

### CRISIS IMPACT OVERVIEW

- Hostilities and clashes between Hezbollah and Israel have been escalating since 8 October 2023, mainly affecting areas in southern Lebanon. On 23 September 2024, the Israeli army increased their military attacks, with over 330 raids targeting over 117 towns and cities in southern Lebanon (South and Nabatiye governorates), Bekaa governorate, and the southern suburbs of Beirut city in Beirut governorate (Euro-Med Monitor 23/09/2024; OCHA 25/09/2024). On 24 September, another Israeli air strike targeted a residential area in a southern Beirut suburb, killing at least six people and injuring 15 others (AJ 24/09/2024). In response, Hezbollah has escalated their attacks, firing over 100 rockets at areas close to Haifa city, northern Israel, on 22 September, with no casualties reported. This came after a cyberattack on communication devices, resulting in killing of 9 people and more than 3,000 injuries. Hezbollah and the Lebanese Government accused Israel of plotting (AP 22/09/2024 ; AJ 18/09/2024). On 30 September, the Israeli army announced the start of ground raids into villages in southern Lebanon (AJ 01/10/2024; BBC 01/10/2024).
- By 27 September, Israeli strikes on 23 September had killed at least 700 people, including at least 50 children, 94 women, 18 paramedics, 103 Syrian refugees, and two UN staff. The attacks had also injured at least 1,200 people, mostly civilians (AJ 25/09/2024 a; BBC 25/09/2024 a; OCHA 27/09/2024; Sharika wa Laken Instagram 26/09/2024). Since 8 October, Israeli air strikes killed a total of 1,640 people and injured 8,000 (OCHA 30/09/2024).
- There are varying estimates for the number of IDPs since the escalation, as various sources provide differing information. As per IOM, the hostilities had newly displaced more than 90,500 people from the targeted governorates to Beirut governorate and other areas of northern Lebanon by 25 September (OCHA 25/09/2024; IOM 25/09/2024). This brings the total number of people displaced since 8 October 2023 to over 211,300 (IOM 26/09/2024).
- On the other hand, the Lebanese foreign minister estimates that by 25 September 2024, the total number of IDPs in Lebanon had reached 500,000 (Sky News 25/09/2024; AJ 25/09/2024 b). On 29 September, the Prime Minister of the caretaker Government updated this figure to a total of one million people displaced since 8 October 2023 (Annahar 29/09/2024; AJ 29/09/2024).

- By 30 September, around 100,000 Syrian refugees and Lebanese people had crossed into Syria, with many other families left attempting to cross at the border (UN 30/09/2024).

### ANTICIPATED SCOPE AND SCALE

The possibility of an full-scale Israeli ground invasion of Lebanon has become increasingly likely following the escalations in September, including the Israeli attacks on communication devices and raids, the announced 27 September assassination of Hezbollah Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah, and the anticipated retaliation of Hezbollah, in addition to Israeli ground raids in villages in southern Lebanon on 30 September (Politico 28/09/2024 ; AJ 01/10/2024).

In the event that intense Israeli military ground raids on Lebanon continue and expand beyond current limited areas, a broader conflict between Hezbollah and Israel becomes probable (Euronews 24/09/2024; The Conversation 22/09/2024). If the conflict escalates to a full-scale ground invasion, it is unclear whether and at which scale the Lebanese Armed Forces will deploy, given the current economic and political crisis. During 2006 war, the Lebanese military maintained a non-intervention approach, with the main parties to the conflict being the Hezbollah, supported by other local militias, and Israel (IE MED accessed 01/10/2024). Fighters – as part of groups reported to have the backing of Iran – from several countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan have already offered to join Hezbollah in their conflict with Israel (Euronews 25/09/2024 a; AP 22/06/2024).

If hostilities escalate further, civilians will experience increased humanitarian needs. More people are likely to experience forced displacement; the treatment of injuries is likely to further strain the healthcare system; food insecurity levels will likely worsen; and people will likely experience more access disruptions to clean water (HOPE 25/09/2024). The southern governorates of South and Nabatiye, the southern suburbs of Beirut, and the eastern governorates of Baalbek and Bekaa are likely to face the most impact given Hezbollah's presence in these locations (AJ 29/09/2024). Israeli air strikes aiming to weaken the group in preparation for a potential full-scale ground invasion are likely to target these areas (BBC accessed 26/09/2024; Euronews 25/09/2024 b).

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INTERNALLY  
DISPLACED PEOPLE  
AS OF  
29 SEPTEMBER

100,000

PEOPLE CROSSED  
FROM LEBANON TO  
SYRIA AS OF  
30 SEPTEMBER

NEEDS

SHELTER, FOOD, AND  
NON FOOD ITEMS

5.5

INFORM RISK SCORE

More Syrian refugees and Lebanese families are also more likely to continue crossing to government-controlled areas of Syria. This will lead to increased humanitarian needs, including for shelter, livelihoods, and protection (Al Jumhuriya Instagram 25/09/2024; UNHCR 25/09/2024).

Some sources report that both Hezbollah and Israel are more heavily armed compared to 2006 (The National 27/09/2024). This could also increase the scale and severity of conflict, although the information around it remains limited.

Lebanon's already fragile economy is likely to worsen as insecurity directly affects the tourism sector, a main contributor to the country's economy. With a significant drop in tourist arrivals and hotel bookings, as well as increasing threats of insecurity around the airport in Beirut, tourism is facing a near-total halt, leading to more income losses and job cuts for those relying on the industry, such as hospitality workers. This also poses a broader risk to Lebanon's economy, which heavily depends on tourism revenue. Projections indicate that the negative effects of the conflict will continue throughout 2024, further aggravating the current crisis in Lebanon (ACAPS 09/07/2024; NPR 05/08/2024).

## HUMANITARIAN CONSTRAINTS

The simultaneous displacement of people from targeted areas in southern Lebanon to Beirut and northern Lebanon has resulted in severe road congestion lasting for hours, mainly on the coastal road between Sour and Beirut (The Guardian 23/09/2024; BBC 24/09/2024). Many people report needing water and medical attention after the long journey and high temperatures of above 30° C (SWI 24/09/2024; AA 24/09/2024). People also report feeling unsafe for fear of air strikes targeting roads (Alhurra 24/09/2024).

The congestion and heavy traffic have also delayed supply trucks, disrupting the delivery of essential goods and humanitarian aid to affected communities (UNICEF 25/09/2024).

Insecurity is affecting the work of local and international organisations. On 23 September, Israeli raids killed two UNHCR staff (BBC 25/09/2024 a; OCHA 25/09/2024). Israeli attacks have also displaced aid workers and their families, reducing the number of staff able to work and possibly halting humanitarian operations (Anera 23/09/2024). Fears of rocket exchange downing planes have cancelled or suspended many flights, while increased logistical challenges hinder air traffic and aid delivery (MEE 28/09/2024; CNBC 28/09/2024).

Humanitarian responders are likely to face difficulties in reaching displaced people staying with host families (i.e. most of the displaced people) because of a lack of location and contact information. Displaced people staying in collective shelters are likely easier to reach and connect with humanitarian aid (REACH 25/09/2024).

Lebanon's already fragile critical infrastructure worsens the situation, with poor internet connectivity and frequent power outages affecting humanitarian operations and response capacity (Anera 23/09/2024).

## CRISIS IMPACTS

### Displacement

According to IOM, the conflict had newly displaced more than 90,500 people by 25 September (OCHA 25/09/2024; IOM 25/09/2024). Following Israeli raids on 23 September, the Government estimated the total number of IDPs since 8 October at 500,000, later updating the figure to one million on 29 September (Sky News 25/09/2024; AJ 25/09/2024 b and 29/09/2024; Annahar 29/09/2024).

People have been displaced from southern Lebanon districts, such as Bint Jbeil, Hasbaya, Marjayoun, Nabatiye, Sour, and Zahrani, as well as towns surrounding Saida city (BBC 24/09/2024; OCHA 25/09/2024). Many of these districts hosted conflict-displaced people in collective shelters. These people have had to experience a second displacement to safer areas, such as Aley, Baabda, Beirut, Chouf, and Saida districts (OCHA 25/09/2024).

Cross-border displacement to Syria has been reported, with Lebanese and Syrian refugees going through the Masnaa–Jdeidet Yabous crossing between Lebanon and Syria. By 30 September, 100,000 people had entered Syria, mostly Syrian refugees and some Lebanese families (UN 30/09/2024). These Lebanese families fled to Syria in response to high rent costs in Beirut and a lack of safe areas within Lebanon (Al Liwaa 25/09/2024). The newly arrived people are in Damascus, Homs, Rural Damascus, and Tartous governorates (UNHCR 29/09/2024). They urgently need protection, health services, food, NFIs, water, and hygiene supplies (UNFPA 27/09/2024).

There were an unknown number of families still at the border by 25 September, with many in vehicles and some on foot. These families, including children and a number of people injured during the raids, are spending nights at the border waiting to enter Syria (UNHCR 25/09/2024).

Syrian refugees trying to enter Syria are facing additional challenges at the border, as Syrian government entry regulations require Syrian nationals, in particular, to exchange USD 100 (Al Araby TV Instagram 26/09/2024; Al Jumhuriya Instagram 25/09/2024). Return to Syria remains unsafe as people, especially young men, face the risks of arbitrary detention or forced conscription by Syrian security forces (Al Jumhuriya Instagram 25/09/2024).

An unknown number of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon have also been displaced from their gatherings (informal communities) in Sour and Saida districts to other safer areas in Saida to join family members. Others have displaced to northern Lebanon to stay in Palestinian refugee camps and UNRWA shelters. Some Palestinian refugees in Sour have relocated to Burj Shemali, El-Buss, and Rashidieh camps in Sour. Those in Bekaa have mostly displaced to the central and western areas of the governorate. Some Palestinian refugees from Syria have gone back to Syria or showed intention to reach the country (UNRWA 26/09/2024). There is no information, however, on whether Palestinian refugees from Syria can enter Syria or the types of challenges they might face while travelling to the country or upon arrival.

## Shelter and NFIs

Community-led initiatives on social media connecting displaced people with local volunteers and providing information on available rooms, houses, hostels, schools, and other public buildings help newly displaced people find temporary shelters in Beirut and other governorates in northern Lebanon (The Guardian 23/09/2024). The Lebanese Government has also opened 772 new shelters (mostly public school buildings), which were hosting 118,000 displaced people by 29 September (Annahar 29/09/2024). IDPs at shelters report needing mattresses, blankets, and diesel to operate generators (UNICEF 25/09/2024). Similarly, the civil emergency authority in Lebanon reports shortages in mattresses at markets and factories (SBI 25/09/2024).

In Beirut city, it is estimated that 45 schools and other education facilities have received around 10,000 displaced people, providing them with shelter, ready-to-eat meals, water, medication, mattresses, pillows, and blankets. In Saida, by 24 September, the number of displaced people who had arrived in the city had reached 10,000. 6,000 of these were staying in collective shelters (Al Liwaa 25/09/2024). These collective shelters included about 15 institutions, including the Lebanese University. In Tripoli city (northern Lebanon), about 200 families were sheltering in Quality Inn, and an unknown number of families were staying in the Hospitality Institute and Deir Ammar Center (AJ 25/09/2024 a).

UNRWA has opened two new designated emergency shelters in Sibliin Training Centre in Saida district and Nahr Al Bared camp in Tripoli district to receive Palestinian refugees and other displaced people (UNRWA 24/09/2024). The organisation has also turned its Nablus school in Saida city into an emergency shelter to accommodate the increased number of displaced people (UNRWA 26/09/2024).

Before moving to a government shelter, Lebanese people are requested to register their names at the municipality they are displaced to. Displaced Syrian refugees report being unable to register for IDP shelters in the lists available at each municipality, as these lists are only for Lebanese citizens. Syrians are requested to contact UNHCR to be allocated shelters,

but there are limited shelters available from UNHCR, leaving refugees without shelter and sleeping in open areas (AJ 25/09/2024 a; UNICEF 25/09/2024; UNHCR 28/09/2024).

The winter season, which normally runs between December and mid-March, is likely to aggravate displaced people's humanitarian needs, especially for those staying in tents and makeshift shelters.

## Healthcare

Hospitals are overwhelmed with the high number of casualties, not only from the Israeli raids on 23 September but also from the communication devices attack from 17–18 September that left nearly 3,000 injured across Lebanon (The Guardian 17/09/2024). On 25 September, the Lebanese health minister reported that more than 50 hospitals across the country were treating 1,835 people injured in the Israeli raids and were struggling to cope with the demand (BBC 25/09/2024 b).

Before the raids on 23 September, the conflict had already closed six primary healthcare facilities in Bint Jbeil and Marjayoun districts (OCHA 20/09/2024). An Israeli air strike on 23 September targeted the vicinity of Nabatiye hospital, but it did not sustain direct damage and was still operational by 25 September (MNA 25/09/2024; MCD 25/09/2024).

Displaced people need medication for chronic diseases, such as high blood pressure and diabetes. Children also need medical attention, as there are some cases of high fever reported (AJ 25/09/2024 a).

Overall, Lebanon's healthcare sector has been in a deep crisis owing to the economic crisis that began in 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, and the Beirut port explosion in 2020 (ACAPS 19/10/2023). Thousands of medical personnel have emigrated for better opportunities, weakening the sector's capacity (HOPE 25/09/2024). Government hospitals face closures, and medical supplies are dwindling because of a lack of funding. The rising number of casualties from the Israeli hostilities is increasingly overwhelming the sector (Al Ghad 25/09/2024; ACAPS 19/10/2023).

## WASH

The Israeli raids on 23 September damaged water infrastructure, cutting off access to clean water for an additional 30,000 people in South and Bekaa governorates (OCHA 25/09/2024; UNICEF 25/09/2024). Prior to the attacks on 23 September, Israeli air strikes had already damaged water supply infrastructure, affecting access to clean drinking water for more than 100,000 people in South and Nabatiye governorates (ACAPS 09/07/2024). A lack of access to

WASH contributes to an increased risk of outbreaks of diseases, such as cholera. In October 2022, Lebanon experienced a cholera outbreak, with Akkar and Minieh Donnieh in the north and Baalbek in the east being the most affected districts (IFRC 15/01/2024). The Government declared the end of the outbreak in June 2023 (NNA 11/06/2023).

## Food

Displaced people, especially from southern Lebanon and Beirut's southern suburbs, heavily rely on civil society initiatives and volunteers to meet their food needs. Charities such as the Lebanese Food Bank provide meals to displaced families in shelters and schools. Despite such efforts, the demand for food remains high, and campaigns to collect donations and distribute hot meals continue (The New Arab 27/09/2024; MCD 28/09/2024). International humanitarian organisations and agencies such as the WFP are providing ready-to-eat meals, bread, and hot meals for families in shelters, but this is not enough to cover all IDPs' food needs (WFP 29/09/2024).

Food insecurity levels will likely worsen as displacement continues. The displacement of farmers from their agricultural lands in southern Lebanon and other areas reduces the harvest and food availability in markets (ACAPS 09/07/2024; Al Arab 30/01/2024). About 1.26 million people, Lebanese and non-Lebanese (23% of the population analysed), are projected to face Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse food insecurity levels between April–September 2024 (IPC 30/05/2024).

## Education

Further conflict escalations, increased insecurity, and the use of many school buildings as shelters have disrupted education across Lebanon. All educational institutions were closed at least until 27 September (Saraya News 24/09/2024; OCHA 25/09/2024). Most of the 283 shelters that the Lebanese Government has opened to receive newly displaced people are public schools (OCHA 25/09/2024; UNICEF 25/09/2024).

## CRISIS DRIVERS

### Israeli attacks on Gaza

The hostilities between Hezbollah and Israel started on 8 October 2023 as a response by Hezbollah to the Israeli attacks on Gaza following Hamas' military operation on Israeli settlements on 7 October. Since then, Hezbollah and Israel have been exchanging fire almost daily, affecting border areas and causing displacement on both sides. Hezbollah, in official statements, has linked the implementation of a ceasefire in Gaza to an automatic implementation of a ceasefire with Israel (AJ 25/09/2024 c; The Conversation 23/09/2024).

### Control over the Litani River

The Litani River is Lebanon's largest river, and it is considered a key strategic asset for its water resources and potential energy production. It is also a source of tension between Hezbollah and Israel, mainly because of its strategic proximity to Israel's northern border and its value as a water source. Israel views Hezbollah's strong presence near the river as a direct threat to its security, prompting calls within Israel to push Hezbollah beyond the Litani River and create an Israel-controlled buffer zone. Hezbollah considers the area significant to its influence in southern Lebanon (AA 24/09/2024; France 24 19/09/2024). During the recent escalation of hostilities, both sides have mentioned this territorial struggle, which could contribute to a full-scale war (JNS 14/08/2024; AA 09/07/2024; TRT 28/06/2024).

## COMPOUNDING/AGGRAVATING FACTORS

### Price increases

The displacement of large numbers of people from southern Lebanon to safer areas has increased the demand for basic items such as bread, bottled water, milk, diapers, and medication. Before the mass displacement on 23 September, some bakeries in Beirut governorate had already reported that the price of a bundle of pita bread had increased by 6.5 times (Tayyar 25/09/2024).

There is also a rising demand for housing (Al Akhbar 25/09/2024). Merchants and landlords will likely increase the prices of commodities and rent to gain more profit, making access to food, water, and shelter unaffordable for displaced people (SBI 25/09/2024).

The civil emergency authority has called on merchants to not exploit the crisis, monopolise, or raise prices in markets (SBI 25/09/2024).

## Social tensions

Lebanese society has responded to the current crisis with a strong sense of community and solidarity. For example, hotels have provided discounted rates, people have offered free housing, and volunteers have worked to relocate the displaced to safer areas (*The Guardian* 23/09/2024; *Tiber Instagram* 26/09/2024). A rise in sectarian tensions, however, remains a factor that can lead to a worsening humanitarian situation, especially with prolonged displacement (*ACAPS* 09/07/2024). The Lebanese society, and its government, are in fact organised along religious confessional lines. In Lebanon's recent history, tensions have emerged amongst confessional communities, at times resulting in sectarian violence (*ACW* 05/09/2023).

As predominantly Shia Lebanese displaced people seek refuge in safer areas populated by mostly Christian, Sunni, or Druze Lebanese, each community's desire to keep a coherent identity and social fabric can increase tensions (*The Conversation* 16/07/2024). Competition for resources such as housing, aid, and essential services could also aggravate longstanding sectarian divisions. The strain on already fragile political and social structures may heighten mistrust between communities, leading to increased tensions and possibly violent confrontations (*ACAPS* 09/07/2024).

## Lack of governance

Lebanon has faced a prolonged political stalemate since October 2022, resulting in the country's inability to elect a president or establish a functioning Government. This vacuum has heightened the risk of corruption and deepened the country's economic crisis. The caretaker Government's failure to enact essential political and economic reforms has significantly reduced foreign aid and investment, worsening the already dire situation (*ACAPS* 09/07/2024). Many conflict-affected people have criticised the Government and the Lebanese Army for their inaction towards the crisis. Government officials have made only a few public statements with no adequate response or planning (*The Vocal News* 29/09/2024). The lack of governance also hinders humanitarian coordination and programme and response planning, with increased bureaucratic challenges complicating humanitarian aid delivery (*OCHA* accessed 29/09/2024).

## Economic crisis

Since 2019, Lebanon has been facing an economic crisis that has limited the Government's ability to provide basic services (such as healthcare, electricity, and housing) to displaced people. This – plus the Government's inability to provide job opportunities for newly displaced people – will likely aggravate the current crisis (*DW* 27/09/2024; *Snaije* 10/06/2022).

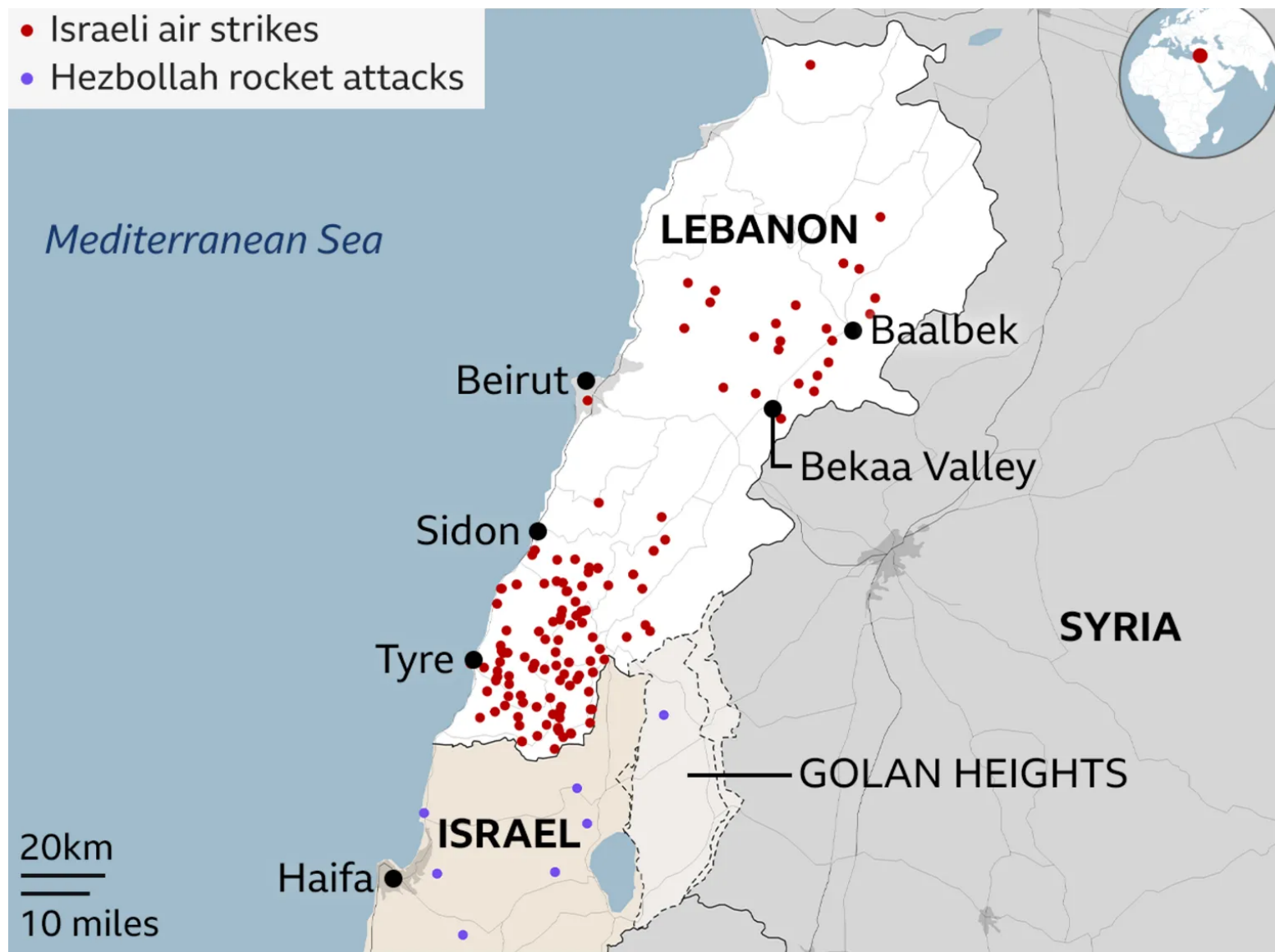
The socioeconomic crisis, compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, has led to an increase in unemployment and inflation in Lebanon, severely affecting livelihoods. Between 2018–2022, unemployment rates soared from 11.4% to nearly 30% (*UNICEF* 08/04/2024). The inflation rate peaked at 268% in April 2023, pushing a significant portion of the population into poverty (*TE* accessed 29/09/2024). Poverty rates rose from 12% to 44% between 2012–2022 (*WB* 23/05/2024). Many families in Lebanon also rely on remittances and diaspora support for survival, and economic instability continues to threaten their ability to meet basic needs (*ACAPS* 09/07/2024).

## The Blue Line

The Blue Line is an internationally recognised, UN-established withdrawal line that marks the withdrawal of Israeli forces from southern Lebanon in 2000 (*UN* 05/03/2021). Despite the presence of UNIFIL at the Blue Line area to maintain peace and security, skirmishes between Hezbollah and the Israeli army already occurred often before the escalation on 8 October 2023. The Blue Line area, being a disputed boundary, has long been a source of tension between the two sides, with Hezbollah claiming that Lebanese land, such as the Shebaa Farms, is under Israeli occupation (*ACAPS* 18/10/2023; *Atlantic Council* 15/07/2024). The undefined boundaries between the two sides could fuel tensions and further escalate hostilities.



### MAP 1. AREAS IN LEBANON TARGETED BY ISRAELI RAIDS ON 23 SEPTEMBER 2024



Source: BBC (24/09/2024 b)