

Humanitarian Crisis in Lebanon

Situation Report #1

September 25, 2024

Project HOPE's team is on the ground responding to the growing humanitarian crisis in Lebanon. We are assessing health and humanitarian needs, mobilizing supplies, and deploying surge staff to assist civilians whose lives have been violently disrupted by the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah.

Situation Update

On September 23, 2024, the Israeli military launched airstrikes throughout southern Lebanon, Beqaa Valley, and the Beirut suburb of Dahiyeh. This offensive culminated from a week of escalation that started with a two-day wireless device explosion attack in Lebanon and a significant increase in attacks from both parties. Within 24 hours, Israeli airstrikes killed more than 550 people, injured 1,800, and displaced tens of thousands. These numbers are expected to rise as attacks continue.

Civilians in targeted areas were forced to flee to safer areas in Lebanon, with some receiving advance warnings and evacuation orders via automated telephone messages or through news channels. Even before the last week of intense conflict, more than 110,000 people had already been displaced from southern Lebanon and 200,000 people were estimated to be in need of humanitarian aid.

Currently, tens of thousands of Lebanese citizens are making the difficult decision to leave their homes for safer areas in the Greater Beirut Area, Mount Lebanon, and northern Lebanon. Public schools have opened their doors to offer shelter for thousands of displaced families. The scale and urgency of health and humanitarian needs will increase as civilians continue to be impacted by the traumas of violence, forced displacement, disrupted access to health care, food insecurity, and lack of access to clean water and sanitation.

Importantly, Lebanon's health system was at its breaking point even before the latest escalation of violence, including severe shortages of staff, medicines, and equipment. The attacks in the past week have placed even further pressure on health workers and put stress on the system's existing resources as survivors seek medical care. Project HOPE expects health and humanitarian needs to concentrate in and around Beirut and other areas receiving increased numbers of displaced families.

Key Updates

- Project HOPE, in collaboration with MedGlobal, conducted a **field assessment** in the Greater Beirut Area across **16 schools** now serving as shelters for internally displaced people (IDPs)
- Our team has identified **urgent health and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) needs** for families displaced by the conflict and now living in shelters
- According to Lebanon's Ministry of Public Health, **more than 550 people have been killed and over 1,800 injured** in recent airstrikes
- Civilians are living in a state of constant stress while experiencing the **mental health impacts and trauma** of violence and forced displacement

Project HOPE's Response in Lebanon

Project HOPE's team in Lebanon has been monitoring the situation and coordinating with key local actors since conflict erupted in the region on October 7, 2023. Following the recent increase in conflict inside Lebanon, our team has conducted field assessments to estimate the immediate, urgent needs on the ground and to identify the best avenues to support IDPs.

On September 24, Project HOPE's team, in collaboration with MedGlobal, conducted a field assessment in four areas across Lebanon (Jnah, Mar Elias, Al Basta, and Verdun), covering 16 public schools. The approximate number of IDPs in these schools is over 13,000, including men, women, and children. As the conflict intensifies, we expect more to seek shelter in these schools.

The immediate needs that the shelter coordinators identified include:

- Water
- Non-food items (personal hygiene items, household and cleaning supplies, and dignity items)
- Infant formula
- Diapers
- Pillows
- Mattresses
- Blankets
- Medications for people with chronic diseases

Project HOPE is working in the immediate-term to procure hygiene kits and other essential non-food items to meet what we expect to be a growing demand for these vital supplies.

Project HOPE is also working closely with the Ministry of Public Health to provide medications and emergency trauma supplies to health workers, who are working around the clock to treat thousands of injuries and save lives. As the health system was nearing a breaking point even before the latest violence, Project HOPE is also working on securing essential medications and other medical products to support the overall health system and ensure access to care for people with injuries and people with chronic conditions.

Project HOPE works through emergency medical services, primary health clinics, and hospitals, in coordination with the Ministry of Public Health, to ensure that medication distribution is structured and takes the necessary minimum service package into account.

Project HOPE will soon be conducting health and humanitarian needs assessments in North Lebanon and Mount Lebanon governates. We continue to coordinate and collaborate with key local actors to ensure smooth sharing of information and avoid duplication in response. We are also reiterating our call on all parties for an immediate ceasefire and end to the violence.