Lebanon

Humanitarian Flash Update #1

Escalation of Hostilities

2 March 2026

unicef
for every child

SITUATION UPDATE AND HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

- Hostilities in Lebanon escalated, with intense airstrikes across multiple areas north and south of the Litani river (South, Nabatieh, Beirut, Bekaa, Baalbek-El Hermel, Mount Lebanon, and Akkar) on the 2nd of March 2026. Israel issued displacement warnings for 53 villages in the South, Nabatieh and West Bekaa.
- Lebanese Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) has reported **31 deaths and over 149 injuries to date**, with numbers continuing to rise.
- The new attacks triggered an estimated 29,000 **people (9000 children) displaced in the last 24 hours alone,** according to the Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Unit, in addition to the previous 62,000 Internally Displaced People (IDPs) in general.

- Families trying to reach safer zones were stranded on roads for prolonged periods and supply trucks are facing delays to reach their destination due to heavy traffic. Civil Defence workers are reported to have been concentrating efforts on rescue operations and transporting injured people.
- Lebanese authorities have announced the opening of over **142 shelters** across the country, with the **majority being public schools, and 49 shelters reported as full.**
- The Minister of Education & Higher Education (MEHE) announced the **closure of all educational institutions** across the country until 4 March 2026 with potential further extension.
- **Water infrastructure remains operational at this stage**, with no additional damage reported to date. Water access continues to be maintained for the affected populations, and no new impacts have been recorded beyond the previously reported damaged water stations.
- The **Lebanese DRM Unit reported urgent needs including water, mattresses, blankets, and diesel to operate generators in shelters** due to insufficient solar power for critical energy needs.

UNICEF IMMEDIATE RESPONSE

UNICEF deployed Rapid Response Teams to identify immediate needs in collective shelters focusing on lifesaving services and supplies. To date light, RRM supplies were distributed to families on the move in and around Beirut and **full RRM packages are being distributed to 10 shelters in the South, Nabatieh, and 14 shelters in Beirut**. Other immediate actions taken by UNICEF on **2 March 2026 include:**

Health

- Initiated the distribution of **essential medications and medical supplies** to MoPH and active Primary Healthcare Satellite Units (PSUs) to respond to the needs of displaced populations.
- In response to immediate needs, coordinated with **MoPH to activate an additional six mobile PSUs**, bringing the total to 37 units. These teams provided medical consultations, immunization, and rapid health support to IDPs, including through outreach in shelters and displacement hotspots.

- Continued support to MoPH's **Public Health Emergency Operations Center** (PHEOC) through technical and logistical assistance, including ensuring reliable internet connectivity and effective coordination between the PHEOC, Crisis Coordination Cell (CCC), transport units, and health facilities.
- Sustained financial support to cover **hospital costs for 700 neonatal and paediatric intensive care services**, ensuring access for sick and small newborns across all affected populations, including non-Lebanese in 11 governmental hospitals.
- **Expanded the Assistance and Care for War-Wounded and Affected Children (ACWA) programme** to ensure coverage of 200 children sustaining conflict-related injuries, including medical care and follow-up.
- In anticipation of a potential large-scale displacement, coordinated with MoPH to identify priority response areas. This included plans to scale up PSUs to more than 60 units, expand hospitalization coverage, procure essential medicines and supplies, and strengthen human resources and logistics capacity. Parallel engagement with donors was initiated to repurpose existing funding and mobilize additional resources to meet rising needs.

Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH)

- In coordination with the Ministry of Energy and Water (MoEW) and partners, UNICEF is assessing **immediate diesel requirements for water and wastewater facilities** to sustain basic service delivery. Immediate fuel provision (20,000L at this stage) to priority facilities in Beirut and Mount Lebanon, in coordination with designated focal points and the MoEW crisis cell, with scale-up dependent on evolving needs.
- Mapping displacement locations to **assess connectivity to existing water** networks and identify potential needs for water trucking.
- Monitoring **wastewater pumping stations** to prevent system overflows and mitigate associated public health risks.
- Strengthening coordination with partners, including ICRC, to avoid duplication and maximize the efficiency of limited resources.

Education

- The focus on **Education in Emergencies** will ensure continuity of learning for affected children. This includes **activating hub schools** in safe areas to continue formal education. School mapping is currently underway to identify schools located near shelters and benefit from multiple UNICEF investments, including rehabilitation, inclusive education, hybrid learning facilities and digital equipment. In parallel, **online and remote learning modalities will be leveraged through platforms such as Madristi, the CERD E-book application, and the Call & Learn Hotline** to support children not able to safely access schools.
- In shelters, the response will prioritize **Psycho-Social Support (PSS),** child protection, and distribution of **learning and recreational materials**. Rapid resource mapping will be conducted across all schools currently being used as shelters to identify available infrastructure and assets that can support service delivery.
- Through the UNICEF **Multiple Flexible Pathways programme**, ongoing mapping exercise to assess absorption capacity of and accessibility of Makani Multi-Service Community Centers and Dirasa Schools to scale up their response and support additional case load of children.
- Human resource mobilization will also be undertaken through comprehensive mapping of available **education personnel**, including Makani and Dirasa staff, teachers residing in shelters, and education volunteers for reassigning to shelters and centers closest to their residence to support service delivery.
- Mobilized partners for **outreach and identify displaced children who are not in shelters and refer them to Makani** centres to receive comprehensive support.
- Collaborating with MEHE's sub-national Education Offices to assess **damaged schools** and recovery plans.

Youth Engagement

- Coordinating with MEHE TVET and partners to accommodate displaced youth in **TVET hub schools**, and to enable continuity of learning within shelters through provision of tablets and connectivity, building on UNICEF's Learning Passport platform.

- Under preparation to initiate the **production and distribution of up to 10,000 blankets and sleeping bags** for displaced families, should needs increase.
- In coordination with WFP, ready to activate **daily meal provision for displaced families** (up to 3,000 meals per day), including engagement of women and youth in shelters, if the situation deteriorates.
- **Engaging youth in shelters in recreational activities, psychosocial support, and mental health interventions**, in collaboration with MoSA social workers and the Lebanese Red Cross (LRC), to support well-being and community cohesion.

Nutrition & Child Development

- Immediate readiness to support the MoPH and Nutrition Sector partners through **rapid coordination, technical assistance, and operational guidance** to strengthen nutrition preparedness.
- **Pre-positioning of essential nutrition supplies** to prevent and treat malnutrition among vulnerable children, including BP-50 high-energy biscuits, micronutrient supplements, and ready-to-use complementary foods.
- Advancing response planning and preparedness measures, including **mapping partner capacities and identifying priority geographic areas** to support displaced populations.
- Immediate coordination with MoPH to **mobilize nutritionists** across all UNICEF-supported, activated mobile Primary Healthcare Satellite Units (PSUs), in anticipation of large-scale displacement. Nutritionists will deliver nutrition screening, Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) counselling, referrals for pregnant and lactating women and young children, and distribution of essential nutrition supplies.
- Scaling up **IYCF support through rapid assessments, potential expansion of the national IYCF hotline, and dissemination of hotline information and counselling materials** via nutrition and health partners.

Child Protection

- Ongoing **identification of children injured by the escalation to ensure access to essential services**, including individual case management, psychosocial support, and specialized care. The Children Affected by Armed Conflict (CAAC) Task Force is fully activated to monitor and verify grave violations against children.
- **Identification and support of unaccompanied and separated children**, including family tracing and reunification, and provision of family-based care where needed.
- Distribution of approximately **6,500 dignity kits to displaced women and girls is being planned**, including essential personal hygiene items.
- Distribution of **220 recreational kits across IDP shelters is being planned** to support the mental health and psychosocial well-being of children and adolescents aged 7–18.
- Delivering **explosive ordnance risk education (EORE)** to children and communities to mitigate immediate protection risks.
- Ensuring leadership and **coordination of the Child Protection** sector at both national and field levels to enable a timely and coherent response.

Social Protection - Cash Assistance

- Coordinating with the Government and UN partners to initiate an **emergency cash response** for families affected by the recent escalation.
- Building on the 2023 and 2024 emergency cash responses, this intervention will leverage existing social assistance systems and beneficiary databases. It will prioritize vulnerable **Lebanese and non-Lebanese households, particularly those with children and persons with disabilities, reaching approximately 45,000 families** in a phased approach through a one-off transfer. Depending on how the situation evolves, the response may be scaled up to include additional households and/or multiple transfer cycles.

Risk Communication and Community Engagement, Accountability to the Affected Populations (AAP), Gender and Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

- **Updating the communication flows** on available services for affected communities through UNICEF's social media channels and an emergency help page. Information will also be shared through UNICEF's community-facing number (04-727 300) and implementing partners on ground.
- **Displaying PSEA posters in all shelters**, to provide information on existing feedback and reporting channels, while making sure that PSEA messages are shared through NGOs frontline workers.

- **Initiating discussions with the Social Worker Syndicate Lebanon (SWSL)** to map out the first responders to the humanitarian crisis in the South. The Social Worker Syndicate will train first responders on social behavioural change, PSEA and AAP and how to safely report concerns related to wrongdoing perpetrated by humanitarian workers.
- **Establishing community feedback mechanism led by women** to share critical information in hard-to-reach areas and allow beneficiaries to voice complaints and share their feedback about the services provided.
- I**mplementation of emergency sessions with and for displaced adolescent girls** in and outside of shelters, including girls on the move, aiming to equip girls with life-saving information and skills to navigate the day-to-day challenges and risks that affect them during emergencies.
- **At scale capacity building to front line workers,** including shelters' ones on GBV safe identification and referrals, disability inclusion, PSEA, RCCE and AAP.
- **Activated the integrated RCCE emergency framework** to ensure timely dissemination of life-saving information, strengthen two-way communication with affected populations, mitigate misinformation and panic, and promote safe behaviours during displacement and hostilities, with particular attention to women, children, adolescents and persons with disabilities.

HUMANITARIAN COORDINATION

On 28 February 2026, the Minister of Social Affairs (MoSA), designated by the Government as the sole authority to coordinate with the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) in the event of displacement, convened a meeting with Heads of UN Agencies to align on preparedness measures in anticipation of a potential escalation. During the meeting, MoSA confirmed that the agreed coordination architecture falls under the Lebanese Response Plan (LRP), through the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) framework, led jointly by MoSA and the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM). At the sub-national level, coordination is led by Governors in coordination with the National Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Unit. On 2 March, the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) convened all sector leads to further clarify coordination mechanisms and approval processes.

Within this framework, UNICEF leads the WASH, Education, and Nutrition sectors, as well as the Child Protection Working Group, at both national and sub-national levels. UNICEF also contributes to the Health, Gender-Based Violence (GBV), Gender, Livelihoods, and Basic Assistance sectors. At the sub-national level, the Operational Coordination Group (OCG) is coordinating the response in close collaboration with MoSA and Governors.

UNICEF-led sectors are continuously monitoring partners' emergency response capacities and contingency stock levels, while ensuring that sector-specific preparedness actions are undertaken in coordination with partners.

FUNDING NEEDS

UNICEF's Response and Preparedness Plan for three months require USD 48 million to be implemented for one million persons in need. This includes at least **10 million USD for immediate urgent response**. The table below shows the funding received in period covered by the Plan.

Funding Needs	Funding Received	Funding Gap
$48.2 million (100%)	USD 8 million (16.5%)	USD 40.2 million (83.5%)

For more information please contact:

Marcoluigi Corsi
Representative
UNICEF Lebanon
mcorsi@unicef.org

Andrea Berther
Deputy Representative
UNICEF Lebanon
aberther@unicef.org

Sonia Vila Hopkins
Partnerships Manager
UNICEF Lebanon
svilahopkins@unicef.org

Anne Kindrachuk
Chief Field Operations
UNICEF Lebanon
akindrachuk@unicef.org