



*International Medical Corps team in Lebanon facilitates an awareness-raising session for the community health club for children, to promote good hygiene practices for prevention against COVID-19.*

It has been more than two months since the massive and deadly port explosions (which were recently classified as one of the most powerful blasts in history not produced by a nuclear bomb), and Beirut continues to face a slow and vast rebuilding and recovery phase amid intense socioeconomic and political crises.<sup>1</sup> This week, hundreds of protestors marched through Beirut to mark the one-year anniversary of a non-sectarian protest movement that shook the political elite but that has yet to achieve its goal of sweeping government reform. The past year has been one of near-constant turmoil and crises that have left the majority of the population feeling hopeless. As response efforts have shifted toward longer-term recovery activities, there is still a great need for mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), especially for the elderly and most vulnerable segments of the population.

In addition to the economic and political strife, COVID-19 remains a dire concern. The number of cases has skyrocketed since the August 4 explosion, with the total number of infections surpassing 65,500 as of October 22. The number of cases has increased by nearly 70% over the past three weeks. Approximately 10% of those testing for the virus are COVID-positive, a percentage that health professionals describe as alarmingly high—indeed, the World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that governments maintain a positivity rate below 5% before relaxing social distancing measures. The combination of high infection rates, along with the growing financial crisis, could soon overwhelm Lebanon's fragile healthcare system. Hospitals are already struggling to compensate staff, keep equipment running, maintain vital medical supplies or even to stay open. In July, the American University Medical Center—one of the country's oldest and most prestigious university hospitals—laid off hundreds of staff. As the number of COVID-19 infections rises, concerns about capacity have become more urgent. Recent reports indicate that beds in intensive care units (ICUs) are filling up quickly. The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) and local hospitals are working quickly to increase capacity to meet rising needs.

### **International Medical Corps Response**

Since 2006, International Medical Corps has been supporting health, MHPSS and gender-based violence (GBV) activities in Lebanon. We have partnerships with more than 50 primary healthcare centers (PHCCs) and hospitals, where we

## **FAST FACTS**

### **Our Footprint**

- International Medical Corps has partnerships with more than 50 primary healthcare centers (PHCCs) throughout Lebanon, supporting primary healthcare services for Syrian refugees and vulnerable Lebanese at facilities in Bekaa, Beirut, Mount Lebanon, Akkar and other areas throughout the north and south.

### **Our Response**

- In the immediate aftermath of the explosion, our team provided more than 1,100 medical consultations and more than 2,300 psychological first-aid sessions through mobile medical units that were deployed to Bourj Hammoud, Geitaoui, Karm El Zeitoun, Mar Mikhael, and Mdawar.
- To date, International Medical Corps has distributed personal protective equipment (PPE)—including masks, gloves and gowns—to 27 healthcare facilities, and medical supplies to 23 facilities.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-54420033>



Immediately following the explosion, International Medical Corps' team distributed PPE to more than 2,000 community volunteers who were supporting clean-up and recovery efforts.

support the needs of both refugees and vulnerable Lebanese residing in Greater Tripoli, Akkar, Beirut and Mount Lebanon, Bekaa and the South.

In the immediate aftermath of the explosion, International Medical Corps deployed two mobile medical units (MMUs) and MHPSS shelters to Bourj Hammoud, Geitaoui, Karm El-Zeitoun, Mar Mikhael and Mdawar to provide medical care and mental health services to patients affected by the blast. In those initial days, more than half of Beirut's healthcare facilities were non-functional and many facilities that remained operational were overwhelmed by patients seeking care for injuries sustained in the blast and COVID-19. The MMUs, which were operational between August 4 and August 23, provided critical relief to healthcare facilities, while meeting the urgent needs of residents. During that time our team provided medical consultations to 1,121 patients and provided medications to 703 patients.



In addition to providing direct services to beneficiaries, International Medical Corps procured and distributed personal protective equipment (PPE)—including gloves, masks and gowns—and supplies to 19 PHCCs and eight hospitals around Beirut. We have also distributed medical and cleaning supplies, including alcohol swabs, bandages, cleaning solution, bleach, detergent, tongue

depressors, sterilization paper, syringes and hypodermic needles. Moving forward, International Medical Corps will continue to support existing facilities with PPE, medical equipment and supplies to support operations. To date, the team has distributed more than 160,000 masks, 300,000 pairs of nitrile gloves, and 16,000 surgical gowns. Additional procurements are underway and distributions will continue over the next several months.

The team is also continuing to provide psychological first-aid (PFA) sessions and gender-based violence consultations to beneficiaries in Beirut. Our team has provided more than 2,300 PFA sessions to individuals since the explosion. The team has also provided GBV case management services to 292 beneficiaries and hosted awareness-raising sessions for more than 290 participants. Because the need for mental health services remains high, our team is working to strengthen and expand services throughout the city. We have conducted six PFA training sessions for frontline healthcare workers, reaching 81 participants. We are also working with the MoPH and the National Mental Health Program to ensure that both psychosocial support and GBV services and referrals are fully integrated into existing health infrastructure and remain major priorities for recovery efforts.



International Medical Corps delivered critical supplies and PPE to Hotel Dieu Hospital on August 10.

Lebanon Response		
 <b>PPE</b>	KN95 masks: 8,780	Surgical masks: 159,560
	Nitrile gloves: 307,730	Surgical gowns: 16,350
 <b>SUPPLIES</b>	Alcohol swabs: 95,200	Gauze: 185,400
	Bandages: 1,845	Sanitizer: 2,039