**Beirut explosions: UNICEF urgently appeals for US$46.7 million to support 100,000 children over the next three months**

*At least three children killed, 1,000 injured, and 100,000 directly affected. UNICEF is focused on keeping children safe, rehabilitating essential services and supporting young volunteers*

**BEIRUT/GENEVA, 20 August 2020**-UNICEF is urgently appealing for US$46.7 million to respond to the needs of children and families severely affected by the Beirut explosions on 4 August. The death toll from the explosion has increased to at least 171, including three children. A further 6,000 people, including around 1,000 children, were injured. UNICEF estimates that nearly 100,000 children had their homes damaged or destroyed. Many households are in poor living conditions with no proper access to water and sanitation.

“The Beirut explosions have created additional trauma for the children of Lebanon who also have to cope with the impact of a steep economic crisis and a raging pandemic,” said UNICEF Executive Director Henriette Fore. “UNICEF and partners have been on the ground from day one, salvaging vaccine stockpiles, distributing water, and helping clean up debris. We count on our donors to help us support the children and families who are affected by this tragedy and who will need all the support they can get to rebuild their lives.”

The Beirut explosions come on top of an already collapsed economy and a surge in COVID-19 cases (7,711 total cases as of August 13).

As highlighted by UNICEF Lebanon Deputy Representative, Violet Speek-Warnery, during an online press briefing with international media based in Geneva, UNICEF is working on the ground with partners to meet the urgent needs. The revised funding appeal is focused on three pillars:

*Keeping children safe:*

Mental health and psychosocial support to help children and their families recover from trauma. This comes in the form of psychosocial kits for children and parents; to setting up child-friendly spaces in affected areas; to the provision of more specialized, intensive support, including hotlines and provision of referral tents.

Services to protect children from gender-based violence and the provision of hygiene supplies such as sanitary pads.

One-off emergency cash grant to make sure that the most economically vulnerable families can meet their children’s basic needs.

Facilitating the distribution and logistics of 10,000 tetanus vaccines administered to injured people as a precautionary measure.

*Rehabilitating the basic essential services:*

Many homes still don’t have access to safe, sufficient water for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene. The response includes repairing damaged water and sanitation facilities and systems.

The appeal covers support for the rehabilitation of 16 damaged primary health care centers that serve 160,000 people and equipping them with critically needed supplies, including much-needed personal protective equipment for health and frontline workers who are simultaneously responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Supplies continue to arrive, including a shipment with over 3.5 million surgical masks, 2.6 million pairs of gloves and other equipment including face shields, coveralls, thermometers, goggles and headcovers.

Relocating at least 80 percent of acute and chronic medications and all of vaccines stored in the central warehouse damaged by the blast.

And, crucially for children, rehabilitating damaged schools and making sure that children whose homes have been damaged can keep learning – whether in classrooms, or via COVID-enforced distance learning.

Finally, *UNICEF is supporting young volunteers* who are helping affected families with debris cleaning, cooking and food and water distribution, reaching 3,500 people so far. These young volunteers are part of ongoing programmes supported by UNICEF to strengthen their skills for income generation. The revised appeal will strengthen training and resources to equip thousands more adolescents and young people with the skills they need – whether it is carpentry or plumbing or construction – to be part of the effort to rebuild their country.

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Data as of August 14.