

SITUATION

135 deaths 5000 people suffering from injuries and burns - 100+ people reported missing

Severe damage to critical health infrastructures

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

WHO PRIORITIES

- Meeting emergency trauma & medical needs
- Ongoing assessments of health system and humanitarian impact
- Coordinating the international response, including EMTs
- Ensuring continuity of COVID care
- Addressing humanitarian health needs of displaced persons
- Undertaking environmental impact and providing health guidance

FUNDING NEEDS

USD 15 million to cover emergency trauma and humanitarian health needs and continuity of COVID 19 response

Current Situation and Impact on Health Sector

The recent explosion near the main port in Beirut on 4th August 2020 has caused widespread damage and resulted in over 135 dead and 5000+ people injured. These casualties have significantly overwhelmed the health system that was already reeling from a socio-economic crisis and the ongoing COVID pandemic. Although needs assessments and search and rescue operations are still ongoing, WHO is deeply concerned about the hospital and health workforce capacity, supplies of medicine, and chemical fumes which might have a harmful impact on the health of people with underlying conditions.



Heavily damaged central drug warehouse, WHO Lebanon

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.

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 proposes to support the MOH in a detailed assessment of the damage to and functioning of health facilities.

International emergency medical teams (EMT) are already arriving in-country to support the government's response. WHO proposes to assist the MOH by establishing an EMT Coordination Cell and deploying an experienced EMT Coordinator. 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.

While the immediate response must 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. But 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.

Donor alert: Lebanon blast 9 August, 2020

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