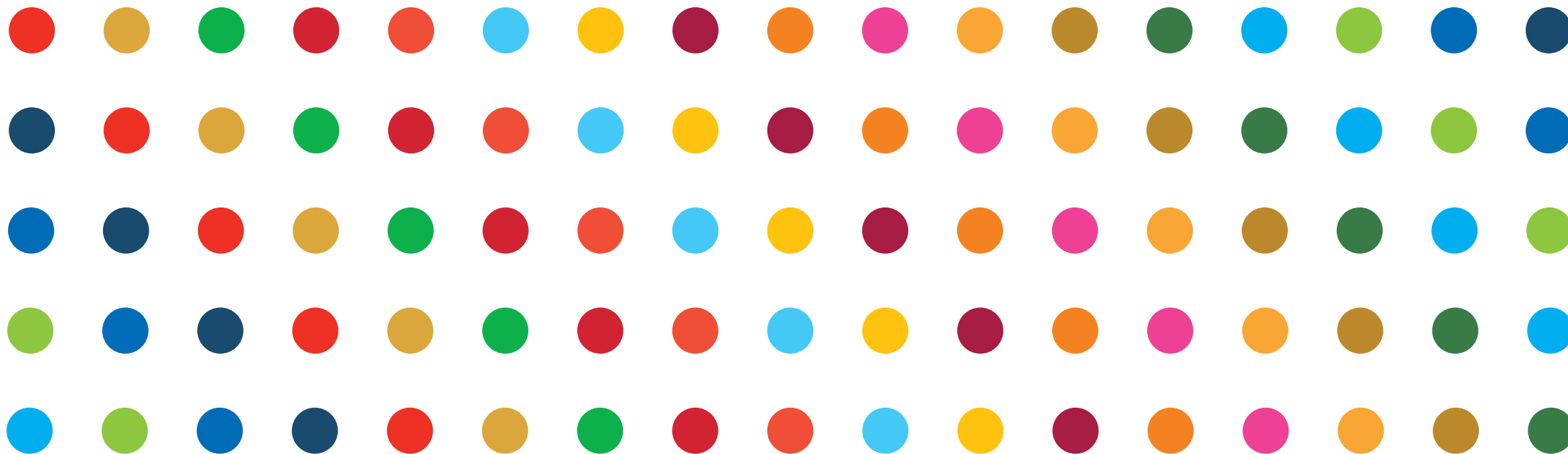

Lebanon's Experience in Poverty Eradication & UN Development System's Support



Unprecedented Crisis

- The ongoing socio-economic and financial crisis is likely to rank within the top three most severe globally since the mid-nineteenth century
- Lebanon's economy contracted by 10.5 percent in 2021, the highest contraction amongst 193 countries globally. This devastating contraction follows from a 21.4 percent contraction in 2020, reflecting the near complete destruction of an economy and a shrinking GDP to 21.8 billion USD.
- By 2021, half of Lebanon's population plunged into poverty, with further reports estimating that more than 34% of Lebanon's population suffering extreme poverty. Vulnerable populations of all nationalities are disproportionately affected, as they grapple with triple digit annual inflation rates for the 21st consecutive month, and the minimum wage is merely equivalent to 26\$.
- Deprivation in the areas of health care, medicines, basic services, education, employment, housing and assets
- Beirut port explosion in August 2020 took over 200 lives, left over 6,000 people with physical injuries and displaced over 300,000 people.
- Lebanon is entering its 'third mass exodus' ranking 113 out of 144 globally in terms of its brain drain
- Lack of political will to arrest the ongoing economic depression and severe deterioration of living standards.



A Multi-Pronged Crisis: Factors Exacerbating the Economic and Financial Crisis

Covid-19

- Lockdowns and curfew measures
- Hampered economic activity & hindered economic recovery
- Devasting impact on MSMEs
- Increased number of people living in extreme poverty (ESCWA estimates that 82% of the population is living in multi-dimensional poverty, 2021)
- Heavily Strained Health sector, with limited resources as a result of the economic crisis.
- More than 1 million COVID-19 cases in Lebanon (Cumulatively), and 10,400 deaths.

War on Ukraine

The main channels of impact on Lebanon include:

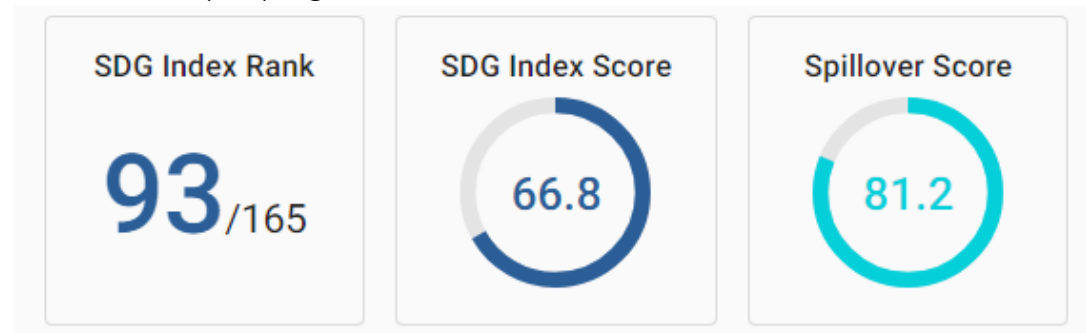
- Wheat reserves running dangerously low and threatening food security;
- soaring prices of fuel items due to the global rise in energy prices, and commodity prices more generally, aggravating Lebanon's inflation-depreciation spiral and the currency crisis.

82%

multidimensional poverty
rate in 2021 (ESCWA)

SDGs in Lebanon

- Amid the country's compounding economic, financial, social and health crises, the focus on SDGs continues to fade away
- Lack of a national development strategy : In the absence of a national SDG plan and related indicators and targets, UN agencies, funds and programmes have been providing technical and policy support in accelerating SDG-based planning and implementation to relevant ministries and state entities
- Council of Ministers' national committee to oversee and guide the roll-out of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in Lebanon, mandated to:
 - Act as a coordinating body
 - Raise awareness of, and integrate, the SDGs into national policies and programmes
 - Build a national database to assess achievement towards each of the goals
 - Regularly review progress using the Voluntary National Review (VNR) process
- At the legislative level, a parliamentary sub-committee has also been formed to monitor and advance the SDGs within the Parliament
- The UNCT in Lebanon has supported the government to accelerate its work on the 2030 Agenda, with different UN agencies providing technical support to relevant ministries and state entities (including for the preparation of the 2018 VNR).
- The widespread dearth of data greatly affects transparency and accountability and made it difficult to obtain a detailed and accurate picture of progress towards the SDGs in real time in Lebanon
- The economic crisis compounded by the impact of COVID-19 is set to widen the gap between people living in rich and poor countries, increase unemployment, increase poverty rates, and thus hamper progress with the SDGs.



Source: Sustainable Development Report, Dashboard, SDG Index

CCA: Identification of Challenges in Lebanon

- Collective action and partnerships to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to realize the principle of “Leaving no one behind” (LNOB)
- Engagement in a broader policy dialogue with government and other key stakeholders for advancing the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, and to develop the UNSDCF 2023-2025.
- A core analytical function of the UNCT to closely track situational developments and inform the UN system’s work on a continuous basis.
- Financing poverty in the context of a severe economic and social crisis is a challenge especially with limited foreign aid, in the context of unimplemented reforms.
- Inadequate social protection schemes in the country
- The CCA highlights key development challenges, underlying and structural causes, as well as opportunities to address them.



CCA Key Findings

Increased poverty

Food insecurity

Collapsed health system

Collapsed education system

Lack of quality infrastructure in support of growth

Labour market deficiencies

Weak domestic policies in support of growth

Social discrimination

Wealth inequality

Low competitiveness and productivity

The UNCT has signed with the GoL the UNSDCF 2023-2025 (8 outcomes) which include:

People

Improved lives and wellbeing for all people in Lebanon

- Outcome 1: Enhanced, inclusive, equitable, comprehensive, and sustainable social protection systems and programmes
- Outcome 2: Strengthened provision of and equitable access to quality services, including basic services
- Outcome 3: Enhanced protection for the most vulnerable



Prosperity

Improved resilient and competitive productive sectors for enhanced and inclusive income-generating and livelihood opportunities

- Outcome 1: Enhanced competitiveness and business environment of MSMEs and high potential productive sectors' value chains
- Outcome 2: Strengthened diversified income opportunities to promote social and economic inclusion



Basic assistance

- Unconditional cash assistance to meet basic non-food needs
- Seasonal cash assistance for basic survival needs
- Child-focused social assistance
- National Disability Allowance prepared, with target of 10,000 in 2022

Social protection & reforms

As the Government's focus on social protection became apparent, the National Social Protection Strategy was completed, with an extensive gender and disability perspective. The Document highlighted the need to rapidly expand the social assistance system in Lebanon through the introduction of Social Grants that would address lifecycle vulnerabilities to complement the existing anti-poverty programs.

Development

- Business management and development training
- Short-term jobs
- Upgrading infrastructure, environmental assets, and agricultural lands
- Businesses supported with technology transfer, business management trainings, and capacity building services
- Capacity building
- Shops rehabilitated and equipped, generating short-term jobs
- Cash assistance
- "Lebanon Export Academy": access to international markets (under PSDP)

Access to food and nutrition

- Unconditional cash assistance to cover basic food needs
- In-kind food assistance
- Conditional assistance
- Schoolchildren/received in-kind food Assistance
- schoolchildren received school snacks

Health

- Acute and chronic Medication
- Tuberculosis and HIV patients
- accessed treatment and diagnostic services
- hygiene kits
- subsidized consultations
- Free routine immunization Services
- hospitals, primary health care centers, cold chain storages' needs requests Addressed
- patients supported with non-Covid-19 hospitalization, advanced diagnostics, obstetric and life-saving care
- Mobile Health Clinic
- tuberculosis and HIV screening conducted
- COVID-19 RESPONSE

Rehabilitation and housing

- Improved shelter conditions of informal settlements, non-residential buildings, and shelters to achieve humanitarian standards
- Cash for rent to mitigate eviction/eviction risk
- Cash for shelter

Way Forward

- 2022 will be a strategically important year for the UN's engagement in Lebanon
- Setting up the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2023-2025)
- To best address the current situation in Lebanon, the Framework will clearly outline what the role of the UN will be in supporting the urgent development priorities, including addressing the main drivers and root causes of the development, humanitarian and peace challenges currently facing the country to put Lebanon on the path of the agenda 2030.
- At the heart of what the UN does will remain the commitment to leave no one behind, for which the UN will continue to and strive better to walk the talk.
- Such work targeting the most vulnerable on social protection, productive sectors, and basic services will be essential towards fulfilling this commitment and will be key to end the acute humanitarian needs.
- Moving forward with the new Cooperation Framework, the UN will focus on accelerating the engagement for emergency development priorities, through inclusiveness and collective action of key partners in country to direct transformation towards sustainable development.



**End Poverty
in All its
Forms
Everywhere**