

ILO RESPONSE TO THE BEIRUT BLAST

**A Decent Work Approach for Quick
Recovery and Job Creation**

An update (September 2020)

CONTEXT

On the 4th of August 2020, a massive explosion ripped through the Port of Beirut destroying facilities and flattening buildings in surrounding neighbourhoods. The blast killed over 200 people, and wounded several thousands of others. Destruction has left around 300,000 people without homes.

Building on existing humanitarian response efforts, the United Nations in Lebanon has developed an effective comprehensive response to the emergency based on three phases, which include transitioning from immediate humanitarian relief to recovery and reconstruction and eventually into longer-term economic recovery and development.

The ILO response programme contributes to the UN Flash Appeal under the Emergency Response Framework to address the consequences of the explosion, from immediate needs to recovery and reconstruction[1].

The ILO promotes the principle that employment, livelihoods and decent work are key to the successful recovery and reintegration of crisis-affected people, and this guides ILO's own response.

[1] For more information, please visit
https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms_753302.pdf

ILO'S OPERATIONAL UPDATE

Shelter

EMERGENCY REPAIRS TO PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND GENERATION OF DECENT EMPLOYMENT

Within days of the explosion, the ILO mobilised its on-going Employment Intensive Infrastructure Programme (EIIP) to provide immediate support to those heavily impacted by the blast, through creating short-term decent job opportunities for both Lebanese nationals and Syrian refugees to help with the clear-up operations in Beirut.

These interventions are still ongoing and are expected to generate 250 decent short-term employment opportunity for 40 days for vulnerable men and women living in the damaged areas and surrounding neighborhoods.[2]

The ILO is also supporting the Lebanese Order of Engineers and Architects (OEA) and the Lebanon Grassroots Initiative (LGI) with 1,000 sets of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) and a Training of Trainers (ToT) programme on Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) in construction for 100 of their members. The training aims to promote safety and health standards and prevent work-related accidents, injuries, and infections during activities related to damage assessment, demolition and reconstruction of buildings affected by the blast.

Around US\$ 233,000 of existing funds from Germany through the German Development Bank (KfW), which is supporting EIIP, and US\$ 120,000 from the Netherlands' funded project under PROSPECTS (Partnership for improving prospects for forcibly displaced persons and host communities), in addition to ILO's own internal resources, have been reprogrammed and repurposed for these immediate interventions.

ENHANCING EMPLOYABILITY FOR QUICK REHABILITATION AND RECONSTRUCTION

Skills: The ILO has repurposed some of its funds to increase the number of beneficiaries in non-formal market-based training approaches from 65 to 100 young women and men. Two courses will be developed and implemented related to occupations in the construction sector. During the course, beneficiaries will be enrolled in On-The-Job training in collaboration with contractors and syndicates to practice their skills and take part in the reconstruction/rehabilitation work in damaged areas.

Protection

SUPPORT TO MIGRANT WORKERS THROUGH CASH GRANTS AND COMPLAINT MECHANISMS AND EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGE

The FAIRWAY programme, supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) repurposed US\$ 100,000 to support migrant workers, especially migrant domestic workers through one or more partnerships with local Civil Society Organizations that provide cash assistance, legal aid, referral services and mental health support.

The ILO will provide immediate support to migrant workers through a combination of cash grants, food and rental subsidies as well as legal aid. It will also help to develop a compliant mechanism for migrant workers linked to either trade unions, cooperatives or NGOs, and provide information campaigns on emerging issues and occupational safety and health training.

Food Security

EVIDENCE-BASED SUPPORT TO PROMOTE MSMES RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE

The ILO is conducting a rapid assessment on the impact of Beirut blast on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

The assessment will provide evidence that can inform potential technical and financial future support to enterprises to help them recover in the aftermath of the explosion and restore businesses as quickly as possible.

The data collection for the assessment will begin in early October. The study will build on assessments conducted by various agencies, notably the World Bank RDNA[3], ACTED[4], and a report that is expected to be released soon by the Livelihoods Working Group in Lebanon[5]. Building on these assessments that primarily provide knowledge on the extent of the physical damage and early needs assessments, the ILO study will address:

- 1.The profile and conditions of MSMEs prior to the explosion;
- 2.The extent of the impact on business operations, including financial conditions;
- 3.Their coping and adaptation measures;
- 4.Implications on employment and working conditions;
- 5.Expectations and conditions for business continuity; and

The report is expected to be finalised and released in mid-November 2020.

[2] For more information, see https://www.ilo.org/beirut/media-centre/news/WCMS_754845/lang--en/index.htm

[3]<http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/650091598854062180/Beirut-Rapid-Damage-and-Needs-Assessment.pdf>

[4]<https://www.acted.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/lebanon-beirut-blast-rapid-needs-assessment-report-august-2020-finalv2.pdf>

[5] <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/working-group/21>

FUNDING STATUS

Short-term employment for reconstruction and repair works

CLUSTERS:
SHELTER & FOOD SECURITY

- Funding needed:
US\$ 2,300,000
- Funds allocated:
US\$ 400,000
- Funding gap:
US\$ 1,900,000

Support to MSMEs for business continuity

CLUSTERS:
FOOD SECURITY

- Funding needed:
US\$ 2,000,000
- Funds allocated:
US\$ 50,000
- Funding gap:
US\$ 1,950,000

Support to migrant workers

CLUSTERS:
PROTECTION

- Funding needed:
US\$ 1,000,000
- Funds allocated:
US\$ 100,000
- Funding gap:
US\$ 900,000

Funding status

- Total Budget Required:
US\$ 5,300,000
- Total Budget allocated:
US\$ 500,000
- Total Funding gap:
US\$ 4,800,000

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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