

LEBANON FLASH UPDATE #6



SAMS

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SITUATION UPDATE

In December 2024, the regime in Syria collapsed, concluding in the removal of President Bashar al-Assad. However, the emergence of new sectarian violence under a transitional government has resulted in widespread uncertainty regarding Syria's future. A violent crackdown has led many Syrian Alawites to flee to Lebanon, turning initial optimism into chaos and conflict.

Recent hostilities in the Tartous, Latakia, Homs, and Hama Governorates have continued to drive people into northern Lebanon, especially in Akkar, resulting in an estimated 30,000 displaced individuals, with more expected to arrive. These newcomers are now spread across 30 locations, primarily in 27 villages near the Syrian border.

According to an update from the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) published on April 4, 2025, new arrivals in Lebanon have surpassed 29,000, predominantly consisting of Syrian refugees and some Lebanese families. Many are living in inadequate conditions, taking shelter in informal settings, abandoned structures, and overcrowded host communities (ECHO, 2025).



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The report emphasizes that the sudden influx of people is straining local infrastructure, raising concerns about potential disease outbreaks, and escalating social tensions. The situation is especially critical in Akkar, Tripoli, and Baalbek-Hermel, where widespread poverty and limited resources hinder the capacity to accommodate many displaced individuals. There is an urgent need for assistance in various areas, including housing, clean water and sanitation, healthcare access, protection services, and mental health support (ECHO, 2025).

A 2025 needs assessment revealed significant challenges related to water access, sanitation, and hygiene for Lebanese and Syrian respondents in Akkar, Bekaa, Baalbek-El Hermel, and Southern regions of Lebanon. While Lebanese individuals generally reported better access to these essential services, many still faced difficulties, particularly in rural areas like Baalbek-El Hermel. Syrian refugees, especially those living in overcrowded camps, encountered severe gaps in water and sanitation services, often relying on external assistance.

The negative impacts of the recent influx of Syrian refugees into northern Lebanon have been compounded by the ongoing harsh military actions launched by the IDF against southern Lebanon. These dynamics have further deteriorated the already weakened health system in Lebanon.

In the South, which is considered the most severely impacted area by the conflict, the urgency of WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) needs appears less pronounced. Respondents prioritize other immediate concerns, such as food, shelter, and healthcare.

Additionally, the emotional and psychological toll of displacement is substantial, with many respondents reporting anxiety, depression, and mental health challenges resulting from the conflict. In Bekaa and Baalbek-El Hermel, 52% of Lebanese respondents indicated experiencing stress due to the conflict, while a similar proportion of Syrians acknowledged facing mental health issues, including anxiety and emotional trauma. In the South, 18% of respondents reported anxiety, depression, or stress associated with the conflict and difficulties in coping with the loss of security and stability, with emotional trauma noted by 4% of Lebanese and 9% of Syrians (Lebanon, M. C., & Lebanon, M. C. (2025, April 8).



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UPDATES ON SAMS ACTIVITIES IN LEBANON

January 1 - March 31, 2025



SAMS is actively running five Mobile Medical Units (MMUs) that effectively meet essential health and social needs through various services. From December 2024 to March 2025, following the activation of the Emergency Mobile Units, SAMS has provided support to 31,956 individuals across Beirut, Hasbaya, Kufurhiem, Jbeil, Bekaa, Baalbak, South, and Al Nabatieh. The services offered include medical consultations, public health awareness sessions, general protection, and psycho-education awareness sessions, as well as awareness sessions on gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual abuse.



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The numbers achieved by the Mobile Medical Units MUs for the last 3 months are as following:

JANUARY



5,821
Medical
Consultations



1,847
Public Health
Awareness
Sessions



1,499
General
Practitioner
(GP) & Psycho-
education



1,732
Gender-based
violence (GBV)
& PSEAH &
Sexual Abuse

FEBRUARY



4,478
Medical
Consultations



1,323
Public Health
Awareness
Sessions



847
General
Practitioner
(GP) & Psycho-
education



927
Gender-based
violence (GBV)
& PSEAH &
Sexual Abuse

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MARCH



5,362
Medical
Consultations



1,959
Public Health
Awareness
Sessions



1,306
General
Practitioner
(GP) & Psycho-
education



1,458
Gender-based
violence (GBV)
& PSEAH &
Sexual Abuse



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LOOKING AHEAD AND NEEDS

Lebanon urgently needs assistance across multiple sectors, including shelter, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), healthcare access, protection, and psycho-social support. The impact of the latest war has been particularly severe in children with a UNICEF report noting that many continue to experience anxiety, depression, and significant nutritional challenges. A January 2025 survey revealed that 72 percent of caregivers reported their children feeling anxious during the conflict, while 62 percent noted signs of depression—an alarming rise from pre-war indicators. Nutritional standards are dire, especially in the heavily affected Baalbeck-Hermel and Bekaa governorates, where over half of children under two suffer from severe food poverty. The crisis also extends to older children, with many going without sufficient meals. Household necessities exacerbate this situation, as 45 percent of families have had to reduce health spending, and 30 percent have cut education expenses. In addition, many households lack access to safe drinking water, essential medications, and adequate heating. As Lebanon navigates the aftermath of the conflict combined with years of political and economic instability, the multifaceted needs of its population remain critical and demand immediate attention.

According to RDNA ^[1] (Rapid Damage and Need Assessment) report prepared by the world bank: Lebanon's Recovery and Reconstruction Needs Estimated at US\$11 Billion, due to the destruction imposed by the harsh war of IDF against Lebanon.



¹worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2025/03/07/lebanon-s-recovery-and-reconstruction-needs-estimated-at-us-11-billion

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In response to these dire circumstances, SAMS is planning to enhance its efforts in Lebanon to revitalize the health system by implementing the following initiatives:

- Establishing a static Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) center in Bekaa.
- Establishing a static Comprehensive Primary Health Care (CPHC) center in Bekaa.
- Conducting a rapid field needs assessment and damage and loss evaluation for all healthcare facilities previously contracted by SAMS under the Secondary Health Care (SHC).
- Upgrading the Cash for Health services under SHC, targeting both Lebanese citizens and migrants.
- Deploying specialized medical missions consisting of SAMS volunteers from the U.S. to Lebanon's most medically underserved areas.





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