UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency

LEBANON



LEBANON EMERGENCY
FLASH UPDATE

10 February 2025

UNHCR and partners distributing relief items to people in need in South Lebanon. © UNHCR/Houssam Hariri

98,986
Internally displaced people in Lebanon.
(source: IOM/DTM)

890,830
Persons who moved from place of displacement
(source: IOM/DTM)

270,000
Syrians have returned to Syria from neighboring countries since 8 December 2024
(source: UNHCR)

94,000
Lebanese and refugee arrivals from Syria
(source: DRM)

Situation overview

In the Bekaa, daily crossings at the Masnaa official crossing point (OCP) continue at a low but steady rate, averaging 1,000 entry and exit movements per day. However, no crossings were reported from Qaa OCP due to the worsening security situation along the Qaa and Hermel borders. In North Lebanon, the Arida Official Crossing Point (OCP) remains closed since 3 February as public works are ongoing. Additionally, movements continue to take place across borders through unofficial crossing points.

- As of 8 February, the government's Disaster Risk Management reported approximately 94,000 arrivals from Syria in Baalbek Governorate, including an estimated 20,000 Lebanese returnees. In response to cross-border displacement, UNHCR is coordinating closely with the authorities to primarily focus on measures to enhance material assistance provision.
- Families continue facing obstacles in safely returning to their areas of origin in South Lebanon due to damaged housing and infrastructure, restrictions on returning to certain municipalities, and other limitations on the movement of Syrian refugees.
- Israeli airstrikes in South Lebanon and the Bekaa continued, causing casualties and injuries. The South Governorate faced destruction of homes and infrastructure in border areas by the Israeli Army.
- UNHCR's January 2025 Refugee Perceptions and Intentions Survey (RPIS), shows an increasing proportion of the refugee population expressing a clear intention to return to Syria. Refugees in Lebanon put a significant emphasis on ensuring livelihood opportunities, access to their properties or alternative housing and improved safety security before making a final decision to return.

UNHCR LEBANON

UNHCR RESPONSE

UNHCR continues to respond to the needs of refugees and Lebanese displaced across Lebanon, returning IDPs within Lebanon and new arrivals from Syria, by providing protection services, emergency cash assistance, core relief items, access to safe shelter, health care, and psychosocial support.

VOLUNTARY RETURN

- UNHCR released its Operational Framework for Voluntary Return, which outlines UNHCR's plans to assist the voluntary return of Syrian refugees and IDPs to their homes and to support their reintegration in areas of origin.
- On 6 February, UNHCR published the 10th Flash Regional Survey on Syrian Refugees' Perceptions and Intentions on Return to Syria. In Lebanon, 24 per cent of respondents expressed an intention to return within the next 12 months. Syrian refugees in Lebanon highlighted the need for livelihood opportunities, access to properties or alternative housing, and improved safety and security before making a final decision to return. 61 per cent also highlighted the importance of "go-and-see" visits to take an informed decision on returning to Syria.
- The first Durable Solutions Working Group (DSWG) meeting of 2025, chaired and lead by UNHCR, convened key representatives from the UN, international and national NGOs and donor community, to align on strategic approaches and enhance efforts to support voluntary repatriation of Syrian refugees. A Technical Working Group focused on operationalization of return will convene in mid-February, with ongoing coordination between UNHCR and the General Security Office (GSO).
- UNHCR in Lebanon is currently advocating with the Government of Lebanon (GoL) for a structured process that enables refugees to engage in temporary 'go-and-see' visits and for the removal of administrative and other barriers to return. To this end, a Technical Committee between UNHCR and the GSO has been established to develop clear pathways for return. Moreover, UNHCR Lebanon has also reinforced information to refugees on voluntary return through the UNHCR Lebanon Help Page and community structures, as well as the provision of return counselling through its National Call Centre.

RESPONSE TO INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

- UNHCR is coordinating closely with the authorities and other humanitarian organizations, and providing protection services, emergency cash assistance, core relief items, access to safe shelter, health care, and psychosocial support for those who still remain in displacement.
- In January, 6,240 Syrian refugees and Lebanese have been supported with Emergency Protection Cash Assistance (EPCA), a one-off lump sum payment to address or mitigate an urgent emergency that exposes an individual or household to serious harm or risks. EPCA was mostly used to address risks of eviction, risks and actual homelessness and resorting to harmful coping mechanisms.
- UNHCR and its legal partners provided support to approximately 2,670 displaced Lebanese people, offering legal aid primarily in the form of counseling and assistance on issues related to housing, land and property (HLP), and civil documentation.
- Across the country, 534 Outreach Volunteers continue to identify and refer displaced persons at heightened risk. Families urgently need assistance to secure basic needs, cover rent, find adequate shelter, and afford for healthcare related costs - especially those with serious medical conditions or those requiring chronic medications - mostly in the South and Beirut and Mount Lebanon.
- In January, two Community Development Centres CDCs in Beirut and Mount Lebanon (BML), affected by the war, became operational following the completion of rehabilitation work. In total, 20 CDCs are currently open to receive refugees, Lebanese IDPs, and host community members across the country. The Centres provide communities with opportunities to engage in and benefit from various activities including psychosocial support, awareness sessions and skills-building programmes.
- In South Lebanon, UNHCR is supporting six Social Development Centres (SDCs) to provide community-based protection interventions, including psychosocial support (PSS) activities through sports and art, and stress management sessions for parents and caregivers. Awareness sessions on Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) are being conducted both at SDCs as well as through mobile teams, given the high risk of unexploded ordnance in the south. Additionally, with improved access in the South and Nabatiyeh governorates, three safe spaces re-opened in Tyre, Nabatiyeh and Saida after being closed during the hostilities to provide crucial gender-based violence, child protection and persons with specific needs case management support.
- Together with partners, UNHCR is conducting monthly assessments to better understand and address the protection needs of IDP populations across Lebanon. Initial findings reveal significant challenges to the safe return of both Lebanese and Syrian IDPs, including widespread destruction from the conflict, rising costs of goods and rent, lack of housing, and overcrowded shelters. Additionally, they face disruptions in healthcare and education, as well as increased protection

risks such as child protection, gender-based violence, and family separation. Many also suffer from severe mental health issues due to ongoing uncertainty, violence, and displacement.

- In Beirut and Mount Lebanon, UNHCR and partners provided 380 secondary displaced Syrian refugees and Lebanese with core relief items including blankets, mattresses, jerry cans, kitchen sets and solar lamps.
- UNHCR and partners finalized an assessment conducted in eight Collective Sites hosting 800 IDPs in Mount Lebanon. Findings show that the main needs are repair of windows and doors, latrines and shower fixtures, and additional partitioning. Additionally, UNHCR is also supporting six Collective Sites hosting 1,414 people in Beirut and Mount Lebanon with protection and shelter services.

RESPONSE TO RETURNING IDPs WITHIN LEBANON

- Families continue facing obstacles in safely returning to their areas of origin due to damaged housing and infrastructure, restrictions on returning to certain villages, and other limitations on the movement of Syrian refugees.
- UNHCR continued to monitor the secondary displacement of refugees impacted by the conflict in Lebanon, identifying urgent needs and referring them to relevant services. In January, 5,000 refugees were identified as displaced, with the majority (63 per cent) being returnees to their original places of residence. However, they continue to require protection and other services, including housing and access to livelihoods.
- In South Lebanon, UNHCR and partners stepped up assistance to returning Lebanese IDPs. In January, over 21,000 people received core relief items including blankets, mattresses, kitchen sets, solar lamps, sleeping mats, winter jackets, stoves and hygiene hits. Additionally, some 500 returning IDP families were provided with plastic sheets to weatherproof their affected houses.
- In South Lebanon, UNHCR, in collaboration with a local partner and the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA), has begun distributing assistive devices and other essential items for persons with specific needs. 846 extremely vulnerable individuals have received targeted assistance, including adult and children's wheelchairs, specialized beds and walkers.
- In January, some 2,960 refugees received life-saving hospitalization services through UNHCR's hospital network in the South, Bekaa and Beirut Mount Lebanon regions totaling 44 hospitals. Additionally, UNHCR has provided Saida Government Turkish Hospital Trauma and Emergency Center with advanced intensive care unit (ICU) equipment, enabling the hospital to admit and treat patients with critical trauma and burn injuries.
- As displaced Syrian refugees gradually return to the South and Nabatiyeh, UNHCR and its partner successfully conducted the first post-ceasefire card distribution for multi-purpose cash assistance, benefiting 2,380 vulnerable refugee families.

RESPONSE FOR NEW ARRIVALS

- In light of the rapidly changing dynamics and evolving context in the country, UNHCR continues to monitor the population movements, and engage with refugee and Lebanese returnees' communities to respond to the most immediate humanitarian needs and track intentions, and ensure dissemination of relevant information to the communities.
- As of 8 February, the government's Disaster Risk Management reported approximately 94,000 arrivals from Syria in Baalbek Governorate, including 36,300 in 210 informal collective shelters, with 57,600 in community including 20,000 Lebanese returnees. The numbers have risen from last month due to new arrivals following insecurity in Ghour, Homs. A household profiling exercise is currently underway with the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) and UNHCR's partner Intersos in Hermel and Baalbeck governorates. So far, 1,500 households have been profiled, with the aim, to identify needs and refer the most vulnerable individuals to the available assistance programmes.
- In response to cross-border displacement, UNHCR is coordinating closely with the authorities to primarily focus on measures to enhance material assistance provision. Through the Basic Assistance Sector, UNHCR and partners are providing core relief items including blankets, mattresses, winter clothes and pillows to newly arrived families in collective shelters in addition to providing basic protection services and referrals for people with specific needs.
- At the request of the Government, UNHCR has included provisions in its Referral Health Care Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to ensure new arrivals have access to life-saving hospitalization care. In January, 50 new arrivals received hospitalization care in UNHCR-contracted hospitals.

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