

2026 Middle East Emergency Response

Situation Report #2

March 9, 2026

Project HOPE maintains an active regional presence across the Middle East, with teams on the ground responding rapidly to evolving humanitarian needs. In Iran, Project HOPE team members have carried out assessments, recording significant impact to health facilities, the provision of health care, and pharmaceutical and medical supply for both acute and chronic conditions, as well as an increase in disease. In Lebanon, Project HOPE's team is supporting internally displaced families by distributing essential relief items including bottled water, bedding supplies, and hygiene kits, and supporting the strained local health system through mobile medical units in shelter settings. In parallel, Project HOPE has pre-positioned personnel in Iraq and is closely monitoring the Iran border, establishing supply chains for critical medical and humanitarian supplies and coordinating with local partners to ensure preparedness and a rapid response should needs escalate.

Situation Overview

Regional hostilities in the Middle East have resulted in significant civilian casualties and widespread disruption across Iran and neighboring countries. As of early March 2026, available reports indicate that more than 1,250 people have been killed and over 12,000 injured in Iran, while at least 13 people have been killed and nearly 2,000 injured in Israel following missile and aerial attacks exchanged between Iran, Israel, and U.S. forces operating in the region. Casualties have also been reported among U.S. military personnel stationed at regional installations. UNHCR estimates that around 100,000 people left major cities in Iran, moving toward rural and peripheral areas. An internet blackout is in effect across Iran, making information gathering a challenge.

The conflict has also triggered **renewed fighting between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon**. Hostilities and evacuation warnings have been reported nationwide, and Israeli ground forces have entered southern Lebanon. According to the Lebanese Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), **at least 486 people have been killed, more than 1,300 injured, and over 667,000 have been internally displaced**, 120,000 of whom are registered and sheltering in public schools and collective centers. Casualty and displacement figures are expected to rise as the conflict continues. Health facilities in affected areas of Lebanon are reporting an **influx of trauma patients**, as they strive to maintain essential services for chronic disease patients, maternal and child health care, and other lifesaving services. Several facilities face shortages of essential medicines, medical supplies, and fuel required to maintain generator-supported operations.

The escalation has also prompted **renewed cross-border movements into Syria**, with more than 67,000 predominantly Syrian and over 6,000 Lebanese returning or seeking safety across the border in the last week.

Further escalation risks significant humanitarian consequences across the region, including increased **civilian casualties, new waves of displacement, disruptions to health services, and additional constraints on humanitarian access**.

Key Updates

- **U.S. and Israeli attacks on Iran** resulted in the death of Iran's Supreme Leader and other high-ranking officials. Widespread Iranian retaliatory attacks have occurred across the region with reports of **civilian casualties in multiple countries**.
- Project HOPE's on-the-ground assessments of the health situation in **Iran** has revealed a **rapidly deteriorating situation** impacting disease incidence, availability of care, and the pharmaceutical and medical supply chain.
- Project HOPE has **propositioned personnel in Iraq**, building a **supply chain for medical and humanitarian supplies**, and coordinating with local partners to support urgent needs.
- In Lebanon, Project HOPE is distributing **water, hygiene supplies, and shelter items** to sites housing displaced people in the areas of Saida and Beirut/Mount Lebanon.
- Project HOPE has **two Emergency Health Pallets** with essential medicines en route to support hospitals and primary health facilities in Lebanon.
- Project HOPE's team in Lebanon is preparing to deploy and operate **two mobile medical units** to provide primary health consultations, basic medications, and triage and referral services in the North and Beirut/Mount Lebanon.

Project HOPE's Response

Project HOPE team members across the region remain safe, exercising increased caution and continuing to operate and provide essential services in multiple countries.

Project HOPE's Emergency Response Unit has prepositioned personnel in **Iraq** and has carried out **preliminary health assessments in Ahfaz, Iran and the surrounding communities**. Assessments show an **increase of respiratory illnesses and asthma** related to continued bombing of oil refineries. **Shortages of medicine**, including for chronic diseases like diabetes and hypertension, were identified across several locations. Vaccinations and medical supplies are also unavailable in some areas. Many of those communities were already impacted by lack of potable water and access to health care, and now increasing costs of fuel, food, and other goods could have devastating consequences for the most vulnerable.

Project HOPE will continue to monitor the fluid situation in **Iran**, working with local partners to assess the medical needs of the civilian population, particularly in communities that were resource-strained before the attacks due to international sanctions. Project HOPE is also determining the appropriate **supply chain routes** that would be necessary to deliver humanitarian supplies to those in need.

Project HOPE's team is on the ground in all Lebanese governorates, addressing rapidly increasing humanitarian needs and delivering immediate assistance to internally displaced families in close coordination with MoPH, the Ministry of Social Affairs, and sector partners. Project HOPE is **distributing drinking water, hygiene kits, bedding kits, and essential items** to shelters in Saida, Beirut, and Mount Lebanon areas reaching around 1,300 individual within the initial round of distributions. Project HOPE has secured **two Emergency Health Pallets (EHPs) containing essential medications** that will be donated to health facilities facing shortages. The organization is also working to secure and mobilize additional medicines, trauma supplies, and medical consumables to address emerging gaps and ensure the continuity of essential health services. Project HOPE is activating **two mobile Primary Health Care Support Units (PSUs)** in the North and in Beirut to deliver basic primary care services, including psychosocial support within shelters and displacement sites. These units will operate in close coordination with local authorities and health sector partners, with plans to expand the number of units as needs increase.

In Gaza, where Project HOPE provides health and humanitarian programs, all aid crossings have been highly restrained, limiting the movement of personnel and supplies, further straining the limited availability of food and medical resources, and exacerbating the humanitarian crisis.

Project HOPE is also advancing a **cross-border preparedness initiative** to ensure rapid delivery of humanitarian and medical assistance to Syrian returnees crossing the **Lebanese-Syrian borders**. In collaboration with local partners, Project HOPE is planning to establish a 24/7 medical service point at the border crossing to identify vulnerable cases, stabilize urgent medical conditions, and provide lifesaving relief before families move into Syria.

Project HOPE has extensive experience delivering lifesaving health and humanitarian assistance in complex emergencies, active conflict settings, and in close coordination with local stakeholders. The established presence in the region provides Project HOPE with strong **contextual knowledge, trusted partnerships, and the operational readiness** needed to scale emergency health, mental health, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) interventions in response to the current escalation.

Project HOPE is continuing to act in coordination with partners across the Middle East, while remaining committed to the **humanitarian principles** of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence.