

## Lebanon situation report #9

Monday 24 July 2006

*Targeting the South of Lebanon and the southern part of Beirut, which started on 12 July, continues. To date, 346 civilians have been killed and more than 1,200 injured. Mass destruction of the infrastructure implies widespread impairment of the health system.*

*WHO and other health partners are supporting the national authorities in meeting urgent needs, which include access to safe drinking water, health care, vaccines and life saving medications for the rapidly increasing number of displaced people in shelters in Lebanon and Syria. Collaboration with other health agencies such as UNICEF, UNFPA, the Lebanese Red Cross and others is instituted through the health cluster mechanism.*

### Highlights

- Humanitarian aid is reaching the main cities in South Lebanon through the operational humanitarian space.
- Bombing continues in South Lebanon, the southern suburb of Beirut, Bekaa, Baalbek and Hermel. Ground battles have reportedly started near the South borders.
- The Flash Appeal will be launched today in Beirut by the United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator. The Flash Appeal seeks a total of 150 million US\$ to meet the needs of some 800,000 people over the next three months. The health requirement is 32,428,200 US\$, of which 13,925,000 US\$ is allocated to WHO.



United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator Jan Egeland during his visit to Lebanon, visiting one of the main hospitals in Beirut together with the Lebanese Minister of Public Health, H.E. Dr Mohammed Jawad Khalife (left), and WHO Representative in Lebanon, Dr Jaouad Mahjour (left from Jan Egeland) 23 July 2006

### General impact

- Official figures report 346 dead and over 1,234 injured. The number of displaced people in shelters has increased to 114,000. National authorities report a total of 582 shelters. Besides the 114 schools, other public institutions like convents are accommodating the displaced population across the country.
- The number of displaced people according to the Higher Relief Committee is distributed as depicted in the following table (as of 22 July 2006).

Region	Number of centers	Number of individuals
Beirut	158	37939
Mount Lebanon	266	40318
North	27	1927
South	83	20278
Bekaa	48	3059
<b>Total</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>103521*</b>

\*as of 22 July 2006

- Physical damages are reported at airports, ports, and bridges and highways. Further damage is reported in regards to the communication infrastructure, electricity transformers, fuel tanks and stations.
- UN security phase IV remains in place in Lebanon.
- UNHCR is assuming the role of coordinator for the care of the refugees in Syria.

### Health impact

- Trauma, triage, food aid and shelter remain the top priority issues. Medications for chronic diseases and supplies for safe water and sanitation are the most urgent health needs.
- Basic needs of displaced populations are covered by NGOs in most shelters.
- NGOs report shortages of medications for chronic diseases, as well as detergents and cleaning supplies. Direct health interventions, such as polio and measles vaccinations, have been initiated by some NGOs. Reports show that approximately 2,500 oral polio vaccines and 1,500 measles vaccines were provided to displaced children in the Beirut area.
- The WHO Lebanon Office continues mapping health needs of 91 temporary shelters in the Greater Beirut area.
- Health coordination between NGOs, MOH and UN agencies is a top priority for WHO, in an effort to minimize the duplication of efforts, especially in collection of key data and statistics on health needs.

### Health response

The WHO and partners are providing support in four areas:

#### 1. Assessment and monitoring

- An assessment at the main hospital in Beirut showed adequate coping abilities for the overload of seriously injured patients. One of the most striking observations included the severe cases of amputations.
- The United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator, together with government officials, is planning to visit South Lebanon today.

#### 2. Health coordination

- WHO is focusing on strengthening coordination with NGOs. The establishment of the Disease Surveillance Early Warning and Response Network (EWARN) will help in coordinating with NGOs, especially in regards to the collection of disease statistics.
- Responsibilities regarding water and sanitation are clear. UNICEF is the lead agency, and WHO's focus is on drinking water quality.

#### 3. Filling health gaps

- WHO is concentrating on providing support to the Ministry of Health in determining priorities and a plan of action. Medication for chronic diseases and supplies for safe water and sanitation have currently been identified as the most urgent needs.
- Despite current transportation limitations, the Crisis Management Centre in Jordan has offered support in transporting supplies from WHO on their regular convoys to Lebanon.

### World Health Organization

<http://www.emro.who.int/eha/>

<http://www.who.int/hac/en/>

- WHO is preparing to locally procure stocks of medication for chronic diseases. International procurement from Syria, Jordan and other countries is also being investigated.
- WHO has mobilized an expert who will be developing a mental health psychosocial programme for refugees of this crisis.

#### **4. Preserving and supporting local health systems**

- WHO is looking into establishing close linkages with NGOs to ensure continuous access to health care in the primary health centers and temporary shelters.
- A guidance note on WHO functions in crises working with displaced populations and refugees is being finalized and will soon be disseminated.

#### **Urgent needs**

- Improving access to health care services.
- Tracking the need for medicines and surgical supplies and rapid procurement of medications for chronic diseases.
- Ensuring safe water and sanitation for displaced populations.