



Syrian refugees navigate freezing floodwaters in an informal tented settlement in Lebanon's Akkar governorate. Photo courtesy of Lebanese Red Cross.

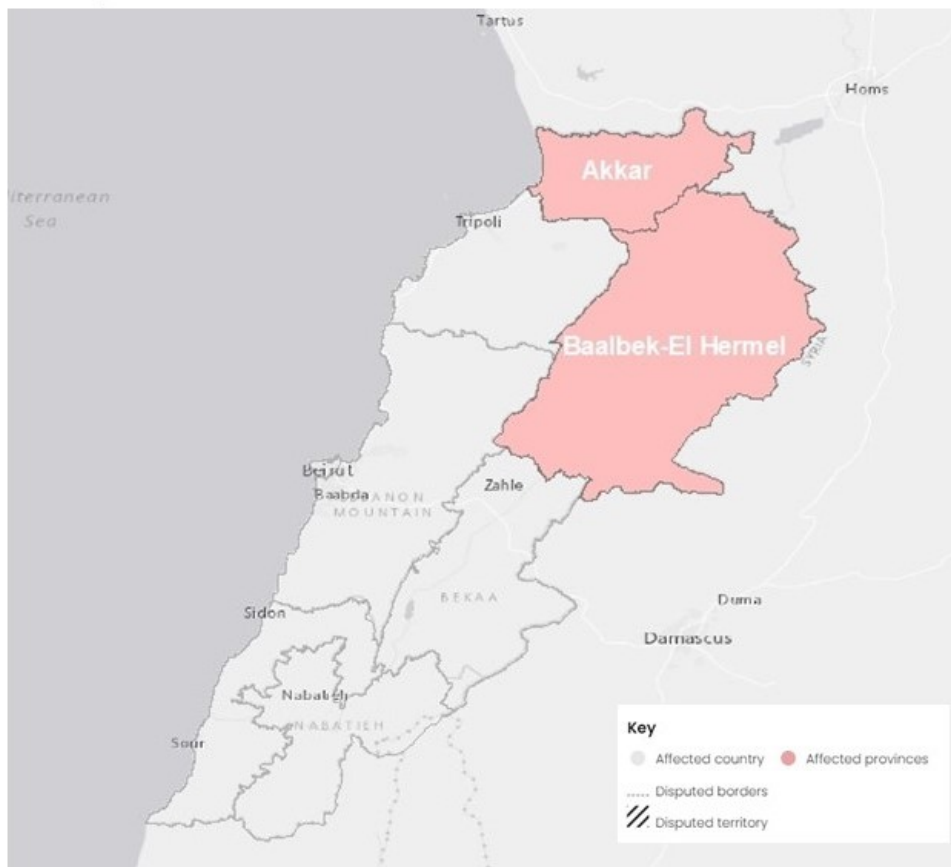
Appeal: MDRLB013	DREF Allocated: CHF 366,875	Crisis Category: Yellow	Hazard: Cold Wave
Glide Number: CW-2023-000026-LBN	People Affected: 1,024,200 people	People Targeted: 11,890 people	
Event Onset: Slow	Operation Start Date: 2023-02-21	Operation End Date: 2023-05-31	Operation Timeframe: 3 months
	Targeted Areas:	Bekaa, North	

Description of the Event



LBN: Other – 2023-01 – Lebanon Severe Weather (2023-02-06)

February 22, 2023



Map depicting the targeted areas

What happened, where and when?

In February 2023, Lebanon has been hit by a wave of severe winter weather, leading to a drop in temperature with snow at high altitudes and rain at lower altitudes, thunderstorms, and strong winds.

Winter storm Farah hit Lebanon on 31 January 2023 and was followed by a cold spell and heavy precipitation. On 6 February, the weather deteriorated in the North of the country and the Ministry of Education announced the closure of public and private schools nationwide for a period of three days. Data from Interagency Coordination Lebanon indicate that people were impacted in the Bekaa Valley, Beirut and surrounding population centers in Mount Lebanon, and the South and North regions of the country (Interagency Coordination Lebanon 7 February).

In Lebanon's northernmost governorate of Akkar, 1-2 meters of snow were reported at high altitudes (National News Agency 9 February). Many roads were closed for a week or longer due to limited ability of municipalities to clear snow and ice. As of 14 February, many roads still above 1500 meters remained impassable due to snow accumulation (National News Agency 14 February). At lower altitudes in the same governorate, heavy rains led to flooding of waterways including the Kebir River which forms part of the border with Syria.

In the Bekaa Valley, which stretches between two mountain ranges, heavy rains were reported at low altitudes. Flooding occurred at multiple sites, with an additional risk of flooding identified due to rising levels of the Litani River. In the northern Bekaa Valley in Baalbek-Hermel governorate, three Syrian children drowned when a waterway overflowed. The area was also affected by the closure of cross-mountain roads connecting the region to the rest of

the country due to snow and ice accumulation (Al Jazeera 7 February).

These conditions have left communities isolated and unable to access basic goods and services. They pose additional risks to those living in inadequate shelter, including the estimated 22% of Syrian refugees in the country who live in informal tented settlements (ITS) (VASyR 2022). Informal tented settlements are unplanned residential gatherings mainly in rural areas often made of plastic and timber. Movement for residents of ITS has been severely hampered by the accumulation of snow, ice, and floodwaters, with residents reporting difficulty accessing food, water, and fuel for heating.

This comes as Lebanon is attempting to recover from a cholera outbreak in late 2022 and is grappling with severe strain on its healthcare system due to a socioeconomic crisis prevailing in the country since late 2019.



Lebanese Red Cross volunteers distribute bread in one of the informal tented settlements in Akkar governorate. Photo courtesy of Lebanese Red Cross.

Scope and Scale

Severe weather has affected areas throughout the country to varying degrees. Akkar and Baalbek-Hermel governorates were identified by the Lebanese Red Cross (LRC) as particularly affected by the confluence of weather impacts and low coping capacities in these governorates, which are among the most impoverished in the country (see section on Needs - Livelihoods and Basic Needs). Municipalities have limited capacity to reopen roads, leaving blockages particularly for remote communities.

Previous Operations

Has a similar event affected the same area(s) in the last 3 years?	Yes
Did it affect the same population groups?	Yes
Did the National Society respond?	Yes
Did the National Society request funding from DREF for that event(s)?	Yes
If yes, please specify which operations	MDRLB005 2015; MDRLB006 2019

If you have answered yes to all questions above, justify why the use of DREF for a recurrent event, or how this event should not be considered recurrent

This event can not be considered to be recurrent due to the changed operational context and reduced coping capacity in Lebanon since the previous DREFs, caused by the complex crisis in the country. While Lebanon experiences Lebanon's vulnerability to the impacts of rainfall and winter weather has been exacerbated by structural challenges including urban sprawl, underdeveloped and undermaintained drainage systems, as well as a crisis of waste management which impedes existing drainage systems. The readiness of local stakeholders to cope with the adverse weather conditions is strained due to a prevailing complex crisis in the country.

Current National Society Actions

Coordination	LRC coordinates its winterization programming with other actors in Lebanon, including targeting of informal tented settlements as part of its broader response to the Syrian refugee crisis.
Resource Mobilization	LRC is mobilizing support for its winterization response plan through this DREF in addition to bilateral support from other Participating National Societies through various contingency measures put in place earlier.
Livelihoods And Basic Needs	LRC's Disaster Management Sector has provided support to 600 households in Akkar with the provision of bread and water. LRC also distributed food parcels to an additional 800 households in Akkar, and blankets and mattresses to a limited number of households.
Health	Palestinian Red Crescent Society - Lebanon Branch (PRCS-L) hospitals are mobilizing to receive patients impacted by the weather conditions.
National Society Readiness	The Lebanese Red Cross (LRC) provides its services countrywide with the support of around 400 staff, and more than 7,000 active volunteers. Owing to its grass roots level presence, LRC is well embedded and respected in Lebanese society and mandated by the government as the primary ambulance service provider. LRC is equipped with highly trained volunteers, equipment and fleet along with the extensive experience in responding to winter storms which further enhances their position in responding to winter storms.

Movement Partners Actions Related To The Current Event

IFRC	IFRC Lebanon Delegation is coordinating with members and other stakeholders.
ICRC	ICRC is implementing winterization programming in Lebanon as part of its regular support in the country.
Participating National Societies	Several IFRC members have expressed interest in supporting LRC's winterization response through existing projects and rapid response funds.

Other Actors Actions Related To The Current Event

Government has requested international assistance	No
National authorities	At a national level, authorities are responding to winter weather conditions through the Disaster Risk Management Unit at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers and the Civil Defense with the engagement and coordination of relevant local government actors.
UN or other actors	The Interagency Coordination mechanism for Lebanon activated a rapid needs assessment on 1 February, and its network of partners is supporting affected populations with temporary relocation support, in-kind shelter relief items, and referrals. As of 14 February, UN Lebanon Crisis Response Plan partners supported over 1,260 households with assistance including shelter kits, relief items including mattresses, blankets, hygiene kit, and supported 149 individuals with temporary relocation.

Are there major coordination mechanisms in place?

LRC coordinates its support to Syrian refugees in informal tented settlements with other humanitarian actors through existing mechanisms. The water sector in Lebanon is coordinated by the UNICEF and with the presence of the main actors in the country during the initial influx of refugees, the informal tented settlements were divided across them to avoid any duplication of service provision and to maximize nationwide coverage. The water sector in which LRC is a main actor meets on a monthly basis to discuss the needs, progress and ensure enhanced coordination, ad hoc meetings are also conducted to address urgent needs related to the sector.

Needs (Gaps) Identified



Livelihoods And Basic Needs

The storms have impacted the ability of affected populations to access basic goods and services. This is due in part to access issues, with thousands of affected families facing extremely restricted movement and isolation from markets due to accumulation of snow, ice, and floodwater. In addition, road closures have an adverse impact on the income of those engaged in informal or daily labor. Affected families have reported difficulty accessing basic food and water, with some residents of ITS in the Aarsal district of Baalbek-Hermel resorting to melting snow for drinking water.

Resilience in these communities has been eroded by socioeconomic strain before and during the country's complex humanitarian crisis which worsened in 2019. The first Lebanon IPC Acute Food Security Analysis in 2022 shows food insecurity in the targeted regions is higher than the national average. In Akkar, 55% of residents and 60% of refugees were reported to be at IPC phase 3 or higher, indicating a need for urgent humanitarian action. This can be compared to the lower national rates of 33% and 46% for residents and refugees, respectively. In Baalbek, 50% of residents and 55% of refugees were at IPC phase 3 or higher, and in Hermel this figure was 50% for residents and 60% for refugees (FAO, WFP and Lebanese Ministry of Agriculture January 2023).

In addition, high prices of fuel impact families' ability to adequately heat their homes. With the phasing out of subsidies since the onset of Lebanon's economic crisis in 2019 and the depreciation of the Lebanese currency, the imported diesel fuel used for heating has become prohibitively expensive for many households. As of mid-February, the cost of a single 20-liter tank of diesel cost more than twice the monthly minimum wage of 675,000 Lebanese lira (Lebanese Directorate of Oil February 2023). Secondary risks to health and the environment have been identified as people without access to fuel or wood resort to burning plastic for heat.



Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation And Recovery

The current weather conditions come against a backdrop of increasing extreme winter rainfall events in Lebanon driven by climate change (Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Center 2021). Lebanon's vulnerability to the impacts of rainfall and winter weather is exacerbated by structural challenges including urban sprawl, underdeveloped and undermaintained drainage systems, and a crisis of waste management which impedes existing drainage systems. The readiness of local stakeholders to cope with the adverse weather conditions is strained due to the complex crisis in the country.



Water, Sanitation And Hygiene

Lebanon's ongoing complex crisis has had detrimental impacts on WASH conditions in the country, with the country seeing its first cholera outbreak in 30 years in late 2022. Sanitation and hygiene needs are also pronounced in informal and collective shelters, as well as Palestinian gatherings. In informal tented settlements housing Syrian refugees, one in three households lack access to improved sanitation facilities (VASyR 2022). There is a linkage between WASH conditions and some of the risks associated with winter weather conditions, as waste management can cause blockages in rivers which increase flooding risks, while flood conditions pose sanitation hazards.



Health

Severe weather patterns, combined with deteriorated living conditions faced by many, heighten certain health risks to vulnerable populations. Palestinian Red Crescent - Lebanon Branch has highlighted respiratory illnesses as a particular concern for communities living in substandard housing. Other notable health risks include injuries from traffic accidents, already a public health risk in Lebanon which is exacerbated by flooding, snow, ice, and fog at high altitudes leading to conditions of low visibility.

Access to healthcare is a concern amid Lebanon's complex crisis including economic collapse since 2019, ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and cholera outbreak in late 2022. Lebanon's healthcare system has been severely strained by the crisis in the country, while on the individual level the cost of treatment stands as one of the main barriers to access. This concern is particularly acute for Lebanon's refugee population, who make up more than one in four in the country and face gaps in healthcare coverage.

Healthcare for Syrian refugees is supported by UNHCR in cooperation with Lebanese authorities. Palestinian refugees in Lebanon are ineligible for state healthcare services and have historically relied on UNRWA to defray the costs of treatment. However, recent UNRWA monitoring highlights the impact that increasing costs of hospitalization on Palestinian communities seeking healthcare. (UNRWA Protection Monitoring 2022). UNRWA's hospitalization policy covers part of hospital expenses, while a growing number of Palestinian families are unable to cover the difference. The 2022 MSNA indicated that among Palestinian refugees who had a recent unmet healthcare need, the cost of treatment had been a major barrier for 45% of respondents. This figure was particularly high in Baalbek-Hermel at 64% and in Beirut at 86% of respondents (REACH Lebanon 2022 MSNA).



Protection, Gender And Inclusion

The risks posed by winter weather conditions are heightened by inadequate access to safe housing, a reality for many vulnerable families in Lebanon, including refugees, migrants, and households impacted by the socio-economic collapse. The closures of schools and transportation due to weather conditions may increase isolation of vulnerable groups, including children. A higher proportion of female-headed Syrian households live in ITS. (VASyR 2022).

Operational Strategy

Overall objective of the operation

The objective of this DREF operation is to reduce the impact of the ongoing severe weather conditions on 11,890 people by providing affected Lebanese and Syrian refugee families in Akkar and Baalbek-Hermel governorates with in-kind and voucher-based assistance to meet their basic needs, and by easing access to healthcare services for affected Palestinian refugees.

The operation will be conducted over a duration of 3 months and will be implemented by the Lebanese Red Cross (LRC), in parallel with the Palestinian Red Crescent Society Lebanon Branch (PRCS-L), which will focus its intervention on healthcare access in and around Palestinian refugee camps.

Operation strategy rationale

To achieve above stated objective, the LRC in parallel with PRCS-L will ensure the following services are provided to the targeted communities.

Livelihoods and Basic Needs (Target: 11,700 People or 2,600 households with a household multiplier of 4.5 due to targeting of both Lebanese and Syrian families)

LRC will distribute food parcels to 2,000 households, intended to meet the basic nutritional needs of a family of 5 for one month.

LRC will distribute bread and drinking water to an additional 600 households requiring partial support to meet basic food needs. Each household will receive 2 packages of bread and 1 gallon of water, intended to supplement families' supplies to meet their basic needs.

LRC will also distribute fuel vouchers to 2,000 households to ensure that families have access to fuel for heating, which has become increasingly unaffordable amid Lebanon's ongoing socioeconomic crisis. Based on LRC's continuous engagement in the targeted areas, it is known that households are equipped with heating stoves, but the high cost of fuel rendered the usage of them inaccessible, therefore fuel vouchers were identified as an appropriate solution. The distribution is accompanied with short key messages regarding the safe usage of heating stoves.

This DREF operation represents a contribution to LRC's overall winterization response, which has also received bilateral support from Participating National Societies.

Healthcare (Target: 190 people)

Given the limited access to health care systems by vulnerable refugee and host communities in the targeted areas, which is exacerbated by the ongoing socio-economic crisis, there is need to ensure the targeted families have access to health care during the winter period. This will ensure that individuals affected by health impacts of the winter weather, particularly respiratory illnesses and injuries related to traffic accidents, have the ability to receive treatment regardless of ability to pay.

To ensure this is done with dignity, PRCS-L will ensure Palestinian refugees and other economically vulnerable patients in the target areas receive free health care by covering hospital bills for three months.

Targeting Strategy

Who will be targeted through this operation?

LRC will target Syrian and Lebanese households impacted by the weather conditions in Akkar and Baalbek-Hermel governorates. Within Baalbek-Hermel, LRC will target the district of Aarsal.

PRCS-L services target economically vulnerable Palestinian patients across Lebanon through the 5 hospitals it operates near and within Palestinian camps and gathering located in Bekaa, Tripoli, Beirut, Saida, and Tyre. DREF funds will assist PRCS-L to cover bills for patients who require care related to the winter weather conditions, including illness and accidents. PRCS-L support will take place through its existing network of five hospitals throughout Lebanon, to which Palestinian refugees travel to seek care.

Explain the selection criteria for the targeted population

LRC response will focus on the governorates of Akkar and Baalbek-Hermel based upon the severity of the impacts of weather conditions in addition to the low coping capacities among targeted populations. LRC will target affected ITS which fall within its usual zones of coverage, to avoid duplication with other actors. Specific households within ITS and in Lebanese communities will be selected based upon the severity of impact in terms of households' access to goods and services.

PRCS-L will target patients at its hospitals who are unable to cover costs of treatment based on vulnerability screening by PRCS-L personnel.

Total Targeted Population

Women:	-	Rural %	Urban %
Girls (under 18):	-	%	%
Men:	-	People with disabilities (estimated %)	
Boys (under 18):	-	%	
Total targeted population:	11,890		

Risk and security considerations

Please indicate about potential operational risk for this operations and mitigation actions

Risk	Mitigation action
Poor weather conditions inhibit access to affected populations.	Continuous monitoring of needs and capacities across the operational areas and dynamic allocation of resources to ensure efficient response.
Staff and volunteers face exposure to transmissible illnesses such as cholera and COVID-19 during the response.	Ensure all staff have received the full dosage of one of the WHO approved COVID-19 vaccines and access to safe drinking water and they are trained on modes of transmission.
Lebanon's economic crisis leads to volatility in the price of items and consumables.	Keeping RCRC Movement Partners and other non-Movement Partners updated on the financial situation and shortages and soliciting support to compensate the shortage in funding. Follow-up and regular updates to stakeholders and suppliers. Rely on the use of local materials.

Please indicate any security and safety concerns for this operation

Planned Intervention

	National Society Strengthening	Budget	CHF 96,630
		Targeted Persons	
Indicators	Target		
Number of learning exercises conducted and documented	1		
Priority Actions:	The DREF operation will assist LRC support services, which include Finance, PMER, Procurement, and the Office of the Secretary General in order to ensure a well managed response.		
	In addition, a learning exercise will be conducted for this DREF operation with relevant stakeholders.		
	DREF funds will contribute to running costs for support sections and these sections' internal communication costs.		

	Secretariat Services	Budget	CHF 3,938
		Targeted Persons	
Indicators		Target	
Number of deployments in support of the operation		1	
Priority Actions:		• Finance in Emergencies is deployed to support the financial reporting	

	Livelihoods And Basic Needs	Budget	CHF 219,644
		Targeted Persons	11700
Indicators		Target	
Number of people reached with fuel vouchers		9000	
Number of people reached with food assistance		11700	
		The DREF operation will support LRC to complete the following activities in Akkar:	

Priority Actions:	-Replenishment of food parcels distributed already by LRC to 800 households -Replenishment of stocks of bread and water distributed already by LRC to additional 600 households -Distribution of food parcels to additional 200 households -Distribution of fuel vouchers to 1,000 households The DREF operation will further support LRC to complete the following activities in Baalbek-Hermel: -Distribution of food parcels to 1,000 households -Distribution to fuel vouchers to 1,000 households
--------------------------	---

	Health	Budget	CHF 46,664
		Targeted Persons	190
Indicators	Target		
Number of people served by PRCS-L hospitals with inpatient care	119		
Number of people served by PRCS-L hospitals with outpatient care	71		
Priority Actions:	PRCS-L: PRCS-L will treat patients impacted by the weather conditions with secondary healthcare services in the 5 hospitals it manages across Lebanon.		
	DREF funds will support coverage of medical bills for the most economically vulnerable patients - approximately 10% of the patients expected to be treated for respiratory illnesses and weather-related accidents.		

About Support Services

How many staff and volunteers will be involved in this operation. Briefly describe their role.

LRC's DREF operation will involve volunteers and staff from Disaster Management Services, and support sections. Volunteers and staff in these teams will lead the implementation of activities and coordination with operational partners. LRC's Planning Section will facilitate overall Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (PMEAL) for the operation.

Will surge personnel be deployed? Please provide the role profile needed.

If there is procurement, will it be done by National Society or IFRC?

LRC will complete procurement as related to this DREF.

How will this operation be monitored?

Monitoring for the DREF operation will be conducted by the LRC Disaster Management Sector with technical support from the Planning Section. Key activities will include post-distribution monitoring as well as a lessons learned workshop.

LRC will report actuals against the ITT and operational updates will be published on the progress of this operation and any significant changes.

Please briefly explain the National Societies communication strategy for this operation.

Budget Overview



DREF OPERATION

MDRLB013 - Lebanese Red Cross Lebanon Severe Weather

Operating Budget

Planned Operations	266,308
Shelter and Basic Household Items	0
Livelihoods	219,644
Multi-purpose Cash	0
Health	46,664
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	0
Protection, Gender and Inclusion	0
Education	0
Migration	0
Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery	0
Community Engagement and Accountability	0
Environmental Sustainability	0
Enabling Approaches	100,567
Coordination and Partnerships	0
Secretariat Services	3,938
National Society Strengthening	96,630
TOTAL BUDGET	366,875

all amounts in Swiss Francs (CHF)

Contact Information

For further information, specifically related to this operation please contact:

- **National Society contact:** Georges Kettaneh, Secretary General, georges.kettaneh@redcross.org.lb
- **IFRC Appeal Manager:**
Hossam Faysal, Regional Head of Health, Disasters, Climate & Crises (HDCC) Unit - MENA, hosam.faysal@ifrc.org, +961 71 802 916
- **IFRC Project Manager:**
Cristhian Cortez Cardoza, Head of Delegation for Lebanon, cristhian.cortez@ifrc.org, +961 71 802 926
- **IFRC focal point for the emergency:**
Cristhian Cortez Cardoza, Head of Delegation for Lebanon and Iraq, cristhian.cortez@ifrc.org, +961 71 802 926
- **Media Contact:** Mey Al Sayegh, Head of Communications, IFRC MENA, mey.elsayegh@ifrc.org, +961 03229352

[Click here for the reference](#)