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Beirut Port Explosion Response

August 2020

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OVERVIEW

On August 4, 2020, there was a devastating explosion at the port of Beirut, Lebanon. The roof of a warehouse caught fire and within a short period of time, a massive explosion sent a mushroom cloud into the air and a supersonic shockwave, which radiated more than five miles, through the city of two million people.

Initial reports from the Lebanon YMCA describe the situation as catastrophic, with more than 35,000 homes destroyed, 300,000 people left homeless, over 150 fatalities, 5,000 people injured and more than 140 people missing as of August 7, 2020. Even before the explosion, 75% of Lebanese needed aid: 33% had lost their jobs, and one million people were living below the poverty line.



LEBANON YMCA IMPACT AND RESPONSE

Lebanon YMCA volunteers and staff are safe, but the grief and the damage experienced are immeasurable. One of the YMCA offices, located over 5 kilometers (3 miles) away, has been heavily damaged. YMCA teams are joining several organizations and thousands of volunteers, focused on immediate response and recovery actions of clearing debris and doing a quick survey of the needed assistance so that coordinated actions can begin.

With hospitals in the capital area destroyed, the YMCA is also assessing damages to their primary health care centers. Of their 46 centers, 30 sustained heavy damage. The YMCA will prioritize making repairs to these centers to help provide frontline health services.

Lebanon is home to almost seven million people. It is bordered by Syria to the north and east and Israel to the south, while Cyprus lies to its west, across the Mediterranean Sea.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

YMCA of the USA is supporting the response to this crisis in coordination with the Lebanon YMCA. Financial contributions are the most effective way to help at this time and **100% of your support will be sent to the Lebanon YMCA** to help them in their response and recovery efforts.

Please make a secure online donation through YMCA World Service at <https://donate.ymca.net>. To ensure **100% of your gift is designated for this effort**, please type "Lebanon YMCA" in the "comments/special instructions" box. For gifts by mail, use the address at the bottom of this page, attention: Mary Tikalsky, and write "Lebanon YMCA" in the memo line of your check. For gifts by phone, call 312 419 8371.

Thank you for your support. For more information on this effort or other World Service-funded programs, call World Service at 312 419 8371 or visit ymca.net/world-service.

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