

# Lebanon – Explosions

AUGUST 28, 2020

## SITUATION AT A GLANCE

<b>180</b>	<b>6,500</b>	<b>300,000</b>	<b>171,600</b>
Deaths Resulting From August 4 Explosions in Beirut	People Injured by August 4 Explosions in Beirut	Number of People Targeted by USAID/BHA Food Assistance	Number of People Affected by Damaged Shelters
<i>GoL – Aug. 2020</i>	<i>UN – Aug. 2020</i>	<i>USAID – Aug. 2020</i>	<i>UN – Aug. 2020</i>

- Food security organizations reach 80,000 people affected by the August 4 explosions with food assistance in Beirut.
- USAID/BHA provides approximately \$15.2 million to support populations affected by the August 4 explosions in Lebanon, including through food, health, and shelter assistance.
- USAID de-mobilizes DART and RMT as response efforts shift from meeting immediate needs towards reconstruction.



<b>TOTAL U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN FUNDING</b> For the Lebanon Response in FY 2020	USAID/BHA <sup>1, 2</sup>	\$15,167,951
	DoD <sup>3</sup>	\$3,794,200
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$18,962,151<sup>4</sup></b>

<sup>1</sup> USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA).

<sup>2</sup> Total USAID/BHA funding includes non-food humanitarian assistance from the former Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance and emergency food assistance from the former Office of Food for Peace.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Defense (DoD)

<sup>4</sup> This total does not include approximately \$41.6 million in supplemental funding through USAID/BHA and U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM) for coronavirus disease (COVID-19) preparedness and response activities or State/PRM funding for refugee response activities in Lebanon. Existing State/PRM partners have reoriented activities to respond to the needs of individuals affected by the August 4 explosions.

## TIMELINE

**Aug. 4, 2020**

Concurrent explosions occur at a warehouse near Lebanon's Port of Beirut.

**Aug. 5, 2020**

U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon Dorothy Shea declares a disaster in Lebanon due to the humanitarian impacts of the explosions.

**Aug. 7, 2020**

USAID deploys a DART and activates a RMT. USAID/BHA also announces \$15.1 million to support emergency response activities in Beirut.

**August 9, 2020**

Urban search and rescue operations cease and response efforts shift to providing immediate humanitarian assistance to those affected by the explosions, per GoL request.

**Aug. 10, 2020**

Acting USAID Administrator John Barsa arrives in Beirut to highlight USG's commitment to addressing the needs of the Lebanese people.

**Aug. 14, 2020**

UN releases flash appeal for humanitarian and reconstruction support.

**Aug. 21, 2020**

USAID demobilizes DART and RMT as response efforts shift to reconstruction.

## KEY DEVELOPMENTS

### **USAID De-Mobilizes DART and RMT as Response Efforts Shift Towards Reconstruction**

As of August 25, the August 4 explosions had resulted in at least 180 deaths and injured 6,500 persons, and 12 people remained missing, according to the Government of Lebanon (GoL) Ministry of Public Health and the UN. Following a decrease in immediate humanitarian needs resulting from the explosions, response efforts are shifting towards reconstruction and recovery efforts. As such, USAID demobilized the Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) and Washington, D.C.-based Response Management Team (RMT) on August 21.

### **Relief Actors Respond to Increase in COVID-19 Cases**

Health actors in Lebanon identified 676 new COVID-19 cases on August 28, bringing the total number of cases in the country to more than 15,600 with 148 deaths. The rise in COVID-19 cases since the August 4 explosions prompted the GoL to impose a two-week lockdown beginning on August 21; relief actors responding to the August 4 explosions are exempt. However, the UN notes that the case fatality rate remains low and the pandemic has not yet reached crisis levels in Lebanon. To support national COVID-19 response efforts, humanitarian agencies are hiring additional health care workers; bolstering laboratory testing capacity; conducting COVID-19 awareness sessions; distributing information, education, and communication materials on COVID-19 preventive measures; providing essential medical equipment, personal protective equipment (PPE), and tests kits to health facilities; and training health staff on infection prevention and control measures. In addition to the nearly \$19 million to respond to the August 4 explosions, the U.S. Government (USG) has provided \$41.6 million to support COVID-19 response efforts in Lebanon.

### **WFP Warns of Increased Food Prices; Relief Agencies Reach 80,000 People with Food Assistance**

The UN World Food Program (WFP) warns that food prices will likely continue to increase in Lebanon due to import and market disruptions resulting from the August 4 explosions, even as food remains available at local markets. Prior to the explosions, food prices were steadily rising in Lebanon, with prices increasing approximately 245 percent from October 2019 to June 2020, according to WFP. Moreover, the damage to the Port of Beirut could also contribute to rising prices due to the need to identify alternative, costlier supply routes, including the Port of Tripoli. As local markets remain the main source of food for most households in Lebanon, possible disruptions in supply and reduced household purchasing power may negatively affect vulnerable households' access to food. Additionally, the UN estimates that 70,000 individuals have lost access to income-generating opportunities due to the explosions, directly impacting the ability of more than 12,000 households to meet basic needs. Assessments indicate that

food affordability remains a key concern of populations affected by the explosions, the Lebanese Red Cross (LRC) reports. Meanwhile, humanitarian organizations—including USAID/BHA partner WFP—continue to distribute emergency food assistance to the most vulnerable populations, reaching approximately 80,000 people as of August 25. WFP has also provided food parcels to community kitchens serving 3,000 hot meals per day to individuals affected by the explosions.

### Access to Health Care for Chronic Conditions Identified as Primary Need

As of August 25, health actors report that health needs are shifting towards the treatment of chronic conditions and reproductive care, as well as psychosocial support services. Multi-sector needs assessments have identified access to health care and medicines for chronic illnesses as a priority for female-headed households, those without savings, and those with older family members or members with a chronic illness, according to LRC. Vulnerable households highlighted that financial barriers were the primary hindrance to health care access, as payment is required at non-public hospitals and medical facilities in Lebanon, which provide 80 percent of the country’s health care services. Health actors continue to support health facilities through the provision of medical supplies and medicines, as well as augmenting staff capacity.

## NATIONAL, INTERNATIONAL, AND U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

### KEY FIGURES



**300,000**

Number of people targeted to receive USAID/BHA food assistance

### FOOD SECURITY

Food security was a major concern in Lebanon prior to August 4, and the explosions destroyed silos at the Port of Beirut that processed 85 percent of the country’s grain supply, the UN reports. In response to the explosions, USAID/BHA provided \$10.5 million to WFP, aiming to improve food security conditions for 300,000 people affected by the explosions.

The first WFP shipment of approximately 12,500 metric tons (MT) of wheat flour arrived at the Port of Beirut on August 18 and is currently being offloaded to mobile storage units, after which the UN agency will distribute the wheat to bakeries and millers to bolster the national bread supply. Relief actors also continue to conduct food security assessments and distribute hot meals to first responders and households without functioning kitchens. As of August 25, food sector actors had reached an estimated 80,000 people in 18 neighborhoods in the capital city of Beirut with emergency food assistance, including hot meals and food parcels, the UN reports. Moreover, nutrition partners are conducting infant and young child feeding training sessions, aiming to reach 4,000 pregnant and lactating women.



**6**

Number of USG-procured IEHKs delivered to Beirut

### HEALTH

Humanitarian organizations continue to meet health needs in Beirut, providing essential supplies, medicines, and PPE; deploying mobile medical units (MMUs) to help absorb the caseload from damaged hospitals; and mobilizing additional medical staff through emergency medical teams (EMTs). From August 4 to 25, health organizations provided at least 2,370 medical consultations and treated

approximately 830 people, the UN reports. Additionally, four international EMTs were supporting six hospitals as of August 25.

On August 11, USAID/BHA coordinated with DoD to airlift six USAID/BHA-procured interagency emergency health kits (IEHKs)—containing critical medical commodities sufficient to support up to 60,000 people for three months—to Beirut. The kits were distributed to the American University of Beirut (AUB) and Lebanese American University to support life-saving health interventions. USAID/BHA is also supporting Caritas to expand primary health care services—including psychosocial support—at four Beirut clinics, as well as provide mobile and home health care services to populations unable to visit clinics. In addition, State/PRM partner the International Medical Corps (IMC) was providing PPE and other medical supplies to 19 primary health care facilities, eight hospitals, and two MMUs as of August 25.



**40,000**

Number of buildings damaged by August 4 explosions

## SHELTER

Relief actors have identified shelter rehabilitation as an essential need following the August 4 explosions, particularly in Beirut’s Ashrafieh, Gemmayzeh, Karantina, and Mar Mikhael neighborhoods. In response, USAID/BHA is supporting Lutheran World Relief (LWR) to assist with critical repairs to ensure that damaged homes are safe, secure, and habitable for the most vulnerable explosion-affected households. USAID/BHA is also supporting Caritas to provide explosion-affected communities with basic household items, such as mattresses and stoves, as well as rent support for people whose houses were destroyed by the explosions. Additionally, shelter partners—including State/PRM partner the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)—had reached more than 4,160 households affected by the August 4 explosions in Beirut’s Geitawi, Gemmayzeh, Karantina, and Mar Mikhael as of August 25, including through the distribution of shelter and weatherproofing kits. Humanitarian organizations also continue to coordinate to identify areas in need of shelter support, according to the UN.



**25**

Percent of households lacking connections to main water supply networks

## WASH

Although most of Beirut’s water supply infrastructure remains functional, some households lack access to water due to damaged water lines connecting houses to supply networks. Additionally, many households in affected neighborhoods typically purchase water—either bottled or trucked—and face challenges accessing water services. Of more than 3,640 assessed buildings, an estimated 125 did not have access to the water supply system as of late August. Moreover, the explosions damaged the water supply systems of more than 540 buildings and 3,500 roof-water tanks, the UN reports. In response, three water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) actors are supporting nearly 100 of the 125 buildings without water access to reconnect to the water supply network and have installed nearly 280 water tanks, reaching 480 households in Gemmayzeh and Mar Mikhael, according to the UN. The UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and partners had also distributed more than 3,440 hygiene kits to vulnerable households as of August 25.

Additionally, USAID/BHA is partnering with AUB—in coordination with LRC—to distribute emergency hygiene kits to those affected by the disaster. Meanwhile, State/PRM partner IMC had distributed 1,140 hygiene kits in affected neighborhoods as of August 25.

### **LOGISTICS AND RELIEF COMMODITIES**

From August 6 to 9, DoD delivered five flights of relief commodities, including nearly 230 MT of meals-ready-to-eat, medical supplies, and safe drinking water, to Beirut as part of the USG's disaster response efforts.

**USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE LEBANON EXPLOSIONS RESPONSE IN FY 2020<sup>1</sup>**

<b>IMPLEMENTING PARTNER</b>	<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
<b>USAID/BHA</b>			
Non-Food Assistance			
Caritas	Health, Shelter and Settlements	Affected Areas	\$2,400,000
LWR	Shelter and Settlements	Affected Areas	\$2,200,000
	USAID/BHA Airlifted Relief Commodities	Affected Areas	\$47,751
	Program Support Costs		\$20,200
<b>TOTAL NON-FOOD ASSISTANCE FUNDING</b>			<b>\$4,667,951</b>
Food Assistance			
WFP	Cash Transfers for Food, Local and Regional Food Procurement	Affected Areas	\$10,500,000
<b>TOTAL FOOD ASSISTANCE FUNDING</b>			<b>\$10,500,000</b>
<b>TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING</b>			<b>\$15,167,951</b>
<b>DoD</b>			
	Logistics Support and Relief Commodities	Beirut	\$3,794,200
<b>TOTAL DoD FUNDING</b>			<b>\$3,794,200</b>
<b>TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE LEBANON EXPLOSIONS RESPONSE IN FY 2020</b>			<b>\$18,962,151</b>

<sup>1</sup>Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds. Funding figures reflect publicly announced funding as of August 28, 2020.

<sup>2</sup>This total does not include State/PRM funding for refugee response activities in Lebanon. Existing State/PRM partners have reoriented activities to respond to the needs of individuals affected by the August 4 explosions.

**PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION**

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making monetary contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. A list of humanitarian organizations that are accepting monetary support for disaster responses around the world can be found at [interaction.org](http://interaction.org).
- USAID encourages monetary contributions because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed (often in the affected region); reduce the burden on scarce resources (such as transportation routes, staff time, and warehouse space); can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietarily, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information can be found at:
  - USAID Center for International Disaster Information: [cidi.org](http://cidi.org)
  - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at [reliefweb.int](http://reliefweb.int).

USAID/BHA bulletins appear on the USAID website at [usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work](http://usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work)