



**For Immediate Release**

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InterAction

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## **INTERACTION MEDIA ALERT**

### **Lebanon: NGOs Still Responding One Month After Explosion**

[InterAction](#) provides weekly tailored Media Alerts highlighting the work our Members are implementing around the world. **This week's Media Alert focuses on the NGO response to the ongoing crisis in Lebanon following the Beirut explosion.** If you would like to learn more about any of the following information, please feel free to reach out directly to the POC provided.

#### **"The Suffering is Following Us..."**


One month after the blast in Beirut, Mercy-USA is still operating one mobile medical unit providing follow up care for wounds and treatment for patients who are not able to be seen in the local clinics and hospitals. Chronic prescription medication distribution has started in the Karantina neighborhood, a hard-hit area near the scene of the explosion, for those unable to fill and pay for their medicine. The program is offering immediate help to those who rely on medicine to treat chronic illnesses like diabetes and high blood pressure.

One beneficiary of Mercy-USA's chronic prescription medicine program is the elderly grandmother of Ahmad Obeid. Ahmad, 20, fled Syria to Beirut in 2012 with his family. He is not able to work now due to injuries he sustained in the blast. He told us, "We fled the destruction in Syria, and now the suffering is following us." As part of our chronic medicine distribution program, Mercy-USA delivered Ahmad's grandmother a two months' supply of the prescription medicine she needs.

For more information, contact Kari Ansari, [kansari@mercyusa.org](mailto:kansari@mercyusa.org), Mercy-USA.

#### **A Population in shock**

Humanity & Inclusion's 100-person team in Lebanon continues to support people with injuries and mental trauma following the Beirut explosions. The local team is available for interviews and can explain the kinds of injuries—some of which still lack full diagnoses—they've encountered, including lacerations from shards of glass, causing tendon and nerve injuries, paralysis, and muscle weakness, and complex fractures or amputations. The psychosocial support team can discuss the mental trauma they're working to ease. Cases range from people terrified to leave their homes, to families distraught at having to send their children to live



with relatives, as they can no longer afford to maintain a large household, to depression as livelihood prospects dry up.

For more information, contact Mica Bevington, [m.bevington@hi.org](mailto:m.bevington@hi.org), Humanity & Inclusion.

### **Lutheran World Relief: Addressing an Urgent, Unmet Need for Kitchen Appliances**

Lutheran World Relief is building on its work supporting food parcel distribution to help families return home to functioning kitchens. It's not a need one thinks about immediately. However, when banks are closed and struggling families are trying to return home, making sure they have a functioning kitchen is a critical bit of support. Working with Makhzoumi Foundation, LWR identified who can help with stoves, refrigerators, and other appliances at a reasonable cost.

For more information, contact John Rivera, [jrivera@lwr.org](mailto:jrivera@lwr.org), Lutheran World Relief.

### **"Healing the Wounds" Clinics**

Helping Hand for Relief and Development (HHRD) started the Beirut Relief Efforts the day after the devastating blasts in Beirut. From August 6 to August 28, 2020, HHRD has provided hot meals with bread and bottled water; dignity packages (food & hygiene kits); "Healing the Wounds" clinics; mobile clinics; and home repairs (replacing the broken glass of windows of some of the more than 300,000 damaged homes).

For more information, contact Ilyas Choudry, [ilyas.choudry@hhrd.us](mailto:ilyas.choudry@hhrd.us), Helping Hand for Relief and Development.

### **Hope Amid the Rubble: Lebanese Clean-Up Led by Teenagers**

Parts of the Lebanese capital are devastated beyond recognition, but it's not the government leading the clean-up. It's teenagers. Young people have flooded to Beirut from all corners of Lebanon, most of them volunteering with local aid groups. Many come from mosques and churches. Maronite Scouts is one such group, a local partner of Catholic Relief Services. Up to 150 scouts from throughout the country have helped clean up Beirut and distribute food and water.

For more information, contact Megan Gilbert, [megan.gilbert@crs.org](mailto:megan.gilbert@crs.org), Catholic Relief Services.

### **Relief Needs Intensify as Beirut Faces Converging Crises Following Explosions**

Building on its seven years working in Lebanon, Food for the Hungry is expanding its programming through a continued partnership with local humanitarian organization Middle East Revive and Thrive ([MERATH](#)). Currently, over half of Lebanese residents are concerned about a lack of basic services amid unprecedented economic instability and food insecurity. As well as continuing its previously planned support through winterization programming—distributing blankets, heaters, and fuel vouchers as the weather cools—Food for the Hungry has pivoted its response to include the administration of food vouchers, distribution of shelter rehabilitation and hygiene kits, and provision of comprehensive aid.



For more information, contact Contact Person: Beth Allen, [media@fh.org](mailto:media@fh.org), Food for the Hungry.

### **Beirut's Small Businesses Are On The Brink**

Mercy Corps Country Director in Lebanon, Rafael Velasquez, says, "Our teams are working urgently to support families whose livelihoods are at risk of being destroyed. Small and medium-sized shops account for 97% of the total number of private enterprises in Lebanon, and all of the shops within the blast radius have been affected.

"These shops provide a lifeline for local and vulnerable communities in Beirut and are crucial to the economic activity of the city. Some shops have lost their doors, windows and their ceilings are falling apart, they are not just a hazard but more than 50% of livelihoods depend on them.

"If we do not prevent these shops from shutting down, the shop owners and those employed will have no place to stay and no income to survive. Lebanon is already the first Middle East country in history to be experiencing hyperinflation, and if we don't help these devastated neighborhoods return to some sense of normalcy, we anticipate further economic hardship."

For more information, contact Christina Luchetta, [cluchetta@mercycorps.org](mailto:cluchetta@mercycorps.org), Mercy Corps.

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