

# UNHCR Flash Update on Lebanon: Beirut Port Explosions

19 October 2020

## Operational update

### Shelter:

As winter approaches, the urgency of capacitating vulnerable households affected by the 4 August explosions to repair their homes continues to grow.

Between 8 and 19 October **641 households** have received the USD 600 one-time cash grant, reaching 2,179 individuals; the programme targets a total of **11,500 vulnerable households with lightly or moderately damaged homes to allow them to undertake minor repairs**.

The distribution point is in the center of Beirut, allowing beneficiaries to easily access their cash grant, and is organized in accordance with governmental guidelines on COVID-19 prevention. UNHCR staff is present during the distribution to quickly resolve any issues faced.

UNHCR's minor repair and rehabilitation programme also started as planned. The detailed repair needs of 1,874 housing units have been determined, works have been finalized in 12 apartments and are underway in 155. Other units are continuously identified and handed over to contractors.

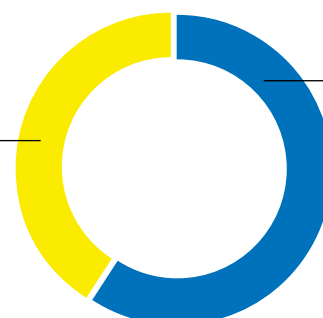
UNHCR also launched a project with the American University of Beirut's Urban Lab to establish neighbourhood profiles of the areas targeted for the shelter programme. These holistic profiles cover the populations living in the area, including the housing, social fabric, integration, demographic, infrastructure and services. The profiles will help inform the choices that UNHCR and other actors make in the short and the longer term, notably when rehabilitating community spaces affected by the explosions, and promote community inclusion, participation and accountability in the process. With a detailed understanding of neighbourhoods as complex systems, well-planned interventions from different actors will complement each other to promote inclusion, social cohesion and improve the lives of its inhabitants in mutually reinforcing ways while respecting unique identities.

## Funding needs

UNHCR is focusing its response to the Beirut port explosions in the shelter and protection sectors. We plan to **reach over 100,000 affected persons** through all our interventions.

**Overall needs:  
USD 35M**

**Unfunded  
41%  
USD 14.35 M**



**Funded  
59%  
USD 20.65 M**  
*as of 14 October 2020*

UNHCR's shelter response pays particular attention to the cultural heritage of Beirut's buildings. The historic urban area of Beirut holds a strong cultural and social value, contains architectural heritage from a broad range of periods, and provides homes to a diverse population of different social, economic and ethnic backgrounds. Acknowledging the cultural value of urban neighbourhoods, we are building the capacity of partners and contractors through a series of online sessions. The sessions cover architectural heritage, pre-1930, 1930-1970, and public and common spaces. In these sessions, expert heritage architects and practitioners explain how to identify heritage buildings or significant building elements and how to preserve and repair structures to maintain the cultural identity of affected areas. The online sessions are followed up with practical fieldwork where partners and contractors visit selected locations, witness repairs in progress and have an opportunity to engage with architects and craftspeople. More than 60 partners' staff participated in the initial trainings. The online sessions will also be replicated for contractors and be followed by on-site investigation visits to familiarize partners and contractors with heritage elements as well as resources on appropriate materials and contacts of heritage craftspeople and artisans.

New relationships have been forged with the Government's Directorate General of Antiquities as well as more than 20 experts part of the ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments) network, specialized heritage architects and craftspeople. The latter will provide technical advice, monitoring and construction management, working with specialized contractors and artisans.

### Protection:

UNHCR's protection response to the Beirut Port explosion enables Lebanese and non-Lebanese who have been affected to access individualized support, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), emergency cash assistance (ECA), services for persons with specific needs, individual rehabilitation services, as well as legal aid. These services are mostly provided by our specialized partners through a referral system. This means that a trained staff who identifies an individual affected by the blast with a protection risk or need will provide the information to the partner who specializes in addressing that need or risk.

### As of 19 October, UNHCR has supported more than:

- **7,600** exchanges with affected individuals through home visits and outreach activities, including **2,000** referrals;
- **690** persons with individual support and tailored assistance through our partners;
- **340** households with ECA, reaching **over 1,150** individuals, helping them to address protection concerns;
- **1,500** persons with specialized mental health and psychosocial support (in addition to the wider scale psychological first aid provided initially at the community level).



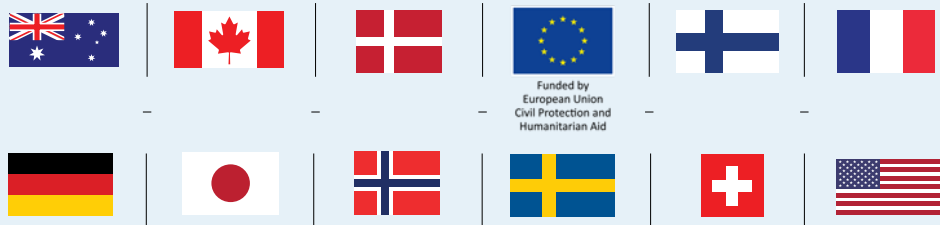
*Four-year-old Syrian refugee, Manar, and her mother Fahima at a mental health centre in Beirut where Manar is receiving psychological support. As part of UNHCR's response to the explosions, Manar was referred to a psychologist at a centre run by our partner, the Makhzoumi Foundation. Manar's mother and her psychologist agree that the sessions have had a positive impact on her post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), using methods including breathing, painting, playing and clay work.*  
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## Coordination

UNHCR assumed co-leadership of the Protection and Shelter sectors and continues to pursue the highest standards for the response through our coordination and technical advice and support. The protection sector coordination has published its first Protection Sector Dashboard and created an online interactive version of the [3W mapping for protection services in affected areas](#).

The shelter sector has published its second Shelter Sector Dashboard and continues to disseminate appropriate standards for the response and coordinate with the Government's Forward Emergency Room.

UNHCR Lebanon is grateful for the support of its donors to our response to the Beirut explosions, including donors of flexible funds and private donors.



**Australia | Canada | Denmark | European Union | Finland | France  
Germany | Japan | Norway | Sweden | Switzerland | United States of America**

## UNHCR Lebanon operation



### Funding:

**USD 607.5 million** requested for the UNHCR Lebanon operation in 2020

**51%** funded as of 14 October 2020  
(USD 285.8 million received)

## Additional links

For further information, please visit – [UNHCR Lebanon website](#) or the [UNHCR data portal](#).

Support UNHCR's emergency response in Lebanon:

<https://donate.unhcr.org/sg/stand-with-lebanon/~my-donation>

### For more details, please contact:

UNHCR MENA Regional Office in Amman at [MENAreporting@unhcr.org](mailto:MENAreporting@unhcr.org)  
Anna King, Senior External Relations Officer, UNHCR Lebanon, at [kinga@unhcr.org](mailto:kinga@unhcr.org)