

1. Crisis overview



Lebanon is experiencing a multidimensional crisis, with spill over effects from the decade long Syrian crisis, compounded by a rapid economic recession and political deadlock. This has led to a near collapse of basic services, an increase in humanitarian needs, and a significant rise in social tensions. The collapse of WASH and health services particularly, has had severe consequences as it facilitates the current outbreak of cholera declared in October 2022, the first one since 1993. The country’s currency has lost more than 90 per cent of its value, while prices of essential goods, including food, have increased more than 1,000 per cent since 2019. The conflict in Ukraine has further affected prices and supply of food items and energy negatively. As a result, food insecurity and poverty have increased rapidly for all populations in Lebanon. This has led to a rise in the use of negative coping mechanisms and a severe deterioration in living standards for Lebanese and non-Lebanese populations alike, especially affecting persons with disabilities, elderly, women and children. In a country of approx.. 6.8 million people OCHA has classified 2.5 million people in need of humanitarian assistance and protection, including 2.2 million Lebanese, 100,000 migrants, and 210,000 Palestinian refugees. This is in addition to the estimated 1.5 million Syrian refugees already identified as in need of assistance in the country by UNHCR and the Lebanese government.

2. Humanitarian needs & affected population

Beginning in 2019, Lebanon has been experiencing one of the world's worst economic collapses since the mid-nineteenth century, according to the World Bank. This collapse has been made worse by political instability, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Beirut port explosion of August 2020. The economic crisis has led to a wealth destruction, near collapse of public finances, and a shrinking of the middle class as more vulnerable to fall into poverty and those who can, emigrate. Meanwhile, Lebanon is managing the spill over effects from the decade long Syrian crisis. Out of the 6.6 million Syrian refugees displaced outside of Syria, 1.5 million live in Lebanon. In addition to the Syrian refugees, Lebanon also hosts approx. 210,000 Palestinian refugees. This means that Lebanon is hosting the most refugees per capita in the world.¹

Due to loss of livelihoods and rampant inflation, Lebanese and non-Lebanese households are unable to meet their basic needs, and food insecurity is rising. In the face of these challenges more people are relying on harmful coping mechanisms, such as buying food on credit, restricting food consumption, or reducing health and education expenditure. The use of these coping mechanisms has a negative impact on vulnerable groups and their protection needs, as incidents of child labour and child marriages are increasing and people fall deeper in to debt. Prior to the socio-economic crisis, the private sector was heavily relied on for a range of basic services including electricity, health care and education. However, with more people unable to afford these, people are turning to public services. Yet, the mismanagement and neglect of public institutions prior to the crisis means they are unable to meet the full scale of the need, and they are near collapse, with the health care, electricity, and the WASH sector's collapse most acute. There is a severe medicine shortage in the country, and many cannot afford to access primary health care while a majority of wastewater treatment plants and pumping stations are no longer working due to unavailable or unaffordable sources of power.

As humanitarian needs increase rapidly and basic services are near collapse, some groups are more vulnerable than others. Female headed households face compounded challenges as women more often than men are unemployed, reliant on family or community assistance, and their vulnerabilities are heightened due to wide-spread gender inequality. For persons with disabilities and elderly the situation is also of particular concern, as their access to critical health care services has been severely restricted. Increasingly the poverty is also putting young men at more risk, vulnerable to recruitment into violent groups, including ISIS. Migrants and refugee households, already vulnerable due to restricted legal status, have become more at risk of evictions, coerced returns, increased food insecurity, etc., as the crisis unfolds. Finally, within all

¹ It is difficult to know exactly how many refugees reside in Lebanon as UNCHR was disallowed from registering these in 2015. Additionally, generally it is difficult to confirm demographic figures in Lebanon as the last census took place in 1932.

vulnerable groups children are generally hardest hit, as the crisis itself and many coping mechanisms used have implications for their nutrition, education and exposure to labour.

3. The humanitarian response

The National Poverty Targeting Program (NPTP) is the only national social assistance program run by the government, and to enhance the reach of the NPTP, the World Bank is financing a complimentary project called the Emergency Social Safety Net Project (ESSN). Both initiatives provide a package of benefits that includes health, education, and food assistance to families selected based on vulnerability and need. Yet, both have a difficult time keeping up with the increasing poverty. The Lebanese civil society attempts to provide assistance where possible, and this is coordinated through the main forum for the extensive network of national NGOs, the Lebanon Humanitarian and Development NGOs Forum (LHDF). The international humanitarian response is overseen by the RC/HC, supported by OCHA. The main coordination forum is the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), where strategic and operational decision-making and oversight is carried out. It includes representatives from the UN, INGOs, the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, donors and the NGO coordination platforms of the Lebanon Humanitarian INGO Forum (LHIF) and LHDF. The top three donors to Lebanon, considering both humanitarian and development funding are the USA, Germany and the EU.

Against the escalating humanitarian situation described above, there is a consensus to provide assistance based on needs rather than nationality or status. Therefore, the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) targeting Syrian refugees and host communities, active since 2011, was accompanied by the Lebanon Emergency Response Plan (ERP) in August 2021 with a more clear targeting of vulnerable Lebanese households. The ERP is an extension of the Reform, Recovery, and Reconstruction Framework (3RF) which was created to help rebuild after the Beirut port explosion in August 2020. The LCRP is managed by UNHCR, UNDP and Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) and it aims to strengthen the protection, humanitarian assistance and resilience of Syrian refugees and affected populations in Lebanon. It is part of the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP), which combines the national response plans of neighbouring countries managing the spill-over from the Syrian crisis. The ERP, in turn, is managed by OCHA and strictly humanitarian in nature, aiming to address the needs of the most vulnerable Lebanese, migrant and Palestinian refugees in the country. The ERP prioritise eight sectors for assistance, with Food Security, Health and WASH being the top three. The LCRP in turn prioritise food security and basic services.

The two humanitarian response plans are supposed to be complementary, but have in practice overlapped with limited coordination. During 2022 however, there has been an effort to improve this coordination, and in the second half of the year the HCT approved a structure where some of the sector working groups are now being joined between the two frameworks. This will hopefully help to minimise any overlap, and allow for coherent and prioritized sector plans to be developed, something that is essential considering the limited humanitarian funding

available. Furthermore, in the process of analysing data and developing annual plans, there has also been a concerted effort to verify and analyse data together, which will further help with prioritization.

4. Sida's humanitarian allocation

Considering the growing needs across Lebanon, 70 million SEK has been earmarked to respond to the most urgent humanitarian needs without regard to nationality or status. This humanitarian allocation will align with the overarching objective of the ERP to provide multi-sectoral life-saving, humanitarian, support to people in areas of most need, as well as the two first objectives of the LCRP to strengthen the protection and humanitarian assistance of Syrian refugees and affected populations in Lebanon.

The advised sectoral focus is on WASH, health, and food security as these have been highlighted by both humanitarian response plans, albeit with a cross-sectoral priority on basic services. Partners are also encouraged to be flexible in response to the current Cholera outbreak. In all interventions supported, conflict sensitivity, improved protection outcomes, and gender, should be key considerations, as social tensions are on the rise in Lebanon. Additionally, organisations should take environmental impact into consideration when implementing projects. Through this approach, Sida will promote and ensure compliance with the humanitarian principles and encourage partners to have a greater impact while avoiding aggravating the situation.

Finally, to ensure quality funding, Sida will continue focusing on flexibility and localisation as well as to gradually turn to multiyear commitments. But to ensure that urgent, prioritized or underfunded needs are still supported, the portfolio will also maintain some targeted, project specific, funding.

PARTNER	SECTOR	PROPOSED AMOUNT (SEK)		
		2023	2024	2025
AAH	FSL, Nutrition, WASH, Basic Assistance	10,000,000	10,000,000	10,000,000
INGO Forum (IRC)	Coordination	1,000,000	-	-
LHF	Multisectoral	24,000,000	-	-
NRC	FSL, ICLA, WASH, Education, Shelter	10,000,000	-	-
ICRC	Food Security, Health, Protection	10,000,000	-	-
Swedish Red Cross	WASH, Health	15,000,000	-	-

UNRWA	5,000,000 ²	-	-
TOTAL	75,000,000	10,000,000	10,000,000

FLEXIBLE FUNDING & ADDITIONAL ALLOCATIONS 2023

PARTNER	FLEXIBLE FUNDING ³	ADDITIONAL ALLOCATION
OCHA Field Coordination ⁴	2,000,000	-
TOTAL	2,000,000	

² The allocation to UNRWA is preliminary.

³ Flexible funding includes a mix of allocations such as Rapid Response Mechanism and other flexible funding mechanisms.

⁴ Sida provides flexible funding to OCHA's field coordination, and this preliminary allocation is therefore subject to change.