

Relief Activity Report No. 1

Crisis in Lebanon

Cologne, 26 July 2006

Overall Situation



A Lebanese woman cries while carrying her baby during evacuation onto a UN boat inside Tyre port. REUTERS

The humanitarian situation in Lebanon has become critical after two weeks of Israeli air strikes in the conflict between Israel and the Lebanese Hizbollah militia. The bombardment has killed about 400 people in Lebanon, mostly civilians. More than 35 Israeli citizens died in the conflict, mostly because of Hizbollah missiles hitting settlements in northern Israel.

It is estimated that more than 700,000 Lebanese fled from their villages and towns since the war began.

Activity of the Lebanese Association of the Order of Malta and Malteser International

The Lebanese Association of the Order of Malta has been active since long in the provision of basic health care. It maintains ten health care centres all over the country. Additionally to their regular services they are now providing basic health care to more than 2,000 displaced persons in six of the health centers throughout the country.

In the town of Jezzine and its surrounding, the association supplies more than 1,000 displaced persons, who found refuge in two schools, with food, pharmaceuticals and sanitary facilities. Furthermore, a mobile intervention team for the medical supply of displaced persons is set up. In order to prevent scarcity of basic medical drugs and supplies a stock of pharmaceuticals is going to be established.

The most critical situation persists in the village of Rmeich, which is located next to the Israeli border near the war-ravaged town of Bint Jbeil. Dr. Raed el Alam, the responsible of the health center of the Order of Malta in Yaroun, has set up a subsidiary in Rmeich next to his clinic, after the whole population from Yaroun had to flee the village. The population of Rmeich and about 8,000 displaced people from the surrounding villages are locked up there due to fighting between the Israeli army and Hizbollah forces.

“Rmeich is in a situation of total misery”, states the latest report from the association. “There is lack of medical drugs – especially for chronic diseases -, of milk for the babies, of bread and drinking water, not to mention the difficulties to transfer patients and injured people to a hospital.” On Sunday, the association managed to transport a stock of medical drugs to Rmeich in coordination with the Lebanese Red Cross just before Rmeich became inaccessible.

Five other health centers near the fighting area are providing medical aid to displaced persons: In Marjeyoun near the Golan Heights, there are many refugees from the surrounding villages. The responsible of the center, Sister H  l  ne Habib, who was in Beirut when the attacks began, has returned to Marjeyoun bringing medical drugs for the health center and the hospital of the town. The health center in Roum near Jezzine and in Ain el Remmaneh in a southern suburb of Beirut are taking care of two schools each, hosting more than 1,650 persons altogether. The health centers in Barga near Baalbeck in the Beqaa Valley and in Khaldieh in northern Lebanon are also treating displaced persons.

The health center in Siddikine west of Tyrus is not accessible at the moment. The village has been bombarded several times, the staff has dispersed. Further three health centers of the Order in the north of Lebanon are equally preparing to treat refugees.

So far, the network of the Order of Malta has supported the Lebanese Association with more than 120,000 euros. So far, we know about these donations: The Austrian Association has given 30,000 euros, the Brazilian Association (Sao Paulo) has donated 16,500 euros, the British Association 5,000 euros, Malteser International and the German Association of the Order of Malta have supported the emergency aid in Lebanon 30,000 euros each. The Australian Association is preparing a national appeal to support the work of the Order of Malta in Lebanon.

Malteser International closely observes the situation and the possibilities to support the work of the Lebanese Association in the future.



Helth centers of the Lebanese Order of Malta:

1. Rmeich / Yaroun
2. Marjeyoun
3. Siddikine
4. Roum / caza de Jezzine
5. Ain le Remmaneh
6. Zouk Mikhael
7. Barqa
8. Kobayat

Not tagged on the map: Kefraya, Khaldieh