



Middle East Situation

Lebanon – Flash Update #11

11 May – 24 May 2026

UNHCR and its NGO partner Amel Association International conduct a psychosocial support session with displaced refugee women in Tyre, South Lebanon, focusing on coping in emergency settings. © UNHCR

Key figures

1,049,328

displaced people registered through Lebanon's government relief platform (MoSA 1 April)

129,724

internally displaced people hosted in collective shelters (DRM 21 May)

635

operational emergency collective shelters (DRM 21 May)

9,397

injuries since 2 March (MoPH 21 May)

3,089

fatalities since 2 March (MoPH 21 May)

912,978

Syrians known to UNHCR (April 2026)

371,548

Syrians who have crossed back to Syria between 2 March – 19 May (Syria GAPC)

82,189

Lebanese have crossed to Syria between 2 March – 19 May (Syria GAPC)

Overview

- Between 14 and 15 May, **political-level talks between Lebanon and Israel were held in Washington** under U.S. auspices, marking a further step in direct engagement.
- On 15 May, Israel and Lebanon agreed to **extend the ceasefire for 45 days**. The talks resulted in the launch of two parallel tracks: a security track on 29 May and a formal political track scheduled for 2-3 June 2026. Despite the extension, **hostilities have remained intense over the past two weeks** since the last UNHCR Flash Update, with continued airstrikes mainly targeting southern Lebanon.
- **Displacement patterns remain fluid**, with many people repeatedly returning home temporarily before being displaced again, especially in southern areas. More people are relying on public spaces, unfinished buildings, host communities, and informal shelters, making vulnerable groups harder to identify and limiting their access to assistance and referral services
- **Displacement orders expanded** beyond southern Lebanon to include Nabatiyeh city, prompting renewed population movements and raising concerns over the geographic expansion of hostilities. **Returns continue to be constrained** by insecurity, widespread housing damage, inadequate access to services, and risks posed by unexploded ordnance.

UNHCR response

Renewed displacement and prolonged uncertainty drive widespread fear, anxiety, and psychological distress, particularly among communities already exhausted by years of instability and repeated displacement. While the ceasefire initially instilled hope in an eventual end to the conflict and prospects for return, displacement remains high and humanitarian needs acute. UNHCR and its partners are delivering protection services, shelter assistance, core relief items (CRIs), and cash assistance to displaced Lebanese and refugees. Alongside the emergency response to internal displacement, UNHCR continues to implement its essential protection interventions, including community-based protection, shelter, multi-purpose cash assistance, and durable solutions programmes for refugees.

Where community endures: Solidarity in Tyre's public garden

Fleeing intensified hostilities in Tyre and surrounding villages, **185 displaced families** (1,182 individuals, including 232 children) are currently staying in the public garden of Tyre amidst difficult conditions. Around 60% are Syrian refugees. The city's **17 collective shelters**, mostly schools, are operating at full capacity, while hundreds of additional people continue to arrive following evacuation orders and strikes. They have sought refuge in open public spaces, where protection risks remain high and access to basic services is limited.

In this setting, the small Ezzeddine Café has become an informal lifeline for the displaced community. Around the café, children gather to play, creating rare moments of normalcy. Its owner, Nadiran – himself displaced and living there with his family – keeps the café open to offer **free access to water, electricity for charging phones, toilet facilities, and a place to gather**. “Every day, the numbers in the garden are growing. Every time there is an evacuation warning, more people arrive,” he explained.



Displaced café owner Nadiran speaks with UNHCR staff inside his café in the public garden of Tyre, which has become a gathering point for families seeking water, electricity, and a place to connect. © UNHCR

As needs continue to grow, such community-led acts of solidarity are important. They complement efforts by the local authorities, the Disaster Risk Reduction teams and humanitarian partners including UNHCR to help displaced access shelter.

Coordination

Under the leadership of the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) and within the Lebanon Response Plan (LRP) framework, UNHCR Lebanon co-leads the Inter-Sector Coordination Group with MoSA, OCHA, and UNDP. UNHCR also co-leads the Protection Sector with MoSA and Oxfam; the Shelter/Core Relief Items Sector with MoSA and the Norwegian Refugee Council, and co-chairs the Cash Working Group (CWG) alongside MoSA and World Vision International. In situations of internal displacement, UNHCR plays a coordination and response role within the sectors the Agency co-leads with the Government and NGOs, while maintaining overall responsibility for the refugee response in line with its mandate.

Protection

Protection risks remain severe as displacement becomes increasingly prolonged and fluid, with many families repeatedly returning home for short periods before being forced to flee again. The main challenges facing displaced families, including refugees, have been legal vulnerability, poor living conditions, and growing difficulty accessing basic services. Non-Lebanese communities are facing even greater risks, including arrest, detention, deportation, and restrictions on movement due to their regular lack of documentation. Among the 78 partners reporting under the Protection Sector in Lebanon, UNHCR and its protection partners contributed to the reach of more than **225,900 individuals with targeted protection interventions** since the start of the renewed escalation, including child protection, Gender-Based Violence (GBV) prevention and response.

How UNHCR and Protection Sector partners are responding

225,900+

individuals reached by protection interventions, including general protection, child protection and GBV prevention and response (23% supported by UNHCR)

114,700+

individuals benefitting from information sessions, awareness sessions, and individual consultations on how to access services or other information (31% supported by UNHCR)

73,600+

Individuals receiving mental health psychosocial support, including community-based psychosocial support (11% supported by UNHCR)

- **Since 2 March 2026, over 35,800 people were reached by UNHCR and its NGO partners through information sessions, awareness activities, and individual consultations on available services and protection risks**, providing guidance on security, available services, and key protection risks like child protection and GBV risk mitigation for displaced families both inside and outside collective shelters. This was complemented by **73,100+ individuals reached via WhatsApp**, alongside ongoing engagement through UNHCR's channels to provide timely guidance and support, including **over 3,700 calls and messages** related to displacement through UNHCR's national call center and online contact form, and **494,000+ visits** to UNHCR's HELP site. Refugee and Lebanese outreach volunteers also recently conducted awareness sessions among displaced communities to counter misinformation, including fraudulent WhatsApp messages falsely claiming the provision of financial assistance.
- UNHCR and its partners provided **mental health and psychosocial support to nearly 8,000 individuals** through collective shelters, community development centres, and outreach activities. Support was delivered by trained social workers, counsellors, psychologists, and outreach volunteers through individual and group sessions, prioritising displaced people affected by insecurity, repeated displacement, and prolonged shelter stays. In addition, UNHCR child protection partners provided structured psychosocial support to 2,500 children facing distress, isolation, and coping challenges linked to displacement
- **Recognising that displacement disproportionately affects persons with disabilities and creates additional protection risks, UNHCR provided targeted support across multiple modalities**, including **892 reached with emergency protection cash, 925 supported through community development centres and outreach volunteers**, and 50 provided with assistive devices and rehabilitation services. These interventions are delivered based on identified needs and may include more than one form of support per individual. **A total of 829 individuals at heightened risk, including 179 children, were provided with emergency case management support**, prioritising those facing acute and complex protection risks such as serious medical vulnerability, violence, family separation, eviction, or exploitation.



10,500+ Syrian refugees supported (between 1 April and 21 May 2026)

through counselling and a one-time cash grant of USD 100, aimed at reducing risks and mitigating harm during their return back to Syria under the current challenging circumstances.

UNHCR launched the **return due to force majeure** procedure on 1 April to respond to humanitarian needs of Syrian refugees who perceive no viable alternative than to return to Syria.

[More here](#)

UNHCR publishes new International Protection Considerations with Regard to Asylum-Seekers from the Syrian Arab Republic

On 21 May 2026, UNHCR published its **2026 International Protection Considerations (IPCs)** for Syria, replacing the interim guidance issued in December 2024 following the fall of the Assad regime. While the IPCs acknowledge significant positive developments in Syria, they underline that conditions have not yet reached a level of stability and durability that would justify cessation of refugee status. UNHCR continues to call on States to maintain protection space, uphold the principle of non-refoulement, and avoid forced returns. The updated guidance recognizes that protection risks persist for specific profiles, including minorities and individuals with perceived political affiliations, and emphasizes that any returns should remain voluntary, safe, dignified, and informed. The IPCs also stress the need for a comprehensive solutions approach combining voluntary return, legal stay arrangements in host countries, and continued resettlement opportunities.

Supporting displaced families facing eviction

UNHCR's NGO partner Makhzoumi Foundation conducted a protection needs assessment following reports of eviction threats affecting four Syrian refugee families residing in a collective shelter in Beirut. The families, displaced from South Lebanon, faced critical protection risks significant medical vulnerabilities. All reported high levels of fear and distress, alongside the absence of alternative accommodation after being instructed to vacate the premises. Given the imminent nature of the eviction, case management follow-up was initiated, including monitoring of living conditions and referral pathways, while advocacy efforts were undertaken with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Beirut Disaster Risk Reduction to seek suspension of the eviction notice and mitigate immediate protection risks.

Shelter and core-relief items (CRIs)

Shelter conditions across Lebanon continue to reflect growing pressure on capacity and uneven distribution of available space, as displacement remains fluid and concentrated in specific areas. Collective shelters in key location hubs, including Beirut and the South, are operating at or near full capacity, with limited absorption capacity for new arrivals, while displacement continues to be largely absorbed outside formal sites through host communities, informal arrangements, or public spaces. Ongoing reliance on schools as collective shelters illustrates the need to support displaced families to find more sustainable shelter solutions outside collective sites, to enable schools to resume education in September.

How UNHCR and Shelter Sector partners are responding

179,000

people assisted through the distribution of core relief items (55% supported by UNHCR)

565

collective shelters assessed by the Shelter Sector (13% supported by UNHCR)

286

collective shelters with repair works completed (15% supported by UNHCR)

- **Advancing a transition towards more sustainable shelter solutions:** As Shelter Sector lead agency, UNHCR contributed to a discussion with the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education on a strategy to support a gradual shift from the reliance on schools as collective shelters, towards more sustainable, medium-term shelter solutions. The proposal includes an approach to consolidate collective shelters, enabling families in sites prioritised for decommissioning as collective shelters to be supported through alternative arrangements or relocated to sites that can remain in the medium term. Further discussions with Government counterparts are ongoing to define priorities and implementation modalities.
- **Scaling up shelter repairs and maintenance to sustain capacity:** A total of **72 collective shelters** are currently benefiting from repair and maintenance activities, reaching over **14,400 displaced individuals**, while **43** sites have been completed and a further **three** remain under rehabilitation, helping sustain functionality in high-pressure locations.
- UNHCR is advancing the implementation of its **Cash for Shelter programme** targeting vulnerable refugee households residing outside collective shelters. To date, the programme has supported approximately 180 out of the 600 targeted households through cash assistance of USD 250 per household. The activity aims to address immediate displacement-related shelter needs and support households with rent, utilities, and minor shelter-related expenses.
- **Delivering core relief items (CRIs) to support basic living conditions:** More than **85,800 displaced people** have been reached with over **221,000 CRIs** inside collective shelters, complemented by more than **40,950 CRIs** distributed outside shelters to **12,000 displaced people** in host communities and informal settings.



UNHCR-supported partitions in a collective shelter create private family spaces, helping reduce protection risks and improve living conditions for displaced households. © UNHCR

Strengthening shelter conditions through community-led initiatives

In collective shelters across North Lebanon, community-led initiatives are helping improve living conditions and strengthen engagement among displaced populations. Through Community Development Centres, Caritas supported initiatives in two shelters hosting over 550 displaced individuals, around 37% of whom are refugees.

Activities include training on basic maintenance and repairs, such as welding and electrical work, as well as barbering skills for young men, alongside the mobilisation of displaced community focal points. These initiatives are complemented by psychosocial support and awareness sessions, helping strengthen community cohesion and promote self-reliance in high-pressure shelter settings, in coordination with the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education.



Displaced families maintain a community garden. © UNHCR

Cash assistance

In addition to direct delivery of multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA), UNHCR continues to play a central role in coordinating emergency multipurpose cash assistance (EMPCA) for refugees. UNHCR strengthened partner delivery through capacity mapping of cash actors with available resources, providing orientation on the cash programme, and finalizing or renewing data sharing agreements. Access to the Refugee Assistance Information System (RAIS) was expanded to support coordination and prevent duplication, while targeting approaches were aligned to ensure coherence and complementarity across partners. As a result, additional refugees are expected to receive EMPCA by the end of May through NGO partners. To date, **over 128,000 refugees have been reached through the joint UNHCR-WFP multipurpose cash assistance programme**, reflecting coordinated, large-scale delivery of support to affected populations.

How UNHCR and Cash Sector partners are responding

490,000

Lebanese reached with Emergency Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance through the Government-led SRSN

128,000

vulnerable refugees reached with emergency Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance

11,998

vulnerable refugees reached by UNHCR with Emergency Protection Cash Assistance grants

- **A total of 11,998 displaced refugees facing acute protection risks have been provided with Emergency Protection Cash Assistance (EPCA)**, enabling vulnerable households to secure safer accommodation or address urgent protection risks. An increasing number of refugees supported are located in conflict-affected areas, reflecting growing efforts to reach populations in high-risk locations. During the past two weeks, **23%** of households receiving EPCA included a family member with disabilities, highlighting targeted support to those most at risk.

UNHCR'S regular programming

In parallel with emergency response activities, UNHCR continues to implement its regular programming for the refugee population in Lebanon:

- Maintain protection services, including case management, protection cash assistance, Gender-Based Violence and child protection support, and facilitates a voluntary return programme.
- Provide multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA) and core relief items (CRIs) to vulnerable refugees.
- Assist with legal residency and civil documentation in coordination with partners.
- Deliver shelter support, including weatherproofing, rehabilitation of substandard shelters, and upgrades of collective shelters.
- Support Community Development Centres (CDCs) providing information, referrals, and access to services.

UNHCR Emergency Appeal for Lebanon USD 61 million

The inter-agency **Lebanon Flash Appeal**, which is currently 54% funded, calls for **US\$ 308.3 million** to provide lifesaving assistance and protection to one million affected people over three months, from March to May 2026. Within the framework of this appeal, **UNHCR requires US\$ 61 million** to reach **600,000** displaced people with protection, shelter, core-relief items, and cash assistance. These programs are aimed to reinforce and complement the Government-led emergency response, and the funding for the appeal should enable humanitarian partners to rapidly scale up assistance across priority sectors over the three-month period. Confirmed funding and projections against the UNHCR emergency appeal reach **approximately 50% of needs** to date.

As of the end of April 2026, UNHCR in Lebanon was **under a quarter funded** – with overall needs totalling US\$ 472.3 million. Flexible and timely contributions are essential to:

- Maintain live-saving protection services;
- Improve and scale-up collective shelters so they are safe, dignified, and accessible;
- Provide financial support to the most vulnerable displaced households, especially those outside shelters;
- Replenish essential supplies so that UNHCR can respond quickly to further waves of displacement.

UNHCR is grateful to donors who have already stepped up to support and welcomes additional flexible contributions that enable teams on the ground to adapt quickly as the situation evolves.

UNHCR and partners presence

UNHCR maintains presence in Lebanon through its Country Office and three Field Offices (Beirut, Tripoli, and Zahle) with a workforce of more than 300 personnel. We deliver our programmes with 13 I/NGO partners (9 national, 4 international) and in close coordination and collaboration with the Government of Lebanon.



UNHCR is grateful for the support from our donors who contributed to this operation

Australia | Austria | Canada | China | Czechia | Denmark | European Union | Finland | France | Germany | Iceland | Ireland | Italy | Luxembourg | Monaco | Netherlands (Kingdom of the) | Norway | Republic of Korea | Sweden | Switzerland | CERF | Private donors

Contact

Juliette Stevenson | Senior External Relations Officer | stenenso@unhcr.org | Beirut, Lebanon
Vi Tran | External Relations Officer | tran@unhcr.org | Beirut, Lebanon

www.unhcr.org/lb | X | Facebook