

# Beirut Port Explosions

## Zoom-in on shelter needs

### CONTEXT AND METHODS



Collapsed building in Karantina – August 9, 2020

At least 160 people were killed (OCHA) and 5,000 wounded following two explosions that erupted in Lebanon's capital on August 4th at 6 pm. Dozens of nearby buildings collapsed, and hundreds more were severely damaged. Broken glass and debris could be seen two miles away. Up to **300,000 people** might be **homeless** (Beirut's city governor 05/08/2020, OCHA 05/08/2020). In the blast affected area, ACTED estimated that at least 150,000 people are currently in need of urgent humanitarian assistance.

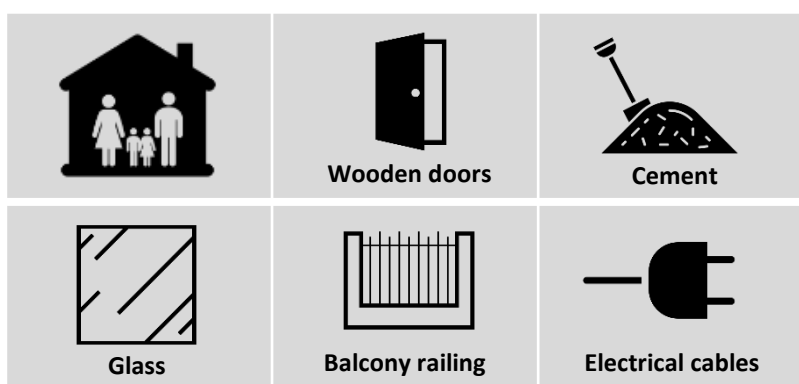
For communities located near the site of the blast, the urgent need to access basic services was made clear through the findings of ACTED's Rapid Needs Assessment on August 7. In areas located close to the port, multisector humanitarian needs were identified, especially in terms of shelter. Widespread structural damage was reported at the harbor and in surrounding neighborhoods, with collapsed buildings, others at risk of collapsing, damaged infrastructure / windows, and lack of access to basic services. According to the Municipality Head of Social Affairs, 11,160 buildings were damaged.

During August 7-11, as part of the Shelter Sector response, **ACTED participated in the household-level joint assessment coordinated by the Lebanon Red Cross (LRC), in Karantina, Gemmayze, Ashrafieh, Mar Mkhayel, Marfa, Madaouar, Rmeil and Saifi neighborhoods.** Data presented in this factsheet draws from a total of 1,765 interviews coordinated by LRC, although some questions were asked to 1,486 households only (highlighted below). Overall, an equal share of respondents were interviewed across genders.

The factsheet also includes **direct observations** by ACTED field teams, as well as **information provided by key response coordination actors.** Throughout the report, information is disaggregated by target neighborhoods as relevant.

While assessment teams endeavor to create an open dialogue to collect objective responses, the subjectivity and possibility of biased answers should be taken into consideration. Also to note, Ashrafieh is over-represented in the datasets currently available. Lastly, the low number of interviews led in some neighborhood does not allow to draw area-specific statistically-reliable conclusions.

### MOST-NEEDED SHELTER REPAIR ITEMS\*

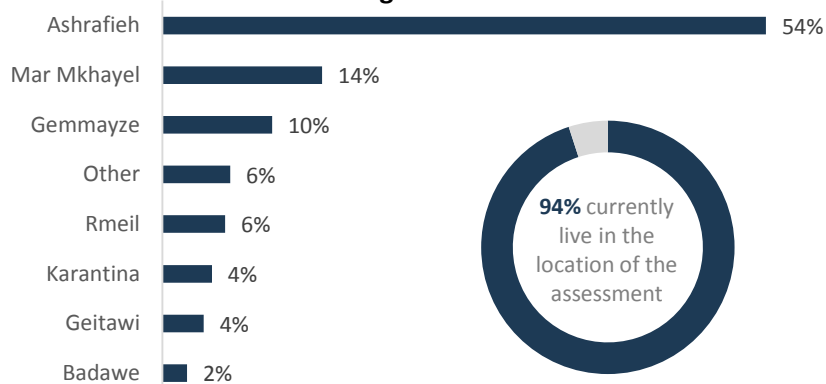


\*Source: ACTED's shelter engineer



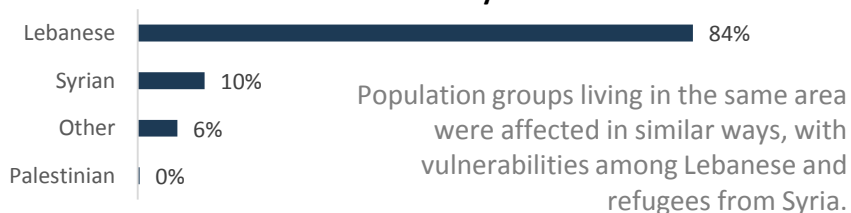
### HOUSEHOLD RESPONDENTS PROFILE

#### Neighborhood



94% currently live in the location of the assessment

#### Nationality



Population groups living in the same area were affected in similar ways, with vulnerabilities among Lebanese and refugees from Syria.

89% have no savings

38% did not have any source of income in the last 30 days

80% have not received assistance so far (multisector)

\*\*Question asked to 1,486 respondents out of 1,765.

Icons source: NounProject



### RESPONSE UPDATES

While some areas are still closed off due to **danger of collapsing buildings** (ACAPS 08/08/2020), **structural assessments** are ongoing by the Governor of Beirut and Beirut Municipality, in partnership with UNHABITAT and the Shelter Sector. ACTED is providing hands-on **information management support**, to improve the efficiency of the assessment. Shelter sector partners, including ACTED, are also mobilizing in-country shelter kits stocks (e.g. plastic sheets, timber, toolboxes), tents and core relief items for immediate distribution and use. State actors are challenged by the scope of response needed, especially in the face of growing mistrust amongst the population.



### SHELTER NEEDS

#### Level of damages on households' dwellings\*\*



Within each assessed area, 15 to 28% of HHs' dwellings suffered major damages.

#### Types of damages among affected household dwellings



62% have not yet been provided with external openings' sealing off\*\*

Especially in Badawe, Rmeil, Ashrafieh and Geitawi.

49% reported damaged window frames\*\*

88% reported broken windows / shattered glass

Across respondents, **shelter is the most-needed basic assistance**, mentioned both as **first and second priorities** (41% and 21% of HHs respectively).

**Affordability and availability of construction materials** are the main concerns with meeting shelter accommodation needs today across assessed neighborhoods, as well as the lack of basic domestic items (ACTED RNA, 07/08/2020). Almost all materials need to be imported and their prices will probably remain prohibitive for many Lebanese (ACAPS 08/08/2020).

In **Karantina**, which is located near to the blast site, an estimated 80% of the houses / dwellings are reportedly destroyed or partly destroyed, with a large share of those not habitable, and 20% of the neighborhood population currently living in a partially damaged building (ACTED RNA, 07/08/2020). According to ACTED field teams (11/08/2020), the affected population commutes between Karantina (day) and family and friends (night), where they feel they have overstayed their welcome. Households then rent small studios and cramped places as a resort to for temporary shelter. ACTED beneficiaries in Karantina have confirmed their preference for **cash assistance and support to return to their homes** over other types and modalities of aid.

The assessment reveals **pre-existing economic vulnerabilities** in all assessed areas, with **Karantina, Gemmayze, Ashrafieh, Rmeil, Geitawi and Mar Mkhayel neighborhoods** confirmed as **priority shelter areas**. Given the extent of infrastructure damages, house repairs might **take time** (ACAPS 08/08/2020). Over the short-term, and based on a structural building assessment, **replacement of materials** should be provided in dwellings presenting minor damages (glass windows, aluminum frames, doors, balcony railing, electrical cables). Sealing off plastic sheets provided to people who lost windows / doors / walls are being removed during the day, due to high temperatures; adequate alternatives should thus be considered. According to the WASH sector, **826 water tanks** are also needed. **Masonry** is needed for walls in partly damaged buildings. Shelter response actors must also be careful not to incentivize for people to stay in heavily damaged buildings, as those must be properly assessed and reconstructed. Only households living in structurally sound buildings should receive sealing off kits as assistance. Affected individuals living in heavily damaged buildings should be supported to find temporary housing until their building is safe. The shelter sector should also coordinate to regularly **monitor prices** of key needed materials, as the affected population requests cash support, and in the short and long term, the demand for already expensive building and repair materials will spike (ACAPS 08/08/2020). With shelter being clearly identified by the affected population as the **first priority need**, **enhanced response coordination** of NGOs in the field under the lead of LRC, UNHCR and UNHABITAT is needed. In Karantina, several NGOs are providing aid in the area, and if distribution sites are not **properly organized**, it is likely to lead to increased disorder, frustrations, and tension. To ensure aid reaches the most vulnerable, beneficiary verification (including current place of living) is needed before affected households are provided with assistance.



In coordination with other emergency actors, ACTED is providing repair / securing support in Karantina - August 2020