LEBANON: Flash Update #28

Escalation of hostilities in Lebanon

as of 25 September 2024

SITUATION OVERVIEW

- Since Monday 23 September, nearly 600 people have been killed, including 50 children and 94 women, while nearly 1,700 have been injured by strikes across Lebanon (source: MoPH).
- At least 90,530 newly displaced people have been reported including nearly 40,000 in 283 shelters. The last number of IDPs reported before 19 September stood at 111,696 individuals displaced since October 2023 (source: DTM, DRM).
- Two UNHCR staff killed by airstrikes.
- Humanitarian organizations urgently require at least $170 million to sustain ongoing response and respond to new needs.

In the early hours of Monday, 23 September, a large-scale military operation launched by Israel in Lebanon resulted in the deadliest exchange of fire across the Blue Line since October 2023. This escalation follows a weekend of intense clashes between Hezbollah and Israel, including Hezbollah rocket attacks on key Israeli sites near Haifa and Israel's most intense bombardment of sites in Lebanon since 8 October 2023. Israeli airstrikes have since hit dozens of towns across Lebanon, including Saida, Nabatieh, Tyre Bekaa valley and the southern suburbs of Beirut.

This latest surge in violence has caused significant loss of civilian life, injuries and new displacement. According to the Lebanese Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), nearly 600 people have been killed and nearly 1,700 injured in Israeli strikes on southern Lebanon and Bekaa and widespread destruction of homes and infrastructure. It is reported that at least 50 children were killed – more than the number of children killed in the past 11 months – and 94 women are among the victims. UNHCR confirmed that the airstrikes killed one of its staff in Bekaa and her youngest son, injuring her husband and another other child. Another UNHCR staff working in Tyre was killed yesterday.

Israeli strikes also extended to regions previously untouched by the conflict, including an air strike in Akkar (northern Lebanon). Several urban centers, including Aitaroun and Barish in Tyre district, have been heavily affected, prompting mass movements of residents toward Beirut and other areas, and severely damaging water infrastructure in the Bekaa and South Governorates, cutting off access to clean water for at least 30,000 people. This in addition to the 16 water stations previously damaged, further compounding the region's water access crisis and heightening humanitarian concerns as reported by UNICEF.

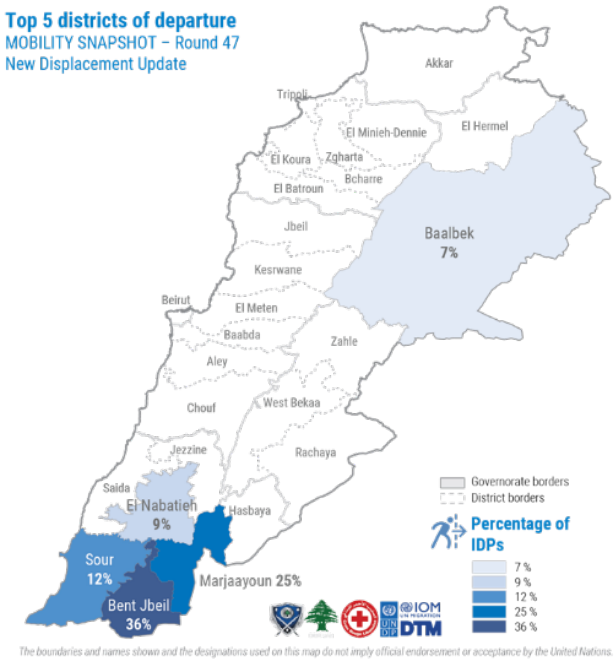
In addition to casualties and injuries, the conflict has triggered mass displacement, with tens of thousands fleeing southern Lebanon towards Beirut and other safer areas. Since 23 September, IOM and national authorities have reported that 90,530 people have been reported as newly displaced, including nearly 40,000 in 283 collective shelters. Efforts ongoing to update on the evolving situation are ongoing. Among the newly displaced, many of the more than 111,000 people displaced since October last year through 22 September are likely to have been secondarily displaced. The exodus of people from south Lebanon to north of the Litani River caused heavy traffic and movement continued on 24 September.

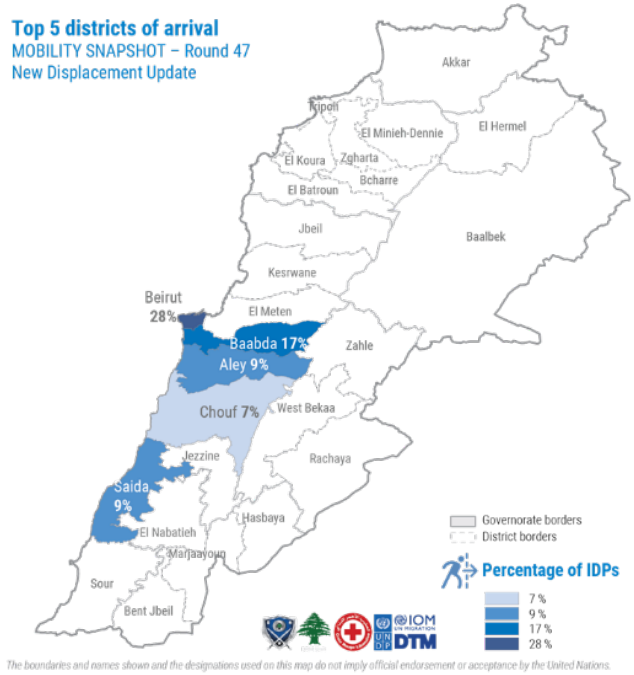
- Displacement has been reported in 193 cadasters across 25 districts.
- The majority of newly displaced individuals come from Bent Jbeil (36%), Marjaayoun (25%), Tyre (12%), El Nabatieh (9%) and Baalbek (7%) districts. Another 13% relocated from other districts.
- The top five destinations (districts) for newly displaced individuals were Beirut (28%), Baabda (17%), Aley (9%), Saida (9%), and Chouf (7%), and 40% displaced to other districts.

The Minister of Education & Higher Education (MEHE) announced the closure of all educational institutions across the country until 27 September 2024 with potential further extension. Lebanese authorities have announced the opening of at least 283 shelters across the country, with the majority being public schools.

On 23 September, the UN Secretary-General expressed grave concern for the safety of civilians on both sides of the Blue Line, including UN personnel, and strongly condemned the loss of lives.

DISPLACEMENT MAPS – 23 & 24 SEPTEMBER 2024





HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

On 23 September, the UN DSCL/RC/HC Imran Riza, together with heads of lead agencies and donor representatives met with the Government of Lebanon, including the Prime Minister and Minister of Environment, who is overseeing the government's response efforts along with line ministries. During the meeting, key decisions were announced to activate the Emergency Operations Center and mobilize urgent response efforts across all sectors. This includes designating schools as shelters, though not all are currently open and ready. Sub-national Disaster Risk Management (DRM) systems are also being activated while they are facing significant challenges due to limited capacity and funding shortfalls. Funding gaps remain for shelter repair, site management, food stocks, fuel and coordination. Additional technical meetings between national authorities and humanitarian partners were held on 24 September on shelter, IDP response and to address overall coordination with non-food items and fuel for basic service provision in these shelters remaining a huge gap. During these meetings, it was agreed that concerned ministries will share an updated list of collective shelters, while it was highlighted that these shelters lack equipment including fuel and water. An ad-hoc HCT is scheduled for 25 September.

To address shelter needs for newly displaced people, the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM) has identified and repurposed nearly 283 locations into collective shelters, mostly schools, so far, with plans to establish additional ones.

Lebanese health services were already overstretched managing the impacts of the simultaneous explosions of pagers and two-way radios belonging to Hezbollah last week, which killed 37 people and injured more than 3,000. In response to these events, the Minister of Public Health (MoPH) activated the Command-and-Control Center (CCC) to ensure effective coordination and patient distribution to different hospitals. Additional casualties and injuries from the escalation of air strikes are further straining a health system already struggling to cope with multiple previous crises. The MoPH is coordinating emergency care and chronic illness treatment for current displaced people, striving to address the urgent health needs of the affected population while attending those wounded in overwhelmed hospitals.

To support health service provision, WHO has worked closely with the MoPH to prepare the Lebanese health system for the management of possible mass casualty events while maintaining the delivery of essential health services. WHO has also provided essential health supplies and worked with the MoPH to integrate mental health and psychosocial services into hospitals making it easier for people to access care during times of war and uncertainty. However, health stock levels remain insufficient for the worsening crisis and restocking is urgent after recent events. UNICEF has procured 25 tons of lifesaving medication and medical commodities

to arrive in Lebanon in the coming days and additional 53 tons under procurement. Many other health sector partners are supporting the Lebanese health service provision across the country.

UN and NGO partners are mobilizing food, water and essential supplies such as mattresses and hygiene kits for distribution to displaced households, especially those in collective sites. Efforts are also underway to assess and monitor fuel requirements for water and wastewater facilities to ensure basic operations are running. UNFPA has some 25,000 dignity kits to be distributed with hygiene kits. WFP has food prepositioned to support up to 150,000 people for five days with ready to eat rations, with dry rations available for 250,000 people for 15 days. Longer-term food support, including cooked meals, faces funding challenges. The Basic Assistance sector has mobilized its partners to provide non-food items to displaced families in collective sites. Continuing challenges include limited resources for response and the congested traffic in the south to reach the shelters with the relief items.

On shelter, more sites are needed, beyond schools. There are substantial financial gaps for shelter repair, while UNHCR and IOM are supporting the conduct of shelter assessments in areas receiving IDPs in collective sites. Additionally, UNRWA has opened two Designated Emergency Shelters (DES) at Toubas School in Nahr El Bared and Siblin Training Centre in the south to support displaced individuals. UNRWA teams are on the ground, with plans to open more shelters as needed, and have pre-positioned food and supplies for assistance. While prioritizing Palestine refugees, UNRWA is also responding to a request to open Nablus school in Saida for IDPs and has activated its emergency response plan, which includes hospitalization for wounded Palestine refugees.

Since 24 September, more than 290 schools across Lebanon have been identified to be repurposed as shelters, affecting access to education for up to 100,000 students and disrupting education for the fifth and sixth consecutive years. This ongoing crisis adds to existing challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, political instability, economic downturns (including teacher strikes), and continuous conflict. The extensive use of schools as shelters not only disrupts the immediate educational process but also has long-term consequences on the academic success and future prospects of Lebanon’s children, particularly affecting the most vulnerable groups.

On protection, the sector has outreached to displaced families and existing cases at heightened risk, prepositioned dignity kits, ensure case management and emergency counseling or planned for protection emergency cash assistance amongst other activities.

Humanitarian organizations urgently require at least $170 million to sustain ongoing response and respond to new needs – this will also increase with growing impacts on the civilian population. Partners urgently need these funds to bring in essential relief items supplies, such as food, medicines and shelter, for immediate response in Lebanon, and to provide support through existing services to the affected community.

Under the leadership of the DSCL/RC/HC, the humanitarian community has been helping in addressing access constraints faced by partners and people in need of humanitarian assistance through the established Civil-Military Coordination (CMCoord) Cell and Access Working Group. Efforts to secure unimpeded access are expanding, but ensuring guarantees for safe humanitarian access to those still in affected areas and collective shelters remains critical.

Sectors’ Partners

ABAAD, ACF Spain, ACTED, ADRA, Alpha, AMEL, ANERA, AVSI, Beit el Barakah, CARE, Caritas Lebanon, CONCERN, Dar El Efta, DCA, DPNA, DRC, Ghirass for Society Development, Handicap International, I m possible, ICRC, Imam Sadr Foundation, IMC, Intersos, IOCC Lebanon, IOM, IR Lebanon, IRC, ISWA, La Guilde, Lebanese Social Responsibility, LOST, LRC, Makhzoumi, MCC, MDSF, MECC, MEDAIR, MERATH Lebanon, Mercy Corps, Mouvement Social, Nabaa, Nabad, Nation Station, NRC, Nusaned, Order of malta, OXFAM, PCPM, Plan International, PU-AMI, PwC, Sanabel Al Janoub, Save the Children, Sawa blessed, SCI, SHEILD, Solidarités international, Swiss Barakah Charity, TdH-L, Trocaire, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UN Women, URDA, WCK, WFP,WHO, WVI

Line Ministries

Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Ministry of Energy and Water, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Social Affairs.

Displacement Tracking Matrix

MOBILITY SNAPSHOT – Round 47 New Displacement Update

Report Production Date: 24 September 2024 | Data collected up till 3 pm on 24 September 2024

Overview

Armed confrontations have been occurring at the Southern Lebanese border since the 8 October 2023. As a consequence, families have fled their homes. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) conducts daily monitoring of population movements to inform preparedness and response planning. This work is carried out in partnership with the Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Unit, technically supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), to triangulate and mutually verify data from the IOM mobility tracking exercise and the household registration exercise conducted by the Lebanese Red Cross (LRC) through the Emergency Operation Rooms (EORs) at the Union of Municipality (UoM) level across the country.

Population numbers for collective shelters and registered individuals have been directly provided from the data collected at the level of the emergency operations rooms, supported by the LRC and the DRM Unit.

Newly arrived IDPs by cadaster of arrival and district of origin

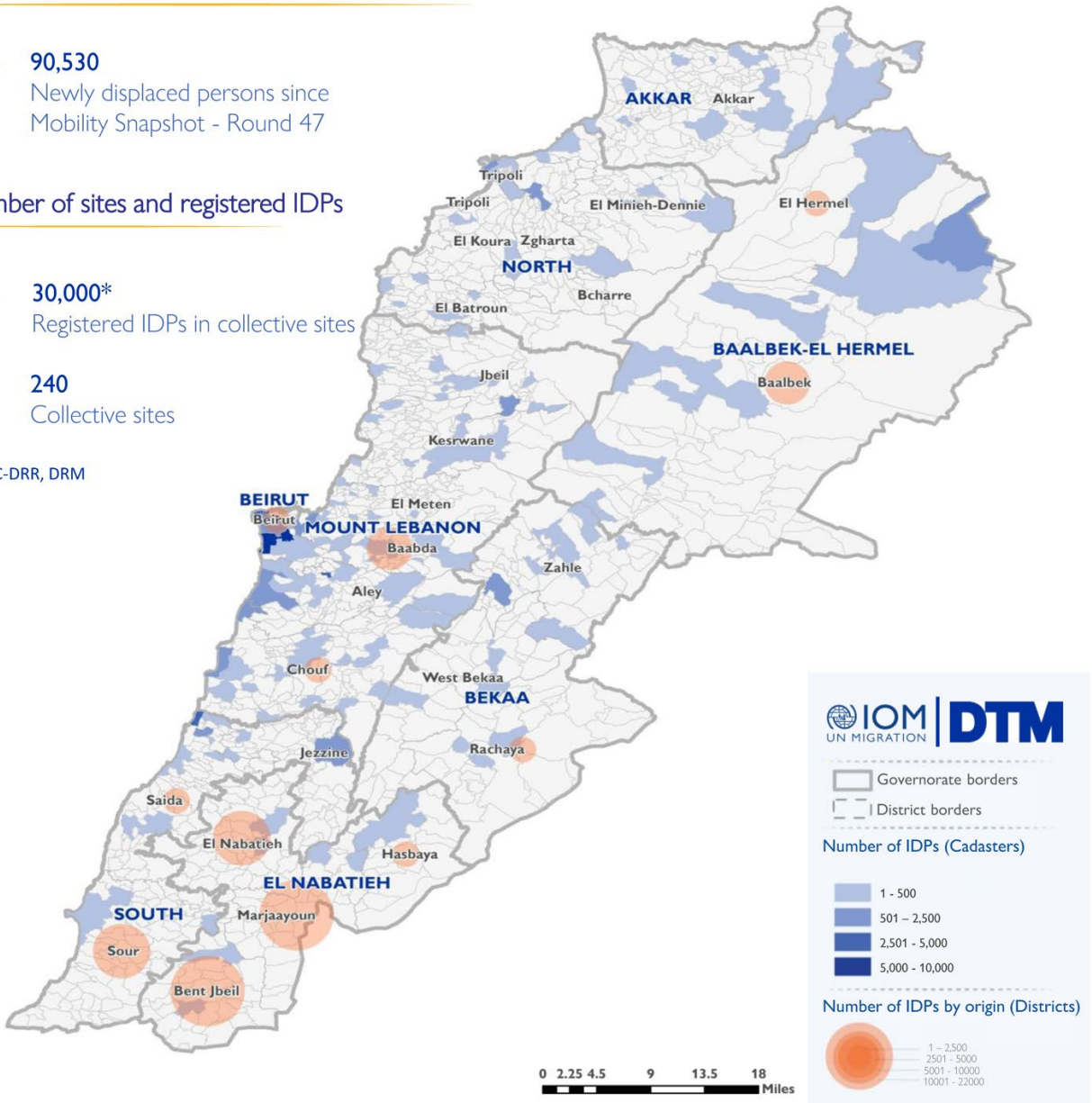
90,530
Newly displaced persons since Mobility Snapshot - Round 47

Total number of sites and registered IDPs

30,000*
Registered IDPs in collective sites

240
Collective sites

Source: LRC-DRR, DRM



*DRM/LRC conducts household level registration for IDPs to inform direct assistance. This complements IOMs mobility tracking which captures an estimate of the total IDP population to inform national preparedness and response planning, as well as resource mobilisation.

This map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.