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VOICES OF VULNERABILITY:

A needs Assessment in Lebanon's Akkar, Bekaa, and Southern regions

March 2025



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Acknowledgements

This report explores the needs of Lebanese and Syrians during the ceasefire time following the escalation of the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah. It focuses on the needs under the cash, WASH, shelter, protection, food security and livelihoods sectors. The data collection was carried out by the end of December 2024.

This report was produced through close collaboration between four non-Governmental organizations including: Mercy Corps Lebanon, WeWorld Lebanon, LOST and Shield.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

BOB	BOB financial service provider
ESSN	Emergency Social Safety Net
FCS	Food Consumption Score
FCRM	Feedback and Complaints Response Mechanism
IPC	Integrated food security phase classification
LOST	Lebanese Organization for Studies and Trading
MPCA	Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA)
MTO	Money Transfer Agencies
NPTP	National Poverty Targeting Programme
OMT	OMT financial service provider
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Lebanon is currently experiencing a severe humanitarian crisis driven by a combination of factors, including decades of political instability, an economic collapse classified by the World Bank as one of the most severe globally in over 150 years, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the catastrophic Beirut Port explosion. The recent conflict between Hezbollah and Israel has further deepened vulnerabilities, leading to intensified humanitarian needs and social tensions. To better understand the needs in Akkar, Baalbek El Hermel and South and to be accountable to the voices of the community Mercy Corps, WeWorld and LOST gathered efforts and conducted a rapid needs assessment with Lebanese and Syrians using a mixed method approach. The needs were across the cash, food security, livelihoods, shelter, wash and protection sectors.

For the **cash** sector, the assessment highlights an overwhelming demand for cash assistance (72%), particularly in Akkar, followed by Bekaa, Baalbek-El Hermel, and the South. The cash that is currently provided was described as insufficient with limited coverage. Existing assistance is insufficient, with limited coverage. Perceived unfairness in cash distribution, driven by transparency issues, favouritism, economic disparities, and exclusion of certain groups, has fueled tensions, emphasizing the need for clear selection criteria and inclusive programming.

Access to markets across the assessed areas was generally acceptable, with an average travel time of 11 minutes reported. Supermarkets are the most ones accessible, followed by the small shops. While the availability of goods is reported as generally consistent, certain essential items such as medicine and school supplies are notably scarce in local markets. Regional differences in market access and availability highlight varying levels of access.

With regards to **food security**, it remains a major issue across the assessed areas, with many households resorting to the use of negative coping strategies to manage limited food access. Only 58% of households meet acceptable food security standards, while 18% fall into the poor category. All surveyed Syrians in the South and Baalbek-El Hermel are classified as borderline. High dependence on crisis-level livelihood strategies (84%) underscores the need for sustained interventions to address food insecurity and build resilience.

In terms of **livelihoods**, employment opportunities remain scarce and unstable, forcing many households into temporary or casual labour. The ongoing conflict has worsened the situation, leading to rising debt and fewer job opportunities, particularly in Baalbek-El Hermel and Akkar. Job losses due to the war have increased reliance on humanitarian aid. There is a strong demand for skill development, particularly in agriculture, vocational trades, and business management, to enhance income generation and economic resilience.

Shelter-related challenges remain prevalent, especially among low-income and displaced families. Common issues include damaged homes, high rent, inadequate heating, and rain-related leaks. The situation is most critical in Bekaa, Baalbek-El Hermel, and the South, where many report inadequate living conditions, including home destruction due to conflict. Reconstruction and shelter assistance are urgently needed, along with infrastructure rehabilitation for water and sanitation systems.

The ongoing conflict in Lebanon has severely exacerbated **water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH)** challenges, affecting both Lebanese and Syrian communities. Limited access to clean water and sanitation services, particularly in Baalbek-El Hermel and other conflict-affected regions are reported. While some regions, like the South, report better access to water, many households across Akkar, Bekaa, and Baalbek-El Hermel continue to face difficulties in meeting basic WASH needs. The findings highlight the critical need for improvements in water

infrastructure and sanitation systems, especially in areas most affected by the conflict. Moreover, while access to hygiene items is generally high, gaps remain, particularly among displaced populations. Addressing these WASH-related needs is essential to ensure the well-being of both Lebanese and Syrian communities, with a focus on rehabilitating or constructing water and sewage infrastructure in the most the conflict affected areas.

Protection remains a pressing need for both displaced Lebanese and Syrian families in the assessed areas. Displacement and conflict have heightened protection risks, particularly for vulnerable groups. While gender-based violence incidents remain relatively low, concerns about child labor, verbal harassment, and limited access to protection services persist. A lack of awareness about available services exacerbates the situation. Additionally, displacement has taken a severe psychological toll, with many reporting anxiety, depression, and stress. There is a critical need for preventive measures, response activities, and mental health support to safeguard affected populations.

Addressing these urgent humanitarian needs requires coordinated, transparent, and inclusive interventions to support the most vulnerable and promote long-term stability in Lebanon's crisis-affected regions.

INTRODUCTION

1. Background and Context

Lebanon is facing a humanitarian crisis resulting from different complex factors, including decades of political instability, the country's economic collapse, the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the catastrophic Beirut Port explosion in August 2020. The World Bank has classified Lebanon's economic collapse as one of the most severe globally in over 150 years, with the Lebanese pound losing more than 90% of its value against the US dollar since 2019, plunging over 80% of the population into poverty (World Bank, 2021¹; UNICEF, 2023²). This economic freefall has been compounded by hyperinflation, which surpassed 150% in 2023, making it increasingly difficult for Lebanese households to afford basic needs, including food, healthcare, and housing (WFP, 2022)³. In addition, essential services such as electricity, water, and sanitation have become hardly accessible, further exacerbating public hardship.

The 2023 conflict between Hezbollah and Israel has further deepened the vulnerabilities, creating a volatile environment leading to intensified humanitarian needs, social tensions, and economic despair. Fighting intensified along the southern border, , leading to significant casualties and widespread displacement. By November 2023, the United Nations reported that more than 100,000 people⁴. The war also caused extensive damage to infrastructure in the Southern and Bekaa regions, including roads, bridges, and electricity networks, making it even more challenging to deliver humanitarian aid to those in need.

In response to the escalating displacement needs, the government of Lebanon, in collaboration with WFP, has expanded the coverage of national social safety nets to help families meet their basic needs. Under the Shock-Responsive Safety Net (SRSN), WFP assisted 213,700 Lebanese individuals with cash transfers for three months with amount in line with the ESSN. Additionally, humanitarian aid agencies in Lebanon have been fully mobilized, with 1.05 million people reached with critical humanitarian assistance under the Flash Appeal in 2024. The Flash Appeal seeks an additional US\$ 371.4 million to meet the immediate needs of people directly impacted by the recent hostilities through the end of March 2025. Funding for the response has been significant, with US\$ 1.65 billion in donor contributions to the Lebanon Response Plan and Flash Appeal in 2024, of which \$303 million was for the Flash Appeal.⁵ Despite these efforts, Lebanon's national social protection system remains fragmented and under-resourced, unable to fully protect families from the devastating effects of the economic collapse and the ongoing conflict. This gap in support continues to push many families further into poverty, making it even harder for them to regain their independence and resilience or rebuild their lives in this challenging environment.

In response to the unfolding situation, a needs assessment was conducted by Mercy Corps, WeWorld, LOST and SHIELD in Akkar, Bekaa and South to capture the pressing needs of affected communities in those areas. The assessment aims to provide insights to ensure that future programming is responsive, equitable, and effective in addressing the most urgent needs. It seeks to be accountable to the voices of diverse groups, ensuring that they are included in the analysis. By integrating the perspectives of communities directly affected by the crisis, the assessment will help ensure that humanitarian assistance is tailored to the specific needs of Lebanon's most vulnerable populations.

¹ World Bank (2021). *Lebanon's economic crisis: A timeline of key events*. World Bank Group.

² UNICEF (2023). *Lebanon Country Report*. United Nations Children's Fund.

³ World Food Programme (WFP). (2022). *Lebanon: Emergency Food Security Assessment*.

⁴ UNHCR (2023). *Displacement in Lebanon: Impact of the 2023 Conflict*

⁵ UNOCHA (2025). Lebanon: Flash Update #63 - Escalation of hostilities in Lebanon, as of 13 March 202

2. Purpose of the needs assessment

The purpose of this needs assessment is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the evolving needs of displaced and non-displaced populations in Lebanon, particularly in the context of the ongoing economic crisis and conflict.

Specifically, the assessment aims to:

- Combine resources and increase collaboration between humanitarian agencies by conducting one needs assessment to avoid duplication of efforts.
- Being accountable to the population who participated and ensure that diverse perspectives, particularly those of vulnerable groups (e.g., women-headed households, individuals with disabilities, and displaced persons), are captured to inform programming, making it relevant, and responsive to the complexities of Lebanon's crisis.
- Identify the needs of Lebanese and Syrians during the ceasefire period, focusing on different sectors including cash, livelihoods, WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene), shelter, food insecurity and protection.
- Develop recommendations to guide humanitarian stakeholders in effectively addressing the identified needs and improving the overall response to the crisis.
- Examine perceptions of fairness: Investigate whether MPCA or ECA is perceived as fair or inequitable by different groups, including those who have not received any assistance.

METHODOLOGY

The needs assessment reached 1,110 respondents (85% Lebanese and 15% Syrians), distributed between Bekaa and Baalbek-Hermel (62%), Akkar (34%) and South (4%); focusing on areas identified as most vulnerable based on the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) assessment.

The assessment relied on three main datasets collected through the lead of Mercy Corps and WeWorld

- In Bekaa and Baalbek-El Hermel area (including Bouday, Baalbek, Zahle, Nabi chit, Hermel, Laboue, Iaat, Irsal, Brital, Beshwat, Douris, Hlebta, Riyak, Der El Ahmar and other villages), MC team collaborated with DRR and DRM to obtain lists of households while WW also coordinated with local authorities and municipalities to obtain the lists and adopted a hybrid data collection modality on in person where feasible and phone.
- For the South area (including Marjayoun, Sour, Shebaa, Ebel El Saqi, Nabatiyi and Bent Jbeil villages), Shield completed the data collection using mobile data collection.
- In Akkar, the needs assessment was conducted with the support of the municipality officials with 359 households while deploying a follow-up survey with 21 households to better capture social cohesion effects utilizing lists of vulnerable households received through municipality officials.

The sampling used consisted of a simple random selection focusing on households with specific vulnerabilities, including women-headed households, households with infants, households with members with disabilities, households with elderly members, families displaced or significantly impacted by the war such as those facing destruction of homes or businesses, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) who are currently displaced, and returnees who were formerly IDPs.

In addition, eight key informant interviews (KIIs) were conducted with municipality representatives, and community influencers in the Bekaa and South to triangulate the data and better understand the needs of the displaced and non-displaced households. The exercise employed a snowball sampling approach, mapping local stakeholders. The eight KIIs were completed across various areas and positions, highlighting diverse community and leadership

roles. These interviews involved the Bouday Mayor, the Mayor of Baalbek, Kaem Makam in Hermel, the Coordinator for the Lebanese Red Cross in Hermel, representative of a women's leadership in Benet Jbeil, a doctor at Lebanese University from Tyre, and two social activists in Nabatiyeh and Sour respectively (please see below table 1).

Table 1: Survey and KI respondents

Type of assessment	Target population	Nationality	Bekaa and Baalbek-El Hermel	South	Akkar	Total number
Surveys	Lebanese Households	Lebanese	555	22	361	938
		Syrians	132	21	19	172
KIIs	Community leaders (municipality representatives, doctors in universities etc.)	Lebanese	4	4	None	8

1. Data collection, ethical considerations and analysis

Enumerators, facilitators and note takers were daily workers trained through an online induction session. In South, Bekaa, and Baalbek El Hermel, enumerators conducted assessments using a hybrid method of field visits and phone interviews. In Akkar, data collection was conducted face to face in 11 villages, with follow up interviews that were completed over the phone. Data collection was completed in Arabic, with enumerators explaining the purpose of the assessment to the participants. Respondents were assured that their participation was voluntary, and that the information shared during the discussions will remain confidential and anonymous. The data was collected through mobile data collection and oral consent was obtained from all participants. The data collection period spanned from 2 December 2024 to 26 December 2024. Emerging data from the KIIs were transcribed and then thematically analysed. Surveys were analysed through descriptive statistics to reflect the percentages and frequencies, as well as graphs were used to visually present the data.

2. Limitations

The assessment encountered several limitations during data collection. However, these limitations did not impact on the quality of the findings.

- 1. Access constraints:** Access constraints were particularly notable in the southern regions, where political factions hindered assessments and field visits. As a result, the partners relied on Shield for data collection support while awaiting permission to access these areas, which led to a reduced sample size from the South.
- 2. Responses:** The overall security situation and ongoing conflict within the country had highly affected both Bekaa and Baalbek-Hermel, and the South areas, which could have significantly impacted some of the responses of the participants.

3. **Assessment channels:** in certain cases, the outreach to target population was only possible via phone, introducing risks related to potential biases in self-reporting and limitations in gauging non-verbal cues.
4. **Non-availability of respondents:** Some respondents did not consent to participate in the assessment for reasons that were not disclosed.
5. **Lack of data in some of the areas** due to non-response or the use of three datasets as mentioned in the methodology section. This led to conclusions drawn on a smaller sample, which was generically validated through secondary sources.

FINDINGS

1. Demographics

Nationality: The total sample size of 1,110 respondents consisted mostly of Lebanese followed by Syrians and it was divided by district and nationality as seen in figure 1. In Bekaa and Baalbek El Hermel and South, the majority were Lebanese with 81% and 95% respectively. While In the South the sample was almost divided equally between Lebanese and Syrians.

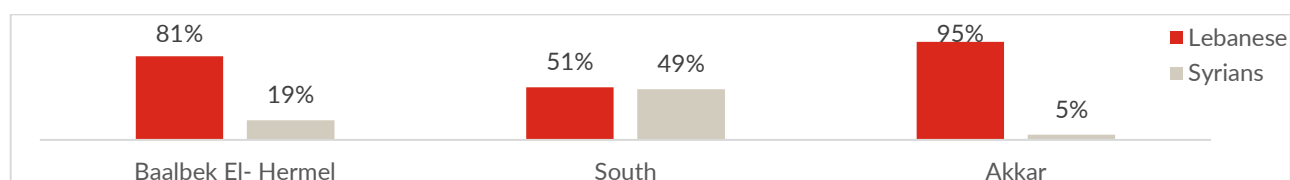
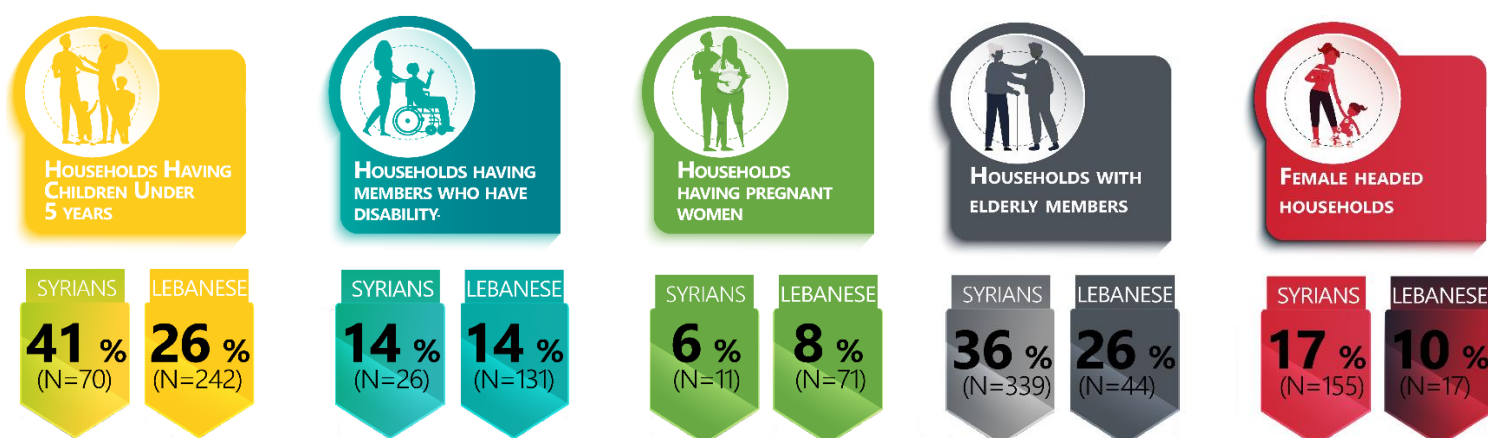


Figure 1: Sample size by governorate and nationality

Household vulnerabilities: The sample covered the following household vulnerabilities:



Gender: The sample constituted of 76% male respondents and the rest were females divided by area as follows:

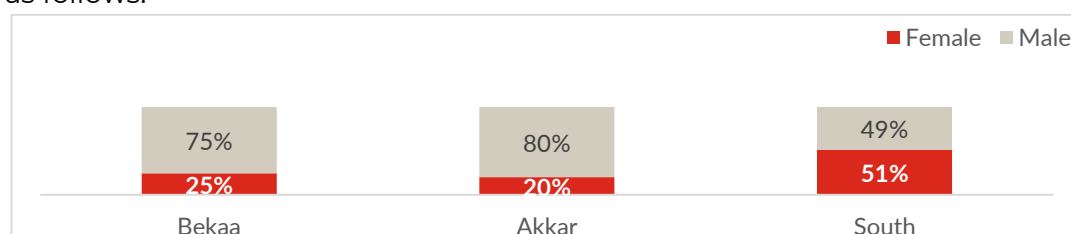


Figure 2: gender distribution

2. Cash

Cash was among the most requested assistance across the assessed areas. In Akkar, 93% of respondents emphasized the need for cash to cover their emerging needs, followed by 79% in Bekaa and Baalbek El Hermel, and 44% in the South. Findings across nationalities were similar with slightly higher percentages among Syrians.

Outreach preferences

This section presents the findings of the cash assistance program preferences across the three assessed areas. It focusses on the respondents' preferred methods for receiving information about the cash assistance, registering for assistance, and receiving updates on their application outcomes.

Receiving Information About the Cash Program: Most respondents preferred receiving information via telephone, with 95% in the South, 86% in Bekaa and Baalbek El Hermel, and 78% in Akkar. Face-to-face interaction was preferred by 25%, with 43% in Bekaa and Baalbek El Hermel, compared to 23% in Akkar and the 9% in the South. These preferences are consistent with UNHCR findings, which highlight that displaced populations often rely on mobile communication as their primary means of accessing information⁶.

Registration Methods for the Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) Program: Telephone calls were favoured by 78% of respondents, with the South showing a preference of 100%, Bekaa and Baalbek El Hermel at 85%, and Akkar at 48%. Face-to-face registration was preferred by 42%, specifically in Akkar (48%) and Bekaa/Baalbek El Hermel (37%). SMS was selected by 24%, with Akkar (25%) and Bekaa/Baalbek El Hermel (23%) showing higher preferences. Similar trends of the preference for mobile and direct communication were seen in UNHCR's Refugee Assistance Review⁷.

Receiving Updates on Application Outcomes: Phone calls were the preferred method for receiving application updates, with 78% of respondents opting for this modality (100% for the South, 68% for Akkar and 66% for Bekaa and Baalbek El Hermel). SMS notifications were chosen by 42%, with Bekaa and Baalbek El Hermel at 60%, South at 36%, and Akkar at 30%. Face-to-face interaction was less likely to be chosen as a preferred modality, which was selected by only 12%, with 29% in Bekaa and Baalbek El Hermel, 5% in South, and 3% in Akkar.

Cash Modalities Preferences

When asked about the preferred modality for receiving cash assistance; in Akkar, 97% stated preferring transfers via Money Service Providers like BOB and OMT, with only 3% opting for bank transfers. In Bekaa and Baalbek El Hermel, 92% prefer cash in hand, while only 2% choose bank transfers and less than 2% prefer vouchers. In the South, all respondents choose cash in hand. The cash modalities preferences did not differ by nationality. This aligns with World Bank's findings, which underscores the growing reliance on cash-based transfers in Lebanon⁸.

A minority of the respondents (less than 10%) across the areas expressed **about challenges they may face when dealing with Money Transfer Agencies (MTOs)**. These challenges include limited

⁶ UNHCR Lebanon. (2024). *Protection and Assistance Needs in Lebanon: Assessment Report*.

⁷ UNHCR Lebanon. (2024). *Refugee Needs Assessment: Cash Assistance and Vulnerability*

⁸ World Bank Lebanon. (2024). *Lebanon Economic Monitor: Cash Transfers as a Lifeline*.

access to mobile phones, network coverage issues, high transaction fees, lack of knowledge on using MTOs, locating a mobile money agents, ID or registration requirements, limited cash-out points and experience delays in receiving transfers. To mitigate these challenges, the participants highlighted the need of awareness and sensitization on how to use MTOs, increase the number of agents, reduce transaction fees, and simplify identification and registration requirements.

Regarding **whom should be entitled to withdraw the assistance**, 79% believe the head of the household should withdraw assistance, and 42% think any household member could do so. Only 1% suggested using a trusted community member or relative as a proxy. The percentages did not vary across areas and nationality.

Perceptions on social cohesion and cash assistance fairness

The findings show significant concerns regarding **perceptions of the fairness of cash assistance distribution across the assessed areas**. In Akkar, 38% of respondents expressed concerns about the fairness of the process compared to 57% in Bekaa and Baalbek El Hermel, who described it as unfair, signalling common dissatisfaction. A notable 23% of respondents in this governorate did not answer, possibly reflecting hesitation or uncertainty. Among Syrian respondents in the same area, an overwhelming 81% chose not to respond, which could indicate a lack of trust or fear of repercussions; of those who did answer, 16% considered it unfair. In the South, all respondents preferred not to answer, which could suggest either a lack of awareness or reluctance to comment on the issue (figure 3). The UNHCR Lebanon Protection Needs assessment confirms the concerns raised by respondents regarding the transparency and equity of aid distribution⁹.

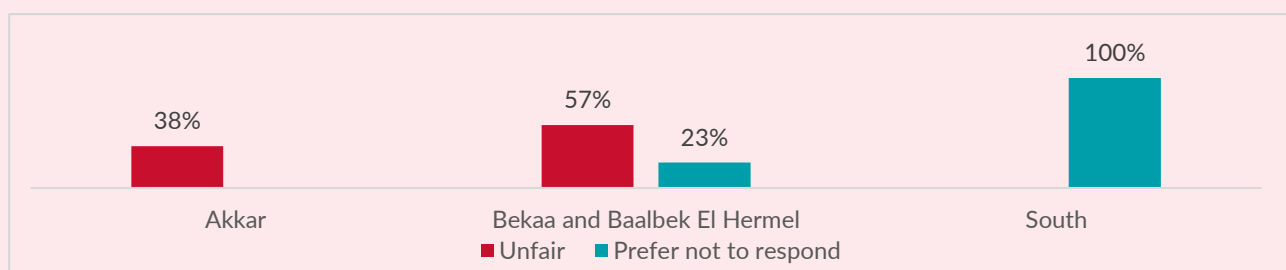


Figure 3: Perceptions of unfairness of the cash assistance

Overall, the responses reveal a strong sense of skepticism regarding the fairness and transparency of the cash distribution process across most regions.

Reasons behind the perception of unfairness: In Akkar, responses indicated issues such as lack of transparency in the selection process, insufficient amounts of cash, and mismanagement, including corruption and favouritism. The responses were similar for the Bekaa and Baalbek El Hermel where: 13% noted the exclusion of specific groups, 20% reported that displacement status was unfairly prioritized, 29% observed inequities in the selection or distribution process, 14% highlighted unequal distribution amounts, and 6% criticized the lack of transparency in allocation processes. In the South, respondents opted not to answer this question. These issues were similarly identified in the UNHCR's Assessment, which highlights concerns about the unfair distribution of resources and the need for improved processes of cash distribution¹⁰.

⁹ UNHCR Lebanon. (2024). *Protection and Assistance Needs in Lebanon: Assessment Report*.

¹⁰ UNHCR 2024. Results of 2023-2024 Participatory Assessment

Factors that drive perceptions of fairness or inequity in cash assistance distribution: The factors that drive perceptions of fairness or inequity in cash assistance distribution vary across regions. In Akkar, respondents identified several factors that affect the fairness perceptions, with 48% noting the perceived economic situation (income, wealth, or assets), followed by 33% mentioning household size. The economic situation plays a role in the perception of fairness as some families might be categorized with low economic status but do not need assistance compared to other families who seem to be better able to meet their needs. Similarly, the household size might seem big, but the needs of big families might be less compared to smaller families. Perceived favouritism or discrimination (33%) and vulnerability status, such as elderly household members and women-headed households (28%), were also significant factors. While access to political or social influence (14%), information about the program, geographic location, and access to distribution points were reported less frequently, they still played a role in shaping perceptions of fairness. Similar trends were noted among Syrians.

In Bekaa, Lebanese respondents pointed to a range of factors influencing fairness perceptions. A preference for displaced families was highlighted by 30%, with economic factors (29%) and household size (27%) also significant. Political and social influences within the community were mentioned by 21%, indicating that local dynamics play a considerable role in how aid is distributed and perceived. Syrian respondents in the region focused more on displacement status (19%), household size (10%), and economic conditions (9%) as factors impacting fairness, with political or social influence having a much smaller impact (2%).

In the South, 59% of Lebanese respondents believed that displacement status significantly affected fairness perceptions, with economic situation (32%) and political/social influence (32%) also cited as important factors. Among Syrian respondents, 48% emphasized displacement status, and 43% pointed to household size as key factors in shaping their views on fairness. Economic conditions (19%) and political or social influence were also noted by 24%, highlighting some differences in how Syrian refugees perceive the aid distribution process compared to local populations (figure 4).

This aligns with findings from the UNHCR Lebanon Refugee Needs Assessment, which highlights the impact of socio-economic as well as displacement status as key determinants in the perception of aid fairness¹¹.

Perceptions of fairness in cash assistance distribution are shaped by several factors including economic conditions, household size, vulnerability, and displacement, with regional and nationality differences across Akkar, Bekaa and Baalbek El Hermel, and the South.

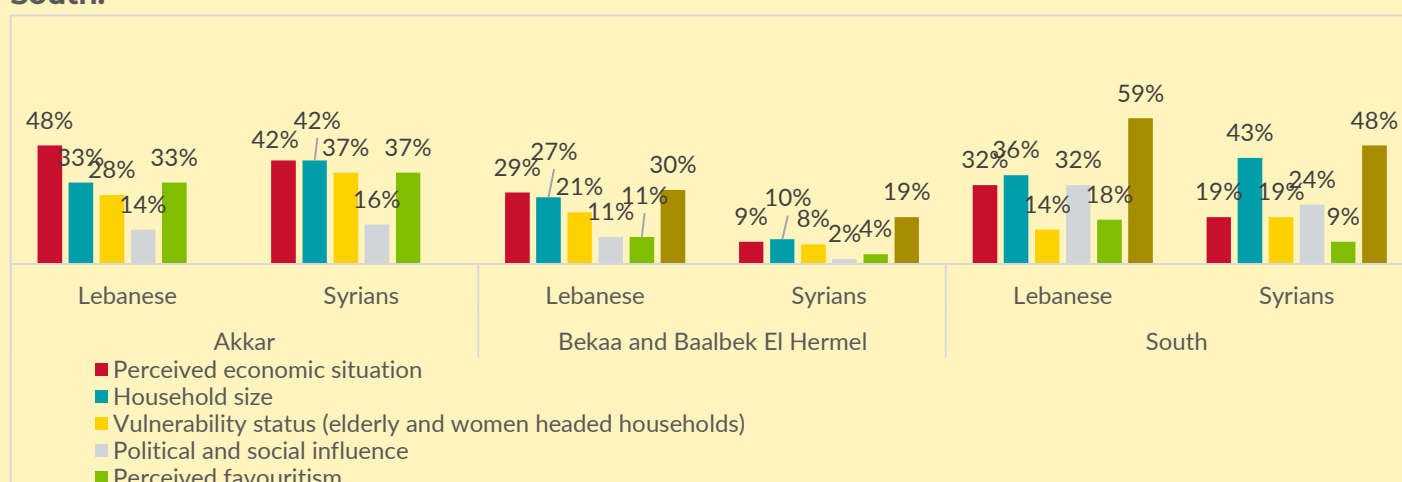


Figure 4: factors affecting the perception of the cash assistance fairness

¹¹ UNHCR Lebanon. (2024). *Refugee Needs Assessment: Cash Assistance and Vulnerability*.

Suggestion on how to improve fairness of cash distribution: In Akkar, respondents suggested several ways to improve the fairness of cash distribution, with the majority recommending increased transparency in the selection process (40%) and more equitable distribution based on need (33%). Other suggestions included more inclusive targeting, such as including non-displaced people (30%), allocating more resources to families in need (18%), and clearer communication about how assistance is distributed (13%). Additionally, some respondents emphasized the importance of establishing a Feedback and Complaints Resolution Mechanism (FCRM), reducing paperwork, and ensuring more frequent and timely distribution cycles. Thirteen percent of respondents noted instances where community members felt excluded from the assistance, which negatively impacted relationships, leading to resentment and tensions, particularly between displaced and host communities.

In Bekaa and Baalbek El Hermel, Lebanese respondents highlighted similar recommendations to enhance fairness, including clearer communication about how assistance is distributed (28%) and a more need-based distribution (52%). Other suggestions included more frequent and timely distribution cycles (4%), increased transparency in the selection process (20%), and the inclusion of non-displaced families (4%). Additionally, 5% of respondents called for more resources to be allocated to families in need, while 12% suggested better management and monitoring of the distribution process. Syrian respondents in the same region also suggested improvements, with 8% advocating for clearer communication, 11% favouring a need-based approach, and 5% calling for increased transparency in the selection process. No responses were provided from the South. These insights reflect the recommendations for enhanced accountability and transparency in cash assistance programs, mentioned in the UNHCR's Refugee Needs Assessment¹².

3. Market access

Assessing the market access is important in determining the economic well-being of displaced and host populations, especially with the ongoing conflict. It helps determine insights into the ability of families to get essential goods, meet their basic needs, and maintain some level of self-sufficiency. The ability to access markets, even in the aftermath of conflict, shows the ability of markets to recover and continue their operations despite the challenges posed by displacement, destruction, and economic instability.

Across the assessed areas and the two nationalities, access to market is reported relatively easy with an average of 11 minutes reported as time to reach to the closest market. Most frequented place is the market while a high percentage in Baalbek El Hermel reporting informal shops as their main marketplace. Goods availability was reported across assessed areas while items reported unavailable were medicine and school supplies by a high percentage.

Main marketplace: 57% of respondents reported the presence of big markets (supermarkets) as the main ones in their areas while 36% reported access to smaller shops. In Akkar, 55% reported access to small shops followed by 36% reporting supermarkets and 9% reporting wholesalers. In Baalbek El Hermel, 50% reported supermarkets while 44% reported small shops followed by 7% reporting wholesalers. In Bekaa, 86% reported supermarkets while 9% reported the presence of small shops. There were no responses for the South area (Figure 5). This aligns with the report produced by UNHCR that found that supermarkets and informal markets are the main places where displaced populations in Lebanon access goods¹³.

¹² UNHCR Lebanon. (2024). Refugee Needs Assessment: Cash Assistance and Vulnerability.

¹³ UNHCR Protection Monitoring Report - Lebanon, 3rd Quarter 2024

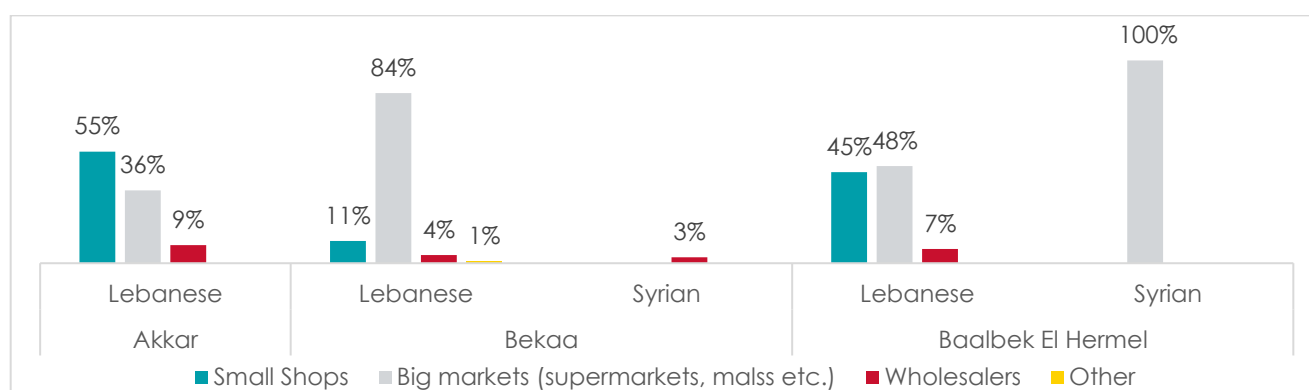


Figure 5: Market places respondents buy from

Market Access: The average time to reach the market was reported as 11 minutes across all locations, with variations by region: 13 minutes in Bekaa, 12 minutes in Baalbek El Hermel, and 9 minutes in Akkar. Overall, 89% of respondents reported having market access. However, the percentage of those experiencing limited access was higher in Baalbek El Hermel (16%), followed by Akkar (11%), the South (5%), and Bekaa (4%). This is consistent with the World Bank's Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDNA), which found that 90% of displaced households in Lebanon have access to markets within 15 minutes¹⁴. It is also echoing the challenges reported in the WFP's Market Functionality Index for areas like South and Baalbek-El Hermel, where market access is more inconsistent due to price unpredictability and ongoing instability¹⁵.

Availability of Goods: Majority of respondents reported goods available always or very often in the market at 65% while 32% reported sometimes. Medicine was reported as an item not found in the market close by 52% followed by clothing (27%), school supplies (16%), dry food items (13%), fresh food items (10%), households' goods (9%) and hygiene items (6%). These findings echo UNHCR's Protection Monitoring reports, which highlight that medicine, food, and school supplies remain less accessible in areas where supermarkets are less accessible¹⁶.

The assessment of market access reveals that **markets were able to recover and continue their operations even during ongoing conflict and displacement**. While challenges remain, especially the availability of goods availability, the ability to access markets within short travel times is a positive indicator people trying to recover from the effects of the war.

4. Food Security

Food insecurity is a significant concern across the assessed areas, with many households relying on negative coping strategies due to limited access to food. Although, a big number of households in Bekaa, Baalbek El Hermel, and Akkar reported an acceptable Food Consumption Score (FCS), a significant portion are facing challenges, specifically in Baalbek El Hermel and the South, where the FCS was lower. Many households are using negative coping strategies, like reducing meal sizes and borrowing food, highlights the needs of the households in terms of food security.

Food Consumption Score: 70% of those interviewed in Bekaa, Baalbek El Hermel and Akkar had an acceptable Food Consumption Score (FCS) while 22% were categorized as borderline. Host communities had the lowest % of acceptable FCS at 68%, followed by IDPs at 70% and 83% among returnees. In Baalbek El Hermel the percentage of acceptable FCS was the lowest at 61% while

¹⁴ World Bank, March 2025; Lebanon - Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDNA)

¹⁵ WFP Lebanon Market Functionality Index - January 2025

¹⁶ UNHCR Protection Monitoring Report - Lebanon, 3rd Quarter 2024

slightly higher in Akkar at 68% and 76% in Bekaa. In the South, 51% had an acceptable FCS, 31% were borderline, and 18% were categorized as poor (figure 6). Secondary data align with these findings, which prove the worsening food security levels in Lebanon. According to the FAO and UNHCR¹⁷ reports, the number of food-insecure individuals has increased, with 1.65 million people facing acute food insecurity by early 2025. The Lebanon Poverty and Equity Assessment 2024 notes that, despite some areas reporting acceptable FCS, the economic crisis and food inflation have pushed many families to use negative coping strategies¹⁸. Around 30% of Lebanon's population is now severely food insecure, a sharp increase from previous years^{19 20}.

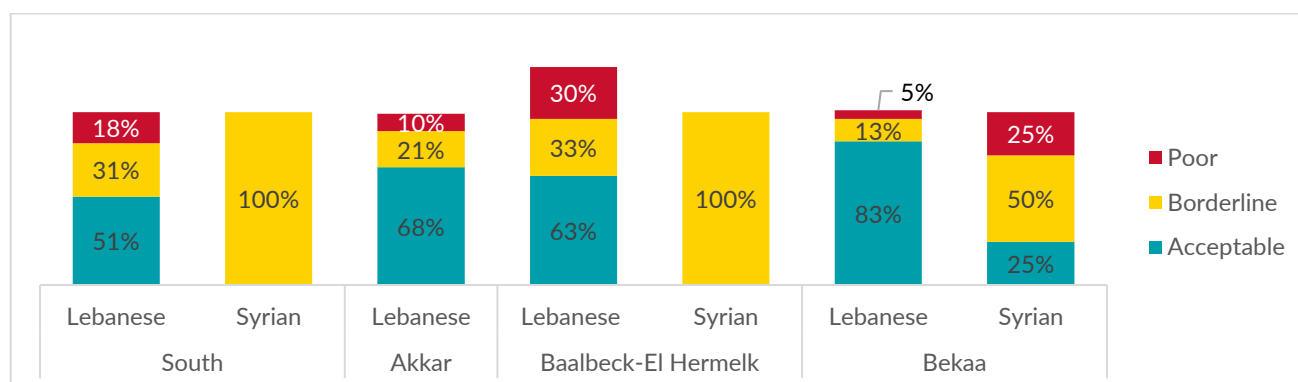


Figure 6: Food consumption score by nationality and area

Coping Strategies: Relying on less preferred and expensive food was the most common negative coping strategy reported by respondents at 86% followed by reducing the size of meals (49%), reducing the number of meals eaten in a day (44%), borrowing food or relying on help (39%) and restrict consumptions of adults in order for children to eat at 29%. Among governorates, the percentages were relatively similar. Similar trends are reported in the FAO report, where households are often substituting essential food items with less nutritious ones²¹.

Livelihood Coping strategies: 84% of respondents were categorized at a crises or emergency category. The percentage was highest in Akkar at 94% followed by Baalbek El Hermel at 88% and Bekaa at 71%. However, in the South, 60% of respondents were categorized as non/neutral, while 40% were in the stress category (figure 7). Worsening economic conditions and increased reliance on negative livelihood coping strategies, are reported with large numbers of households facing extreme difficulty in meeting their basic needs^{22 23}.

¹⁷ UN. (2024). UN report warns of famine, aggravated by conflicts and climate shocks. Associated Press News

¹⁸ World Bank. (2024). Lebanon Poverty and Equity Assessment 2024 - Weathering a Protracted Crisis. Knowledge for Policy

¹⁹ Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). (2025). Food insecurity deepens in Lebanon following conflict, new report shows. FAO News

²⁰ World Bank. (2024). Lebanon Poverty and Equity Assessment 2024 - Weathering a Protracted Crisis. Knowledge for Policy

²¹ FAO. (2025). Food insecurity deepens in Lebanon following conflict, new report shows.

²² World Bank. (2024). Lebanon Poverty and Equity Assessment 2024 - Weathering a Protracted Crisis. Knowledge for Policy

²³ UN. (2024). UN report warns of famine, aggravated by conflicts and climate shocks. Associated Press News

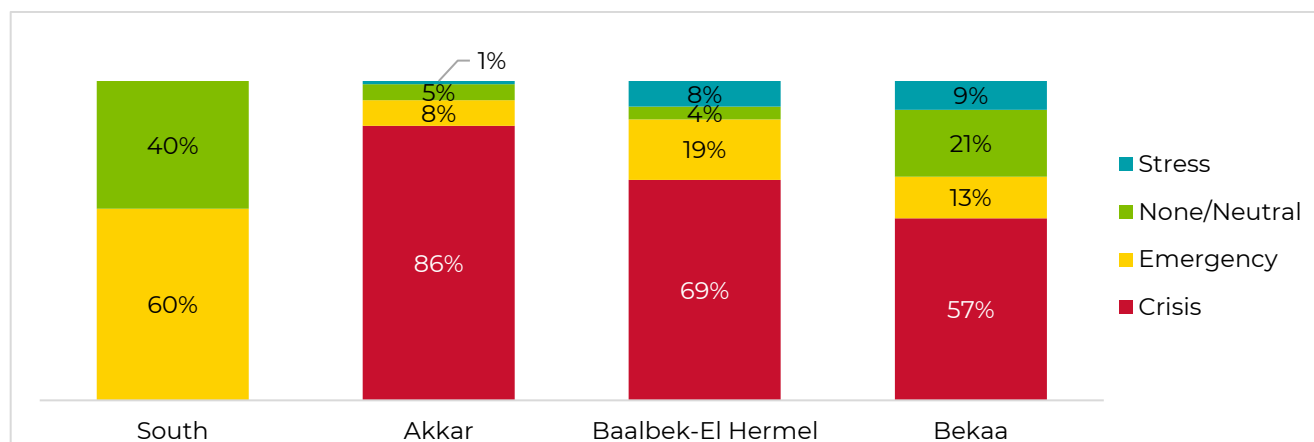


Figure 7: Livelihood coping strategies by nationality and area

5. Livelihoods

Households in the assessed areas are challenged by limited and unstable employment opportunities and income sources as the conflict has significantly altered employment landscapes. Many households reported relying on one main income source that is usually a temporary or casual job. Average income earned by households was reported at 58 million Lebanese Pound (LBP) which is slightly over the MEB value reported as of February 2025 of a household of 5 (51.3M LBP, WFP). while the majority reports high rates of debt and more than half of the respondents reported lack of job opportunities. This is consistent with UNHCR's findings, which highlighted the precarious nature of livelihoods for displaced populations, emphasizing a reliance on informal or temporary labour in the face of limited stable job opportunities²⁴.

Employment status: 74% of respondents reported that the head of household has a job. The percentage was slightly higher in Baalbek El Hermel at 82% and lower in Bekaa at 69%. In terms of the job nature, 49% reported a fixed job while 45% reported a temporary job. Among Syrians, relying on temporary jobs was highly noted (figure 8).

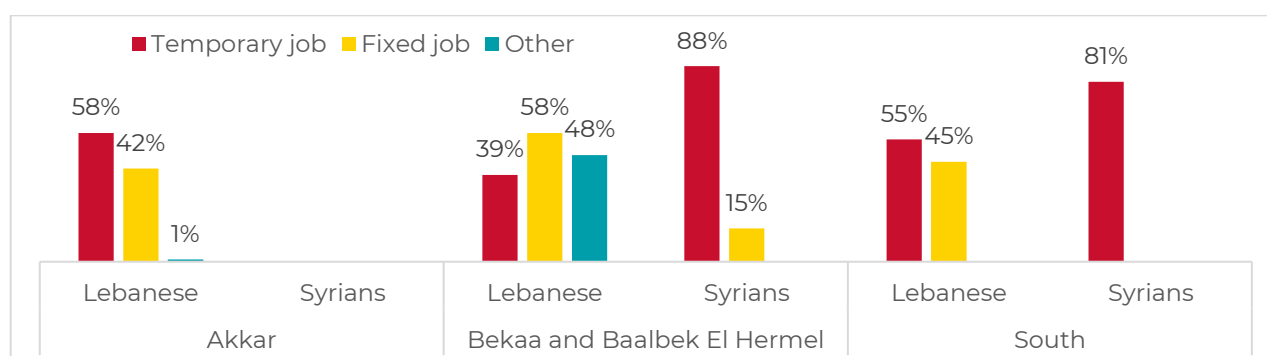


Figure 8: Employment status

Impact of war: 41% of the respondents reported that their employment status did not change as a result of the recent of escalations while 41% lost their jobs, 55% reported that there are fewer opportunities, 17% changed their job and 21% reported that they are relying more on humanitarian aid. In Baalbek El Hermel, the percentage was higher where 65% reported that they lost their jobs 19% had to change work while 6% reported no change. In Akkar, 22% reported changing their job or losing it because of the escalation and in the South 36% reported that they lost their jobs or had to change work (9%) and 45% reported that there are fewer opportunities. This aligns with World

²⁴ UNHCR Lebanon. (2024). Livelihood and Economic Impact of Displacement in Lebanon. UNHCR Lebanon

Bank's 2024 report, which found that the escalation of conflict and economic downturn has further limited employment, particularly in affected areas among vulnerable communities²⁵.

Table 2: Impact of conflict escalation on the livelihood of the respondents

	Total	Akkar	Bekaa and Baalbeck El Hermel	South
Did not change	41%	75%	6%	
Lost of job	41%	22%	65%	36%
Fewer opportunities	55%		66%	45%
Changed jobs	17%	22%	19%	9%
Relying on humanitarian assistance	21%		33%	9%

Income Sources: Casual labour was reported by majority as the main source of income at 30% followed by formal wages from government institutions (27%), formal wages from private institutions (15%), small business trade (12%) and crop production and sales (9%). No source of income was reported by 5%.

Household Income and debt: Average income reported among interviewed households was 54 million Lebanese Pound (LBP). The average was lower in Akkar at 21.5 million, in Bekaa 52 million and in Baalbek El Hermel 153 million. In terms of debt, 58% of the respondents reported owing money, the percentage was the highest in Akkar at 70%, followed by respondents in Baalbek El Hermel at 68% and Bekaa at 38%. These figures support the ones from the FAO's 2025 report, which shows that Lebanon's economic crisis, compounded by conflict, has led to an increased reliance on debt for survival, specifically in rural areas²⁶.

Skills and Assets: Majority of interviewed households reported no assets that can be used to start an income generation activity (67%) while 19% reported having small agriculture tools such as shovel and hoe. In terms of skills, 54% reported having no skills while 29% reported having agriculture skills, business skills (7%) and livestock management skills (6%).

Preferences on livelihood opportunities: agriculture activities, farming and livestock was as the most preferred livelihood opportunity by interviewed households at 37% followed by small business and entrepreneurship (27%), skilled trades such as carpentry and plumbing (19%), wage labor such as factory work (12%), services such as cleaning and transportation (8%), retail or market sales and education or training related opportunities both at 6%.

Table 3: Preferences on livelihood opportunities

	Akkar		Bekaa and Baalbek El Hermel		South	
	Lebanese	Syrians	Lebanese	Syrians	Lebanese	Syrians
Agriculture (farming, livestock)	52%	32%	31%	44%	36%	67%
Small business or entrepreneurship	19%	26%	27%	27%	32%	19%
Skilled trades (carpentry, plumbing, etc.)	14%	21%	16%	23%	23%	19%

²⁵ World Bank. (2024). New World Bank Report Assesses Impact of Conflict on Lebanon's Economy and Key Sectors.

²⁶ FAO. (2025). *Food insecurity deepens in Lebanon following conflict, new report shows*

Retail or market sales	5%	0%	10%	3%		
Wage labor (factory, office work, etc.)	0%	5%	14%	6%	27%	24%
Services (cleaning, transportation, etc.)	5%	11%	9%	5%	4%	
Education or training-related opportunities	0%	11%	7%	4%	9%	5%

Access to opportunities: when it comes to displacement's effects on opportunities, households in Baalbek El Hermel and South were asked if they feel displaced households have the same access to these opportunities as non-displaced households, 42% noted that displaced households face more barriers while 25% reported that access is the same and 19% reported that displaced households have better access. This reflects broader trends reported by UNHCR, where displaced people face barriers to access stable jobs, due to legal restrictions and limited opportunities²⁷.

Livelihood skills

The findings from the surveys and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) reveal the needs for livelihood skills development in the assessed areas, which align with the current challenges and opportunities available for both Lebanese and Syrians. The findings echo UNHCR's 2024 livelihood report, which shares the importance of skill development as a key strategy to improve economic resilience among displaced and host populations²⁸. Below is a breakdown of the required livelihood skills and training by region:

In Akkar, the most stated livelihood skills needed are agricultural skills, with 43% of respondents expressing interest in farming and animal care; followed by 33% of respondents highlighting the need for vocational training in areas such as carpentry, welding, and plumbing, which are practical skills that could provide immediate employment opportunities. Business management and entrepreneurship skills were voiced to be needed by 20% of respondents, signalling a desire for self-employment or small business development, while 8% expressed an interest in computer skills, particularly in software and online marketing, which is relevant to the growing digital economy. This is consistent with findings from the World Bank's 2024 assessment, which highlights the increased need for entrepreneurial skills among displaced populations as a response to limited formal job opportunities²⁹.

In Bekaa and Baalbek El Hermel, both Lebanese and Syrian respondents showed varied but overlapping needs. Among Lebanese, 36% expressed interest in vocational skills, with carpentry, welding, and plumbing being the most common choices. Additionally, 31% sought business management or entrepreneurship training, and 16% were interested in agricultural skills, though to a lesser extent compared to Akkar. Syrians, on the other hand, had a stronger demand for vocational training, with 45% indicating interest, followed by 30.2% seeking business management or entrepreneurship training and 21% interested in agricultural skills. Computer skills and financial literacy were also sought by Syrians, reflecting a need for both technological and economic management expertise. This aligns with UNHCR's report, which found that Syrian refugees in Lebanon are focused on acquiring practical skills for immediate employment, with vocational training and entrepreneurship being high priorities³⁰.

²⁷ UNHCR Lebanon. (2024). *Livelihood and Economic Impact of Displacement in Lebanon*.

²⁸ UNHCR Lebanon. (2024). *Livelihood and Economic Impact of Displacement in Lebanon*.

²⁹ World Bank. (2024). *New World Bank Report Assesses Impact of Conflict on Lebanon's Economy and Key Sectors*.

³⁰ UNHCR Lebanon. (2024). *Livelihood and Economic Impact of Displacement in Lebanon*.

In the South, vocational training stood out as the most pressing need, with a significant 83% of Lebanese respondents indicating interest in trades such as carpentry, welding, and plumbing. This reflects the region's demand for practical, job-ready skills. Language skills were also noted by 31.8% of Lebanese respondents, highlighting the need for improved communication, particularly in a multilingual context. Business management and entrepreneurship training were less sought after here compared to other regions, with only 12% of Lebanese expressing interest. Among Syrian respondents, the demand for vocational skills was similarly high at 80.9%, and language skills were also noted by 14.3% of respondents. Despite the high demand for vocational training, the interest in agricultural skills and business management was lower in the South compared to Akkar and Bekaa. This aligns with the FAO's findings, which noted variations in skill preferences across the areas, with rural areas like Akkar having a stronger focus on agriculture³¹.

Table 4: Preferences on livelihood skills needed

	Akkar		Bekaa and Baalbek El Hermel		South	
	Lebanese	Syrian	Lebanese	Syrian	Lebanese	Syrian
Vocational/ skilled Skills	28%	37%	36%	45%	83%	81%
Entrepreneurship	9%	31%	31%	30%	12%	14%
Computer Skills	9%	5%	14%		4%	9%
Agricultural Skills	51%	31%	16%	21%	5%	5%
Health Skills	5%		10%		-	
Language Skills	-	10%	11%		32%	14%
Microwork	-		6%		4%	

Overall, there is a clear demand for vocational skills across all areas, with agriculture, carpentry, welding, and plumbing being the most commonly cited areas of interest. Business management and entrepreneurship training are also needed, especially in Bekaa and Baalbek El Hermel, to support both Lebanese and Syrian populations in starting and managing businesses. Additionally, computer skills and financial literacy were seen as essential, particularly among Syrian refugees. Addressing these skill gaps through targeted training programs can significantly enhance the livelihoods of both Lebanese and Syrian communities, promoting economic resilience and self-reliance.

6. Shelter

While many households in the assessed areas reported owning homes, a significant portion continues to face several shelter challenges. These include damaged shelters, high rent, inadequate heating, and leakages during rain. These issues are particularly concerning for households that are struggling to meet basic needs, such as displaced families and low-income households. Many respondents reported difficulties with heating, especially during the colder months, and the need for better protection from the elements, such as leaks during rainfall.

In terms of accessibility to shelter-related items, the majority of respondents reported that essential items, such as hygiene products, cooking utensils, clothes, sources of light, and mattresses, were

³¹ FAO. (2025). Food insecurity deepens in Lebanon following conflict, new report shows.

readily available in local markets. This highlights the feasibility of using cash assistance programs to meet the shelter needs of families and provide them with the necessary items to improve their living conditions.

Shelter pressing challenges: half of the respondent reported housing related pressing needs. In Bekka and Baalbek El Hermel 54% of Lebanese and 50% of Syrian highlighted shelter as the most pressing challenge after war. In the south 48% of Lebanese and Syrians reported the same pressing challenge. In Akkar 25% reported no shelter issues. These findings echo those from UNHCR's, which highlights that shelter conditions remain a significant issue, especially for vulnerable populations including refugees and in areas hosting large numbers of displaced persons³².

Shelter type: Majority of respondents reported own house (86%) as the type of shelter they live in. In Bekaa the percentage of those reported renting a house was higher at 20% while in Baalbek El Hermel it was 8% followed by 4% in Akkar. Among Syrians, the higher percentage reported renting a house (86%) while among Lebanese, majority reporting owning a house (91%). These findings are consistent with UNHCR's housing survey, which highlighted that displaced populations are more likely to rent³³.

Adequate Shelter: Issues faced by respondents in terms of adequate shelter were leaking during the rain, lack of heating, damaged shelter or shelter is too small and high rent. In Bekaa and Baalbek El Hermel, 14% of the Lebanese and 12% of the Syrian reported home destruction due to war. Similar percentages were noted in the south where 18% of the Lebanese reported loss of their homes and 85% of displaced persons reported house damages. In Akkar 25% reported no shelter issues. This is consistent with WFP's report, highlighting that conflict-related shelter damage remains a critical issue in areas (like Bekaa and South) with a high concentration of displaced families³⁴.

7. WASH

The ongoing conflict in Lebanon, followed by ceasefire, has drastically exacerbated water-related needs for both displaced Syrians and Lebanese communities. The disruption of infrastructure and increased displacement have created significant challenges in accessing clean water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities. The findings from various regions, including Akkar, Bekaa, Baalbek-El Hermel, and the South, reveal critical gaps in water access and a heightened demand for support in these areas.

Access to drinking water: Respondents were asked about the sufficiency of their access to drinking water. Only 39% reported having sufficient access, while 44% reported somewhat sufficient access, and the remainder reported insufficient access. Regional disparities are notable: in the South, 64% reported sufficient access, compared to 46% in Bekaa, 43% in Akkar, and just 13% in Baalbek-El Hermel (figure 9).

Access to water for domestic use: in terms of access to domestic water, only 45% reported sufficient access to water while 38% reported somewhat sufficient and 17% reported insufficient access to water. In Akkar, 48% of respondents reported that their access is sufficient, 48% somewhat sufficient and 4% insufficient while in Bekaa 51% of respondents reported that their access is sufficient, 26% somewhat sufficient and 23% insufficient. In Baalbek El Hermel, 21% of

³² UNHCR Lebanon. (2024). *Shelter and Housing Conditions of Displaced Persons in Lebanon*.

³³ UNHCR Lebanon. (2024). *Shelter and Housing Conditions of Displaced Persons in Lebanon*.

³⁴ WFP Lebanon. (2024). *WFP's Emergency Response and Cash Assistance for Vulnerable Families in Lebanon*.

respondents reported that their access is sufficient, 42% somewhat sufficient and 37% insufficient. In the South 36% reported water insufficiency, while the rest mentioned that it was sufficient. In terms of change in access to water, majority (86%) reported that their access to water has not changed in the past month (December 2024) while 12% reported yes.

Sanitation Services: When asked about the accessibility of sanitation services, 67% of respondents reported accessibility, 30% reported somewhat accessible services, and 3% reported inaccessibility. Akkar and Bekaa reported higher levels of access (67% and 82%, respectively), while Baalbek-El Hermel had lower access (29%), with 55% reporting somewhat accessible and 16% reporting no access. In the South, 9% reported inaccessibility, with the remainder reporting no issues (figure 9).

Hygiene items: Access to hygiene items was generally high, with only 1% reporting inaccessibility. In Akkar, 62% reported full access, and 38% reported somewhat accessible items. In Bekaa, 71% had full access, with 28% reporting somewhat accessible items. In Baalbek-El Hermel, 63% reported full access, and 36% reported somewhat accessible items. In the South, 5% reported inaccessibility (figure 9).

The key informant interviews conducted with community leaders confirmed the WASH related needs that emerged from the surveys. The majority expressed that the needs among Syrians is higher but Lebanese as well are facing urging water and hygiene needs. They also emphasized on the immense need to rehabilitate or build the water and sewage systems and infrastructure especially in the areas that were directly affected by the conflict.

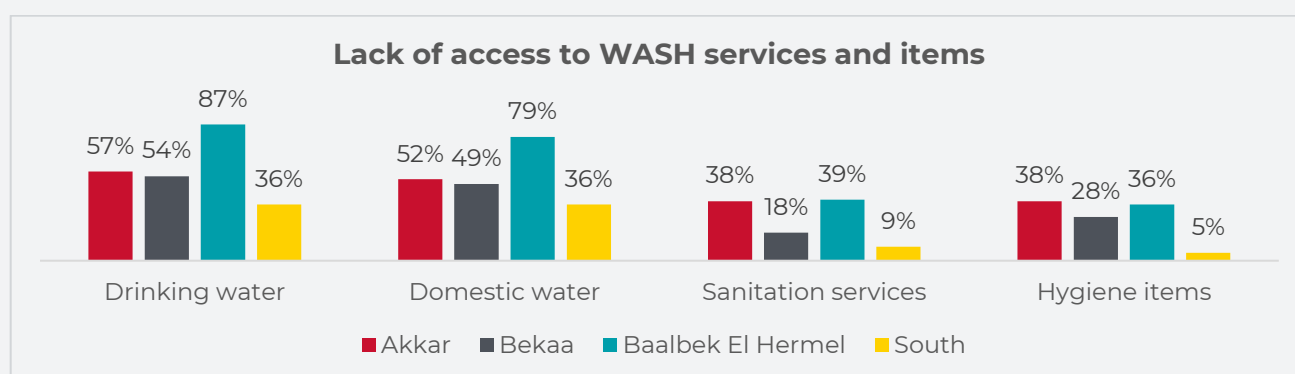


Figure 9: Lack of access to WASH services and items by region

Both Lebanese and Syrian respondents across Akkar, Bekaa, Baalbek-El Hermel, and the South regions face significant challenges with water access, sanitation, and hygiene. While Lebanese respondents generally reported better access to these services, many still face difficulties, particularly in more rural areas like Baalbek-El Hermel. Syrian refugees, especially in overcrowded camps, face critical gaps in water and sanitation services, with many relying on external aid. In the South (considered the most affected area by the conflict), although WASH needs appear less critical compared to other areas, this may be due to respondents prioritizing other urgent needs, such as food, shelter, and healthcare. Addressing these needs and improving infrastructure, is crucial for rebuilding resilience and promoting self-reliance in both Lebanese and Syrian communities. The findings and these recommendations are in line with UNICEF WASH report, which stresses the need for infrastructure rehabilitation to address the water and sanitation needs of both displaced populations and host communities³⁵.

³⁵ UNICEF Lebanon. (2024). *WASH in Lebanon: Situation Update and Recommendations*

8. Protection

Protection remains a critical concern for both displaced Lebanese and Syrian families across the assessed areas. The ongoing conflict and displacement have exposed many families to a range of risks, with protection issues being particularly pronounced in vulnerable groups. While respondents reported low gender-based violence in the assessed areas, availability of protection services was also low in addition to awareness of where and how to access protection services. In terms of protection risks in the area, high numbers of child labour and verbal harassment were documented and fewer cases of domestic and physical violence. Nonetheless, preventive and response activities implementation and outreach are considered a priority support.

Psychological and emotional strains: The emotional and psychological toll of displacement is also substantial. A large number of respondents reported anxiety, depression, and mental health issues resulting from the conflict. In Bekaa and Baalbek-El Hermel, 52% of Lebanese respondents experienced stress due to the conflict, with a similar percentage of Syrians reporting mental health issues, such as anxiety and emotional trauma. In the South Anxiety, depression, or stress due to the conflict and difficulty coping with loss of security and stability were reported by 18% each, while emotional trauma or mental health issues were mentioned by only 4% of the Lebanese and 9% of the Syrians (Figure 10). This is consistent with UNICEF's report, which highlights mental health issues as a critical concern among both displaced persons and host communities³⁶.

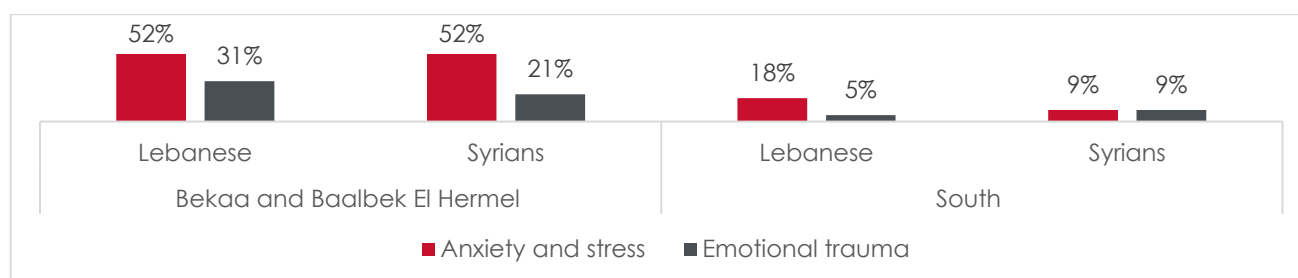


Figure 10: Protection concerns

Protection services: only 17% of respondents in Akkar, Bekaa and Baalbek El Hermel reported availability of protection services in their area. The percentage was reported the lowest in Baalbek El Hermel at 12% followed by 17% in Akkar and 21% in Bekaa. Among Syrians, higher percentages of unawareness were recorded (100% in Baalbek El Hermel and 69% in Bekaa in comparison to responses among Lebanese) (Figure 11).

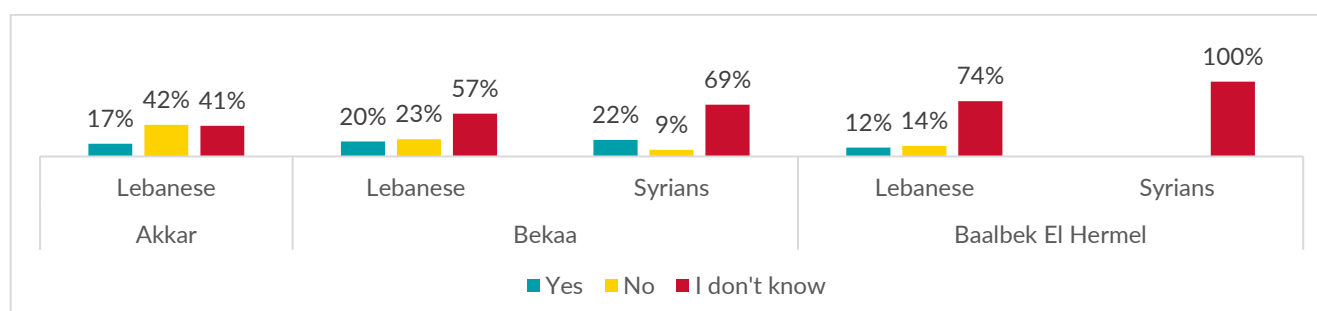


Figure 11: Availability of protection services

Access to protection services: 16% of respondents reported knowing where and how to access protection services where in Bekaa and Baalbek El Hermel it was reported by 14% of respondents and by 18% in Akkar (figure 12).

³⁶ UNICEF Lebanon. (2024). *Mental Health and Protection Needs in Lebanon*.

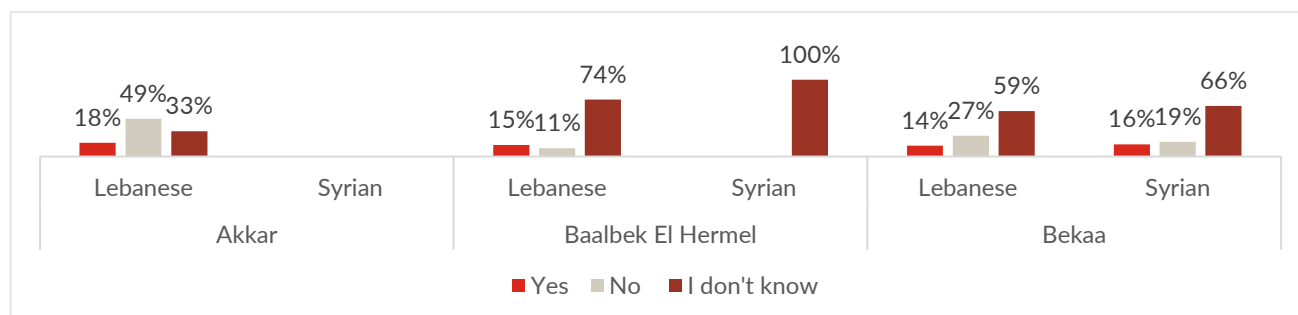


Figure 12: Access to protection services

Protection risks: Verbal harassment was reported as a major protection risk at 32% followed by child labour at 23% and domestic violence at 17%. Fewer respondents also reported physical violence as a protection risk in their area. These protection concerns are also reflected in UNHCR's report, which identifies harassment and child labour as primary risks faced by displaced persons³⁷

RECOMMENDATIONS

General recommendations:

Coordination between different organizations: Ensuring a coordinated approach to the different assistances, with clear communication between NGOs, local authorities, and communities, will help streamline efforts and avoid duplication of resources. Collaboration is critical to ensure that the service mapping is updated, regular coordination is taking place and activities are aligned (according to sector recommendations and standards) among organizations. This will lead to efficient and effective referrals between organizations and will increase perception of fairness within the targeted populations.

Cash:

Consider increasing cash assistance coverage and availability: The high demand for cash assistance across the regions, particularly in Akkar (93%), Bekaa, and Baalbek El Hermel (79%), highlights the critical need for more widespread and consistent financial support. Hence, humanitarian actors are recommended to scale advocacy and donor engagement highlighting the gaps and to increase funding to be able to expand the scope of cash programs to meet the growing needs of both displaced and host communities is essential.

Tailor communication and outreach strategies: Use community's preferred Communication Channels which include telephone calls and SMS. Face-to-face interaction is also the preferred method, particularly in Bekaa and Baalbek El Hermel.

Address challenges with MTOs: Challenges like high transaction fees, network coverage issues, and a lack of knowledge on using MTOs should be addressed through information sharing, awareness and training for the participants. Furthermore, increasing the number of agents and cash-out points could ease access.

Ensure **transparency and fairness in cash assistance distribution** through:

³⁷ UNHCR Lebanon. (2024). *Protection Needs and Response in Lebanon: Assessment Report*.

- A lot of families shared concerns about the fairness of the cash. Addressing these concerns through transparent and clear communication about the selection criteria will improve fairness perceptions. As well as regular updates on distribution schedules and clear communication about the funding allocations are necessary to prevent perceptions of exclusion. The regular updates shall include messaging around lack of funding and the inability to reach out to everyone to be able to meet expectations and perceptions.
- Learning from the experience of Mercy Corps Lebanon which adopted clear communication on the targeting approach and updated the selection criteria from an objective scoring to most vulnerable categories under its SAFER project is recommended.
- Since displaced people and host communities may have different needs and experiences with cash assistance, programs should ensure that both groups have equal access to resources. However, with the funding shortages it is essential to advocate with the donors and funding stakeholders along with the sector to have increased funds and reach out to both groups.

Food Security

- Given the high levels of food insecurity in areas like Baalbek El Hermel and the South, interventions should focus on providing food aid (direct distribution and cash for food) to households with borderline or poor Food Consumption Scores (FCS).
- In the case of inability to reach out to highly food insecure households, consider outreaching them through local authorities who might be better able to guide organizations through the outreach of those families.

Livelihoods

Since 84% of households are relying on crisis or emergency livelihood coping strategies and most of them have lost jobs and the majority stated the lack of opportunities, it is recommended to:

- Provide cash assistance, micro-loans, and grants to support small business development, agricultural investments, and household debt alleviation. The support, followed by a nexus approach, will allow communities to reduce reliance on negative coping strategies and enable them to participate and lead in longer term and sustainable livelihood activities.
- Consider the provision of a combination of vocational training to community members for instance on how to rebuild their home. This will allow trained individuals to consecutively help other families within their communities to rehabilitate their homes at less cost while getting an income at the same time. This can be coupled with conditional cash for them to be able to ensure rehabilitation. They can therefore support as well in the rehabilitation of the infrastructure within their areas.
- Facilitate employment through partnerships with local businesses, cooperatives etc. (could be provision of training or in-kind etc.). Promote investment in agriculture, skilled trades, and small businesses. In parallel, engage in policy and dialogue initiatives to promote economic rights and decent work principles to create enabling market conditions.
- Provide demand-driven vocational and technical training programs tailored to community needs, such as carpentry, construction, welding, modern farming techniques, and entrepreneurship. Include language and digital skills to enhance employability and promote women and youth participation through tailored programs that addresses their need and facilitate social protection mechanisms.
- Facilitate and promote local participation and ownership of local development through participatory local development plans that are community led and implemented.

Shelter

- Offer targeted cash assistance to vulnerable households to repair shelter damage caused by war or weather-related issues, especially in regions like Baalbek El Hermel and the South where the damage is more pronounced.
- Prioritize repairing damaged homes, businesses, and essential systems like water, sewage, and power networks to improve living conditions and economic stability through community labor intensive programs following decent labour standards and principles.

WASH

- Build/ rehabilitate the water and sanitation infrastructure, particularly in areas with the lowest access.
- Provision of cash for WASH to help community members retain their health and access hygiene items.
- Consider rehabilitating the affected WASH infrastructure through the integration of cash for work activities.

Protection

- Increase the availability and awareness of protection services.
- Consider expanding psychosocial support programs for affected communities. In addition, establish mental health programs and counselling services to address stress, trauma, and emotional well-being.
- Look into ways of improving referrals (like updated service mapping and current forms etc. to ensure proper referral pathways. Similarly, train NGOs that do not work under protection to help them better refer cases.