

BEIRUT RESIDENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON AUGUST 4 BLAST

FINDINGS FROM A NEEDS AND PERCEPTION SURVEY

Lebanon was rocked by an explosion at the port of Beirut on August 4, 2020—causing hundreds of deaths, wounding thousands, and leading to significant destruction of livelihoods and property. The blast occurred amid political, public health, and economic crises.

As part of the immediate response, the World Bank conducted a needs and perception online survey targeting the most affected areas to support the preparation of the Beirut Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment. The household survey, deployed from August 13 to 20, captured thousands of residents' perspectives about the explosion's impact, their resulting needs and concerns, and their experiences with and expectations for assistance and reconstruction.



01 impact

Two-thirds of Zone 1 respondents in proximity of the blast were displaced from their homes.

ZONE 1: Port and surrounding areas most affected by the blast including Marfaa, Medawar, Saifi, and Rmail

ZONE 2: Ashrafieh

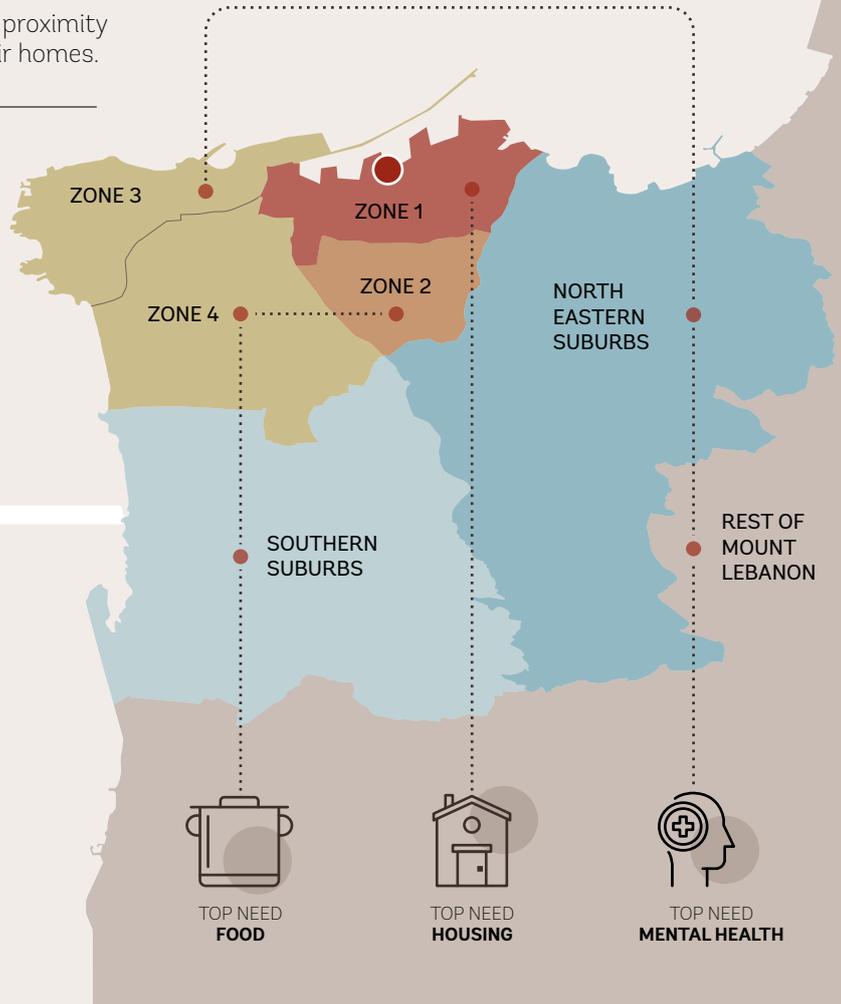
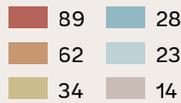
ZONE 3: Ras Beirut and surrounding areas Minet el-Hosn, Ain el-Mreisseh, and Beirut Central District

ZONE 4: Zoukak el-Blatt, Mazraa, Bachoura, and Moussaytbeh

IMPACT INDEX

● Explosion site

Percent worst affected



02 needs

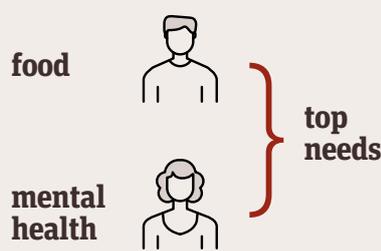
Top needs differed by zone. Most respondents in Zones 2, 4 and the Southern Suburbs indicated access to food as an urgent need. Housing remained a key need for Zone 1 respondents. Mental health needs were mostly raised in Zone 3, the North-Eastern Suburbs, and the rest of Mount Lebanon.

For those who listed requiring assistance with needs, mental health services, food, and medical assistance were among the most pressing needs in the total sample and across zones. Among those who expressed other needs, those with a lower reported monthly income indicated needing financial and livelihood assistance.



“We don’t have any income anymore. With the little amount of money we had, we were forced to pay for the reconstruction.” (Man, Zone 1)

While men and women reported mental health and food assistance as top two needs, men gave more importance to food assistance, and women placed more importance on mental health. 11 percent of men conveyed the need for legal services compared to 5 percent of women.



“We had saved a sum of money for our child’s education and to sustain us, and we have lost it to repair the house.” (Woman, Zone 2)

Comparing Lebanese and Non-Lebanese* Needs

food assistance:

25% Lebanese

64% non-Lebanese

housing assistance:

05% Lebanese

15% non-Lebanese

“We need assistance in rent because we had to fix the doors and glass on our own expense.”

(Woman, North-Eastern suburbs)

* Non Lebanese residing in the areas surveyed

03 concerns

Main concerns raised were exposure to COVID-19, food prices, healthcare, and personal security.



“Expenses to fix and overpricing of fixing. Time to fix while I can’t take much time off – I will be laid off.” (Man, Zone 1)

Comparing Lebanese and Non-Lebanese Concerns

availability of food:

18% Lebanese

49% non-Lebanese

earning an income in the next two weeks:

34% Lebanese

48% non-Lebanese

04 seeking assistance

While most respondents expressed needing support, over one third did not register for support. When asked why they did not register:

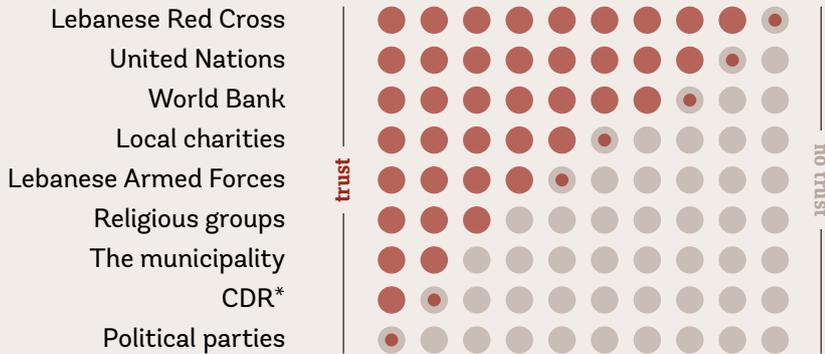
“There’s no reference that we consider trustworthy.” (Man, Zone 3)



“Because we are people with dignity, we don’t know how to ask for help.” (Woman, Zone 2)

05 trust

Residents, on average, saw the Lebanese Red Cross and the international community as more trustworthy than public institutions.



*Council for Development and Reconstruction

Comparing Lebanese and Non-Lebanese Trust

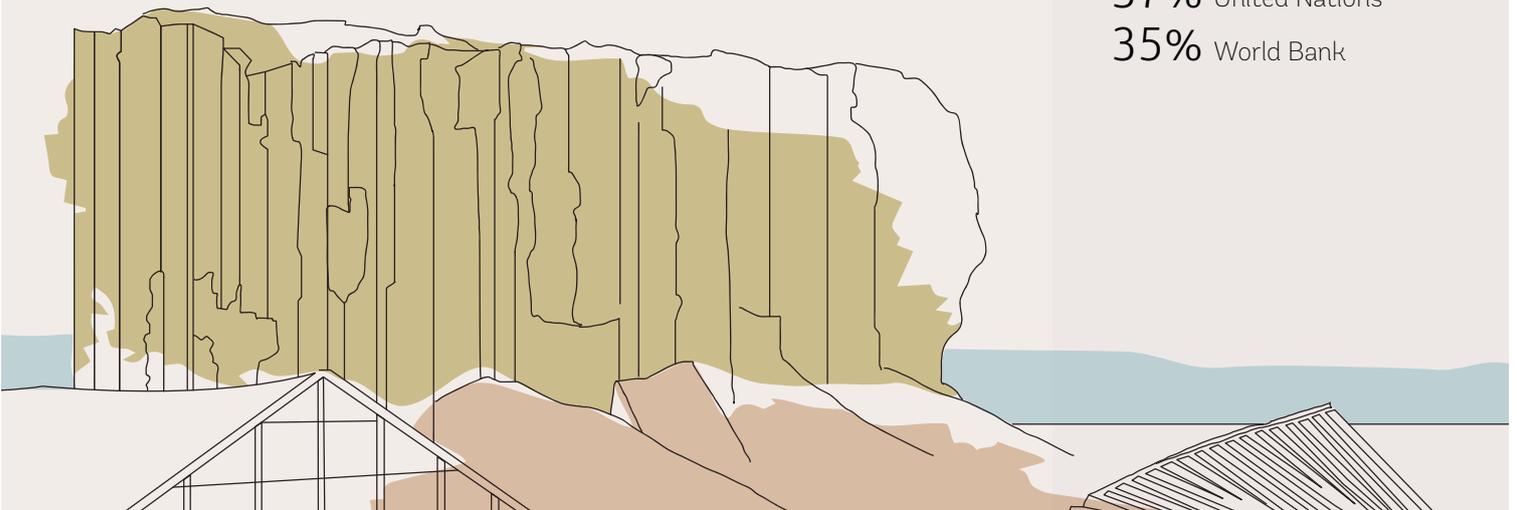
Compared to Lebanese, the percentages of non-Lebanese respondents having “a great deal of trust” or “complete trust” are:

Lebanese

- 80% Lebanese Red Cross
- 56% United Nations
- 47% World Bank

non-Lebanese

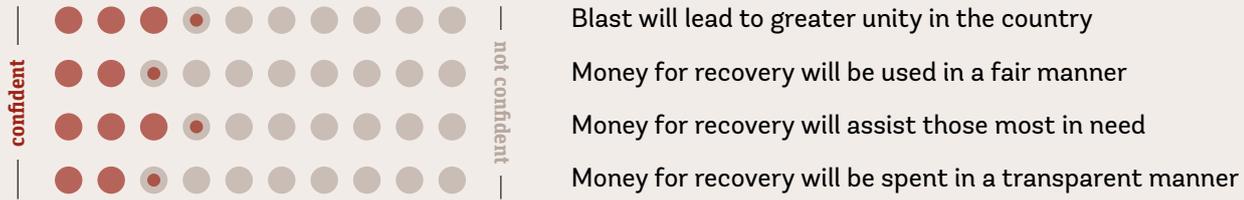
- 62% Lebanese Red Cross
- 37% United Nations
- 35% World Bank





Less than
10%

of respondents were very confident or extremely confident that the money (reconstruction and recovery assistance) would be spent well.



06 future outlook

Attitudes towards the future are largely pessimistic. A majority believe that the situation in Lebanon and their quality of life will have worsened five years from now.

About a quarter of respondents took part in community rehabilitation initiatives through volunteering in the aftermath of the explosion.

Youth were more likely than their older counterparts to participate in volunteering efforts.

Situation in Lebanon in 5 years

14%	4%
better	much better

My quality of life in 5 years

13%	4%
better	much better

Comparing Lebanese and Non-Lebanese Outlook towards the Future

Lebanon will be “better” or “much better” in five years

17% Lebanese
30% non-Lebanese

Quality of life will improve in five years

16% Lebanese
22% non-Lebanese

About the Survey

The online survey created with SurveyMonkey was conducted from August 13 to 20, 2020 in three languages (Arabic, English, and French). It was promoted through geotargeted Facebook ads targeting Beirut and surrounding areas with a radius of seven miles. The ad only targeted those aged over 18. Of the 5,000 respondents, roughly 3,400 provided complete information on sociodemographic variables and were included in our sample. The survey targeted the governorates of Beirut and Mount Lebanon, which were the areas most affected by the port explosion. The design of this survey is such that its respondents are not necessarily representative of all people affected by the explosion. Being a respondent required access to internet. Potential respondents unable to participate in the survey due to their lack of internet access might have been excluded.

Visit <http://wrlld.bg/Mv6o50BwXAC> for more information and to read the complete report.

The anonymized dataset can be downloaded from <http://wrlld.bg/6fVV50Bx2mn>