driver of food insecurity in Lebanon**. As of February, the country experienced the second-highest food price inflation rate globally, exceeding 180%. The decline in humanitarian assistance poses a significant threat to food security in Lebanon. As of December, 26% of Lebanese nationals and 70% of Syrian refugees received food humanitarian aid. However, a funding shortfall led the WFP to reduce the number of refugee households receiving food assistance by 30% in December. Similarly, the number of Lebanese households receiving in-kind food assistance was reduced by approximately 50% in January. Furthermore, UNRWA warned of the possibility of suspending operations in Lebanon due to severe funding constraints, which could affect approximately 250,000 Palestinians, 80% of whom live below the poverty line.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> [Could the EU-Lebanon aid deal backfire on Syrian refugees?. May 2024 | DW](#)

<sup>19</sup> [Statement by WFP Deputy Executive Director on his visit to Lebanon, May 2024 | WFP](#)

<sup>20</sup> [UN food agency fears an escalation on the Lebanese-Israeli border can cripple aid efforts in Lebanon, May 2024 | AP News](#)

<sup>21</sup> [Lebanon – Complex Emergency, April 2024 | USAID](#)

Declining income opportunities and the depreciation of the Lebanese pound further exacerbate vulnerabilities, limiting households' ability to afford basic necessities like food, electricity, health services, and rent. Negative coping mechanisms, such as borrowing money, reducing health expenditures, and relying on children's work for household income, have become increasingly common among Lebanese, Palestinian, and Syrian households.<sup>22</sup>

### Health & Education

The cross-border hostilities have severely impacted service delivery in southern Lebanon, particularly in health services. Ten primary healthcare centers and 17 dispensaries have been partially or entirely closed, leading to more than 10,000 people, including 4,000 children, requiring essential services such as immunization, critical medications, maternal healthcare, and pre-and post-natal care. Over 16,000 children under five, 17,000 adolescent girls, and 10,000 women living in areas with closed primary healthcare centers experience limited access to early childhood development and nutritional services. In the South governorate, 46% of parents and caregivers noted their children experienced anxiety, with 29% struggling with depression. In the Nabatieh governorate, 46% reported anxiety, and 33% reported depression among children. Among Palestinian parents and caregivers throughout Lebanon, 47% of children expressed anxiety, with 30% reporting feelings of depression.<sup>23</sup>

The Public Health Ministry was notified by Kamid Al-Lawz municipality on April 23, 2024, about an outbreak of Hepatitis A. Forty cases have been reported so far. A field test showed insufficient chlorine levels in the town's drinking water, potentially causing contamination. Water samples were sent to a hospital lab for analysis. The ministry, local authorities, and the Red Cross are ensuring proper chlorination and pump functioning to prevent further spread. Training municipalities in chlorine level monitoring continues.<sup>24</sup>

The ongoing conflict in Lebanon has worsened an existing education crisis, closing 72 public and private schools and affecting up to 20,000 children in the South. **Even before the conflict, over 700,000 children were out of school.** By December 2023, 16% of families resorted to sending children to work, up from 11% in April, with Syrian refugee families mainly affected. Access to public healthcare is declining, and most wastewater treatment plants are non-functional, leading to environmental degradation and water contamination. The hostilities have also heightened risks for children, including displacement, recruitment by armed groups, and gender-based

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<sup>22</sup> [Lebanon – Complex Emergency, April 2024 | USAID](#)

<sup>23</sup> [Caught in the Crossfire: The Impact of Six Months of Conflict on Children in Lebanon, April 2024 | UNICEF](#)

<sup>24</sup> [MoPH Announces 40 Cases of Viral Hepatitis A in Kamed al-Lawz, April 30 | MoPH](#)

violence against women and girls. Additionally, an unknown number of children remain in conflict zones without safe access to education. In technical and vocational education and training schools, students are continuing their education through online learning, while facing limited resources, a scarcity of digital devices, and logistical constraints.<sup>25</sup>

### Water and Sanitation

During the recent conflict Israeli forces have destroyed nine water facilities serving over 100,000 people. Displaced children, particularly those in informal settlements, face increased risks of water-related diseases due to overcrowding and inadequate sanitation. In targeted villages, access to water is limited until repairs are made. A recent UNICEF report found that girls and women feel unsafe using shared facilities, with 59% feeling unsafe using showers at night and 44% feeling unsafe every time they use them.<sup>26</sup>

OCHA maintained that urgent support is required to keep the functionality of water supply systems managed by the South Lebanon Water Establishment, with a minimum of \$500,000 per month needed to ensure basic water provision through public systems. The sector lacks funds to replenish hygiene consumables for displaced individuals outside of collective shelters, necessitating a more comprehensive distribution approach. Furthermore, water fee collection has drastically decreased in the South and Nabatieh governorates, posing significant challenges for the South Lebanon Water Establishment, as there is limited external support available for this public utility.<sup>27</sup>

## Anera's Response

### Food Parcels (Ramadan)

Anera is implementing the 2024 Ramadan in Lebanon project between March and May to fortify food security among vulnerable families in South Lebanon. The project seeks to provide essential sustenance to those in need, ensuring that the spirit of Ramadan can flourish even in the face of adversity. Through a combination of **food parcels** and **cash assistance**, the project helps to meet the nutritional requirements of **3,750 individuals** throughout the holy month. By targeting 750 vulnerable families, the endeavor aims to alleviate the strains of food insecurity, granting families the means to observe Ramadan with dignity and peace of mind. In a country grappling with escalating challenges, food assistance emerges as a ray of hope, offering relief to communities navigating uncertain times. With each distributed parcel and every disbursed dollar, the

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<sup>25</sup> [Caught in the Crossfire: The Impact of Six Months of Conflict on Children in Lebanon. April 2024 | UNICEF](#)

<sup>26</sup> [Caught in the Crossfire: The Impact of Six Months of Conflict on Children in Lebanon. April 2024 | UNICEF](#)

<sup>27</sup> [LEBANON: Flash Update # 16 Escalation of hostilities in South Lebanon. April 2024 | OCHA](#)

project moves closer to its intended outcomes: bolstering food security and enabling families to partake fully in the sacred traditions of Ramadan.

### Hygiene Kits

In the wake of emergencies that have displaced many in Lebanon, Anera is implementing the Emergency WASH Response project between June and July to support IDPs residing in different regions of southern Lebanon. With a focus on hygiene, health, and overall welfare, the project will distribute **5,150 family hygiene kits** and **500 baby care kits**. Through these efforts, the objective is to ensure displaced families have access to essential hygiene items, promote cleanliness, and mitigate health risks. Additionally, the project seeks to engage **local youth volunteers**, fostering community collaboration in the distribution process. As a result, the project anticipates tangible improvements in the health and well-being of the targeted families. Family hygiene kits, comprising crucial items such as soap, bleach, detergent, and toothpaste, are poised to enhance hygiene practices and overall health outcomes. Similarly, baby care kits, including essentials like diapers and baby soap, aim to support the specific needs of families with infants.

### Health and Medications

In its third year, the Critical Access for Refugees to Medicine and Health Services (CARMAH) project, funded by the US State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration, has significantly improved health outcomes for vulnerable populations across eight governorates in Lebanon. With a focus on **enhancing access to medicines for chronic illnesses**, the project has directly reached **15,180 patients** between January and March, providing essential medications and 79,100 medication refills. Moreover, through **capacity-building** efforts, CARMAH has enhanced the knowledge and skills of partner clinic staff, ensuring effective service delivery and adherence to protection principles. With a strong emphasis on beneficiary feedback and satisfaction, the project has continuously refined its approach to meet evolving needs, reflecting a commitment to accountability and responsiveness.