

Lebanon: Beirut Explosions Situation Report #5



3 September 2020

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- COVID-19 diagnoses among health care workers in Beirut are increasing along with hospitalizations. COVID-19 cases have increased by **220%** since the explosions on August 4.ⁱ
- Project HOPE began an **assessment at ten primary health care facilities** in Beirut to determine longer-term programming needs in sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and protection.
- This week, Project HOPE received **two interagency emergency health kits (IEHKs)** donated by MAP International. Distributions will begin in the coming days, in coordination with the René Moawad Foundation (RMF).
- Project HOPE is mobilizing additional shipments of critically needed medical and hygiene supplies, including personal protective equipment (PPE), which are expected to arrive in coming weeks.



Project HOPE volunteer Tara Karganlou interviews local population in Beirut, Lebanon. Project HOPE is actively assessing evolving needs and providing immediate relief in blast-affected communities. Photo by Firas Itani

SITUATION OVERVIEW

Nearly a month has passed since the Beirut port explosions and needs in the city and surrounding areas continue to evolve. Shelter, structure rehabilitation, food distribution, and protection remain response priorities. In the health sector, there is growing concern around the increasing number of COVID-19 cases and, specifically, around the number of health care workers falling ill. As of September 2, more than 670 health care workers had been diagnosed with COVID-19 with 80 new cases confirmed between August 30 and September 1 alone.

A total of 598 new confirmed COVID-19 cases and six deaths were reported on September 2. Not only are cases among the general public increasing but the number of hospitalized patients with COVID-19 is increasing as well. Approximately 60 percent of intensive care unit beds designated for COVID-19 are currently occupied according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA).ⁱⁱ The government-instated curfew has been eased slightly and is now in place from 10pm to 6am to help reduce COVID-19 transmission.

Many hospitals and clinics remain damaged. The World Bank estimates damages to the health sector range from US \$95-\$115 million and losses due to depletion of medicines and supplies range from \$200-

Quick Facts

- A warehouse, reportedly containing 2,750 tons of ammonium nitrate, exploded on August 4 in Beirut port
- 220% increase in COVID-19 cases since the blasts
- 670+ health care workers diagnosed with COVID-19
- 292 health facilities were affected
- \$200-245 million in losses to the health sector

\$245 million. As the recovery phase continues, efforts in the short-term should focus on ensuring continuity of health services and establishing sustainable supply chains of medicines and supplies.ⁱⁱⁱ

PROJECT HOPE RESPONSE

Project HOPE, in partnership with RMF, is continuing to respond to needs on-the-ground by providing immediate assistance through the procurement and distribution of medicines and medical and hygiene supplies. Additionally, Project HOPE is positioning for longer-term assistance to ten primary health care facilities in the Beirut area.

Primary Care Facility Assessment

Project HOPE and RMF are actively assessing ten primary health care facilities on SRH capacity and needs to support longer-term programming. These facilities were identified in coordination with UNCT and Emergency Operation Cells. Project HOPE and RMF are coordinating with the WHO Health Sector Team and OCHA to develop SRH and protection interventions at these ten facilities.

Medicine and Supply Distribution

This past week, Project HOPE received **two IEHKs** in Beirut, including basic and supplemental modules, donated by MAP International. Project HOPE and RMF will be distributing these medicines and supplies to the **Karantina Government Hospital, Base Camp Clinic**, and through **RMF dispensaries**. These IEHKs are in addition to the two IEHKs already distributed to seven local NGOs and health care facilities the previous week. Together, these four IEHKs include enough medicines and medical supplies for up to **40,000 people** for three months.

Project HOPE has established a strong supply chain of medicines and hygiene supplies for local partners in Beirut. Several shipments are expected in the coming weeks including more than **2,100 disaster health kits** from MAP International, **five pallets of syringes**, and PPE including **KN95 respirator masks**. Project HOPE and RMF are finalizing distribution plans for these items based on needs at hospitals, mobile clinics and local partners.

Project HOPE will continue to source items based on identified gaps and requests and ensure items are distributed to where the need is greatest.

SOURCES

ⁱ <https://www.npr.org/sections/coronavirus-live-updates/2020/09/02/908726243/after-beirut-explosion-lebanon-sees-a-spike-in-coronavirus-infections>

ⁱⁱ https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Beirut%20Port_SitRep%20No.9.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/BeirutRapidDamageandNeedsAssessmentAugust2020EN.pdf>

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