

THE MIDDLE EAST COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Light-of-Hope

MECC bulletin for the Middle East and Lebanon ordeal and rescue efforts

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A BEACON IN THE DARKNESS:

The Resilience of the Lebanese Spirit



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The Middle East Council of Churches

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FROM HOPELESSNESS TO A GLIMMER OF HOPE

The deep-seated skepticism about the ability of Lebanon's current political establishment to resolve the country's crises, primarily because systemic issues like sectarian power-sharing, corruption, and a fragmented state apparatus prevent meaningful reform from taking root.

The division of authority between the central government, parliament, and provincial councils often leads to competing jurisdictions, overlapping responsibilities, and endless political disputes. This bureaucratic friction freezes public works and leaves little room for decisive executive action.

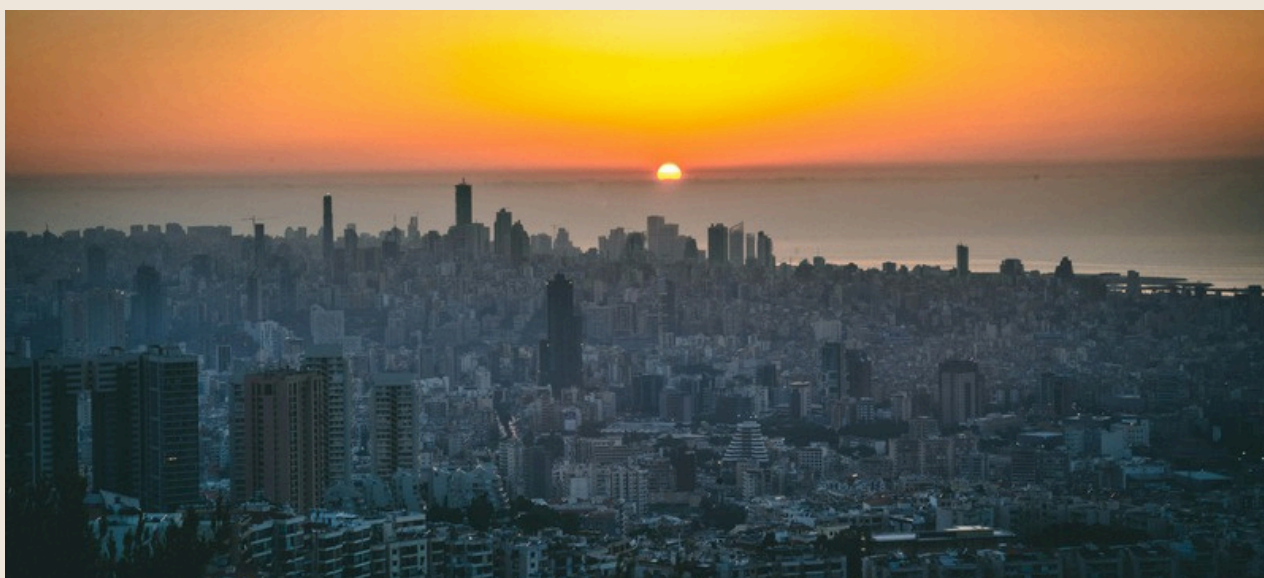
Here comes the issue of public service and assistance in times of crisis. If governmental projects are funded, they are painfully slow and localized. They are deeply rooted in the structural nature of the political system, that suffocates comprehensive, nation-wide reform, keeping the country vulnerable to systemic deterioration.

While Humanitarian organizations automatically become rooted in the country's system as an alternative to government social health and welfare provisions, and create parallel systems that can inadvertently weaken the government by allowing them to abdicate their responsibility for providing essential public health and social services.

The Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) Service and Relief (Diakonia) Department is a critical, faith-based support network acting as a vital lifeline amid Lebanon's compounding crises. Since its inception in May 1974, it has provided emergency aid and psychosocial support to war-stricken and displaced populations regardless of their faith.

The council's ongoing diaconal mission provides essential support in Lebanon through a highly coordinated, grassroots approach:

- **Emergency Relief & Cash Assistance:** MECC distributes vital supplies, including food, clothing, hygiene and dignity kits and bedding, to collective shelters and vulnerable hosting families. Multi-purpose cash assistance is also widely provided to help marginalized groups preserve their dignity.



- **Psychosocial Support:** Operating centers such as the Our Lady Dispensary (Mount Lebanon/Beirut area), MECC runs monthly emotional and mental health awareness sessions, including drama therapy and trauma care for women, children, and men.
- **Humanitarian Convoys:** with the support of its international partners, MECC deploys convoys with basic assistance to isolated and hard-to-reach areas, such as the Marjeyoun district in South Lebanon.
- **Advocacy & Protection:** In light of severe institutional and economic crises, MECC actively advocates for the protection of civilians, respect for international humanitarian law, and an end to the plundering of Lebanon's national resources.

MECC remains committed to defending human dignity and preserving Lebanon's cultural, educational, and social fabric.

What MECC does is but a drop in the ocean of need especially that Lebanon every five or ten years is hit by a crisis never being able to total recovery; 1975 Lebanese civil war; 1978 Israeli invasions in Operation Litani; 1982 invasion on southern Lebanon and advancement all the way to Beirut; 2006 Israeli- Lebanon War, resulting in a 34-day ground incursion and heavy aerial bombardments; 2019 economic crisis and bankruptcy of Lebanese banks; 2020 Explosion of the Beirut port and massive destruction; 2023

began prolonged border hostilities, Israeli forces that launched a new wave of ground incursions and airstrikes across southern Lebanon and the Bekaa Valley following mass evacuation orders that continued in, 2024 , 2025 and today 2026. Driven by a military doctrine of creating a "forward defensive zone," erasing villages and border systematically destroying and razing entire border villages in southern Lebanon.

Consequently, Massive displacement of 1.5million Southerners to the city center have created severe strain on city centers. Triggering crises, severe housing shortages, overwhelmed infrastructure, soaring costs of living, and heightened social friction, exacerbating the divide between long-time residents and the newly displaced.

In this catastrophic and disastrous environment, in this fragile and very flammable political order, mass destruction and massive killing are the daily life, nothing is certain. Could we hope for the future of Lebanon? When peace is like a mirage believing that this is the last round and the end is soon, while the next is even more disastrous, how naïve we are! When international resolutions of peace, cease fire, war principles, sparing schools, hospitals, children, women and elderly are but a cry in the wilderness, hope is unrealistic?

What MECC is providing is but a candle in the darkness, a beacon of survival in an ocean of humanitarian, social, psychological, economic, and political need.

When faced with recurring devastation, broken international resolutions, and a fractured political system, calling hope might seem unrealistic but that is the only logical conclusion.

While political and diplomatic systems continually falter, the hope for Lebanon's future is rooted in the resilience of its people, the potential for institutional reform, and the opportunity to rebuild under new leadership. While the political system remains intensely fragile—plagued by historical sectarian impasses, overlapping financial crises, and ongoing regional conflicts— the hope for Lebanon rests on several enduring realities: Democratic Accountability, Structural and Economic Reforms and Restoring State Sovereignty.

And while the road ahead is arduous, hope for Lebanon's future remain rooted in the resilience of its people, the potential for institutional reform, and the opportunity to rebuild under new leadership.

Meanwhile as in the deepest shadows, hope glimmers within the Lebanese spirit, from grassroots community rebuilding and diaspora support to everyday acts of solidarity. Radiant hope is what truly carries a nation forward.

SETA HADESHIAN



MECC Work Updates

MECC is mobilizing emergency assistance across Lebanon to support displaced families and vulnerable communities with lifesaving aid and essential services:

I. Winter Blankets – ELCH

Activity Description

Winter blankets were distributed to displaced families across multiple locations, both inside and outside collective shelters. This intervention was supported by ELCH, in response to the ongoing needs of households affected by displacement.



A total of 2,815 blankets were distributed across Lebanon, reaching hundreds of families in collective shelters and host communities. The distribution aimed to provide immediate relief and support families facing difficult living conditions, particularly those residing in shelters or in inadequate housing arrangements.

The blankets were well received by beneficiaries, who highlighted their importance in improving comfort and helping them cope with changing weather conditions. Beneficiary feedback was very positive, particularly in elevated areas where temperatures remain low. Many highlighted that the blankets were still needed despite the season, as cold weather conditions persist in these locations.

Distribution

- 140 blankets distributed at the Saint Anne Collective Shelter in Rabwe
- 160 blankets distributed by MECC at The Way, Sin el Fil, for IDPs
- 400 blankets distributed in 3 collective shelters in Deir el Amar, in coordination with the church and the municipality



- 450 blankets distributed to Flora Guest House
- 200 blankets distributed to St. Joseph Church
- 100 blankets distributed to IDPs (Seeds of Mustard list)
- 295 blankets distributed to Ajaltoun Public School
- 330 blankets distributed to Ain Dara Public School
- 1,440 blankets distributed to South Lebanon

Feedback

The Mayor of Deir El Qamar expressed his sincere appreciation for the support, noting that the distribution was both timely and much needed. He emphasized that the municipality is hosting a significant number of displaced individuals and continues to face urgent humanitarian needs, particularly given the ongoing cold weather conditions.



II. Diesel Distribution – ELCH & ELCA

Activity Description



Distribution

- Deir el Amar Collective Shelter: 250 individuals
- Flora Guesthouse Collective Shelter: 1,100 individuals
- Ain Dara Collective Shelter: 150 individuals
- Tyr DRR & Collective Shelter: 3,640 individuals
- Ain Ebel Municipality: 1,540 individuals
- Rmeich Municipality: 6,000 individuals
- Kawkaba Municipality: 280 individuals

Diesel was distributed to collective shelters and municipalities in the South and Beirut and Mount Lebanon (BML), supporting displaced populations and responding to urgent needs related to electricity and basic service provision. This intervention was supported by ELCH and ELCA, and aimed to help maintain essential operations in sites hosting displaced families.

The provision of diesel contributed to powering generators used for lighting, water pumping, and other critical services, supporting adequate living conditions within shelters and easing pressure on municipalities managing high numbers of displaced individuals. MECC continues to support collective shelters in BML and hard-to-reach areas in South Lebanon with diesel for water pumping, electricity, and vital necessities — especially in the South.

Feedback

Beneficiary feedback was very positive, as the provision of diesel addressed a critical need within shelters and municipalities supporting displaced populations. The fuel support played a key role in maintaining essential services, particularly electricity and water supply, which are vital for daily living in collective shelters.

Archimandrite Sassin in Al Rabwe Collective Shelter expressed his satisfaction and appreciation for the Council's engagement, particularly highlighting the importance of the needs assessment conducted by the MECC team prior to the assistance. He also welcomed the provision of fuel support, which was urgently needed to ensure the continuity of essential services within the shelter during this critical period.

The Mayor of Deir El Amar expressed his appreciation to MECC for its continuous support throughout the displacement crisis, highlighting that MECC was among the first organizations to support collective shelters in the area through diesel provision, blankets, first aid kits, and unrestricted vouchers.



III. Drinking Water Distribution – ELCH

Activity Description



Bottled drinking water was distributed to displaced families residing in collective shelters, in response to the acute shortage of safe drinking water in crowded shelter settings. This intervention was supported by ELCH.

A total of 2,300 packs of bottled water were distributed, with each pack containing six 2-liter bottles, reaching approximately 2,300 beneficiaries. The distribution aimed to provide immediate relief and support families facing difficult living conditions, particularly those residing in shelters with limited access to clean water.

Distribution

- 450 packs to Saint Anne Collective Shelter in Rabwe
- 950 packs to Flora Guesthouse Collective Shelter in Karantina
- 450 packs to Ain Dara Public School
- 1,850 packs to South Lebanon (Tyr DRR), with the generous support of Tearfund



Feedback

Beneficiary feedback was very positive, as all distributions took place within collective shelters where access to clean water remains limited. Many highlighted the importance of receiving potable water, noting that it is essential for their daily use and overall well-being in crowded living conditions.

The support was considered timely and necessary, as it helped ease some of the immediate challenges related to securing safe drinking water.





IV. Cleaning Kits Distribution

Activity Description

MECC distributed cleaning kits to collective shelters to support the maintenance of basic hygiene standards among large numbers of displaced families. A total of 275 kits were distributed in the first phase of the response, with subsequent distributions continuing as needs evolved.



Distribution

- 150 kits to South Lebanon
- 50 kits to Flora Guest House
- 25 kits to the Lebanese University – Institute of Social Sciences
- 25 kits to Ain Dara Public School
- 25 kits to Ajaltoun Collective Shelter, serving approximately 280 people
- 25 kits to St. Joseph Church Collective Shelter, serving more than 250 people

Feedback

Flora Guest House: Residents, along with Mr. Ali Hammadeh, one of the shelter focal points, expressed deep gratitude and appreciation. They highlighted how meaningful it was to feel the care and compassion of the MECC, which paid close attention to details and supported a wide range of needs including fuel, drinking water, blankets, and cleaning supplies. The cleaning kits were particularly valued given the large number of displaced individuals (over 1,000 people), where maintaining hygiene is critical.

Lebanese University – Institute of Social Sciences: The shelter focal point described the support as a thoughtful and impactful gesture. She emphasized that the Council's assistance,



provided without any discrimination between religions or sects, reinforced a strong sense of trust, inclusion, and hope among beneficiaries. She also highlighted additional urgent needs, including first aid kits, food parcels, and medications for chronic illnesses, particularly for elderly residents. In response, the MECC team promptly acted on these requests and revisited the shelter to address the identified needs — especially as MECC is among the few organizations currently providing first aid kits.





V. Unrestricted Voucher Distribution

Activity Description

A total of 800 unrestricted vouchers were distributed across multiple IDP communities, churches, and local organizations to support displaced families in meeting their urgent needs.

Distribution

- Moumken Organization (Hamra – Ras Beirut): 300 vouchers
- IDPs through OLD: 200 vouchers
- Greek Orthodox – Mar Elias, Sin El Fil: 70 vouchers
- Ajaltoun / Outside Shelter: 65 vouchers
- Derdghaya IDPs – Melkite Catholic Church: 50 vouchers
- Deir El Amar IDPs outside shelter – Maronite Church: 50 vouchers
- Kawzah IDPs (through Kawzah Municipality): 35 vouchers
- Syriac Orthodox Church: 30 vouchers

Feedback

One displaced beneficiary who received an unrestricted voucher expressed relief and gratitude: "We desperately need many basic items. I will immediately use this voucher to buy meat and vegetables. Honestly, since the beginning of our displacement, my family and I have not been able to cook a proper meal with meat."

The head of the Ajaltoun shelter thanked MECC for the initiative of distributing vouchers to displaced families living outside formal shelters. She explained that many families outside shelters receive very limited assistance and are often overlooked, stressing that these vouchers allow families to purchase their most urgent and essential needs with dignity.



VII. Support to Hard-to-Reach Areas in South Lebanon

Activity Description

In a powerful act of solidarity with the people of South Lebanon, MECC organized a humanitarian convoy to the hard-to-reach villages of Marjeyoun district, where communities continue to endure isolation, uncertainty, and limited access to essential services.

With the generous support of Tearfund, Danmission, and ELCA, and in coordination with the Lebanese Army, the convoy delivered 595 hygiene kits and 1,040 food kits to vulnerable families in Bourj El Moulouk, Kleyaa, Jdeidet Marjeyoun, and Ibl El Saki.

Family Hygiene Kits

- 160 kits in Bourj El Moulouk
- 435 kits in Jdeidet Marjeyoun

Regular Food Kits

- 800 food kits in Kleyaa
- 215 food kits in Ebel El Saqi



While many roads in South Lebanon remain difficult and communities continue to endure isolation and uncertainty, MECC remains committed to standing beside the people who chose to remain in their villages despite all challenges. This convoy is not only about aid — it is about presence when people feel forgotten, dignity when hardship becomes part of daily life, and reminding every family in the South that they are not alone.



VIII. First Aid Kits Distribution

Activity Description

To strengthen emergency preparedness and support frontline community response efforts, MECC distributed first aid kits to municipalities across Tyre, Saida, and Marjeyoun districts. The kits were provided to areas hosting displaced families, collective shelters, and villages facing challenges in accessing healthcare services and medical supplies. In many of these communities, municipalities and local actors remain the first point of support during emergencies and periods of instability.

Municipal representatives expressed strong appreciation for the quality and usefulness of the kits, highlighting that the contents respond directly to the daily needs faced within shelters and isolated villages. The kits were described as practical, well-equipped, and highly valuable for immediate response and basic medical care in areas where access to health facilities can be limited or delayed.

Distribution locations (BML and Collective Shelters)

Deir El Amar, Ajaltoun, Rabwe, and Rawche/Lebanese University.





IX. Protection Activity in Shelter – NCA

Activity Description

Gender-based violence (GBV) awareness sessions were conducted at the collective shelter in Achrafieh, at the Saint Joseph Church, targeting IDP migrant women and girls, alongside a recreational activity for their children. This intervention was supported by NCA, in response to the protection needs of displaced populations.

A total of 45 individuals were reached through one session. The activity aimed to raise awareness on gender-based violence, promote safe practices, and provide participants with information on available support services. In parallel, recreational activities for children created a safe and supportive environment, allowing women and girls to engage more comfortably in the session.

Additionally, MECC was selected as a GBV actor to conduct a GBV Safety Audit at St. Joseph Shelter in Ashrafieh, targeting the migrants' shelter (approximately 280 residents). In coordination with the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) and the GBV sector, and following MoSA's authorization for protection, GBV, and child protection partners to implement such audits in collective shelters, MECC proceeded with the visit and conducted the assessment on site. The exercise focused on identifying safety risks and concerns affecting residents, particularly vulnerable groups. Findings and recommendations will be shared to enhance protection, safety, and dignity within the shelter and will be published in a report by OCHA.





Feedback

Beneficiary feedback was very positive, with women and girls expressing appreciation for the safe space created during the session. Participants highlighted the importance of discussing sensitive topics such as gender-based violence in a supportive and respectful environment.

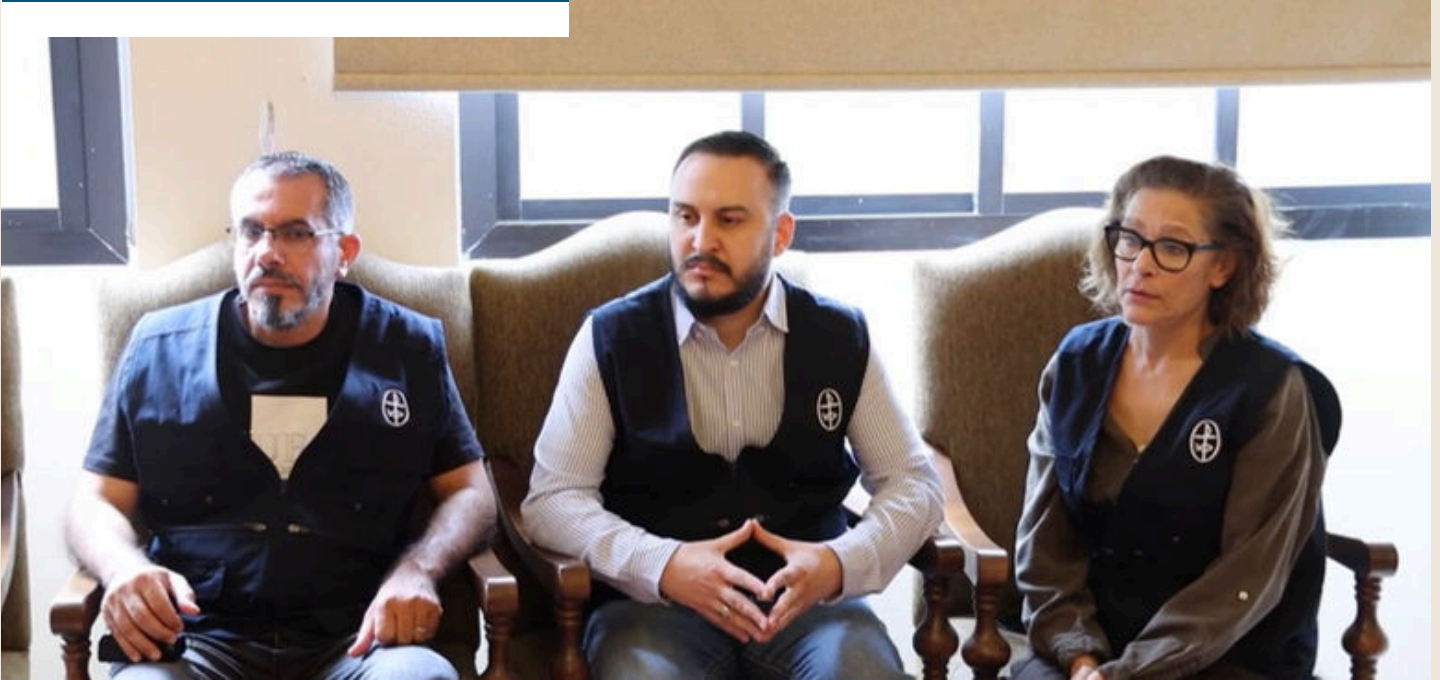
The recreational activity for children was also well received, as it allowed participants to engage more comfortably in the session while ensuring their children were in a safe and engaging space.

The migrant residents at the St. Joseph shelter expressed sincere appreciation for the comprehensive support provided. They were especially thankful for addressing multiple needs — including blankets, medications, cleaning kits, and GBV awareness sessions for women — which contributed to enhancing their sense of safety and protection. As one woman expressed: "Every time the Council's team arrives, we feel a sense of joy. Beyond the assistance itself, they treat us with genuine care and humanity."





X. Field Visits and Coordination



During this period, the Diakonia team and the Diakonia Lebanon Programme Director conducted field visits to Deir El Amar Municipality and the Melkite Greek Catholic Cathedral – Episcopal Vicariate in Deir El Amar. The visits aimed to assess the displacement situation on the ground, identify the most urgent humanitarian needs of affected families, distribute vouchers to IDPs in Deir El Amar, and deliver first aid kits to collective shelters and displaced communities.

Feedback from the Episcopal Vicariate in Deir El Amar

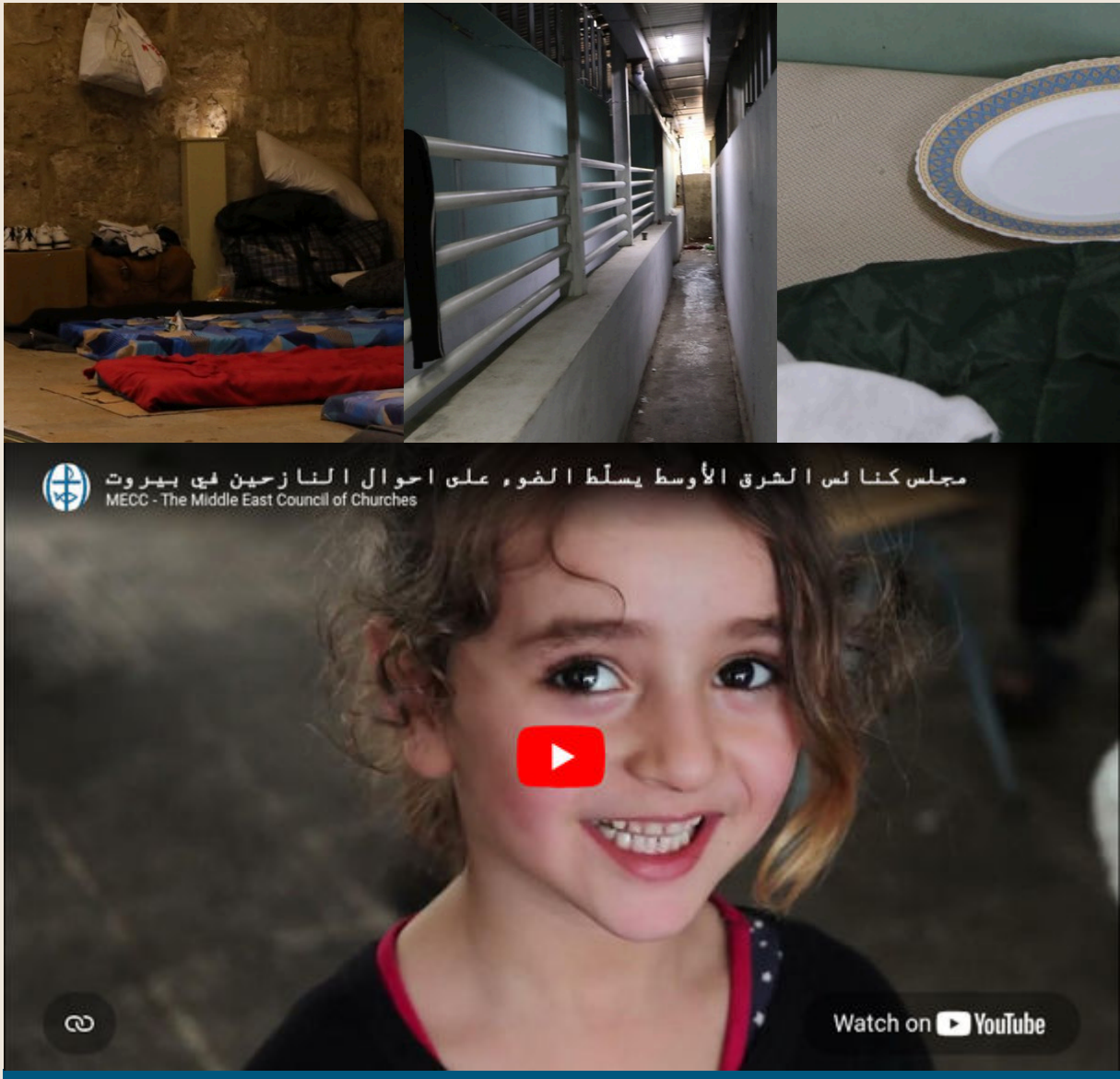
Archimandrite Naaman Kouzhia, Episcopal Vicar in Deir El Amar, conveyed his deep gratitude to MECC for its support to both the town and displaced families hosted there. He emphasized that despite limited capacities and scarce resources, "MECC stood by the community with humanity, sincerity, and compassion, supporting people without any discrimination."



Audio Visual Media from Reality







More documented photos of
the MECC Relief work on the following links:

MECC Light of Hope Relief operation - May 5, 2026

The Middle East Council of Churches

MECC Light of Hope Relief operation - May 22, 2026

The Middle East Council of Churches



His Holiness Pope Leo XIV video-calls priests in southern Lebanon



During his audience with the Apostolic Nuncio to Lebanon, Archbishop Paolo Borgia, Pope Leo video-calls about ten priests from the southern regions of Lebanon and encourages them and assures them of his prayers.

By Salvatore Cernuzio

Around 9:45 a.m. on Wednesday, May 6, a group of parish priests from villages in southern Lebanon got a pleasant surprise when they received a video call from Pope Leo XIV.

Around ten small screens featured the faces of the various priests, and at the center was Pope Leo. The call lasted only a few minutes, but there were greetings and smiles, marked by the surprise of the participants. The villages of the priests are along the border with Israel and are being worn down by missiles and bombardments.

The Pope reiterated his “encouragement” to the priests “for what they are doing.” He also assured them of “his prayers” and imparted his apostolic blessing...

This news was published on the Vatican News website, [click here](#) to read more.



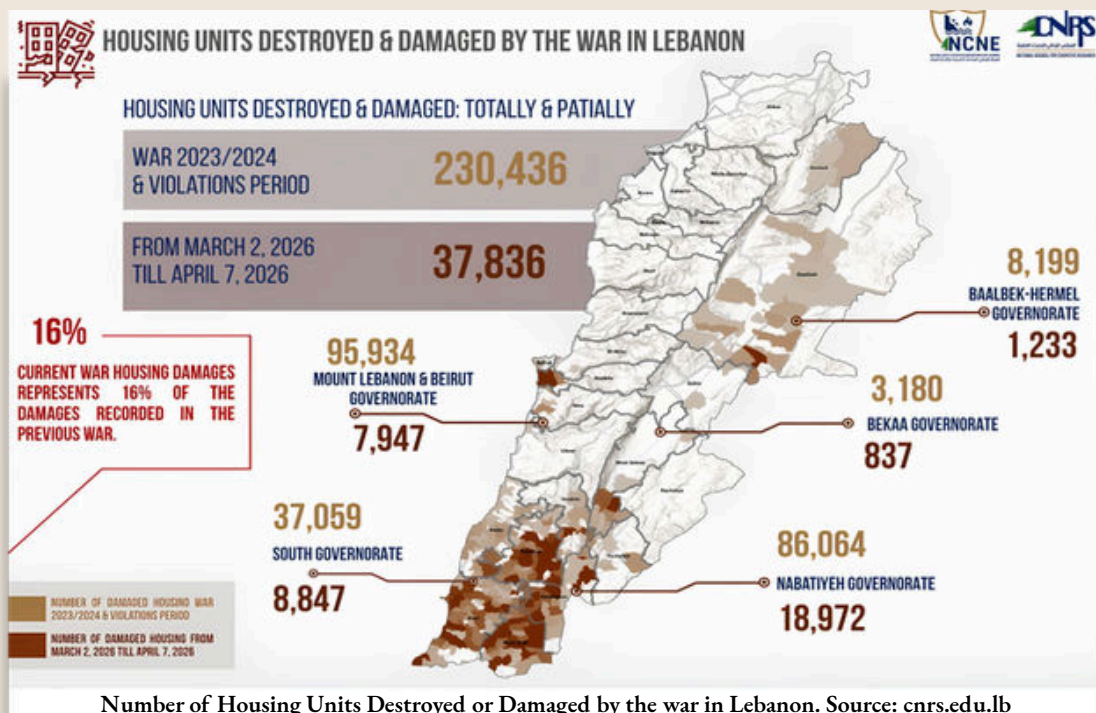
Casualties, Displacements and Level of Devastation in the ME:

Lebanon

Deaths: Deaths: + 3089 (among them are more than 110 healthcare workers and paramedics) Injuries: + 9397.

Level of Devastation: ~40,000 housing units damaged in just 35 days, this accounts for approximately 16% of the total damage recorded during the previous phases of the war. Most affected areas: Southern Beirut Suburbs — highest concentration of damage, Nabatieh, Bint Jbeil, Sour (Tyre).

IDPs: 129,724 scattered in 635 shelters. Ministry of Health designated 77 hospitals which treat IDPs free of charge. Hostile Actions so far: 16,434.





Key Developments:

- Occupier strikes reportedly damaged a mosque in southern Lebanon during the ceasefire period. (April 22)
- The Occupier military targeted the area Touline southern Lebanon. The Lebanese Health Ministry reported that two people were killed (April 23)
- Strikes killed 14 people and wounded 37 as the Occupier's military warned residents to leave seven towns beyond the buffer zone. (April 26)
- Lebanese authorities accused the Occupier of attacking emergency and rescue workers in southern Lebanon, killing at least three aid workers. Lebanon's prime minister described the attacks as "war crimes." (April 28)
- Occupier attacks on southern Lebanon have killed at least 28 people and destroyed residential buildings. Areas targeted were Jebchit, Toul, Harouf, Qana, Bent Jbeil. Among the killed, was a Lebanese soldier and his family. Meanwhile there are reports of ongoing demolition of vacant buildings in the South by Occupier forces. (April 30).
- Lebanon's National News Agency reports Occupier attacks have killed more than 30 people in a single day. (May 1)
- The Occupier launched multiple strikes across southern Lebanon, killing at least 10 people. Shoukine in Nabatieh district, Kfar Dajjal, Lwaizeh, and Siddiqine in Tyre were targeted (May 2)
- 17 people were killed in total by strikes on Khallet Raj, near the Litani River. (May 4)
- Continued Israeli strikes reportedly killed at least six people in Lebanon, according to conflict tracking summaries and Lebanese reports. (May 5)
- The Occupier launched airstrikes across southern and eastern Lebanon,



including Zella, Saksakieh/Siksikiyah, Khirbet Selm, and Mayfadoun. At least 13 people were reported killed that day. (May 6)

- The Occupier conducted an airstrike in Beirut's southern suburbs (Dahiyeh/Haret Hreik), targeting a Hezbollah Radwan Force commander. This was the first strike on Beirut since the ceasefire took effect, and that it threatened the truce. (May 6)
- The Occupier reportedly issued displacement/evacuation orders affecting 12 villages north of the Litani River, an area not under occupation at the time. Lebanese and regional outlets characterized this as an escalation inconsistent with the ceasefire terms. (May 6)
- Airstrikes hit areas including Saksakieh, Sidon district and nearby southern towns. Lebanese authorities reported high civilian casualties, including children. (May 9)
- Strikes killed at least 10 people, including paramedics and a child. Lebanon accused the Occupier of violating international humanitarian law. (May 22)
- Attacks intensified despite the April ceasefire framework. Media reports described villages reduced to craters, repeated strikes near Tyre and Nabatieh, and attacks affecting medical infrastructure and ambulances. (May 23-24)
- Occupier expanded operations and issued warnings that triggered civilian displacement from Beirut's southern suburbs. Strikes were reported in the western Bekaa area around Mashghara. (May 24-25)
- Occupier leadership publicly announced a broader offensive posture, with the IDF reportedly striking more than 70 Hezbollah-linked sites in a single day, including infrastructure in southern Lebanon and the Bekaa Valley. The escalation came amid collapsing ceasefire efforts and renewed cross-border attacks. (May 25-26)



Iran

·**Deaths:** 2,000 to 2,500+ civilians. Injuries: +20,000.

·**Level of Devastation:** The Iranian Red Crescent said 87,294 sites have been damaged or destroyed in Iran since the start of the attacks, including residential, commercial, medical, and educational facilities, 289 medical, health, and rescue centers hit, more than 600 schools damaged or destroyed, a desalination plant destroyed which cut water to 30 villages, at least 30 fuel depots destroyed, electric infrastructure damaged caused blackouts and service disruptions in major cities.

·**IDPs:** Between 3.2 million and 4 million.

Occupied Palestine

·**Deaths:** ~25–30. Injuries: ~4,400 to 6,000.

·**Level of Devastation:** 5,000+ buildings damaged or destroyed, 10,946 claims of damaged buildings, contents/equipment, vehicles, a major hospital (Soroka) was directly hit and severely damaged, at least 1–3 schools damaged, 3 planes parked at Ben Gurion Airport damaged.

·**IDPs:** 6,000+.

Syria

·**Deaths:** 4.

·**Damage is limited** in geographic scope compared to Lebanon or Iran.



Iraq

Deaths: 2 injured: 4.

Level of Devastation: Unknown number Residential areas struck by drones and missiles in multiple regions, reports of fires, structural damage to buildings including hotels (e.g., Royal Tulip AlRasheed Hotel), diplomatic sites (Baghdad Diplomatic Support Center near Baghdad International Airport), airports, oil fields, and telecommunication towers.

United Arab Emirates

Deaths: 9 Injuries: 178.

Level of Devastation: homes, cars hit by debris. Limited but real civilian property damage. Dubai International Airport damaged leading to fuel tank fire and temporary shutdown of flights, Fujairah oil facilities damaged, Shah gas field operations disrupted, ports such as Jebel Ali and Port of Fujairah damaged, a few government buildings, damage near Palm Jumeirah, Burj Al Arab, and residential/commercial zones, a tower in Dubai Marina.

Kuwait

Deaths: ~3–4 injuries: ~32.

Level of Devastation: Some damage to Kuwait International Airport including radar system and fuel tanks, Power generation and desalination damaged, oil refineries damaged, 6 power lines damaged, debris from intercepted missiles fell on some residential areas damaging some buildings.



Oman

·**Deaths:** +7 injuries: +16.

·**Level of Devastation:** Oil storage tanks at Salalah port were hit, causing large fires and structural damage, Port of Duqm and Salalah Port damaged, Sohar industrial zone damaged, 2 damaged oil tankers.

Bahrain

·**Deaths:** +2 injuries: ~50+.

·**Level of Devastation:** Residential neighborhoods and commercial buildings in Manama were hit or damaged by debris, an office tower in the Seef District was struck, causing structural damage, Bahrain International Airport damaged, Mina Salman Port damaged, desalination plant was damaged, fuel depot in Muharraq Governorate was damaged, Aluminium Bahrain (Alba) confirmed an attack on its facilities.

Saudi Arabia

·**Deaths:** +2 injuries: ~12.

·**Level of Devastation:** Residential building hit in AlKharj, Other potential civilian structures and neighborhoods have experienced debris and proximity damage, debris caused a localized fire and minor damage to Saudi Aramco's Ras Tanura oil refinery and AramcoExxon refinery in Yanbu.



Humanitarian Response in Lebanon: (April 23- May 26)

- The Lebanese government, the European Union, Denmark, and France, through the French Development Agency, launched a €32 million program aimed at supporting war-affected areas in southern Lebanon and the Bekaa Valley. The program was originally conceived following the ceasefire in November 2014.
- According to UNHCR, over 140,000 individuals have been reached with protection, child protection, and gender-based violence (GBV) services, including psychosocial support, awareness-raising, case management, and emergency cash assistance since the beginning of the escalation.
- In cooperation with the Lebanese Red Cross and Lebanon's Ministry of Social Affairs, QRCS's representation office in Lebanon distributed food and nonfood items (NFIs) to a total of 20,700 beneficiaries throughout April.
- Direct Relief delivered insulin to the Chronic Care Center in Lebanon, enough to support pediatric 1200 children for six months. It's part of a larger rush of emergency support to the hard-hit country, where Direct Relief has delivered more than \$251 million in material medical aid since 2020.
- The European Union and the Ministry of Social Affairs announced new EU funding of €45 million. For the first time in many years, EU funding will be channeled directly through a Lebanese government institution.
- Humanitarian Coalition, which brings together 12 of Canada's leading aid organizations, released a report that on the 30th of April that it has provided critical assistance to more than 23,000 people during April.
- The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) in Lebanon welcomed a contribution of EUR 700000 from the Government of Spain to help meet urgent needs amid worsening food insecurity driven by conflict and the ripple effect of the escalation in the Middle East.



Church Response: (April 23- May 26)

- The Executive Committee of the Council of Catholic Patriarchs and Bishops in Lebanon condemned and denounced the Occupier attacks on Lebanese territory, particularly the targeting of public and private property, the uprooting of olive trees, the destruction of infrastructure, and the attacks against religious facilities, places of worship, and shrines, such as the cross in the town of Debel.
- The Melkite Greek Catholic Archbishop of Ferzol, Zahle, and the Bekaa, Archbishop Ibrahim Mikhael Ibrahim, strongly condemned the act of destruction that targeted the Monastery and School of the Salvatorian Sisters in the town of Yaroun, considering it a blatant and unacceptable violation of all human values and international laws, and a direct assault on the Church's educational and spiritual mission.
- The Greek Orthodox Metropolitan of Tyre, Sidon, and their dependencies, Archbishop Elias Kfoury, and the Melkite Greek Catholic Metropolitan of Tyre and its dependencies, Archbishop George Iskanda attended the "Spiritual Gathering" in Tyre held on the 9th of May, where they stressed the importance of civil peace, supporting the steadfastness of citizens, and safeguarding national unity. The gathering also condemned the Occupier attacks on Lebanon and emphasized the need for the full and balanced implementation of United Nations Resolution 1701.