



SITUATION

150 + deaths
6,000+ people suffering from injuries and burns

Severe damage to critical health infrastructure:

- 3 hospitals non-functional
- 2 hospitals with substantial damage
- 500 hospital bed equivalents lost
- 17 containers with essential medical supplies destroyed

WHO PRIORITIES

- Immediate emergency care for injured patients
- Ongoing assessments of health impact and humanitarian health needs
- Coordination of the international response, including EMTs
- Continuity of COVID care
- Procurement of PPE for health workers and
- Provision of essential medical supplies to fill urgent gaps
- Rapid restoration of functioning of damaged health facilities

FUNDING NEEDS

USD 76 million for medical supplies and rapidly restoring hospital capacity

Current Situation and Impact on Health Sector

The recent explosion near the main port in Beirut on 4th August 2020 caused widespread damage and resulted in scores dead and over 6000 injured. These casualties have significantly overwhelmed the health system that was already reeling from a socio-economic crisis and the ongoing COVID pandemic.

Furthermore, the MOPH central warehouse where WHO-supported essential medical supplies were stored has been severely damaged, necessitating immediate relocation to a different warehouse. Moreover, a recently delivered shipment of PPE, stored at the Beirut port warehouse pending transfer to MOPH warehouse was completely destroyed, leaving the nation in need of urgent trauma and PPE supplies.



Heavily damaged central drug warehouse, WHO Lebanon

While initial assessments indicate that three major hospitals are now non-functioning and two others are functioning well below capacity, a more thorough assessment of the impact on the health system is required. Early reports indicate that many health centers and primary care facilities are also damaged and/or out of action. WHO is deeply concerned about the hospital and health workforce capacity, supplies of medicine, and potential chemical contamination and is supporting MOH in a detailed assessment of the damage to and functioning of health facilities.

WHO Response

International emergency medical teams (EMT) have already arrived in-country to support the government's response and an EMT Coordination Cell with experienced EMT Coordinator will be established this week. The Coordination Cell will be responsible for overseeing the reception and tasking of EMTs, promoting adherence to international EMT standards, and ensuring appropriate monitoring of and reporting by EMTs.

Though the immediate response will address trauma and emergency medical needs, it is clear that a major humanitarian crisis is also evolving. Up to 300,000 people have been displaced from their homes and need urgent support for shelter and food assistance. The acute displacement of so many people also risks accelerating the spread of COVID-19 and the outbreak of other diseases, including other respiratory and water-borne diseases. This is why WHO is working with MOH to strengthen disease surveillance and ensure disease control measures are in place, especially among the displaced communities and will also work with other sectors to ensure that humanitarian needs are addressed.



Mental health and psychosocial support will also be a key element of the overall health response and WHO will work with local health authorities to address related needs. A Psychological First Aid (PFA) training is already underway for frontline health workers and Media professionals. A set of IEC materials has been developed to this effect. Patients with prior psychiatric disease are also being supported, by ensuring a reliable supply of psychotropic drugs

Continuity of COVID-19 response activities is also vital. Prior to the explosion, the number of COVID cases in the country was increasing. We must try to avoid any reduction in the COVID response efforts, ensuring that all pillars of the response remain active and that there is a reliable supply of PPE and other supplies to replace the lost and damaged materials

Finally, it is not too early to consider the needs to urgently rehabilitate and “build back better” hospitals and health facilities that were damaged. WHO will support the rapid reactivation and restoration of functioning of priority health facilities. We will do this through physical rehabilitation, and the provision of essential equipment, with a view to longer term reconstruction.

WHO Response in Focus

WHO has focused its capacities on meeting immediate trauma, public health and humanitarian health needs. We will take the initial first steps to support the health system respond to the crisis. We will then rapidly transition to rehabilitation and strengthening the resilience of the health infrastructure, with an ultimate view to “building back better.” In so doing, we prioritize the most vulnerable Lebanese and refugee communities. Major activities include:

- **Meeting urgent trauma and emergency medical needs.** Within 24 hours, WHO rapidly deployed 10 Trauma A & Trauma B kits, and 10 Surgical Supply kits to meet the needs of 1000 trauma cases and 1,000 surgical cases. These supplies, generously transported by the Government of the United Arab Emirates, were dispatched to Lebanon by p.m. August 5th via WHO’s Logistics Hub in Dubai. **But further supplies and equipment are urgently required, including for hospital emergency departments (ED) and intensive care units (ICU).**
- **Assessing fully the health impact of the explosion.** Undertaking a full assessment of the impact of the explosion and the resulting trauma and humanitarian health needs will be vital. Identifying gaps and immediate lifesaving needs in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and local authorities, including conducting a health facility damage and needs assessment in the affected area and the access to health services of displaced persons.
- **Supporting the MOH to establish an EMT Coordination Cell and deploying an EMT Coordinator.** This will ensure that international teams are most effectively integrated into the national response and work according to international standards.
- **Ensuring the continuity of COVID-19 services, including the deployment of PPE supplies to replace those lost through the explosion.** We will assist the MOH in strengthening all pillars of the response and will rapidly deploy supplies of PPE to replace those that were lost as a result of the explosion.
- **Coordinating the humanitarian health response for those displaced by the explosion.** This will include ensuring access to essential health services, strengthening disease surveillance, and collaborating with other sectors to ensure disease control measures are in place.
- **Initiating an environmental impact assessment and guidance.** Together with the American University of Beirut, we are assessing the environmental impact of the explosion and developing guidance for people on how to protect themselves from potentially harmful smoke and polluted air (e.g. wearing masks and staying away from blast area).
- **Supporting the rapid reactivation and restoration of functioning of priority health facilities.** This will be done through initial physical rehabilitation and procurement of essential equipment, medicines and supplies.

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Funding Needs

Rehabilitation	Rehabilitation completely demolished hospitals	40,000,000
	Karantina Hospital (public)	
	Wardieh Hospital (private)	
	St Georges (private)	
	Rehabilitation partially demolished hospitals	20,000,000
	Geitawi Hospital (private)	
	LAU Medical Centre-Rizk Hospital (private)	
	American University of Beirut Medical Centre (private)	
	Warehouse reconstruction	1,750,000
	<i>(USD 750 000 secured already by WHO, funding gap amounts to USD 1 750 000)</i>	
<i>Rehabilitations of 30 PHCs</i>	3,000,000	
Supplies	PPE: Three-month stock for 10 hospitals (around 700 beds)	4,000,000
	Tetanus toxoid vaccine- adults	250,000
	Medical and surgical supplies	750,000
		1,500,000
Continuity of Care	Basic operational costs for at least 10 hospitals (700-800 beds) for 3 months:	1,500,000
	Mental health: counseling services for 6 months	2,000,000
	MOPH support staff for 6 months: USD 2 000 00	2,000,000
TOTAL		76,750,000