



UNHCR's Emergency Assistance to Displaced People and Others of Concern in Lebanon and Neighbouring Countries



Displaced Lebanese families sheltered in a congested classroom in a school. UNHCR/
A.van Genderen Stort

Supplementary Appeal

July 2006

Background

The military conflict between the Israeli Defense Forces and the Lebanese Shiia Islamic group *Hezbollah* which started on 12 July 2006 has been escalating steadily over the past two weeks. Fighting and violence are intensifying day by day while Lebanon remains under blockade. Air raids are targeting southern Lebanon, Tyre, Sidon and southern parts of Beirut. At the time of writing, over 370 civilians had reportedly been killed in Lebanon and over a thousand others had been injured. In Israel, 17 civilians were reported killed and over 350 injured. Lebanon's infrastructure is being destroyed, with power plants, bridges, seaports, fuel storages and roads, among others, systematically targeted. Although diplomatic efforts to obtain a cessation of hostilities are underway, there is currently no hope of an immediate ceasefire.

The Humanitarian Situation

Two weeks into the conflict, the impact on the humanitarian situation is alarming, and worsening by the day. It is estimated that so far around 700,000 people have been displaced, and this number is increasing. A large part of the population in the south is under siege, their homes have been destroyed and have little or no access to shelter, food, health, and other essential services. Many are heading for those parts of Beirut which are currently still regarded as safe, or for the mountain areas.

In Lebanon, the majority of the displaced people being accommodated by relatives and friends or are otherwise self-sufficient. There are, however, already 110,000

internally displaced people (IDPs) are sheltered in schools and other public buildings, including in the mountainous regions. The authorities and other institutions such as political parties, the Red Cross, NGOs and religious organizations are mounting efforts to provide initial assistance to the locations where displaced people have concentrated, however, their capacity could be exhausted very soon. Schools and other public buildings currently hosting IDPs cannot support large numbers of people for long periods as they do not have the necessary facilities, in particular water and sanitation. There are no health services for people with chronic medical conditions or facilities for safe delivery for pregnant women.

In Beirut, large numbers of IDPs have arrived mostly from shelled Beirut suburbs and areas further south. Many of them arrived with little resources and are in need of immediate assistance in shelter, food, water and medical care.

Before the conflict, Lebanon hosted over 1,000 recognized refugees, mainly from Iraq, Sudan and Somalia. There were also over 2,600 Iraqis registered with UNHCR under the temporary protection regime. The total Iraqi population of concern to UNHCR in Lebanon is estimated at around 20,000. Most of them were self-sufficient before the conflict. However, the current situation has prompted increasing numbers of them to approach the Office, as many were living in the targeted areas in the southern suburbs of Beirut and are now in need of emergency shelter and other basic assistance. As local authorities prioritize assistance to their own nationals, these groups face particular difficulties and are increasingly dependent on UNHCR.

The rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation in terms of increasing numbers of IDPs is compounded by the continued blockade, which does not permit for the

replenishment of stocks of relief items from outside Lebanon. The destruction of bridges and roads and the threat of continuous bombardments have prevented or significantly limited movements and access to supplies and services. Power supplies and water treatment facilities have been destroyed, and this has affected the functioning of almost all other public sectors, particularly health services and sanitation. A breakdown in public administration, combined with the collapse of the economy, could render the situation untenable for large segments of the population. Such a situation could trigger large-scale outflows of people out of Lebanon.

Over 200,000 people have so far crossed into the Syrian Arab Republic. They are predominantly Lebanese. Most of them were initially able to provide for themselves or were assisted by families and friends, but an increasing number have run out of resources and are in need of immediate assistance.

UNHCR's Initial Response

Activities

Lebanon

At the time of writing this appeal, UNHCR was boosting its operational capacity in terms of staffing and logistics, and stocking additional equipment and humanitarian supplies. UNHCR also supported actively the establishment of an emergency relief coordination mechanism in Beirut, in close cooperation with local authorities, other UN agencies and international organizations, particularly with the ICRC, as well as with NGOs.

UNHCR Beirut staff have been carrying out field assessments and mapping out sites where the IDPs have settled. National staff staying in the mountain areas have also been making assessments in those locations. They have been able to make local purchases of some urgently needed non-food items, such as mattresses, and have distributed them to needy displaced people. UNHCR international staff has also carried out field visits to areas hosting IDPs and arranged for further local purchases, pending the arrival of larger stocks of non-food items from outside the country.

Finally, UNHCR has made arrangements for emergency shelter and provided relief assistance to refugees and asylum-seekers affected by the conflict who have approached the Office.



Damascus: The first UNHCR's convoy with relief items from Amman arrives in Damascus. *UNHCR/N. Magerramov*

Syrian Arab Republic

To strengthen UNHCR's emergency response to the Middle East crisis, a regional operation coordination cell is being established in Damascus, in order to support the operations in Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and other affected countries in the region.

UNHCR has provided non-food items from its existing stockpiles to its implementing partner, the Syrian Arab Red Crescent,

since mid-July was distributing them to an increasing number of needy people arriving from Lebanon. Non-food items to cover the needs of 20,000 people arrived in Damascus and more are under way. The items include mattresses, blankets, tents, lanterns, kitchen sets, jerry cans, stoves and plastic sheeting.

UNHCR monitoring teams were present at all four border entry crossings with Lebanon.

Other locations

UNHCR is prepositioning non-food items in Larnaca (Cyprus) for onward sea shipment to Beirut. A stockpile of non-food items is already in Amman (Jordan) and Kuwait. Amman is a logistics back-up to Damascus due to the existing infrastructure and stocks of relief supplies established to support UNHCR's Iraq operation. In Turkey, Mersin and Iskenderun are also potential logistics alternatives for the delivery of non-food items.

Staffing

An emergency mobile team comprised of 35 staff has been mobilized to supplement UNHCR staff already on the ground in Lebanon, Syria and Cyprus, (Seventeen in Lebanon, Sixteen in Syria and two in Cyprus).

In Lebanon, four international staff have remained after most were evacuated. Staff from the emergency mobile team have started arriving in Beirut. There are also 20 national staff on the ground who, for security reasons, report to the UNHCR office intermittently. Three of them sought refuge in the mountains at the start of the aerial bombardment and are now working in their current locations to assist the displaced populations in public buildings.

In the Syrian Arab Republic, UNHCR's presence is comprised of three international and seventeen national staff. As Damascus is envisaged to be a hub for this emergency operation, an emergency mobile team of sixteen international staff is being deployed there. Some of these staff have already arrived, and the last ones are due to arrive before 30 July.

In Cyprus, UNHCR's office has two international and five national staff. Two of them have been deployed to the port entry points of Larnaca and Limassol for border monitoring and protection intervention purposes. Two additional staff members have been deployed from the emergency mobile team.

UNHCR also has an international presence in **Jordan** and **Egypt**, which could be reinforced if needed.



Damascus/Offloading of UNHCR relief items. UNHCR/
N.Magerramov/July 2006

UNHCR'S APPEAL

This appeal details UNHCR's requirements in Lebanon and in neighbouring countries for an initial period of three months. UNHCR has also established contingency plans should the situation require the continuation of the emergency operation.

In Lebanon, as part of the "cluster approach" to situations of internal displacement endorsed by the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator on 21 July 2006, **UNHCR is the designated UN lead agency for the protection cluster and the emergency shelter cluster**. UNHCR will ensure that the UN and other partners' protection efforts are complementary to the activities of the ICRC. UNHCR will also take the lead in the management of collective centres and distribution of non-food items.

The cluster approach involves close coordination and collaboration with national governments, other UN agencies and international organizations such as IOM, international and national NGOs and other stakeholders, to ensure a predictable response.

In the Syrian Arab Republic, Lebanese nationals fleeing the conflict and arriving in Syria and neighboring countries are of concern to UNHCR and the international community at large, and in need of protection. UNHCR will provide emergency shelter and non-food items to the displaced people and closely coordinate its protection activities with other partners.

Protection

UNHCR's main **objective** is to ensure physical and material safety of the most vulnerable displaced people and other people of concern in Lebanon as well as in neighbouring countries, with particular emphasis on women, children and the elderly. UNHCR has a mandate for the protection of refugees, asylum-seekers and potentially stateless persons in Lebanon.

Activities:

UNHCR will ensure that there is a coordinated approach to the protection of the displaced among all those involved in the humanitarian relief effort both in Lebanon and in the surrounding countries. UNHCR, in collaboration with others, will:

- Map sites where the displaced have concentrated, profile and monitor displaced populations;
- Assess the needs of those displaced by the conflict,
- Establish a presence in main sites hosting displaced people, including collective centres;
- Ensure that systems are in place, particularly in collective centres, to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence;
- Monitor border entry points to identify and assist the most vulnerable arrivals and assess potential outflows;
- Ensure that beneficiaries have access to assistance and other basic rights in a non-discriminatory manner.

- Coordinate a basic monitoring system to ensure that basic rights are upheld and that those displaced are settling in safety and dignity.

Emergency shelter, site management and provision of non-food items

UNHCR’s **objective** under this sector is to identify and assist vulnerable refugees, the IDPs and other persons of concern through provision of emergency shelter, management of collective centres and provision of non-food items.



Traumatized and anxious families live in crowded classrooms in schools. *UNHCR/C. Lau*

Activities:

- Establish an emergency response capacity to meet to the needs of 150,000 displaced people;
- Set up appropriate logistics mechanisms in coordination with other partners;
- Provide non-food items and shelter to the most vulnerable displaced people;
- Design shelter assistance strategies to minimize tensions between the displaced people and host communities, which include the provision of assistance to families and communities hosting displaced people;

- Identifying possible new sites and/or communal buildings, and undertake rehabilitation, where necessary, to keep minimum living standards;
- Coordinate the emergency response with other actors to address the needs of those living in communal buildings and collective centres.

BENEFICIARIES

<p>Lebanon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100,000 of the most vulnerable internally displaced people and other people of concern, including: • Over 1,000 recognized refugees, mainly from Iraq, Sudan and Somalia; • Over 2,600 Iraqis registered with UNHCR under the temporary protection regime; • 20,000 Iraqis in Lebanon who are of concern to UNHCR. 	<p>Assistance will be provided mainly in collective centres for displaced people.</p> <p>This population has been living mainly in southern parts of Beirut, and has become vulnerable due to the conflict. They are increasingly approaching UNHCR for assistance.</p>
<p>Syria (and potentially other neighbouring countries):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50,000 of the most vulnerable people arriving from Lebanon. 	<p>Assistance will be provided wherever required, including at border entry points, communal displaced sites, host families, etc.</p>

As this appeal includes UNHCR's needs for the initial first phase of three months of the emergency operation, it only targets the most vulnerable among the displaced, estimated at around 150,000 beneficiaries. Should the need arise, UNHCR plans to assist up to 600,000 displaced persons of concern, of which 500,000 would be in Lebanon, 65,000 in Syria, 15,000 in Jordan, 10,000 in Egypt and 10,000 in Cyprus.



Lebanese displaced children must adapt to harsh conditions while living in schools and other public buildings. *UNHCR/C. Lau*

CHALLENGES

Access to beneficiaries largely depends on the assurance of security for movements of staff and relief items. Under the current circumstances, the volatile and unpredictable security environment is the main obstacle for building operational capacity and for the delivery of humanitarian assistance. The safe passage of humanitarian workers and relief items is subject to negotiations with the parties to the conflict and coordination amongst humanitarian actors.

Additional logistical challenges are arising as a result of the destruction or damage to airports, seaports and roads.

The unpredictability of the situation calls for flexible planning allowing for fast reaction and adaptation should a change in the current situation trigger an immediate and large-scale return of all displaced populations.

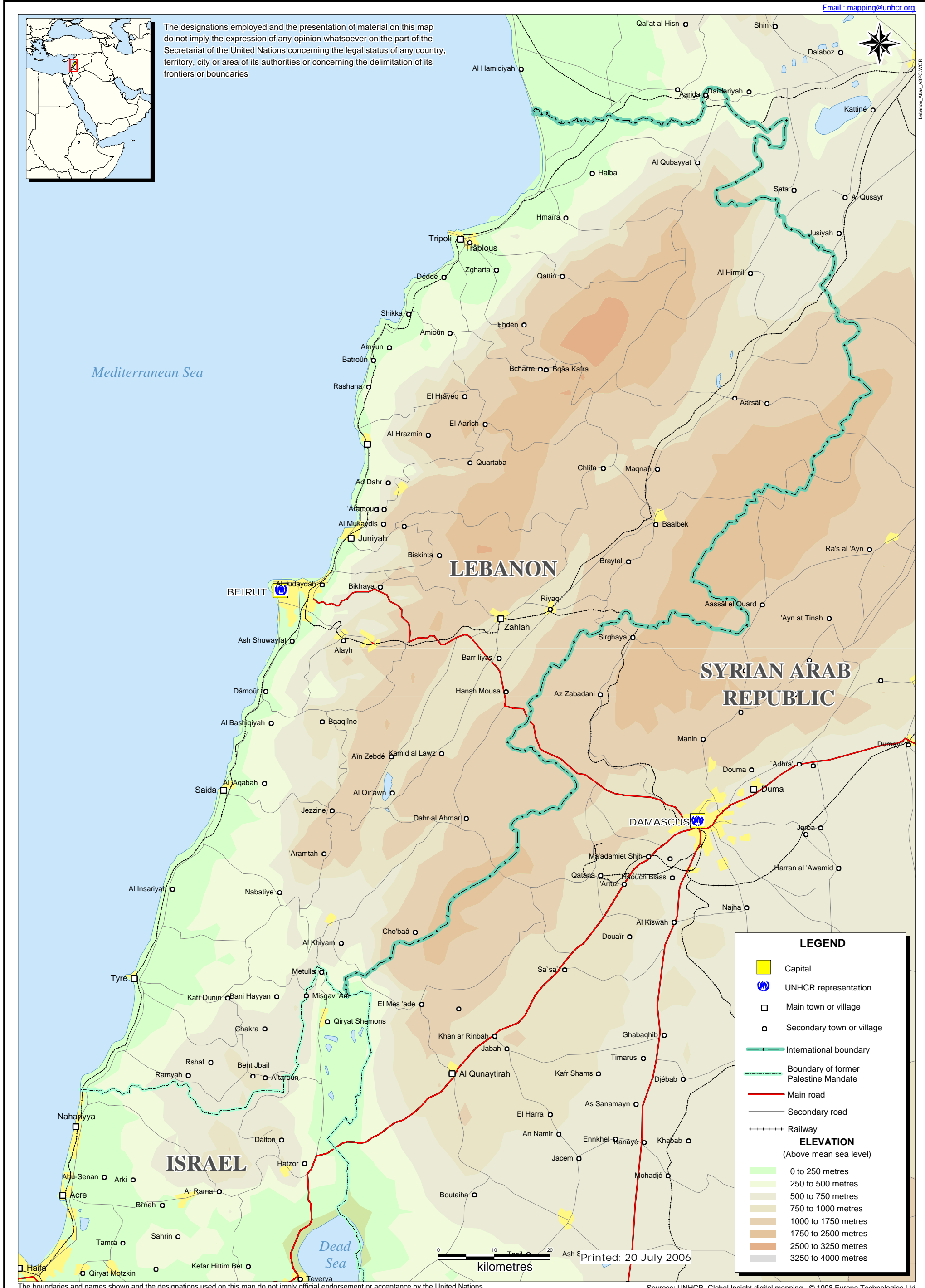
BUDGET

Sectors	USD
Protection, Monitoring and Coordination	2,479,784
Transport/Logistics	1,913,340
Domestic Items	3,039,000
Shelter/ Other Infrastructure/Site Management	4,839,000
Community Services	450,000
Protection/Legal	1,250,000
Agency Operational Support (partners)	1,149,134
Total Operations	15,120,258
Support costs (7%)*	1,058,418
Programme Support	2,674,554
Grand Total	18,853,230

* A 7% support cost has been added to the total budget and will be recovered from each contribution to meet indirect support costs in UNHCR (Field and HQ).



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LEGEND

- Capital
- UNHCR representation
- Main town or village
- Secondary town or village
- International boundary
- Boundary of former Palestine Mandate
- Main road
- Secondary road
- Railway

ELEVATION
(Above mean sea level)

- 0 to 250 metres
- 250 to 500 metres
- 500 to 750 metres
- 750 to 1000 metres
- 1000 to 1750 metres
- 1750 to 2500 metres
- 2500 to 3250 metres
- 3250 to 4000 metres

0 10 20
kilometres

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