REPORT

CHILD SENSITIVE MARKET ASSESSMENT

May 2025

Findings Report

May 2025

Acknowledgments

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ACRONYMS

SCI	Save The Children International
CBA	Cash-Based Assistance
CFRA	Child-Focused Rapid Assessment
CU5	Children Under Five
CVA	Cash and Voucher Assistance
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FSP	Financial Service Provider
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
ITS	Informal Tented Settlements
KII	Key Informant Interview
LIMA	Lebanon Integrated Micronutrient, Anthropometry and Child Development
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SMEB	Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket

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Abstract/Summary

Purpose of the Child Sensitive Market Assessment

This assessment examines market functionality and access to essential child-focused commodities following Lebanon's most severe conflict escalation since 2006. From September to November 2024, the conflict caused widespread infrastructure damage, disrupted supply chains, and compounded Lebanon's ongoing economic crisis. The assessment investigated how these events affected markets' ability to supply essential goods for children, the barriers families face in accessing these commodities, and the feasibility of cash-based interventions to address critical needs in Baalbak, Beirut Suburbs and Nabatieh Districts.

The assessment followed a three-phase, primarily qualitative methodology complemented by secondary data review. It began with a desk review to inform site selection, followed by consultations with key stakeholders to refine the study's scope. Data collection was then carried out with formal vendors in central market areas, as well as with community members and local leaders across the targeted districts. It explored the following key questions:

Conflict Impact and Market Dynamics:

- How has the ongoing conflict escalation, and the subsequent ceasefire, changed the prices and supply of essential commodities for children, particularly in the prioritized focus districts? What were the distinct roles of formal and informal markets in providing essential commodities for children and their caregivers during the conflict escalation, and how are these roles evolving in the current post-ceasefire period?

Market Access & Barriers:

- What specific protection risks and barriers did the women, men, girls, boys face when accessing local markets during the conflict escalation, and how have these risks changed or persisted in the current post-ceasefire environment? Are there any child labor or protection concerns associated with businesses that have emerged or shifted due to the conflict and ceasefire?

Cash Feasibility and Market Capacity:

- How was the capacity of local markets to support humanitarian cash programming impacted during the conflict escalation, and what is their capacity and potential for expansion now, in the post-ceasefire period, and looking ahead to March 2025?

- What are the main barriers and challenges that local vendor are currently experiencing, and how have these changed since the conflict escalation? Which essential items for children were most critically affected by the conflict during the escalation? What market-based interventions could effectively address these evolving barriers and ensure sustained access to child-essential commodities in March 2025 and beyond? Has humanitarian aid affected (positively or negatively) local markets during the conflict escalation? If yes, how?

Key Findings

Conflict Impact and Market Dynamics

The conflict escalation from September to November 2024 significantly disrupted market functionality across the assessed districts, particularly in relation to child-focused commodities. In Baalbek, where structural damage was minimal, markets resumed operations swiftly, yet financial pressures such as high rent and fuel costs continued to threaten sustainability. Despite this recovery, key child commodities such as fortified baby cereal and purees remained unavailable post-ceasefire. In the Beirut Suburbs, markets avoided physical destruction but faced severe functional disruptions due to insecurity and roadblocks. Though markets have since restocked, concerns remain around the affordability and quality of child-focused goods. Nabatieh experienced the most severe market breakdown, with vendors completely halting operations during the conflict. Even after the ceasefire, recovery has been weak, with ongoing infrastructure issues and the continued unavailability of essential child medications. During the conflict period, informal mechanisms such as street and online sales emerged, particularly in Nabatieh, filling gaps when formal systems failed. As the situation stabilizes, formal markets are slowly regaining functionality, but access and affordability barriers persist.

Zooming in specifically into Child-Specific Commodity Access

- **Infant and Young Child Nutrition (0-5 years):** Critical items for this vulnerable age group face constraints across all districts. Specialized products such as infant formula, fortified cereals (Cerelac), and baby foods are either:
    - Almost completely unavailable (particularly in Baalbak)
    - Limited to specific channels like pharmacies, restricting access to such commodities to a specific vendor

- **Children above 5 (6-18 years):** although the study focused mostly on 0-5 years age group, some findings came up related to access to basic rights or needs such as: educational disruption was significant with many schools converted to shelters. While basic educational supplies have become available post-conflict, the delayed academic year and financial constraints continue to prevent many school-age children from returning to school. **Adolescent** girls face specific challenges accessing menstrual hygiene products, which were scarce during the conflict and remain expensive in relation to household income.

Market Access and Barriers

Access to markets during the conflict was shaped by a range of protection risks and barriers, many of which remain post-ceasefire. Women and girls faced greater movement restrictions due to both insecurity and entrenched social norms, leading to increased reliance on male household members to access markets. Possibly, it can then be assumed that this can pose specific challenges for female-headed households. Boys were frequently engaged in market-related labor, such as street vending or working as baggers, exposing them to unsafe and exploitative environments. These trends have not only persisted but in some cases worsened due to weak protection systems and economic pressures.

Cash Feasibility and Market Capacity

The capacity of local markets to support cash-based humanitarian programming was heavily affected during the conflict, especially due to disruptions in functionality, which is expected. However, in the post-ceasefire environment, recovery has been uneven. Baalbek shows high readiness to support such programming, with stable payment systems and vendor willingness to scale up. Beirut Suburbs' markets are restocked but continue to grapple with price fluctuations, while Nabatieh's weak infrastructure limits its current and future capacity. Despite these challenges, most vendors expressed optimism about the potential for expansion and showed interest in participating in voucher-based programs—particularly large vendors and supermarkets.

Nevertheless, local vendors across districts reported ongoing challenges such as high operational costs (rent, electricity, fuel), and financial instability, all of which were exacerbated during the conflict and continue to persist. Among the most critically affected child-specific items were fortified cereals, baby purees, infant formula, and essential medications. These items were either unavailable or restricted to specific vendors, such as pharmacies, which limited access. To address these issues sustainably, market-based interventions such as fair and inclusive voucher programs, support for vendor logistics, and targeted subsidies for essential child commodities could be effective.

Despite these challenges, humanitarian and community support played a critical role during the war, particularly when banks and financial service providers (FSPs) were closed and access to cash was restricted. While humanitarian aid during the conflict did not significantly impact local markets due to its inconsistency and the closure of many vendors, it did play a crucial role in helping families meet basic needs when access to cash was limited. Looking ahead, community members overwhelmingly preferred cash-based assistance due to its flexibility in addressing evolving child and household needs.

Key Takeaways

Implications for Programming

- Markets are recovering at different rates across districts, requiring tailored approaches to cash and voucher assistance (CVA) based on local functionality.
- Child-specific items are subject to fluctuated pricing and limited availability. As a result, access to these items can be easily compromised, requiring targeted monitoring of availability and accessibility, as well as affordability, and providing support accordingly.
- Gender and age play a critical role in shaping both market access and specific needs, highlighting the importance of tailored programming approaches. Also, since the war, the rise in child labor represents an urgent protection concern requiring integrated economic and educational interventions.
- Widespread distrust in banking systems and limited functionality of financial services necessitate adapted delivery mechanisms for cash-based assistance, ensuring that the chosen modality aligns with available financial service providers in terms of distance and capacity to support the number of beneficiary households in the area with minimal disruption.

Top Recommendations

- **Tailor assistance modalities to local market conditions:** Implement unconditional cash or vouchers in areas with functional markets; and combine cash with direct distribution for critical but unavailable items. As long as markets and financial service providers (FSPs) are functional, cash assistance is feasible—and remains the most requested and recommended modality. Where markets are functional but access to cash is constrained by none functional or limited access to FSPs, voucher assistance can be appropriate. However, in situations where markets are non-functional or essential commodities are unavailable, in-kind assistance should be prioritized. It is also possible to combine cash with direct distribution for critical but unavailable items (eg. baby purees and fortified cereal in Baalbak) and in severely affected areas where restock can be challenging or areas where items remain unavailable (eg. Nabatieh).

- **Develop age-specific support packages:** Design transfer values and complementary services based on children's developmental stages and specific needs.

- **Implement market support interventions for vendors specifically those who supply child commodities:** Facilitate micro-loans or grants for traders supplying child-specific commodities to rebuild inventory, storage capacity, and infrastructure, especially in Nabatieh.

- **Address child labor through integrated approaches:** Combine household economic support with educational re-engagement strategies to reduce economic pressures driving child labor.

- **Strengthen municipality (local authority) and community-based coordination:** Support local coordination structures for emergency referrals, especially in hard-to-reach areas.

- **Advocate for regulation of essential goods pricing, particularly for children's items.**

INTRODUCTION

Background and Rationale

Since October 2019, Lebanon has faced multiple overlapping crises—economic collapse, political instability, the COVID-19 pandemic, the Beirut port explosion, and most recently, a severe conflict escalation that began in September 2024. These compounded crises have devastated infrastructure, disrupted markets, and severely impacted vulnerable populations, particularly children.

Then, most recently, the conflict between September and November 2024 represented Lebanon's most severe escalation since 2006, with over 3,700 fatalities, 15,000 injuries, and nearly 900,000[1] internal displacements. Infrastructure damage has been extensive, with over 20,000[2] residential buildings severely damaged, along with critical health facilities, schools, water systems, and market infrastructure. Agricultural production was severely disrupted, particularly in South Lebanon and Baalbek-El Hermel, where major crop losses were reported[3].

For children, the impacts have been particularly devastating. More than 310 children were killed and 1,500 injured, while an estimated 400,000 were forced to flee their communities[4]. The World Bank's Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment estimated the total impact at US$6.8 billion in physical damage, US$7.2 billion in economic losses, and US$11 billion in recovery and reconstruction needs. Market disruptions have been severe, with WFP monitoring data showing that markets in Baalbek-El Hermel, South Lebanon, Nabatieh, and the Southern Suburbs of Beirut were among the most affected[5].

While markets have begun to recover following the ceasefire in November 2024, the recovery has been uneven. Meanwhile, children's nutritional status, educational continuity, and psychological wellbeing have been significantly compromised. According to UNICEF's Child Protection and Risk Analysis (CfRA)[6], 72% of caregivers reported their children were anxious or nervous during the conflict, and 62% observed signs of depression or sadness. In Baalbek-Hermel and Bekaa, 51% and 45% of children under two, respectively, were experiencing severe food poverty.

Against this backdrop, understanding how market systems can support or impede children's access to essential goods and services is critical for designing effective humanitarian interventions.

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[5] Lebanon - Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDNA)(March 2025). https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/lebanon-rapid-damage-and-needs-assessment-rdnamarch-2025-enar
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PURPOSE OF THE ASSESSMENT

This child-sensitive market assessment serves as a **rapid qualitative market assessment** focused specifically on child-sensitive commodities for children under 5 (CU5), in districts where secondary data indicated significant market disruption, aimed at providing a broader understanding of local market functionality and the availability and accessibility of basic commodities critical for children.

It aims to evaluate the feasibility and safety of cash interventions for children and their caregivers to access essential commodities following the conflict. Additionally, it seeks to identify opportunities for market-based interventions that can support the supply of these commodities in local markets.

Objectives

In a nutshell, this assessment seeks to:

- Provide a broader understanding of the major impacts of the conflict and humanitarian aid on local markets, specifically focusing on the supply of commodities essential for children.
- Offer information to determine the most appropriate assistance modality—whether cash, vouchers, in-kind assistance, or a mix of approaches—to support children and their caregivers in accessing essential commodities.
- Identify safety and protection risks, if any, for women, men, boys, and girls when accessing markets, with a particular focus on risks related to cash programming.
- Identify market interventions that could support traders in mitigating the impact of the conflict and in continuing or recovering their businesses.

Assessment Questions:

It aims to answer to the following key questions:

Conflict Impact and Market Dynamics:

- How has the ongoing conflict escalation, and the subsequent ceasefire, changed the prices and supply of essential commodities for children, particularly in the prioritized focus districts? What were the distinct roles of formal and informal markets in providing essential commodities for children and their caregivers during the conflict escalation, and how are these roles evolving in the current post-ceasefire period?

Market Access & Barriers:

What specific protection risks and barriers did the women, men, girls, boys face when accessing local markets during the conflict escalation, and how have these risks changed or persisted in the current post-ceasefire environment? Are there any child labor or protection concerns associated with businesses that have emerged or shifted due to the conflict and ceasefire?

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Scope and Limitations

Geographic Focus

The assessment focused on three strategically selected districts representing different contexts:

The three districts—Nabatieh, Beirut Suburbs, and Baalbek—were strategically selected based on their exposure to the most severe impacts of the conflict. Collectively, these areas represent diverse geographic and socio-economic contexts and were prioritized due to:

- High levels of displacement resulting from direct conflict or spillover effects;

- Market disruptions that affect access to food, services, and livelihoods;

- Vulnerability of host and refugee populations, particularly in areas with pre-existing economic challenges;

Individually:

- **Nabatieh (South Lebanon):** Experienced direct conflict impact, displacement, and significant market disruptions in a semi-urban/rural setting.

- **Beirut Suburbs (Urban District):** Metropolitan hub with complex markets, home to many internally displaced persons (IDPs), influenced by the national economic crisis and conflict spillover.

- **Baalbek (East Lebanon):** Agricultural region severely impacted by aerial bombings and displacement, illustrating rural supply chain disruptions and the interplay between refugee and host communities.

Assessment Focus:

The assessment was structured around three core areas of market analysis—**Market Environment**, **Market Supply and Price**, and **Household Demand and Access**—as outlined in Figure 1. These dimensions were selected to provide a structured framework for data collection, analysis, and interpretation. They also ensured alignment with the assessment's key research questions and objectives, which focus on cash assistance, access barriers, safety risks, and market functionality.

1. Market Environment

This dimension focused on the broader market context, including infrastructure damage and security risks, market size and trader types, competition, and contextual challenges. These factors are essential for understanding how conflict affects local markets and how resilient they are in supplying essential goods and services for children.

2. Market Supply and Price

This component analyzed the origin of supplies, availability and affordability of goods, and supply chain disruptions. These aspects directly inform whether markets can sustain increased demand generated by humanitarian cash assistance and whether they can supply products tailored to children's specific needs, such as infant formula, hygiene kits, or learning materials. An understanding of price volatility and supply chain weaknesses also enables better planning to mitigate the inflationary impact of CVA on critical goods for families with children.

3. Household Demand and Access

This area captured families' ability to access markets, their spending priorities, and perceived and actual protection risks—especially for women, girls, and children. It also examined the modalities of assistance most appropriate to support household needs. This dimension is essential for identifying economic, social, and protection-related barriers that may limit caregivers' ability to procure essential items for children.

Justification for Child-Sensitive Market-Based Programming

This tripartite framework (Market Environment, Supply and Price, and Demand and Access) offers a comprehensive and child-sensitive lens to:

- **Understand market functionality** and the **impacts of conflict and aid on the availability of child-specific commodities**.
- **Inform the selection of appropriate assistance modalities** (cash, in-kind, vouchers, or mixed approaches) that can best meet children's needs.
- **Identify protection and access risks** faced by households—especially children and caregivers—when interacting with markets, including risks of exploitation or exclusion.
- **Support traders and market actors** in restoring supply chains that are vital to sustaining children's wellbeing, health, and development.

In sum, this structure allowed the assessment to provide a nuanced understanding of the impacts of conflict and aid on local markets, determine appropriate assistance modalities, and identify risks and interventions that ensure both functionality and child sensitivity in market-based programming.

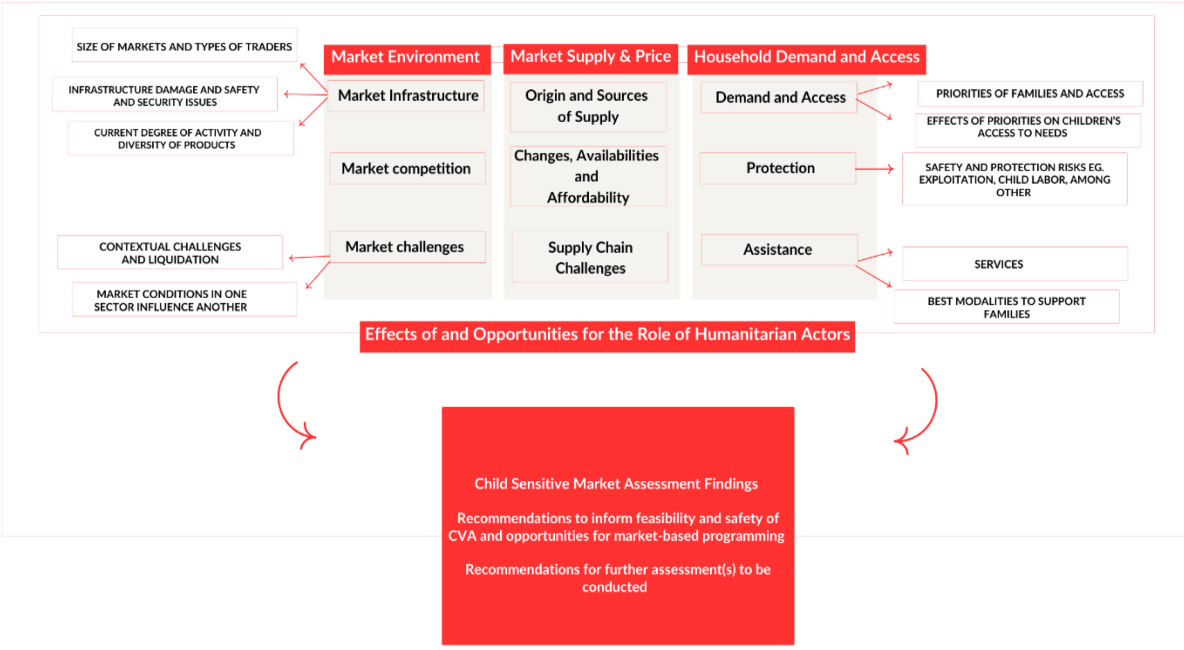

Figure 1 Market Assessment Focus

Methodological Scope

To ensure a comprehensive Child-Sensitive Market Assessment within the project's scope and timeframe, a **three-phase data collection approach** was adopted:

The study primarily employed a qualitative approach, supported by the review of available secondary data. It began with a desk review to inform the selection of locations based on three main criteria:

- areas most affected by the war, especially in terms of market functionality, as identified in the desk review;
- locations where Save the Children is currently implementing interventions; and
- diversity of selection across at least three different governorates

Following this, the assessment involved a series of consultations (**Figure 2**) with key stakeholders who contributed to refining the study's scope, which were conducted by the lead consultants. This was followed by data collection with formal vendors from central area of each district, community members, and local leaders.

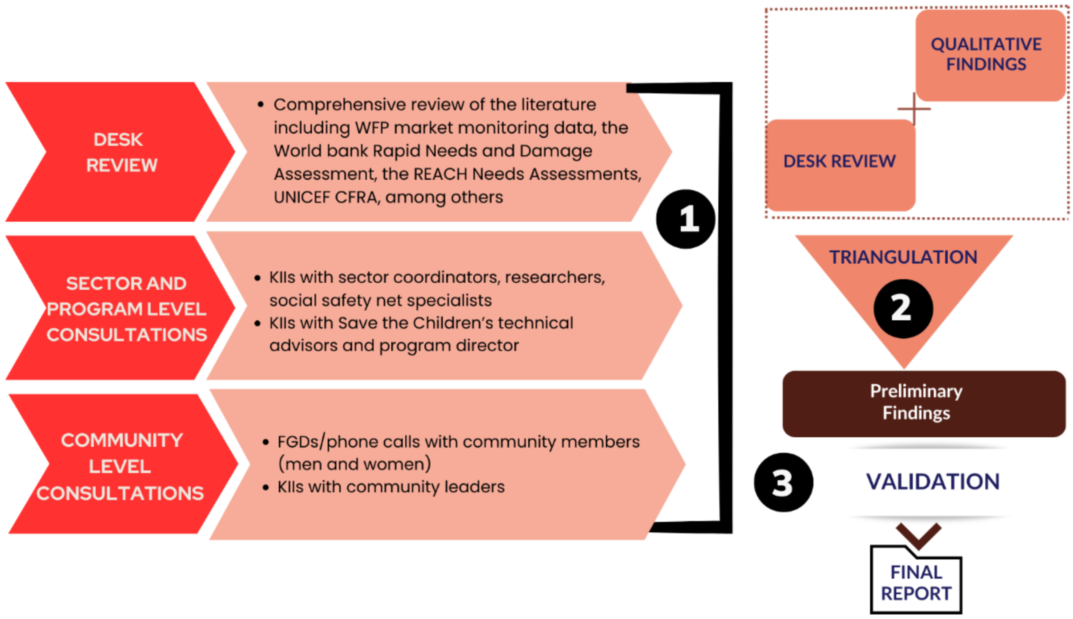

Figure 2 Data Collection Channels

For the latter, a non-probability sampling method[7] was applied, beginning with purposive sampling[8] and followed by a snowball sampling[9] technique. This approach allowed initial participants to refer others with similar characteristics or relevant knowledge, ensuring the participation of adequate number of informants.

The data collection tools were adapted with the support of a market technical expert to ensure alignment with the assessment's objectives and sensitivity to the evolving local market dynamics. Vendor tools—primarily used in Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)—were tailored to explore traders' perspectives on supply chains, pricing, infrastructure, safety, and demand shifts, with a particular focus on products essential for children. Community-level tools, including Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and household surveys, were adapted to capture caregivers' experiences with market access, service availability, safety risks (e.g., child labor, exploitation), and preferences for assistance modalities such as cash or in-kind support. These adaptations ensured that the tools were contextually relevant, child-sensitive, and capable of generating actionable insights to inform appropriate and safe humanitarian interventions. The tools were then revisited with the locally selected enumerators from each district to ensure they are culturally sensitive and sound. Before commencing with data collection, enumerators received comprehensive training on **child safeguarding**, **ethical data collection**, and **research protocols**, with a strong emphasis on informed consent, confidentiality, and referral mechanisms for at-risk individuals. The assessment methodology and tools were reviewed and approved by Save the children's **ethical review committee** to ensure adherence to humanitarian research standards.

Qualitative data was analyzed using thematic analysis—a method that allows for an in-depth exploration of participants' perspectives and experiences. The process involved systematically coding all transcripts to identify patterns and insights across the three core dimensions of the study: market environment, market supply, and market demand, within each of the three districts—Baalbek, Beirut Suburb, and Nabatieh. Emerging themes were then reviewed in relation to the

[7] Non-probability sampling refers to a sampling method in which not all individuals in the population have an equal or known chance of being selected. Instead of random selection, participants are chosen based on specific criteria, availability, or referrals, making it more targeted but not generalizable, yet provides depth and contextual understanding.
[8] Purposive sampling is a non-random technique where researchers deliberately select participants based on specific characteristics or criteria that are relevant to the research objectives.
[9] Snowball sampling is a technique in which initial participants refer or recruit other participants from their networks who also meet the study's criteria.

existing literature to validate and reinforce the findings, ultimately informing the recommendations presented in this report which answers to the following questions:

Ethical Considerations:

The assessment adhered to ethical research standards to ensure the protection, dignity, and rights of all participants, including:

- Integrity: Maintain professionalism, independence, impartiality, and incorruptibility in all aspects of the study.
- Accountability: Promote transparency in reporting and clear communication with stakeholders and participants.
- Cultural Sensitivity & Inclusion: Respect local norms, value participants' perspectives, and ensure an inclusive approach.
- Do No Harm: Prioritize participants' safety and well-being throughout the process.
- Informed & Voluntary Participation: Ensure that participants fully understand the study and willingly engage through informed consent.
- Safeguarding & Protection: Uphold non-discrimination policies and maintain a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment, abuse, exploitation, and stigmatization. Provide training to data collectors on child safeguarding.
- Confidentiality & Anonymity: Protect participants' identities and sensitive information, ensuring ethical data handling.

Data Protection and Management

To generate a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the study themes, **qualitative** data was collected and managed following strict data protection protocols.

Qualitative Data

For data collection with vendors **KoboToolbox**, a secure, open-source digital platform was used to administer a coded qualitative questionnaire, where enumerators used mobile devices to administer surveys, with **submission-only access** to ensure data security and prevent unauthorized modifications. With community member, leaders and key stakeholders, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) captured in-depth perspectives where notes were taken manually and securely transferred to 360 Consulting. Audio recordings, where consent was granted, were used for transcription and stored securely. Knowing that, the majority did not agree to have the interview recorded, which the enumerators abided by. All available recordings will be deleted two months after the final deliverables, in compliance with SCI data protection policies.

All enumerators signed a **confidentiality and data management agreement**, legally binding them to:

- Submit all data to 360 Consulting immediately after collection.
- Discard any copies of data in any form after submission.
- Avoid any unauthorized use, sharing, or storage of data.

All data was handled in accordance with **360 Consulting's Data Management and Protection Policy**. Any data breaches will be addressed in consultation with SCI, with actions taken based on the severity and nature of the breach.

Quality Assurance

Data Collection

To ensure data validity and reliability, the following quality assurance measures were integrated into the data collection process:

- All qualitative sessions were led by trained facilitators, supported by notetakers to ensure accurate documentation and cross-verification of insights.
- Real-time data validation mechanisms were embedded in the digital tools to minimize errors.
- Data was reviewed and cleaned regularly by the study team to correct inconsistencies and identify gaps promptly.

Oversight and Internal Validation

- The Team Leader provided continuous oversight throughout data collection to ensure strict adherence to protocols and methodologies.
- The field coordinator rotated across the districts during data collection to address any concerns and challenges in the field, while providing guidance.
- Regular internal coordination, field reports, and feedback loops allowed for swift resolution of challenges and maintained data quality.
- Frequent **internal validation sessions** were conducted between 360 Consulting team members and the market technical expert to cross-verify findings, refine analysis, and uphold consistency.
- Coordination with the SCI team included routine check-ins and collaborative discussions to ensure alignment with the assessment objectives, validation of deliverables, and fulfillment of milestones.

Limitations:

Despite the various limitations outlined in Table 1, the assessment offers valuable insights into market functionality and access to child-specific commodities across diverse contexts, providing a foundation for tailored humanitarian and early recovery programming.

Table 1 Limitations

Limitation	Description
Non-generalizable findings	The study prioritizes qualitative depth in 3 strategically selected districts to gain rich, nuanced, and actionable insights. While trader interviews and community consultations provided valuable data on market functionality, prices, and access barriers, the assessment primarily captures preliminary perceptions and trends rather than precise, statistically representative measurements of market indicators across the entire country, governorate or district.
Recall bias	In the context of assessing markets before and after a ceasefire, recall bias can arise when traders, vendors, or consumers are asked to compare market conditions—such as prices, supply availability, or

	access barriers—across both timeframes. Many small-scale traders and vendors may not have recorded data on stock levels, prices, or supply chains, making their responses more reliant on subjective recall.
Political and Contextual Challenges	The study was conducted amid economic instability, political uncertainty, and operational constraints, all of which affected data collection. These challenging conditions may have led to additional disruptions that were not fully captured by the study, particularly as parts of the Beirut suburbs were under fire during data collection.
Challenging Participant Reach	Reaching participants proved challenging due to the volatile context and logistical constraints. Security concerns and general uncertainty also contributed to participants' hesitancy to engage. Despite these obstacles, the study made every effort to reach as many participants as possible within the available timeframe and conditions.
Inconsistency in Data Collection Modalities	Due to contextual challenges and the rapid nature of the assessment, access limitations and varying levels of cooperation led to inconsistencies in data collection modalities across locations and target groups. These inconsistencies may have affected the depth and comparability of the data. For instance, although the original plan included conducting Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), it proved difficult to implement them on the ground due to (1) heavy logistics and coordination and follow-up demands in a short timeframe, and (2) security threats and strikes on Beirut Suburbs amid data collection. As an alternative, the team aimed to reach an equivalent number of participants through individual phone interviews—targeting 30 respondents per group (equivalent to 3 FGDs with 10 participants each). However, final participation was limited to individuals who responded and consented to take part in the study.
Lack of Nationality-Based Differentiation	The study did not systematically differentiate between the needs of Lebanese and Syrian participants within FGDs, limiting the ability to draw distinct conclusions based on nationality. This was due to the rapid and exploratory nature of the assessment.

KEY FINDINGS:

Markets show varying degrees of recovery across the assessed districts, with recovery patterns broadly aligning with World Food Programme (WFP) market monitoring data. While some areas like Baalbek show stronger signs of recovery with minimal structural damage, others—particularly Nabatieh—demonstrate only partial recovery with persistent infrastructure challenges. Furthermore, the recovery of markets for child-specific commodities lags significantly behind general market recovery in all districts, with specialized infant and child nutrition products, medications, and hygiene items facing continued availability and affordability constraints. The geographical unevenness of market recovery and the particular challenges in accessing child-essential commodities will be explored in detail in the following district-specific analyses.

Baalbak:

Market Environment

The war significantly disrupted the market environment in Baalbek, leading to widespread closures and restricted access to goods. Market closures were intermittent, vendor specific and largely unpredictable. Some vendors often reopened their shops as soon as airstrikes or security threats paused, even if only for a few hours, while others remained closed. In some cases, vendors would open upon receiving phone calls from community members indicating a temporary lull in the situation. As such, complete closures were primarily observed during periods of active airstrikes. Participants from the community consistently reported that no new markets opened during the conflict (during active threats or strikes) including informal markets, which is expected; rather, many businesses either shut down entirely or operated for limited hours. Pharmacies and libraries were among the most affected, with 3 out of 5[10], each vendor type, reported closed during the war. While supermarkets and grocery stores remained open, they struggled to secure stock due to transportation challenges, price surges, and insecurity. **As a result, most essential items—both for children and adults—were either unavailable, of poor quality, or insufficient in quantity.**

Access to functioning markets during the war was highly variable, with families often resorting to unreliable strategies to meet essential needs—particularly for children. While most people travelled between 10 meters and 5 kilometers to reach local markets, others had to journey as far as 20 kilometers, depending on their location and the availability of operational shops, which have not changed substantially before and after ceasefire. In many cases, families were compelled to travel to nearby villages to find supplies, share scarce resources with neighbours, or borrow basic items. These coping mechanisms were frequently insufficient, especially when it came to securing critical child-specific goods such as baby formula, diapers, and medication.

Despite the challenges of the war, market vendors in Baalbek reported a swift recovery, minimal structural damage, and stable payment systems. Most vendors across different sectors noted no significant changes in market competition during or after the conflict and emphasized their ability to resume operations quickly. Post-conflict observations confirmed that physical market infrastructure remained intact, with little to no visible damage. Furthermore, payment systems proved resilient throughout the crisis—vendors reported and community members confirmed that no changes in the currencies or payment methods used. However, they consistently identified operational expenses such as rent, fuel, and employee salaries as ongoing concerns that might impact their ability to sustain stable operations, which remain to be lingering needs following the economic crisis.

[10] Not to be interpreted as a ratio

Market Supply and Prices

Markets in Baalbek have largely bounced back, yet pricing challenges—particularly for child-related goods—remain unresolved. During the conflict, many vendors, especially supermarkets, temporarily reduced their stock of children's items due to strained supply chains. **To cope, some vendors adapted their procurement strategies, opting for safer or more affordable supply routes, yet this did not always yield positive results.** Vendors unanimously reported no disruptions in payment systems, currencies, or transaction methods, with financial operations remaining stable throughout. Following the end of hostilities, vendors reported a relatively quick recovery and stated that they are currently able to meet increased demand. Quality and quantity of children's goods, such as formula, diapers, and educational supplies, were generally reported as stable post-conflict. While wholesalers reported that prices have largely returned to pre-war levels, smaller vendors—including pharmacies, grocery stores, and libraries—shared more mixed accounts, with some noting continued price instability and others observing sustained increases. Nevertheless, community members consistently emphasized that the prices of these items remain inflated with lower quality available.

While prices for many essential goods did not seem to change since the conflict (Table 2), the availability and quality of child-specific items remain a concern. Specialized infant nutritional products show significant availability constraints:

- Fortified cereals and vegetable purées show "No availability" in the price table, as they were not found during market surveys despite being products typically sold in pharmacies

- Fruit purée for babies was found in extremely limited supply (N=1 vendor only) at 200,000 LL, indicating that while technically "available," the product has very restricted accessibility

- These specialized infant foods face a triple constraint: limited availability, and restricted distribution (pharmacy-only channels), all of which severely limit access for families

Nevertheless, despite the current operational stability, vendors voiced ongoing concerns about high running costs and emphasized the urgent need for access to small loans to recover faster, and stronger overall price regulation mechanisms to avoid fluctuation and discrepancies and ensure affordability for vulnerable households.

Table 2 Prices in Baalbak

Baalbak Items	Price During Conflict (LL) Median (1 USD = 89,000 LL, May 2025)	Price Now (LL) Median (1 USD = 89,000 LL, May 2025)	Approximate Expected Change^^
Education			
notebook	110000	110000	No change
pencil and eraser	15000	15000	No change
Hygiene Items			
soap	56000	56000	No change
baby diapers	240000	240000	No change
baby wipes	90000	90000	No change
sanitary pads	90000	90000	No change
Baby Food Items			
baby fortified cereal	-	-	Item is still unavailable
vegetable puree for babies	-	-	Item is still unavailable

fruit puree for babies	200000	200000	No change
Household Food Items			
chicken breast	58000	58000	No change
fine ground beef	230000	230000	No change
carrots	-	-	Item is still unavailable
bananas	70000	70000	No change
cooking oil	132500	132500	No change
rice	90000	90000	No change
flour	60000	60000	No change
Sugar	70000	70000	No change
Medication			
paracetamol oral tablets	150000	150000	No change
paracetamol syrup	210000	210000	No change
oral rehydration solution	240000	240000	No change

^^ The table is intended to provide indicative insights and should not be interpreted as exact or definitive measures.

Household Demand

Families in Baalbek identified food and medication as their most urgent needs during the war, with infant-specific supplies and education topping the list for children. Caregivers emphasized the critical importance of infant formula, baby food, and diapers for children under five, while education was highlighted as a major unmet need for older children. The delayed academic year, caused by schools being converted into shelters, significantly affected learning continuity.

Families employed various coping strategies to access basic goods during the war, but these were often unreliable—particularly for children. Many households travelled to neighbouring villages, borrowed items, or pooled resources with others. However, such strategies were not always successful. After the war, families turned to rationing and purchasing lower-quality goods. The closure of banks and financial service providers exacerbated these challenges by limiting access to cash. Respondents noted a steady increase in unmet needs over time, despite market recovery, due to financial constraints. Although availability of goods improved post-conflict, many families continued to struggle due to financial constraints, especially with some household members remaining unemployed.

Humanitarian assistance had a complex relationship with the local market in Baalbek, particularly regarding child-related commodities. This relationship varied by market segment and product type:

For general food staples: Vendors reported some reduced demand during aid distributions, but the inconsistent nature of this assistance limited its market impact. Several vendors specifically noted that "assistance did not significantly affect the sale of children's goods—whether food, medication, or educational materials," largely because these specialized items were rarely included in standard in-kind assistance.

For child-specific items: A disconnect emerged between vendor and community perspectives. While vendors reported minimal market impact, community members described instances where "shop owners were selling food items that were meant to be distributed as aid". This suggests that some aid may have been diverted into informal markets rather than reaching intended recipients.

Overall, community members characterized aid during the war as "inconsistent and insufficient," often failing to address specific child needs. Many reported receiving only a single food parcel containing basic staples like legumes and pasta but lacking essential items for children—highlighting the inadequacy of assistance and explaining why it did not fundamentally alter regular market dynamics in their perspective.

Cash assistance remains the most preferred form of aid, particularly for addressing children's needs. Community members emphasized that cash allows households to prioritize their own urgent needs—unlike in-kind assistance, which may not always align with what families lack. Families advocated for a multisectoral response that combines sectors like health, education, and nutrition, with improved targeting to ensure the most vulnerable are reached. They also noted that children's needs are not differentiated by gender, reaffirming that both boys and girls require the same basic necessities. To support the business and community, vendors expressed interest in future collaboration with NGOs, especially through voucher programs that could stimulate local business and target vulnerable populations.

Nevertheless, a pervasive sense of uncertainty about the future lingers, and is shared by both the community and vendors, with child protection and mental health emerging as key concerns. Amid ongoing fears of renewed conflict and political instability, families expressed deep anxiety over potential disruptions to daily life and access to essential services. While no protection risks were reported based on identity factors such as gender, nationality, or age, a significant child protection issue was widely noted: the visible increase in child labor, since the conflict (during and after). Children between the ages of 8 and 15 were often seen engaging in informal work—an outcome caregivers and vendors linked to prolonged school closures and growing household financial pressures. Caregivers voiced serious concern about the long-term emotional and psychological impact on children, particularly citing heightened anxiety during the war and fears that continued instability could worsen children's mental well-being.

Child-Focused Market Access Map

Table 3 Access Matrix for Child-Essential Commodities in Baalbek

Access Difficulty ↓ / Availability & Affordability →	Low Availability/Affordability	Higher Availability/Affordability
High Difficulty Access	• Infant formula • Fortified cereals • Vegetable and fruit purees for babies • Fresh produce	
Lower Difficulty Access	• Baby wipes • Baby diapers	• Basic staples • Paracetamol syrup

The access pattern indicates that the most nutritionally essential items for younger children are the hardest to obtain, while hygiene products remain relatively accessible, though still identified by households as priority needs, as households remain unable to afford them.

Beirut Suburb

Market Environment

Despite avoiding physical destruction, markets in Beirut's suburbs faced severe functional disruptions during the war. Insecurity—marked by roadblocks, theft, and fear of attacks—impeded safe access for both vendors and households. But, similar to Baalbak, market closures were intermittent, vendor specific and largely unpredictable. Many grocery stores and some supermarkets closed temporarily, and complete closure was observed during active threats and airstrikes. While pharmacies and libraries operated on a limited basis, struggling with fuel shortages and unreliable electricity. Even when open, essential items were scarce, overpriced, or of poor quality. This included critical goods such as baby formula, cereal, bread, and cooking gas. Escalating violence and bombings made travel risky, while rising transportation costs further constrained mobility and market access.

With local markets largely inaccessible or non-functional during the war (during active conflict), many community members who remained in Beirut's suburbs reported traveling to other areas to obtain essential goods or depended on assistance. The humanitarian response in Beirut suburbs demonstrated strong presence with most households receiving some form of humanitarian aid—ranging from food parcels and cash to hygiene kits. While this robust assistance helped meet immediate needs, its market impact was mixed. Vendors "generally perceived NGO aid as having minimal impact on local market dynamics," with some noting potential benefits like price stabilization by reducing demand pressure. However, community members reported that aid was "often inconsistent and poorly coordinated," creating unpredictable market effects. Political parties also played a visible role in responding to community needs. No new markets emerged during the conflict, and market competition either declined or remained static, according to vendor observations, **with no shifts reported in the currencies accepted, or policies and procedures for transactions.**

Market access has significantly improved in the post-conflict period, though financial barriers remain, particularly for the most vulnerable households. Most families now access markets within a walkable distance (100m–5km)[11], though some—especially those in more isolated areas—still travel up to 20km, often relying on motorcycles, which is although considered longer distances, also relative and depends on their location and the availability of operational shops in their vicinity. While physical access has improved, ongoing financial hardship, and lingering safety concerns from the conflict continue to hinder effective and secure market engagement. Vendors echoed these concerns, citing persistent fears of theft and security incidents despite the ceasefire.

Following the cessation of hostilities, market competition either stabilized or began to rise again. Nearly all vendors reported that their operations had resumed, though some expressed continued concern about political and security risks, as intermittent conflict persisted in parts of the Beirut suburbs. Electricity and fuel remain the highest operational costs for vendors, followed by rent—underscoring the enduring economic challenges to market recovery and sustainability.

Market Supply and Prices

While markets have largely restocked in terms of quantity, the perceived affordability, and perceived quality, of child-related goods diverged among community members and access of certain commodities such as baby purees, proves limited to certain vendor types. Vendors noted that their supply chains—primarily sourced from producers in Beirut—remained functional even during peak conflict periods, with adjustments made to prioritize safer or more affordable routes.

[11] It is worth noting here that distances are meant to give some insights on access rather than quantify

For instance, several wholesalers—specifically 3 out of 5[12] surveyed—shifted to alternative suppliers offering lower-cost goods or safer logistics. Although nearly all market types are now able to supply or quickly source child-related items, smaller grocery stores continue to face financial constraints that limit their stock, especially of children's food and hygiene products. Challenges included insecurity from roadblocks, safety risks, and economic pressures such as inflated prices, fuel shortages, and unreliable electricity. During the war, 4 out of 5[13] surveyed supermarkets reduced both the quantity and diversity of child-related goods. Also, 2 out of the 5[14] pharmacies had also reduced their stock of infant formula, baby soap, or purees, knowing that it was also found that purees stock is limited to pharmacies. While vendors largely claimed that the quality of these items remained consistent, community members reported a noticeable decline in quality, highlighting a disconnect between vendor perceptions and household experiences. Nevertheless, currently, as seen in Table 3, almost all items inquired about in this assessment including child related items have been restocked.

Price trends in Beirut suburbs reveal a complex picture with significant discrepancies between quantitative price data, vendor reports, and community perceptions. The quantitative price data in Table 3 indicates relative stability or slight fluctuations in prices between conflict and post-conflict periods for many tracked items. However, this aggregated data masks important variations by:

1) Vendor type: Wholesalers reported prices returning to pre-conflict levels, while small retailers and pharmacies continue to experience fluctuations and inflation pressures.

2) Perception gaps: Community members consistently perceived prices as higher than vendors reported, particularly for essential children's items. This reflects both actual price premiums for child-specific goods and the compounding effect of reduced household purchasing power.

These inconsistencies appear to stem from both real market fragmentation and different measurement perspectives, with community members experiencing the cumulative impact of both price increases and financial hardship. This price volatility is further compounded by financial pressures on vendors—most notably the rising costs of electricity, fuel, and rent, which were consistently reported as their most significant operational expenses. Price regulation emerged as a critical community need, alongside targeted financial support for key vendors.

Table 4 Prices in Beirut

Beirut Items	Price During Conflict (LL) Median (1 USD = 89,000 LL, May 2025)	Price Now (LL) Median (1 USD = 89,000 LL, May 2025)	Approximate Expected Change^^
Education			
notebook	115000	115000	No change
pencil and eraser	13500	13500	No change
Hygiene Items			
soap	160000	160000	No change
baby diapers	350000	350000	No change
baby wipes	90000	90000	No change
sanitary pads	120000	120000	No change
Baby Food Items			
baby fortified cereal	90000	90000	No change
vegetable puree for babies	400000	400000	No change

[12] Not to be interpreted as a ratio
[13] Not to be interpreted as a ratio
[14] Not to be interpreted as a ratio

fruit puree for babies	400000	400000	No change
Household Food Items			
chicken breast	-	-	Item still unavailable
fine ground beef	-	250000	Unavailable during the conflict
carrots	80000	80000	No change
bananas	90000	90000	No change
cooking oil	150000	150000	No change
rice	90000	90000	No change
flour	56500	56500	No change
sugar	82500	82500	No change
Medication			
paracetamol oral tablets	90000	90000	No change
paracetamol syrup	210000	210000	No change
oral rehydration solution	100000	100000	No change

^^ The table is intended to provide indicative insights and should not be interpreted as exact or definitive measures.

The role of humanitarian assistance in shaping market dynamics remains contested, though voucher-based models are seen as a potential avenue for future support. Mini-markets, pharmacies, and libraries generally rejected voucher inclusion, while supermarkets expressed willingness to participate and called for small grants to help sustain their operations. These varied responses point to a need for targeted market support mechanisms, particularly those responsive to the specific needs of children and the financial realities of different vendor types.

Household Demand

During the conflict, households faced multiple barriers in meeting their children's needs, prompting a shift in priorities and the adoption of harmful coping strategies. Families consistently prioritized food, healthcare, and education, with parents—particularly those with children aged 0–5—citing baby formula, diapers, medications, and appropriate clothing as urgent needs. Access to education for school-aged children was severely disrupted, hindered by both conflict-related mobility restrictions and worsening financial hardship. To cope, families reported reducing the quality and frequency of meals and substituting higher-quality goods with cheaper alternatives—practices that had visible impacts on children's physical health and psychosocial well-being.

Caregivers also reported a noticeable increase in child labor since the conflict, particularly among children aged 8–14, with many working in markets or on the streets to supplement household income, often at the expense of their education. Participants also highlighted gendered differences in needs, emphasizing that **girls tend to require more complex and costly support**—particularly related to healthcare, hygiene, and basic supplies. These needs reportedly increase as girls grow older and reach physical maturity, further compounding household challenges.

Cash assistance was the preferred modality among households due to its flexibility in addressing child-specific and urgent needs. During the war, access to cash was a significant challenge due to the closure of banks and financial service providers (FSPs), which could also be relative depending on location. This hardship has contributed to a widespread lack of trust in the banking system, a sentiment rooted in Lebanon's ongoing economic crisis over the past four years. The ability of households to meet their children's needs largely depended on the type of humanitarian support they received. This strong preference for cash assistance was further supported by anecdotal reports that some families sold the food rations or parcels they received to purchase more urgently needed items.

Child-Focused Market Access Map

Table 5 Access Matrix for Child-Essential Commodities in Beirut Suburbs

Access Difficulty ↓ / Availability & Affordability →	Low Availability/Affordability	Higher Availability/Affordability
High Difficulty Access	• Infant formula • Vegetable and fruit purees • Fresh produce (carrots, bananas)	• Basic educational supplies (notebooks, pens)
Lower Difficulty Access	• Baby hygiene items	• Basic food staples (rice, flour, sugar) • Basic medications

In Beirut suburbs, the matrix reveals that nutritionally dense foods for children face the greatest accessibility challenges, while basic medications and hygiene items are more accessible but still financially constraining for many households.

Nabatieh

Market Environment

Nabatieh markets experienced minor physical damage during the conflict, and market functionality was severely disrupted, mirroring trends observed in other regions. Vendors were forced to shut down entirely during active conflict, with local trade described as being in a state of total paralysis. During the war, the whole period of around September 23–November 27, **2024**, most vendors, including pharmacies, remained closed.

Community participants noted that while physical distance to markets was often just 3-5 kilometers[15], many of these markets were located in 'hotspot zones' that were effectively inaccessible due to security risks. One participant explained, 'The market was just 3 kilometers away, but we couldn't go—it was in a hotspot zone.' Community members reported using social media and messaging apps to share information about which stores might be open or where aid was being distributed, creating informal information networks to navigate the disrupted market environment.

However, travel during intense shelling was often impossible, leaving many households reliant on sporadic store openings, if ever, or whatever humanitarian aid they could access. The community noticed that some **vendors adapted by selling items online or informally from homes and sidewalks.** Canned foods were the most accessible, while fresh meat, vegetables, fruits, and dairy became unaffordable luxuries. The closure of banks and financial service providers during the war further limited household capacity to cope. The closure of banks and financial service providers during the war further limited household capacity to cope, with Community participants reporting they had depleted all savings and expressed profound distrust in the banking system. As one participant noted, 'They use cash now because they have no trust in banks,' indicating that banking distrust predated but was exacerbated by the conflict. This banking system breakdown led families to rely exclusively on whatever physical cash they had saved or could borrow.

[15] It is worth noting here that distances are meant to give some insights on access rather than quantify.

Market access was strongly influenced by gender. While men faced physical risks as the primary market-goers, women and girls experienced severe mobility restrictions due to both security concerns and social norms. Community participants reported that 'women rarely left their homes due to insecurity, thus assumingly effective in cutting-off female-headed households from market access. Children, particularly girls, remained confined to homes, intensifying psychological isolation. Meanwhile, since the war, some boys aged 8-14 entered the labor market to support family income, taking on roles in markets or informal work to help households cope with financial strain.

Community members emphasized that during the conflict, they either shared resources with neighbors, waited for NGO support, or simply went without. Community members noted that men faced heightened physical risks during the conflict, as they were often responsible for navigating markets under dangerous conditions. **NGO and municipal support played a critical role**, though assistance was inconsistent—some households received food parcels, others hygiene kits, some both, and others nothing at all.

In the post-conflict period, markets in Nabatieh have only partially recovered, with communities consistently reporting that prices increased rather than decreased after the ceasefire. These include reduced consumer demand, ongoing supply shortages, and rising operational costs—particularly for electricity, fuel, rent, and transportation. While competition among traders has resumed, many vendors expressed doubts about the long-term sustainability of their businesses, citing destroyed infrastructure, persistent electricity issues, and weak logistical systems. **Vendors emphasized that while NGO support had been present in some form, its impact on local markets was minimal or unclear.** Most vendors dealing in child-related goods believed that NGO assistance had little to no impact on local markets or were unsure of its effects.

Market Supply and Prices

Child-related items remain insecure in Nabatieh's markets, with volatile pricing, insufficient stock, and limited vendor capacity posing significant barriers for vulnerable families. During the war, no child-related or other items were available in local markets at all (Table 4), as supply chains—primarily linked to wholesalers in Nabatieh, Beirut, Saida, and Tyre—were severely disrupted. Access to these goods was further limited by rising prices, increased taxes, and widespread shortages.

Community participants consistently highlighted the complete absence of critical child-specific items during the conflict period. Essential items like infant formula, baby food, and children's medication (particularly paracetamol syrup) were impossible to find in local markets.

The price data for Nabatieh (Table 3) shows no prices "During Conflict" because markets were completely non-functional, making price comparisons between conflict and post-conflict periods irrelevant. Instead, qualitative community and vendor reports can inform price trends. While post-conflict data shows items becoming available again, community members consistently reported that "prices of essential items actually increased rather than decreased following the ceasefire, contradicting the expected pattern of post-conflict price normalization."

This apparent contradiction—where items went from unavailable to available but at unexpectedly high prices—reflects both market realities and perception factors:

1) Price exploitation in early market recovery, with vendors capitalizing on high demand and limited competition

2) Reference point bias, where communities compare current prices to pre-war (rather than during-war) levels

3) The psychological impact of paying high prices after depleting savings during the conflict

Even post-conflict, vendors—especially grocery stores and pharmacies—continue to report limited availability of child-related products. Among the few who do stock these items, no meaningful improvement in quality or diversity has been observed, while prices remain unstable. Community members consistently question the quality of these items, with Community participants reporting having to resort to potentially harmful coping strategies, including substituting infant formula with tea, feeding infants mashed adult food, and using inappropriate alternatives for basic hygiene items.

Vendors expressed concern that a rise in demand could quickly overwhelm the fragile supply system, given ongoing financial constraints and logistical challenges. Many noted that restocking would be difficult under current conditions, adding to the uncertainty surrounding future availability. Regulating prices was repeatedly highlighted as a critical need to stabilize the market and ensure access to essential goods for children.

Table 6 Prices in Nabatieh

Beirut Items	Price During Conflict (LL)	Price Now (LL) Median (N) (1 USD = 89,000 LL, May 2025)	Approximate Expected Change^^
Education			
notebook	Not available	125000	Unavailable during the conflict
pencil and eraser	Not available	20000	Unavailable during the conflict
Hygiene Items			
soap	Not available	90000	Unavailable during the conflict
baby diapers	Not available	225000	Unavailable during the conflict
baby wipes	Not available	130000	Unavailable during the conflict
sanitary pads	Not available	100000	Unavailable during the conflict
Baby Food Items			
baby fortified cereal	Not available	155000	Unavailable during the conflict
vegetable puree for babies	Not available	120000	Unavailable during the conflict
fruit puree for babies	Not available	130000	Unavailable during the conflict
Household Food Items			
chicken breast	Not available	300000	Unavailable during the conflict
fine ground beef	Not available	550000	Unavailable during the conflict
carrots	Not available	50000	Unavailable during the conflict
bananas	Not available	60000	Unavailable during the conflict
cooking oil	Not available	160000	Unavailable during the conflict
rice	Not available	90000	Unavailable during the conflict
flour	Not available	80000	Unavailable during the conflict
Sugar	Not available	70000	Unavailable during the conflict
Medication			
paracetamol oral tablets	Not available	170000	Unavailable during the conflict
paracetamol syrup	Not available	-	Item is still unavailable
oral rehydration solution	Not available	-	Item is still unavailable

^^The table is intended to provide indicative insights and should not be interpreted as exact or definitive measures

Key operational bottlenecks—including high transportation costs, limited storage capacity, and inconsistent electricity—fueled fears that future humanitarian programming could strain an already fragile supply chain. Many vendors expressed skepticism or limited awareness of voucher programs, voicing concerns over fairness, ambiguous eligibility criteria, and the inability of smaller shops to restock in response to increased demand. Small groceries in particular reported being unable to participate in potential voucher schemes due to limited stock capacity. Those who were open to such programs emphasized the need for clear implementation details to ensure fairness and attract customers. Despite these concerns, some vendors indicated a conditional willingness to participate in assistance programs, particularly if such efforts were designed to guarantee consistent demand and were supported with logistical aid. Looking ahead, vendors highlighted several pressing needs: **price regulation, access to loans, and reliable transportation systems**.

The relationship between humanitarian aid and markets in Nabatieh was particularly problematic. The complete collapse of formal markets during the conflict created a vacuum where informal trading of aid items emerged as an alternative market mechanism. Unlike in Beirut and Baalbek, where aid was described as having "minimal impact" on functioning markets, in Nabatieh, aid effectively became the market for certain periods, with diverted assistance items representing some of the only goods in circulation.

This dynamic was especially harmful for child-specific items not routinely included in standard in-kind assistance, as these commanded extreme premiums when resold. This unique dynamic helps explain why community members in Nabatieh reported price increases rather than decreases following the ceasefire, as the transition from aid-dominated informal trade to recovering formal markets was particularly problematic.

Household Demand

Demand for child-related goods in Nabatieh is heavily influenced by reduced household income, weakened purchasing power, and a strong need for regular, flexible cash assistance to restore family agency and dignity. Community participants revealed that financial constraints were exacerbated by a complete breakdown in banking services, with one participant noting, 'They had no savings left and no trust in banks.'

While community members currently have access to basic food and hygiene items, concerns around affordability and quality remain widespread. For households with children, the absence of essential goods like infant formula, diapers, medication, and nutritious food had serious consequences. Caregivers reported resorting to harmful coping strategies—such as replacing milk with tea or feeding infants mashed adult food— acknowledging these as inadequate but necessary under the circumstances. As one Community participants noted, 'Packages contained lentils, chickpeas, pasta... but they needed milk, oil, sugar.' Families also reported using social media and messaging apps to locate functioning markets or aid distribution points, creating informal information networks to navigate the disrupted market landscape. Even post-conflict, families continue to compromise on food quality and are often unable to afford medications or additional hygiene items due to rising prices, with Community participants specifically noting that 'everything got more expensive after the ceasefire was declared.

Families consistently highlighted the need for regular, predictable support, particularly for education, safe transportation, child protection, and mental health services, as essential to both immediate recovery and long-term well-being. Families expressed deep concern for their children's well-being, reporting that many children had stopped asking for things they needed— n indication that they had internalized their families' financial distress. As one participant emotionally explained, 'Children are psychologically affected by everything they've been through,' highlighting how market disruptions had impacts far beyond just material deprivation. School closures and conversion of educational facilities into shelters compounded children's sense of instability, while safety concerns kept many, especially girls, confined to homes.

While needs between young boys and girls were reported as similar, families noted that as girls grow older, their needs become more complex and costly, especially with regard to menstrual hygiene, which was inaccessible during the conflict. Girls often had to resort to unsafe and unsanitary alternatives. Mental health concerns were particularly acute among adolescents: older boys were frequently described as withdrawn or exhibiting increased anger, while older girls faced heightened risks of exploitation and lacked access to essential menstrual hygiene products during the war. Instances of child labor were reported, with children contributing to household income at the cost of their education.

Despite ongoing constraints, cash assistance remains the preferred aid modality among families, primarily due to its flexibility in meeting specific household needs. Unlike in-kind distributions, which were frequently described as inadequate, cash enables families to make targeted decisions as one Community participants directly stated, 'They prefer receiving money instead of packages because they know what their households need more than anyone else.' This preference reflects not just practical considerations but also dignity and agency for crisis-affected households. Community members emphasized that cash allowed them to respond to rapidly changing circumstances and varying household needs, particularly for children of different ages. Many participants reported that food parcels often lacked essential items such as oil and sugar, limiting their usefulness. In some cases, these parcels were even diverted and sold on the market at inflated prices, raising concerns about both the effectiveness and fairness of aid delivery.

Families consistently emphasized that **one-time distributions are insufficient**. Instead, they called for **sustained, predictable, and flexible support** that reflects their priorities—particularly those related to children's needs.

Child-Focused Market Access Map

Table 7 Access Matrix for Child-Essential Commodities in Nabatieh

Access Difficulty ↓ / Availability & Affordability →	Low Availability/Affordability	Higher Availability/Affordability
High Difficulty Access	• Children's medications - paracetamol syrup not available post-conflict • Oral rehydration solution – not available post-conflict	• Educational supplies (notebooks – 121 666 LL)
Lower Difficulty Access	• Baby hygiene items • Baby food	• Fresh produce

The Nabatieh matrix reveals that many items now available post-conflict remain difficult to access for most vulnerable households due to a combination of distance, security concerns, and financial constraints. Child-specific medications and specialized nutritional products face the most severe access constraints.

DISCUSSION & ANALYSIS: CHILD-FOCUSED MARKET VULNERABILITIES

Market Functionality Recovering Unevenly Across Districts

Across the three assessed districts—Baalbek, the suburbs of Beirut, and Nabatieh—the conflict significantly disrupted market functionality. This aligns with WFP monitoring data from October 2024, which showed that markets in Baalbek-El Hermel, South Lebanon, Nabatieh, and the Southern Suburbs of Beirut were among the most affected[16]. Nevertheless, notably, on the governorate level, El Nabatieh (18% in November 2024 to 67% in January 2025), South (34% to 81%), and Baalbek-El Hermel (61% to 89%) showed significant improvements in market functionality. The Southern Suburbs of Beirut saw a dramatic decline in market functionality, dropping from 70% on September 25 to around 25% by October 3, before recovering to 55% by December 5 following the ceasefire. In contrast, other governorates, including Bekaa, Beirut, Mount Lebanon, North, and Akkar, maintained at least 85% operationality from September onward[17]. These districts, directly impacted by the conflict, experienced severe disruptions in shop operations, with many vendors either closing completely amid threats and airstrikes especially in Nabatieh or operating at minimal capacity and intermittently. Those who remained open faced major challenges in restocking goods due to insecurity, logistical barriers, and fuel shortages. Even essential services such as grocery stores and supermarkets operated on limited hours and suffered from stockouts, with both general and child-specific items either unavailable or of poor quality. These disruptions severely compromised communities' ability to meet basic needs during the war.

Market access was also severely constrained, with families often having to travel considerable distances—sometimes up to 20 kilometers[18]— to find operational vendors. Community participants from Nabatieh noted a critical distinction: 'The market was just 3 kilometers away, but we couldn't go—it was in a hotspot zone,' highlighting that physical distance alone did not capture accessibility challenges. Yet, distance here is less concerning than the safety concerns which often rendered even nearby markets effectively inaccessible. Transportation was both dangerous, due to active conflict and roadblocks, and costly, given the spike in fuel prices.

Transportation was both dangerous, due to active conflict and roadblocks, and costly, given the spike in fuel prices. These findings are consistent with previous assessments from WFP situation reports[19] indicating that hard-to-reach areas, particularly along the southern border, were reported to be entirely dysfunctional and inaccessible, where in response, WFP and UNICEF conducted joint convoys to deliver food, water, and hygiene supplies to affected communities. In many cases, families were forced to rely on private or borrowed vehicles or share scarce resources with neighbors—coping mechanisms that were often inadequate, especially for households with small children or those in isolated locations.

Despite these challenges, markets across the regions have begun to show signs of recovery following the cessation of hostilities. While most vendors resumed operations after the ceasefire, the pace and extent of recovery have varied. This was especially evident in Nabatieh, where conflict-related damage to infrastructure has remained a major obstacle. Literature confirms that in Al-Nabatieh[20], destruction and restricted access continue to hinder market functionality. This

[16] WFP RAM | Food Security Analysis - Lebanon Market Monitor, November 2024. https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/wfp-ram-food-security-analysis-lebanon-market-monitor-november-2024
[17] ibid
[18] It is worth noting here that distances are meant to give some insights on access rather than quantify.
[19] WFP (2024). Emergency Response: Situation Report 3, 10 October 2024
[20] WFP RAM | Food Security Analysis - Lebanon Market Monitor, November 2024. https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/wfp-ram-food-security-analysis-lebanon-market-monitor-november-2024

ongoing stagnation underscores the fragility of local markets during crises and highlights the need for targeted recovery efforts, particularly in areas where economic activity was severely disrupted.

Gender dimensions strongly influenced market access. Community participants consistently reported that 'women rarely left their homes due to insecurity, especially after dark'. Possibly, it can then be assumed that this can pose specific challenges for female-headed households. This gendered market access challenge was compounded by the specific needs of adolescent girls, particularly for menstrual hygiene products, which were frequently unavailable or unaffordable during the conflict. Meanwhile, community participants revealed that boys aged 8-14 were increasingly entering labor markets to supplement household income, often at the expense of their education. These gendered impacts require targeted programming responses that account for both the different market access constraints and specific needs of girls and boys.

Vendors consistently expressed a strong need for small loans and overall effective price regulation mechanisms. Rising operational costs—particularly for rent, electricity, and fuel—were cited as significant threats to business sustainability. In Nabatieh, these constraints were especially acute, with vendors warning that any sudden surge in demand could overwhelm the fragile market system. These financial pressures are major contributors to persistent high prices and limited availability of essential goods. Regulatory interventions to stabilize prices, along with financial assistance tailored to different types of vendors, were repeatedly recommended by both vendors and community members.

Operational barriers—including high transportation costs, unreliable electricity, limited storage space, and insecure roads—continue to impede market functionality. Community participants emphasized that widespread distrust in the banking system further complicated economic recovery, with participants noting they 'use cash now because they have no trust in banks.' The absence of functioning financial services created additional transactional frictions in already stressed markets. These logistical, infrastructural, and financial weaknesses not only hinder vendors' ability to restock but also contribute to broader supply chain fragility.

Quality and Availability Constraints for Child-Specific Commodities

Child-specific goods—including diapers, baby formula, medication, and nutritious foods—were consistently reported as overpriced or entirely unavailable during the conflict, particularly in Nabatieh, indicating that communities are struggling to afford these items. Vendors across all locations confirmed significant difficulties in restocking these essential items, while community members reported having to go without or resort to less appropriate substitutes. Across all assessed areas, a recurring concern emerged regarding the quality and suitability of available child-focused products. While many vendors claimed that product quality remained unchanged, households consistently reported noticeable declines in both safety and quality. This points to a significant disconnect between vendor perceptions and the lived experiences of consumers, particularly caregivers of young children.

Expected Impact on Children Based on Discussion Findings

1. **Deterioration in Child Health and Nutrition**

- Limited access to nutritious food and baby formula is likely to contribute to rising rates of malnutrition among children, particularly infants and toddlers with time-sensitive and specific dietary needs. The use of inappropriate substitutes for formula can lead to gastrointestinal problems, failure to thrive, developmental delays, and weakened immune responses.

2. **Increased Exposure to Disease and Poor Hygiene**

- The unaffordability and/or unavailability of basic hygiene products—such as diapers and sanitary items—forces families to resort to unsafe alternatives, compromising children's health and well-being. Reusing or substituting diapers with unsuitable materials can lead to skin infections, rashes, urinary tract infections, and respiratory complications due to prolonged exposure to unsanitary conditions.

- In overcrowded displacement or low-resource settings, lack of access to safe hygiene supplies exacerbates environmental health risks and undermines infection control, which can affect children negatively.

3. **Psychological Stress on Caregivers and Children**

- The psychological burden on caregivers unable to meet their children's basic needs may manifest as emotional distress, fatigue, and a sense of helplessness, with direct implications for the parent-child relationship. Heightened caregiver stress may lead to reduced emotional availability, inconsistent caregiving, or increased tension within the household. Children, in turn, may internalize this stress—particularly in early childhood when emotional stability and nurturing are critical for development.

Harmful Coping Strategies and Multisectoral Response Needs

Across all assessed locations, families consistently prioritized child-specific needs—particularly infant formula, diapers, medications, and access to education—for children aged 0–5. These needs intensified during the conflict and remained largely unmet even after markets began to restock. Caregivers repeatedly described these items as essential, yet either unaffordable or unavailable, particularly at the height of hostilities.

The literature also shows that dietary needs of children have been unmet even before the war. According to the 2023 LIMA[21] assessment, even prior to the conflict, children's nutritional needs were not being met. Among non-breastfed children aged 6–23 months, nearly half received the minimum number of milk feedings for their age, while only 25% achieved minimum dietary diversity. Almost half lived in moderate food poverty (consuming 3–4 food groups), and nearly one-third lived in severe food poverty (0–2 food groups). Children residing in Palestinian camps and Syrian informal tented settlements (ITSs) were less likely to meet minimum dietary diversity than those in other settings, with dietary diversity strongly correlated with household wealth. Severe food poverty was most prevalent among younger age groups—particularly children aged 6–11 and 12–17 months—and was especially acute in Baalbek, the South, and the Bekaa.

During the conflict, families increasingly relied on harmful coping mechanisms. Reports revealed a reduction in food quality, substitution of infant formula with tea, sharing limited rations, and purchasing lower-grade or unsafe products—all of which negatively impacted children's health and development. There seems to be a need for and reliance on infant formula which is also seen in the CFRA[22] survey, as it revealed that 39% of newborns had not received any breastmilk the day prior to data collection, post-war, pointing to a critical gap in early nutrition. As children grow, a minimum dietary diversity including five of eight essential food groups is required. However, data showed that 99% of children under 18 in Bekaa and 80% in Baalbek-Hermel consumed fewer than five food groups—compared to a national rate of 69%.

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[21] Lebanon Integrated Micronutrient, Anthropometry and Child Development Survey 2023 (LIMA)
[22] UNICEF (2025). Shattered Childhood. https://www.unicef.org/lebanon/reports/shattered-childhoods

Additionally, 27% of families reported challenges in accessing basic hygiene items such as baby wipes and diapers—further underscoring the dire, unmet needs of infants and young children and compounding vulnerabilities among already struggling households.

Beyond nutrition and hygiene, urgent needs in education and health were also prominently reported. School closures and the conversion of facilities into shelters disrupted educational continuity, exposing the fragility of public service infrastructure in emergencies. It is also confirmed by the CFRA[23] that financial barriers to education became more pronounced post-conflict, with two-thirds of families whose children remained out of school citing the cost of fees, transportation, and materials as prohibitive—an alarming increase from 36% in 2023. Caregivers' anxiety about the future was widespread, with 85% expressing serious concerns about their children's ability to continue schooling. Similarly, access to healthcare has also deteriorated significantly. With economic instability and rising costs, 33% of households reported being unable to afford life-saving medication for their children, posing serious risks to their health and survival.

These findings reflect patterns which shows that children's needs often become secondary in emergency response strategies that prioritize generalized basic staple food or shelter assistance over tailored, age-appropriate interventions.

Beyond child-focused concerns, household needs are expected to rise further due to widespread livelihood losses. IPC projections confirm these concerns, Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes are expected to persist through at least May, the month of issuing of this report, in the South, El Nabatieh, Baalbek-El Hermel, Akkar, and North Lebanon governorates. These outcomes are driven by extensive infrastructure damage, the financial burden of restoring critical economic sectors, and the cumulative impact of a year-long conflict. Even in Beirut—classified as Stressed (IPC Phase 2)—significant concern remains, especially in the city's southern areas, where many households are believed to be in Crisis. In the most affected areas of southern Lebanon and Baalbek-El Hermel, displacement, civilian casualties, and widespread livelihood loss will continue to undermine access to food and income[24].

This discussion highlights growing concerning expectations that, in response to prolonged economic hardship and limited access to essential goods and services, households may adopt harmful coping mechanisms that directly compromise children's well-being and future prospects:

- **Reducing children's food intake** by decreasing meal frequency or portion sizes to ration scarce resources, increasing the risk of malnutrition and stunting which can have profound and irreversible impacts on a child's growth and potential.
- **Withdrawing more children from school** due to unaffordable education costs or inability to meet hygiene and clothing requirements, further limiting their future opportunities.
- **Increasingly resorting to child labor or early marriage**, particularly when children are perceived as economic burdens, exposing them to exploitation, interrupted development, and long-term psychological harm.

Persistent Price Volatility and Inflation for Child-Specific Goods

Despite some claims from wholesalers that prices were stabilizing, this trend was not consistently observed at the retail level. Pharmacies, grocery stores, and educational supply shops (e.g., libraries) frequently reported ongoing price fluctuations and it remains clear from the standard deviation that not all vendors sell items at the same price knowing that the collected data is around items that are affordable with acceptable quality to maintain coherence, while noting that also some reported brands, that are still selling, could have influenced the data. Nevertheless, community members echoed these concerns, emphasizing inflated prices alongside declining

[23] UNICEF (2025). Shattered Childhood. https://www.unicef.org/lebanon/reports/shattered-childhoods
[24] FWS net Dec 2024
A month into ceasefire, widespread Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes persist

product quality—particularly for child-specific items such as diapers, formula, and over-the-counter medications. This gap between wholesale and retail pricing suggests that affordability challenges are being disproportionately transferred to end consumers, especially low-income families with young children.

These trends are consistent with findings from WFP market monitoring assessments. By October 17, nearly all WFP-contracted shops across all districts had reported price increases. Significant price spikes were observed in Beirut, Baalbek-Hermel, Mount Lebanon, and the southern suburbs of Beirut. The cost of the food component of the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) rose from USD 36.2 in the second week of September to USD 37.4 in the second week of October—marking a 3.2% increase. Staples such as cereals and pulses, including bread, were the main drivers of this cost rise. Survey respondents most frequently reported price increases in essential goods such as oil, rice, sugar, flour, and bread. These inflationary pressures were particularly acute in southern Lebanon, where conflict-related disruptions compounded market instability[25].

While some districts have shown progress in stabilizing prices, others continue to face significant volatility, especially for essential and child-specific commodities. The continued lack of effective price regulation mechanisms remains a major challenge. Literature and field-level data both confirm that advocacy for stronger price regulation is urgently needed to protect vulnerable populations—particularly families with young children—from potential ongoing inflation or price inconsistency and fluctuation at the point of sale.

Child Protection and Gender-Specific Concerns

An observable increase in child labor was reported since the conflict, across all assessed areas, with children aged 8 to 15 engaging in informal work to support household income. This trend is largely driven by prolonged school closures, deepening financial strain, and the breakdown of protection systems. Families, facing limited options, are increasingly relying on children as economic contributors—often at the cost of their rights, education, and long-term development. Trends from the CFRA[26] show that, 15% of households were forced to withdraw their children from school during the conflict, further compounding education disruption and reducing children's future opportunities.

Additionally, one particularly concerning observation came from caregivers who noted that children had stopped asking for basic items, a sign of emotional numbness and internalized distress. Children in Lebanon are enduring a compounded crisis of bombardment, displacement, disrupted education, food insecurity, and the loss of loved ones—all of which have long-term implications for their development and mental health. Many have experienced direct or indirect trauma, including the death of parents, siblings, or friends, as well as the destruction of homes, schools, hospitals, and water infrastructure.

Caregivers consistently reported growing emotional and behavioral distress among children, including symptoms such as anxiety, withdrawal, aggression, and social isolation. These findings highlight a significant and growing gap in mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) for children, particularly adolescents. Boys were often described as displaying more aggressive behaviors, while girls exhibited increased vulnerability, aligning with global research that shows children's mental health tends to deteriorate in conflict-affected settings—particularly when family stressors are high and support services are lacking. The CfRA[27] findings also confirm this concern as it found that 72% of caregivers reported their children were anxious or nervous during the conflict, and 62% observed signs of depression or sadness—up from 59% and 45%, respectively, in

[25] WFP Lebanon - Market Functionality Index (January 2025). https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/wfp-lebanon-market-functionality-index-january-2025
[26] UNICEF (2025). Shattered Childhood. https://www.unicef.org/lebanon/reports/shattered-childhoods
[27] ibid

2023. These escalating trends underscore the deteriorating mental health landscape for children and the urgent need for expanded MHPSS programming.

While overall needs for boys and girls under 12 were largely similar, the unique needs of adolescent girls remain insufficiently addressed. Issues related to menstrual hygiene management and safe mobility emerged as pressing yet often overlooked concerns. In several areas, girls resorted to unsafe alternatives for menstrual products due to both availability and affordability issues, while humanitarian programming often failed to address these gender-specific needs. This reflects a broader gap in gender responsiveness in emergency response and echoes findings from existing literature on the vulnerabilities of adolescent girls in crisis contexts. Targeted assessments and interventions are needed to explore and address the specific needs of adolescent girls, including access to appropriate hygiene supplies, safe spaces, and protection services.

Cash Assistance: Preferences, Challenges and Integration Needs

Across all regions, families overwhelmingly identified cash assistance as the most preferred modality of aid—citing its flexibility, dignity, and ability to address diverse and urgent needs, particularly those related to children. Food and health emerged as top priorities, followed closely by education—highlighting a strong demand for referrals and integrated service access. While humanitarian assistance was provided during the conflict, largely through food parcels, hygiene kits, and cash distributions, according to the community participants, its delivery was uneven, poorly coordinated, and often dependent on location and visibility to aid actors. Some households benefited from NGO distributions, while others received nothing. Vendors in all three districts generally reported that aid did not significantly alter market dynamics, although some acknowledged its potential to temporarily stabilize prices or meet short-term demand. In other instances, where aid was inaccessible, municipalities and community support played a critical role in addressing access to basic needs to the extent possible.

Demand for assistance varied by district, age group, and likely by nationality—although nationality was not assessed in this study, existing literature suggests significant disparities in need and access to services and challenges in access to aid specially among female non-Lebanese populations specifically Syrian refugees[28]. Also, refugees, in particular, often face compounded vulnerabilities due to legal and documentation barriers.

Other assessments also prove that cash was consistently seen by communities as a more effective and respectful form of support than in-kind aid, especially in rapidly shifting crisis contexts[29], including a very recent assessment by Mercy Corps' cash feasibility assessment 2024[30] Its adaptability allowed households to prioritize needs as they evolved. However, several operational challenges limited the impact of cash-based assistance (CBA). These included limited access to financial service providers (FSPs), persistent mistrust in banks, and heightened risks for beneficiaries traveling to collect assistance—particularly for undocumented individuals or those living in insecure areas. In some locations, money transfer operators had closed due to ongoing airstrikes, and overcrowded or under-resourced distribution points led to repeated, risky trips by recipients.

Crucially, in this assessment communities emphasized that one-time distributions—whether cash or in-kind—were insufficient to meet ongoing and multi-dimensional needs. Households called for predictable, long-term, and multisectoral support that integrates education, health, nutrition, and protection services. This aligns with a growing body of evidence advocating for social protection-

[28] Vulnerability Assessment for Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (2023). https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/109319
[29] From in-kind to cash-based assistance in Lebanon and Syria, https://doi.org/10.19088/SSHAP.2024.051 Social Science in Humanitarian Action Platform
[30] Why Cash Remains the Optimal Solution as Conflict Escalates - A Feasibility Assessment Of Cash Assistance In Lebanon (2024). https://www.calpnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Mercy-Corps_Cash-in-Armed-Conflict_October-2024.pdf

based responses rather than fragmented, short-term humanitarian interventions[31]. As such, humanitarian actors are urged to strengthen rather than duplicate existing mechanisms. This includes aligning transfer values and assistance packages with national standards, collecting data that can support future eligibility determinations, facilitating access to legal and civil documentation, and contributing to both the horizontal and vertical expansion of national systems- an approach supported by several coordinators who participated in this study.

Finally, the absence of a centralized identification and registration platform remains a key barrier to scaling up CBA responses. Despite this, current findings confirm both the need and feasibility of expanding CVA programming. Also, municipalities have often played a vital role in enabling access where other actors faced constraints, highlighting the importance of coordinated, localized, and sustainable approaches to aid delivery.

The assessment revealed significant variations in vendor capacity to participate in humanitarian programming across districts and vendor types. These differences have important implications for the feasibility of market-based interventions, particularly voucher programs targeting child-specific needs.

CONCLUSION ON MARKET-BASED PROGRAMMING CONSIDERATIONS

Vendor Type Analysis:

Table 8 Vendor Type Analysis

Type	District Specific	Supermarkets/Large Retailers	Small Grocery Stores	Pharmacies	Educational Supply Vendors (Libraries)
Capacity status		Demonstrated the strongest recovery and greatest willingness to participate in voucher programs across all districts	More limited capacity across all districts, with financial constraints affecting inventory	Critical for child-specific medications and specialized nutrition products but faced severe disruptions	Showing sufficient stock for basic supplies
District Variations	**Beirut**	Most capable, with nearly full inventory recovery and stable supply chains	"Smaller grocery stores continue to face financial constraints that limit their stock, especially of children's food and hygiene products"	Operated on "limited basis, struggling with fuel shortages and unreliable electricity"	Educational supplies remained available but no access to education
	Baalbek	Moderate capacity with "swift recovery, minimal structural damage," but ongoing concerns about operational costs	Remained open but "struggled to secure stock due to transportation challenges, price surges, and insecurity" with “notably low availability of child-related products"	"Among the most affected, with three out of five reported closed during the war" with critical child nutrition commodities still unavailable post-conflict (purees and fortified cereal)	Educational supplies remained available but no access to education
	Nabatieh	Limited capacity with "doubts about the long-term sustainability of their businesses" due to	Reporting limited ability fully recover even post-conflict	Most severely impacted, with critical child medications (paracetamol syrup,	"School supplies were completely unavailable during the conflict but

[31] Safety net and humanitarian cash in emergency in emergency response in Lebanon, advocacy paper, Feb 2025

		infrastructure damage		ORS) still unavailable post-conflict	have since become accessible"
Scale-up potential		In Beirut and Baalbek, supermarkets reported being "currently able to meet increased demand," while in Nabatieh, vendors expressed concern that "a rise in demand could quickly overwhelm the fragile supply system"	Limited in all districts, with "small groceries in particular reported being unable to participate in potential voucher schemes due to limited stock capacity"	Limited by high operational costs and specialized inventory requirements	Moderate for basic school supplies
Programming implications		Most suitable for voucher programs in Beirut and Baalbek, with targeted support needed for Nabatieh vendors	Would require significant support to participate effectively in voucher programs, particularly pre-financing inventory	"Generally rejected voucher inclusion" but critical for specialized child items, suggesting need for targeted support rather than general vouchers	Could participate in targeted back-to-school voucher programs but would need inventory support

Cross-Cutting Capacity Constraints:

1. **Financial limitations:** Across all vendor types and districts, "operational expenses such as rent, fuel, and employee salaries" were identified as critical constraints affecting inventory capacity. In particular, "electricity and fuel remain the highest operational costs for vendors, followed by rent."
2. **Supply chain fragility:** Although some vendors did switch suppliers, many did not, and even functioning vendors reported vulnerable supply chains, with transportation challenges and security concerns affecting restocking capacity.
3. **Storage and infrastructure:** Physical capacity constraints were reported by smaller vendors across all districts, with particular concerns in Nabatieh where "destroyed infrastructure, persistent electricity issues, and weak logistical systems" limit operational capacity. Vendors emphasized the "urgent need for access to small loans to recover faster", which is a recommended particularly relevant for Nabatieh.
4. **Child-specific inventory challenges:** Vendors consistently reported restrictions or difficulties stocking child-specific items compared to general goods. These specialized products faced "triple constraints: limited availability, restricted distribution (pharmacy-only channels)" and unaffordable for the majority of community members.

Voucher Program Feasibility:

Vendor responses regarding potential participation in voucher programs varied significantly:

- High feasibility: Supermarkets in Beirut and Baalbek "expressed willingness to participate and called for small grants to help sustain their operations"
- Moderate feasibility: Small grocery stores in Beirut and educational vendors in Baalbek, with appropriate support mechanisms
- Low feasibility: Most vendors in Nabatieh and pharmacies across all districts, with the latter noting that specialized inventory requirements make voucher programs challenging

Vendors emphasized that effective voucher programs would require:

1. "Clear implementation details to ensure fairness and attract customers"
2. Support mechanisms to address "fairness, ambiguous eligibility criteria, and the inability of smaller shops to restock in response to increased demand"
3. Design considerations ensuring that programs "were designed to guarantee consistent demand and were supported with logistical aid"

Based on vendor capacity assessment, three priority interventions emerged:

1. **Financial support:** Vendors across all districts highlighted the "urgent need for access to small loans" to address operational costs and inventory challenges. This was particularly crucial for smaller vendors and those selling child-specific commodities, as well as, heavily conflict affected market infrastructure particularly in Nabatieh.
2. **Supply chain strengthening:** Transportation support and logistics coordination were identified as critical needs, especially in Nabatieh where vendors face "high transportation costs, limited storage capacity, and inconsistent electricity."
3. **Price regulation mechanisms:** Both vendors and communities identified price stabilization, overall, as essential, with vendors specifically calling for "stronger price regulation mechanisms to ensure affordability for vulnerable households" while protecting their margins and avoiding fluctuations by vendor.

These market support interventions, tailored to district-specific constraints and vendor types, would significantly enhance the feasibility of market-based programming while improving access to essential child-specific commodities.

CONCLUSION ON CROSS-REGIONAL CHILD-SPECIFIC ANALYSIS

This analysis summarizes findings from Baalbek, Beirut suburbs, and Nabatieh to identify critical patterns in children's access to essential goods and services. By examining cross-cutting themes across all three districts, we can develop more targeted and effective programming approaches that address the specific needs of different age groups, genders, and contexts.

Market Functionality for Child-Essential Commodities

Differential Recovery Patterns by District

The assessment reveals a clear pattern of uneven recovery for markets supplying child-specific goods:

Table 9 Recovery Patterns by District

Region	Market Functionality for Child Items	Key Programming Implications
Baalbek	Limited availability of baby food with concerning quality issues	Focus on quality improvement and price stabilization, as well as availability of baby purees and fortified cereals
Beirut Suburbs	Higher availability with concerning quality issues	Focus on quality improvement and advocate for price stabilization
Nabatieh	Limited availability of medications with concerning overall quality and price issues, as well as sustainability of the stock ad inability to adapt to new shocks	Requires comprehensive market support alongside direct assistance

While general market recovery largely aligns with WFP monitoring data, **markets for child-specific commodities seem to lag behind general market recovery in all districts**. This creates a critical gap in essential goods for the most vulnerable age groups.

Distinctive Price Patterns for Child-Specific Items

Child-specific commodities exhibit two distinct patterns that differentiate them from general household goods:

1. **Regional Disparities:** The price of identical child-specific products varied significantly across regions. Baby diapers in Beirut (around 400,000 LL) cost nearly double those in Nabatieh (around 250,000) and Baalbek (around 250,000), pointing towards possible market segmentation likely based on perceived purchasing power. It is also worth noting that this may reflect disparities among vendors and differing perceptions regarding the affordability of available product brands.
2. **Limited Recovery Correlation:** Unlike general commodities, child-specific items are still perceived as unaffordable for community members, and are likely to be compromised in quality and quantity during conflict such as in Baalbak, as some baby food items where and remain unavailable, with uncertainties on the capacities to restock in case of higher demand, specifically in Nabatiyeh and among smaller vendors.

These patterns suggest child-focused goods require specialized monitoring and interventions, paying attention to district and vendor type.

Age-Specific Needs Analysis, highlights multidimensional needs that impact children wellbeing and their access to their rights or basic services:

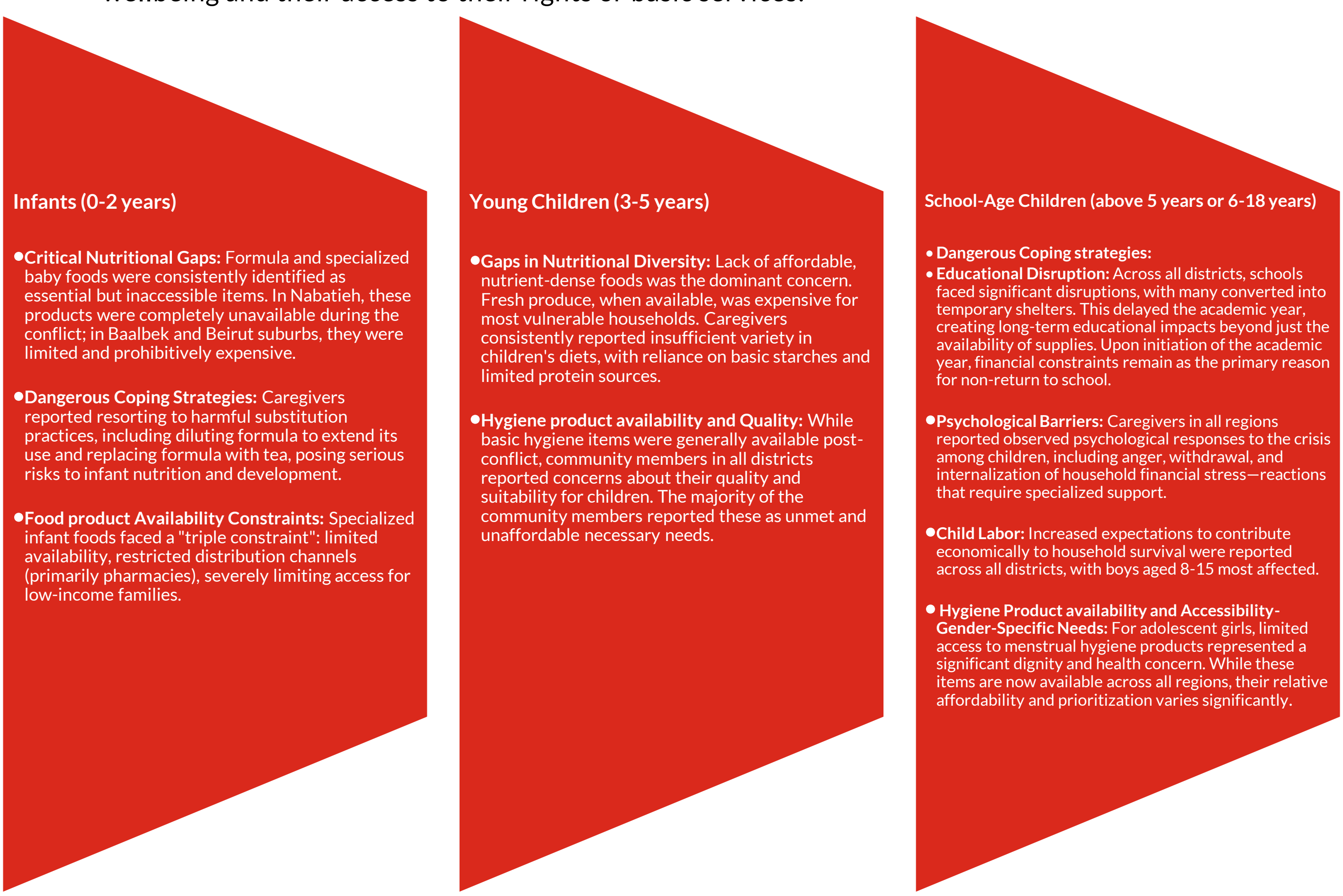

Figure 3 Age Specific Needs

Protection Concerns Requiring Integrated Response

Child Labor as Market-Linked Protection Risk

A significant increase in child labor was consistently reported across all three districts, with important patterns requiring targeted intervention:

Age-Specific Child Labor Patterns:

- **Young children (under 8):** No significant reports of labor involvement across any district
- **Middle age to early adolescent childhood (8-15):** Emerging involvement primarily in:
  - **Beirut suburbs**: Most extensive reporting of child labor, described as "a noticeable increase in child labor, particularly among children aged 8–14, with many working in markets or on the streets to supplement household income, often at the expense of their education"
  - **Baalbek**: Moderate reporting, with the "visible increase in child labor" described as "an outcome caregivers and vendors linked to prolonged school closures and growing household financial pressures"
  - **Nabatieh**: boys aged 8-14 entered the labor market to support family income, taking on roles in markets or informal work", with most severe economic conditions but slightly less explicit reporting of child labor, possibly due to the complete collapse of formal markets during the conflict period providing fewer labor opportunities

Gender Dimensions in Child Labor:

Distinct gender patterns emerged across all districts:

- **Boys:** Primarily engaged in visible, market-based labor:
  - "Boys more frequently engaged in income-generating activities outside the home"
  - "More frequently engaged in market-related labor"
  - Reported "greater pressure to contribute financially to household survival"
  - In Beirut suburbs, this trend was "particularly observed among adolescent boys from more vulnerable households"
- **Girls:** No significant reports of labor involvement

Drivers of Conflict-Related Child Labor:

The assessment identified several interlinked factors driving the increase in child labor:

1. **School closures:** Across all districts, the "delayed academic year, caused by schools being converted into shelters" created both the opportunity and impetus for child labor. With no educational alternatives, children became available for work.
2. **Household economic pressure:** Financial constraints were the primary driver, with families experiencing "depleted savings" and "increasing poverty and food insecurity." Child labor emerged as a necessary coping strategy for many households.
3. **Market disruptions:** The conflict's impact on markets created both challenges and risks related to child labor:
   - Reduced formal employment opportunities for adults
   - Creation of street selling where children could engage in
   - Demand for lower-cost labor from struggling vendors
4. **Protection environment breakdown:** The general deterioration of protective systems during the conflict created conditions where child labor became more acceptable and less regulated.

The consistent finding of increased child labor across all districts represents one of the most significant protection concerns emerging from market dysfunction. The age range most affected (8-15 years) represents a particularly vulnerable developmental period where education interruption and premature labor market engagement can have long-lasting negative consequences.

Mental Health Impacts of Market Deprivation

Psychological impacts of market access challenges were consistently reported across all regions, manifesting differently by age group. The particularly concerning observation across all regions was children "stopping asking" for essential items—indicating internalization of scarcity that may have long-term psychological implications. This finding correlates with the CFRA data showing that 72% of caregivers reported anxiety or nervousness in their children, and 62% observed signs of depression or sadness.

Mobility and Safety Constraints

Gender-differentiated mobility constraints were reported across all regions but were most severe in Nabatieh, where cultural norms compounded security concerns. The inability of women and girls to access markets safely can be expected to have significant implications for female-headed households and adolescent girls' specific needs.

While physical security has improved post-ceasefire, the psychological barriers to movement persist, particularly for women and children. Women and girls often also compromised their sanitary and hygiene needs resorting to unsanitary alternatives during menstruation.

This progressive differentiation by age and gender suggests the need for increasingly age and gender-sensitive programming. Age-specific emerging needs and gender-differentiated coping mechanisms were evident across all regions, with implications for child protection programming. These patterns risk reinforcing harmful gender norms and child development patterns while addressing immediate survival needs, requiring careful consideration in program design.

CONCLUSION ON CASH FEASIBILITY ASSESSMENT

The assessment revealed complex but generally favorable conditions for cash-based interventions, with important contextual factors influencing optimal delivery mechanisms. The assessment revealed complex and sometimes contradictory effects of humanitarian assistance on local markets across the three districts, but no pronounced significant effects were noted especially given markets often intermittently closed upon security threats.

Community Preferences and Rationale

Cash assistance emerged as the strongly preferred assistance modality across all districts, with multiple underlying factors supporting this preference:

- **Prioritization flexibility:** Community members consistently emphasized that "cash allows households to prioritize their own urgent needs," particularly for addressing diverse and changing child needs.
- **Dignity and agency:** Caregivers across all districts valued the dignity that cash provides, allowing them to make their own decisions rather than depending on predetermined in-kind assistance.
- **Addressing gaps in in-kind assistance:** community participants consistently noted that standard aid packages lacked essential child-specific items.
- **Market adaptation:** Cash was seen as better suited to responding to rapidly changing market conditions and price fluctuations, allowing households to adjust purchasing decisions accordingly.

Regional Variations in Cash Feasibility

The feasibility of cash-based programming varies significantly by district as detailed in Table 4:

- **Baalbek:** Shows the strongest market functionality and supply availability, making it the most conducive environment for cash-based interventions. Vendors generally reported capacity to meet increased demand, and essential child commodities are available, albeit with quality concerns. However, baby food remains limited in availability and requires monitoring on availability and stock.
- **Beirut suburbs:** Demonstrates good commodity availability but with price barriers, suggesting Targeted Values (TVs) for top-ups should ideally be tailored to local market prices to ensure they align with household purchasing power and remain affordable, not only in Beirut. Vendors reported confidence in meeting increased demand, but financial pressures on households remain intense.
- **Nabatieh:** Faces the most significant challenges for cash programming due to limited availability and capacity to restock in case of increased demand of essential items, an aspect to be considered especially in case of recurrence of conflict, being in a highly charged district in the south. Community members reported that "prices of essential items actually increased rather than decreased following the ceasefire," and vendors confirmed fluctuation in prices, suggesting that cash alone may be insufficient without market support interventions. Also, it was noted that municipality and community relations played a huge role in access to needs amid restricted access to markets, which is an aspect to build upon with flexible and swift switching of modalities upon need and capacities.

Age-Specific Cash Considerations

The assessment revealed distinct cash transfer considerations for different child age groups as shown in Figure 3:

- **Infants and young children (0-5 years):** Standard transfer values are likely insufficient especially when baby food items prove unavailable such as in Baalbak, requiring monitoring commodity availability, and flexible modalities to fulfill needs.
- **Above age of 5 years children (6-18 years):** Educational expenses represent a significant household burden, with financial constraints cited as the primary barrier to school re-entry. Cash transfers tied to referrals to educational continuity and protection services could address both immediate needs and longer-term developmental goals, taking into consideration the increased risk of child labor at ages 8-15 years.

Banking System and Delivery Challenges

The assessment revealed significant banking and financial service constraints across all three districts, with important implications for cash-based programming. Banking services were disrupted but not completely collapsed. The "closure of banks and financial service providers exacerbated [market access] challenges by limiting access to cash." Post-conflict, banking services have partially resumed, but community members continue to prefer physical cash transactions due to persistent distrust.

Several financial challenges were identified across all districts:

1. **Widespread banking distrust:** This sentiment predated the conflict but intensified during it, with community members across all districts preferring cash. As one Nabatieh FGD participant noted, "They use cash now because they have no trust in banks," indicating a fundamental shift away from formal financial services.
2. **Physical cash dependence:** With limited banking services, households relied exclusively on physical cash reserves that "quickly depleted" during the conflict. This created a self-reinforcing cycle where the community perception that "cash is king" drove further dependence on physical currency.
3. **Geographical access barriers:** In both Baalbek-El Hermel and Nabatieh, "distance to the nearest financial facility was the most common barrier" for those struggling to access financial services, with many communities reporting traveling 10-20km to reach functioning ATMs or money transfer services.
4. **Security concerns:** In five cadasters in Baalbek-El Hermel, "security concerns led to bank, OMT, and ATM closures," demonstrating how perceived insecurity continues to affect financial service availability even after formal hostilities have ceased.

SUGGESTED MARKET MONITORING FRAMEWORK

To ensure continuous understanding of market dynamics affecting child-specific goods and services, this section outlines a preliminary non-exclusive suggested monitoring framework to guide early warning responses. It is based on findings from the current assessment and aims to enable district-level tracking of key indicators relevant to both humanitarian and protection objectives, while ensuring coordination with existing market monitoring systems.

Table 10 Market Monitoring Framework

Indicator	Description	Disaggregation
Availability of child-specific commodities	Stock status at vendor and supplier levels (Availability and assortment)	District, type of vendor
Prices of key child-related goods	Prices for diapers, baby formula, school supplies, children's medication	District, product
Vendor restocking frequency	How often vendors replenish stock for child-specific goods	District, vendor type
Household reported access	% of households reporting challenges in accessing essential child items Percentages of children lacking access to basic needs Percentage of households reporting improved ability to meet children's essential needs after market-based interventions	District, age group, gender of child
Preferred purchasing modality	Cash, in-kind, voucher preferences for child-specific needs	District, vulnerability level
Price-to-income ratio for child essentials	Cost of basic child needs basket as percentage of average household income	District, household type, urban/rural
School attendance correlation	Percentage change in school attendance following identified market price increases Reports of children missing school due to cost-related barriers	District, age group, gender, school type
Child labor market response	New child labor entrants within 3 months of significant market price changes Age-disaggregated data on economically active children using standardized thresholds	District, age group (5-11, 12-14, 15-17), sector
Caregiver coping mechanisms	Types of negative coping strategies used by households when unable to access child essentials Number of households reporting reduced expenditure on children's needs after market price increases Reduction in negative coping mechanisms among households receiving market-based support	District, household type, socioeconomic status

Social protection coverage	% of vulnerable households with children receiving assistance during market disruptions	District, assistance type, household vulnerability

RECOMMENDATIONS

These comprehensive recommendations section provides structured, actionable guidance for implementing child-sensitive market-based interventions across the assessed districts of Baalbek, Beirut Suburbs, and Nabatieh. Each recommendation includes a clear problem statement based on assessment findings, specific recommended actions, and practical implementation steps. We have also included priority levels, suggested timeframes, district applicability, and resource requirement indicators to support implementation planning. The recommendations are directly linked to specific findings from the assessment to ensure evidence-based programming.

Recommendation Matrix

Table 11 Recommendation Matrix

#	Recommendation	Priority	Timeframe	Baalbek	Beirut Suburbs	Nabatieh	Resource Requirements
1	District-Specific Cash Transfer Approaches	High	Immediate	✓	✓	✓	Medium
2	Age-Specific Child Support Packages	High	Immediate	✓	✓	✓	Medium
3	Gender-Responsive Market Interventions	High	Immediate	✓	✓	✓	Medium
4	Integrated Services with Market Support	High	Short-term	✓	✓	✓	High
5	Market Support for vendors specifically those who supply child commodities	High	Short-term	✓	✓	✓	High
6	Flexible Response Mechanisms	Medium	Short-term	✓	✓	✓	Medium
7	Differentiated Vulnerability Programming	Medium	Medium-term	✓	✓	✓	Medium
8	Local Coordination Strengthening	Medium	Medium-term	✓	✓	✓	Medium

9	Market System Advocacy	Medium	Long-term	✓	✓	✓	Low
10	Complementary Cash Top-Ups	Medium	Short-term	✓	✓	✓	High

Detailed Recommendations:

District-Specific Cash Transfer Approaches

Implement tailored cash and voucher assistance (CVA) modalities based on local market conditions in each district. Implement unconditional cash or vouchers in areas with functional markets; and combine cash with direct distribution for critical but unavailable items. As long as markets and financial service providers (FSPs) are functional, cash assistance is feasible—and remains the most requested and recommended modality. Where markets are functional but access to cash is constrained by none functional or limited access to FSPs, voucher assistance can be appropriate. However, in situations where markets are non-functional or essential commodities are unavailable, in-kind assistance should be prioritized. It is also possible to combine cash with direct distribution for critical but unavailable items (eg. baby purees and fortified cereal in Baalbak) and in severely affected areas where restock can be challenging or areas where items remain unavailable (eg. Nabatieh).

Age-Specific Child Support Packages

Design transfer values and complementary services based on children's developmental stages:

- **Infants/Young Children (0-5):** Higher transfer values and complementary nutrition services to address the triple constraints of "limited availability, restricted distribution, and high prices" for specialized products, and advocate for better understanding of the need for baby formula and the limitations for breastfeeding
- **School-Age Children (6-12):** Education-focused support combining cash with school resumption initiatives
- **Adolescents (13-18):** Economic support paired with protection and vocational/educational re-engagement

Complementary Cash Top-Ups

Implement complementary cash top-ups for families with children already receiving other forms of assistance, rather than strict deduplication:

- Provide supplements based on number and age of children
- Study and ensure transfer value remain relevant amid price fluctuation
- Allow flexibility in usage to address household-specific priorities

Flexible Response Mechanisms

Design programs with built-in flexibility to rapidly switch modalities:

- Establish contingency plans for transitioning between cash, vouchers, and in-kind assistance

- Preposition critical child-focused supplies in high-risk areas
- Develop early warning indicators for market functionality

Integrated Services with Market Support

Combine market-based support with integrated service access:

- Pair cash assistance with referrals to healthcare, protection and education
- Support transportation services to markets in isolated areas

Differentiated Vulnerability Programming

Develop programming that addresses different vulnerabilities of Lebanese and Syrian households:

- Adjust assistance packages based on legal status and access constraints
- Address documentation barriers affecting market and service access
- Ensure child-sensitive approaches are inclusive of refugee children

Gender-Responsive Market Interventions

Implement gender-responsive market support and assistance:

- Ensure distribution timing and locations accommodate women's mobility constraints
- Support female vendors and women-friendly market spaces
- Include menstrual hygiene items in standard assistance packages

Market Support for vendors specifically those who supply child commodities

Implement targeted market support interventions:

- Facilitate micro-loans or grants for traders supplying child-specific commodities
- Support enhanced storage capacity for specialized products
- Provide business training focused on managing child-essential supply chains
- Establish price monitoring mechanisms for child-specific goods
- Ensure vendor sensitization on child labor issues and support for age-appropriate youth engagement alternatives

Local Coordination Strengthening

Strengthen municipal (local authority) and community-based coordination:

- Support municipal emergency coordination mechanisms
- Enhance local referral systems for child protection cases
- Build capacity for community-based market monitoring

Market System Advocacy

Advocate for systemic market reforms:

- Push for regulation of essential goods pricing, especially for children's items

Recommendations for Additional Assessments:

Longitudinal Studies on Market Recovery: Implement follow-up assessments over time to monitor trends and shifts in market dynamics post-ceasefire, and check for trends in other districts. This would help mitigate the effects of recall bias and provide real-time data on recovery trajectories, stock availability, and consumer behavior. Conduct targeted assessments in areas heavily impacted by conflict or ongoing insecurity. These areas may exhibit unique market behaviors or access barriers that require tailored interventions.

Comparative Studies Across Nationalities: Future research/assessments should disaggregate findings by nationality (e.g., Lebanese vs. Syrian participants) to better understand diverse vulnerabilities, purchasing power, and access barriers, and to inform more inclusive market-based responses.

Focused Studies on Child related Commodities of Different Age Groups with the Possibility of Engaging them in the Study: Future assessments can study other age groups while focusing on and including additional commodities that are known to be needed by children of different age groups in the range between 6 and 18 years old.

Annexes:

Annex 1: Desk Review of Contextual Updates

Since October 2019, Lebanon has been grappling with overlapping crises—humanitarian, socio-economic, and political—driving an urgent need for humanitarian and development aid. The country has endured widespread protests, the COVID-19 pandemic, a severe economic collapse, and the devastating Beirut blast, all while hosting the world's highest per-capita concentration of refugees—an estimated 1.5 million Syrians[32], including 768,353 registered with UNHCR as of September 2024[33].

These compounded challenges have led to rising unemployment and widespread job losses, increasing poverty and food insecurity over the past 4 years. As of 2024, conditions have not improved. Lebanon continues to grapple with the aftermath of yet another crisis, exacerbated by ongoing socioeconomic and political instability, including a prolonged presidential vacuum. The Gaza-Israel war and escalating tensions between Israel and Hezbollah have further destabilized the country, deeply impacting its economy, livelihoods, and food security. Since October 8, 2023, conflict incidents have steadily increased, particularly along the southern border. In September 2024, hostilities escalated sharply, leading to a cross-border invasion, intense clashes, and airstrikes that triggered mass displacement and inflicted severe damage on critical infrastructure. The conflict, marked by wireless device explosions, over 14,000 Israeli airstrikes, and a ground invasion into South Lebanon[34],[35],, has led to widespread devastation and displacement. By November 2024, nearly 900,000[36] individuals were registered as internally displaced persons (IDPs) across Lebanon, according to IOM-DTM. The war inflicted severe damage on civilian infrastructure, including health centers, residential buildings, and agricultural land.

By December 2024, the country had recorded approximately 3,768 fatalities, 15,699 injuries, and over 899,725 IDPs. Hostilities between Israel and Lebanon escalated sharply in September 2024 after 11 months of cross-border strikes, culminating in a full-scale war. The conflict officially ended two months later, leaving more than 4,000 dead and 16,590 injured. Children were among the hardest hit, with over 310 killed and 1,500 wounded—many suffering from traumatic brain injuries, shrapnel wounds, or limb loss. An estimated 400,000 children were forced to flee their communities, further deepening the humanitarian crisis.

Over 20,000[37] residential buildings sustained severe damage, alongside extensive destruction of agricultural land and assets. As a result, 130[38] municipalities face a high risk of agricultural disruption, with major losses in key crops such as olives, grapes, citrus, bananas, and avocados—many left unharvested and abandoned, particularly in South Lebanon and Baalbek-El Hermel[39]. Aerial strikes further disrupted irrigation systems and livestock grazing, worsening the abandonment of croplands and impacting water and electricity supply.

These disruptions, compounded by Lebanon's ongoing economic crisis since 2019, have severely affected vulnerable populations, particularly Syrian refugees and impoverished Lebanese

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[32] UNHCR (2024). Lebanon At a Glance. https://www.unhcr.org/lb/at-a-glance
[33] UNHCR-Operational Data Portal (2024). Syria Regional Refugee Response. https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria/location/71
[34] ACLED (2024). Israel-Hezbollah conflict. https://acleddata.com/2024/10/10/situation-update-israel-hezbollah-conflict/
[35] ACLED (October 2024). Expanding Israeli operations in Lebanon and the escalation of the Middle East crisis. https://acleddata.com/2024/10/04/middle-east-september-2024-special-issue-middle-east-crisis/
[36] IOM-Lebanon (November 25). Mobility Snapshot Round 65. https://dtm.iom.int/lebanon
[37] REACH (October 2024). Socio-economic vulnerability in Lebanon: Impact and outlook of conflict escalation. https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/socio-economic-vulnerability-lebanon-impact-and-outlook-conflict-escalation-04-october-2024
[38] FAO (December 2024). The impact of the ongoing conflict in Lebanon: Impact assessment on agriculture and livelihoods. https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/impact-ongoing-conflict-lebanon-impact-assessment-agriculture-and-livelihoods
[39] FEWS NET (October 2024). Lebanon Key Message Update: Escalating conflict leads to rising population in need of food assistance, September 2024. https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/lebanon-key-message-update-escalating-conflict-leads-rising-population-need-food-assistance-september-2024

households. Many remain in shelters, while others struggle to secure basic necessities amid soaring food prices[40].

Despite the ceasefire announced in November 2024, Israeli violations have continued sporadically[41],. By December 2024, approximately 786,443[42] IDPs had begun returning to their communities. However, significant challenges persist, with many displaced populations facing unmet needs. Food assistance remains a priority, particularly in areas already classified as IPC Phase 3+[43]. The ceasefire remains fragile, and regional instability could worsen, particularly with the recent fall of the Assad regime in Syria and the cessation of USAID support, both of which risk triggering new displacement and further economic strain.

Case Study Aftermath of the Contextual Challenges:

Following the ceasefire, the World Bank's Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDNA)[44], published in February 2025, estimated the impact of the 2023–2024 conflict in Lebanon at US$6.8 billion in physical damage, US$7.2 billion in economic losses, and US$11 billion in recovery and reconstruction needs.

The commerce, industry, and tourism sectors suffered the greatest economic losses, totaling US$3.4 billion (48%), primarily due to disruptions in business activity and tourism. Losses were concentrated in South Lebanon (23%), Nabatiyeh (28%), and Bekaa (16%).

Commerce and industry—including wholesale/retail, manufacturing, and professional services—along with tourism (hospitality and related services), contributed 40% of Lebanon's GDP, encompassing around 215,000 establishments. As a net importer with only small-scale growth in agribusiness, chemicals, and medicinal production, Lebanon faced US$2.1 billion in losses due to business closures, displacement of employees and business owners, shifts in consumer behavior toward essential goods, and disrupted supply chains.

Tourism has been a vital driver of Lebanon's economy, heavily reliant on foreign expatriate and diaspora spending. While **tourist arrivals surged by 56.6% in 2022**, Q4 2023 witnessed a **24% decline** compared to the same period in 2022. By 2023, tourism contributed **8.6% to GDP** and accounted for **4.4% of total employment**.

Damages and Business Impact

- **Total damages: US$612 million**, with **27% affecting the tourism sector**.
- **Business destruction and damage:**
    - **Commerce & Industry: 6,974 establishments impacted** (2% destroyed, 8% partially damaged).
    - **Tourism: 2,219 establishments impacted** (3% destroyed, 10% partially damaged).
- **Most affected areas:**
    - **Marjaayoun: US$121 million** in damage.
    - **Nabatiyeh: US$101 million** in damage.

[40] FAO (December 2024). The impact of the ongoing conflict in Lebanon: Impact assessment on agriculture and livelihoods. https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/impact-ongoing-conflict-lebanon-impact-assessment-agriculture-and-livelihoods
[41] Israeli attacks on Lebanon continue despite ceasefire agreement (Dec 2024) retrieved from : https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/israeli-attacks-lebanon-continue-despite-ceasefire-agreement
[42] IOM-Lebanon (December 5). Mobility Snapshot Round 66. https://dtm.iom.int/lebanon
[43] OCHA (December 2024). Lebanon: Flash Update #49 - Escalation of hostilities in Lebanon, as of 5 December 2024. https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/lebanon-flash-update-49-escalation-hostilities-lebanon-5-december-2024
[44] Lebanon - Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDNA)(March 2025). https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/lebanon-rapid-damage-and-needs-assessment-rdnamarch-2025-enar

- **Tyre: US$88 million** in damage.

Economic Losses

- **Total losses: US$3.4 billion**, with **US$1.3 billion (38%)** from tourism.
- **Commerce & Industry losses: US$2.1 billion**, including:
  - **US$990 million** in wholesale/retail.
  - **US$829 million** in manufacturing.
  - **US$254 million** in services.
- **Tourism losses:**
  - **45% in conflict-affected areas; 55% due to national economic ripple effects**.
  - Declines in **tourist arrivals, hotel occupancy, rental income, consumer spending, and business profits**.
  - **Safety concerns, supply chain disruptions, and travel restrictions** worsened the crisis.
- **Losses by district:**
  - **Nabatiyeh: US$454 million**
  - **Beirut: US$423 million**
  - **Tyre: US$410 million**

The agricultural sector, which contributed 9% of GDP and 4% of employment in 2020, with the food processing sector contributing an additional 4%, has faced significant setbacks. An estimated US$79 million in damages was reported, primarily from crop production losses (US$34 million), damage to irrigation systems (US$16 million), and livestock losses (US$11 million). South Lebanon, a key region for food production, saw extensive damage to its agricultural assets, including 94% of banana plantations, 63% of avocado trees, and 64% of citrus trees. The Bekaa Valley, responsible

Asset Types	Partially Damaged (establishments)	Completely Destroyed (establishments)	Total Cost (US$, millions)
DAMAGE			
Commerce & Industry	5,363	1,611	567
Manufacturing	785	288	93
Retail, wholesale, and trade	3,491	989	261
Professional services	1,086	334	93
Tourism (including hospitality)	1,732	488	165
Total Damage			**612**
LOSSES			
Output and wage losses from Commerce & Industry			2,072
Manufacturing			*829*
Wholesale, retail, and trade			*990*
Professional services			*254*
Output and wage losses from Tourism (including hospitality)			1,338
Total Losses			**3,410**

for producing 70% of Lebanon's grapes, including those used in winemaking, also suffered major losses.

This sector had already been weakened by the 2019 economic crisis, poor value chain integration, and inefficient institutions. The overall economic losses in agriculture have been substantial, with US$742 million attributed to inaccessible farmland, crop destruction, and halted harvests. The recovery and reconstruction need for this sector total US$412 million, which includes US$165 million for infrastructure and labor recovery. Among the affected areas, Nabatiyeh governorate suffered the highest losses (US$42 million), followed by South Lebanon (US$24 million) and Bekaa (US$8 million). This also underscores the severe impact on livelihoods that communities have traditionally depended on.

Regarding food security, the IPC estimates that **US$247 million** is needed to provide emergency food aid to 550,000 newly food-insecure individuals. It is important to note that an additional 1.1 million people were already food-insecure before the conflict, but they are not included in this estimate.

In the health sector, the conflict has caused an estimated **US$208 million** in damage. A total of 298 health assets were completely destroyed, while 587 were partially damaged, representing 33% of the baseline. The majority of the damage occurred in dental clinics, with 121 completely destroyed and 44 partially damaged. Additionally, 60 pharmacies were destroyed, and 270 were partially damaged. Social development centers also suffered substantial losses, with 34 completely destroyed and 26 partially damaged. Hospitals were also severely impacted, with one completely destroyed and 39 partially damaged. These damages have significantly disrupted the supply of medicines and services to many in the population. Nabatiyeh governorate experienced the highest level of damage, totaling **US$85 million**, followed by South Lebanon (**US$39 million**) and Baalbek-Hermel (**US$34 million**). Districts that experienced the most severe damage to health facilities include Marjaayoun (**US$37 million**), Baabda (**US$32 million**), and Tyre (**US$27 million**).

The conflict has significantly exacerbated Lebanon's existing economic crisis, making urgent recovery efforts essential to rebuild infrastructure, restore livelihoods, and stabilize vulnerable communities. To address these challenges, a phased approach is necessary, beginning with the repair of damaged assets and providing working capital support to affected businesses. In conflict-affected areas, **35% of businesses** require liquidity support to recover. In this context, billions of dollars in private sector investment will be critical for recovery. Technical assistance will also be crucial to support business recovery and ensure sustainability.

Food insecurity remains a pressing issue, compounded by limited access to livelihood opportunities and increasing needs, including healthcare, which will involve compensation for lost labor, typically through cash-based support programs like cash-for-work initiatives, aimed at restoring livelihoods and supporting economic recovery.

Zooming into the impact on the Markets following the conflict:

General Overview:

According to WFP's market functionality monitoring[45], Lebanon's general monthly inflation, as reported by the Central Administration of Statistics (CAS), reached 2.4% in December 2024, up from 2.3% in November and 2% in October, marking the period of conflict. This contributed to a quarterly inflation rate of 6.9% in December, rising from 4.2% in November and 2.5% in October. Meanwhile, the annual inflation rate for 2024 stood at 45%, significantly lower than the 221% recorded in 2023, 171% in 2022, and 159% in 2021.

[45] WFP RAM | Food Security Analysis - Lebanon Market Monitor, January 2025. https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/wfp-ram-food-security-analysis-lebanon-market-monitor-january-2025

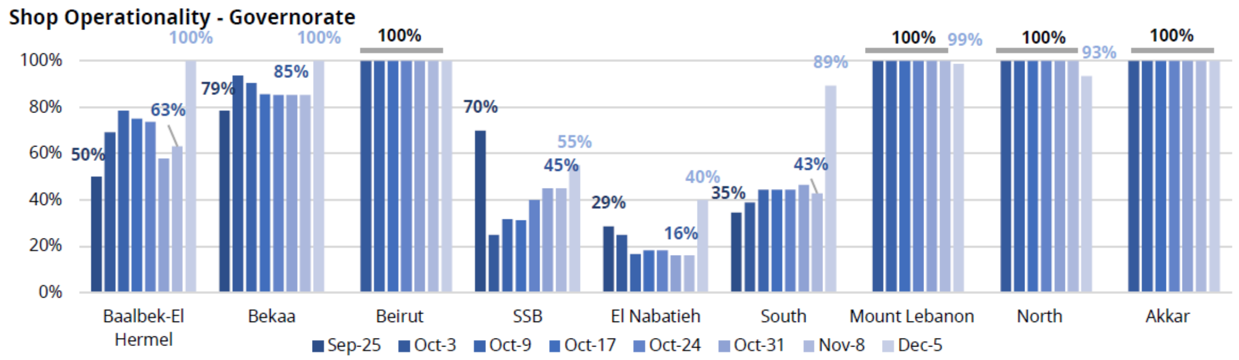
Food inflation eased to 2.6% in December, down from 5% in October and 3% in November. However, quarterly food inflation surged to 11%, marking a return to double-digit levels for the first time since September 2023, while year-on-year food inflation remained stable at 22%. Energy prices resumed their deflationary trend in December, decreasing by 1% after slight increases in October (+1.2%) and November (+0.2%). On a quarterly basis, energy prices remained relatively stable (+0.3%) but had declined by 7% since December 2023.

The primary driver of inflation in December was the annual adjustment of the education component of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) (+30%), followed by food inflation (+2.6%), despite a stable exchange rate of 89,000 LBP per USD. Lebanon's Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) reached a record high of 50.6, reflecting positive expectations of economic growth, political stability, and exchange rate steadiness. The local currency in circulation hit its highest level since October 2019, driven by increased demand for Lebanese pounds.

Meanwhile, food imports through the Port of Beirut rebounded in December 2024 and January 2025 after a dip in November. The financial sector also showed positive signs, with the Ministry of Finance reporting a USD 300 million budget surplus for FY2024, and the Central Bank announcing a USD 250 million recovery in liquid foreign currency reserves in January 2025.

Market Operationality:

Notably, on the governorate level, El Nabatieh (18% in November 2024 to 67% in January 2025), South (34% to 81%), and Baalbek-El Hermel (61% to 89%) showed significant improvements in market functionality. Exploring shop operationality during the conflict in October 2024 reveals that the markets in Baalbek-El Hermel, South, Nabatieh, and the Southern Suburbs of Beirut were most affected. These governorates, directly impacted by the conflict, exhibited the greatest disruptions in shop operations. For instance, the Southern Suburbs of Beirut saw a dramatic decline in market functionality, dropping from 70% on September 25 to around 25% by October 3, before recovering to 55% by December 5 following the ceasefire. In contrast, other governorates, including Bekaa, Beirut, Mount Lebanon, North, and Akkar, maintained at least 85% operationality from September onward[46].



Following the ceasefire, from November 2024 to January 2025, market functionality significantly[47] improved across the affected governorates. In the South, markets in Sour increased from 0% to 83%, Bent Jbeil from 0% to 75%, and Al-Nabatieh from 0% to 60%. It is important to note that 0% functionality should not be interpreted literally as zero, nor should 100% functionality be seen as absolute, as the sample size may not be fully representative.

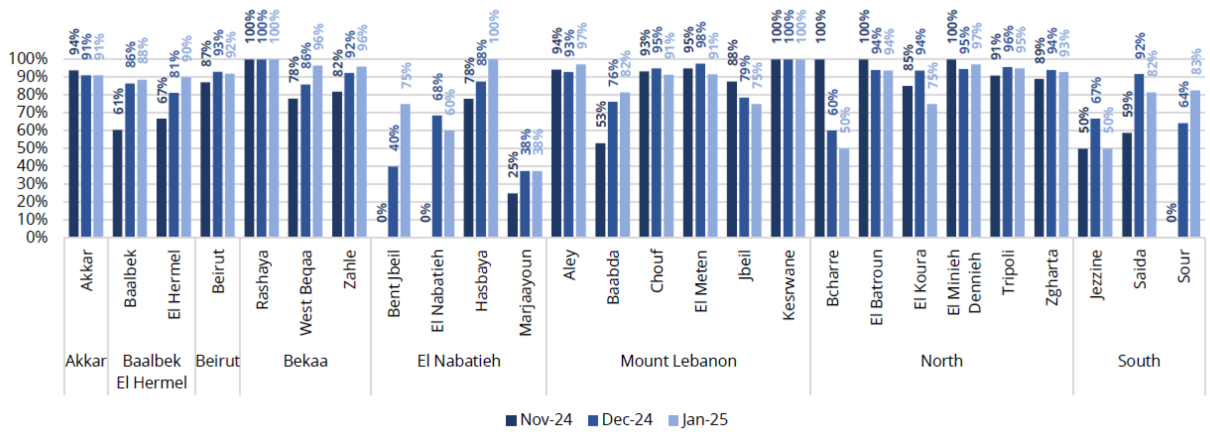
Between November 2024 and January 2025, operational shops in El Nabatieh, South, Baalbek-El Hermel, and Bekaa saw significant increases, while other areas maintained consistently high operationality. However, financial constraints continued to hinder shop operations in Akkar, North, Beirut, and Mount Lebanon. In El Nabatieh, conflict-related damage, destruction, and restricted access remained key challenges to operationality. Similarly, in Baalbek-El Hermel and the South, supply shortages and physical damage continued to disrupt business continuity.

In contrast, districts like Bcharre and Jezzine showed lower percentages of operational shops compared to other regions, but this was not necessarily due to direct conflict impacts. Both districts had a very small sample size—only two shops were surveyed in each district. A single shop closure thus significantly impacts the overall percentage, causing fluctuations to appear more drastic than in areas with larger samples. In Bcharre, financial difficulties led to the closure of one shop in January, while in Jezzine, security concerns resulted in the closure of one of the two surveyed shops.

[46] ibid

[47] WFP RAM | Food Security Analysis - Lebanon Market Monitor, November 2024. https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/wfp-ram-food-security-analysis-lebanon-market-monitor-november-2024

Shop Functionality - District



Market Functionality

The National Market Functionality Index (MFI)[48] rose from 6.9 in December to 7.2 in January, reflecting continued stabilization. All key dimensions of market functionality showed sustained improvements, with significant gains in access to markets, especially in conflict-affected areas.

The MFI[49] showed ongoing improvements across most regions in January 2025, continuing the positive trends from the previous months. The national MFI score increased from 4.9 in November to 6.9 in December, and then to 7.2 in January, indicating a steady recovery in market conditions. The most notable improvements were seen in Baalbek-El Hermel and the South, where MFI scores surged from 2.7 and 1.7 in November to 7.3 in January, suggesting that market functionality in these areas has largely stabilized and is now comparable to national levels. El Nabatieh, while still recovering, showed a significant rise from 1.1 in November to 4.4 in December and 6.3 in January, indicating ongoing recovery, though challenges remain. Markets in Beirut, Mount Lebanon, Bekaa, Akkar, and the North have maintained consistently high functionality, with scores reaching 7.3 since December.

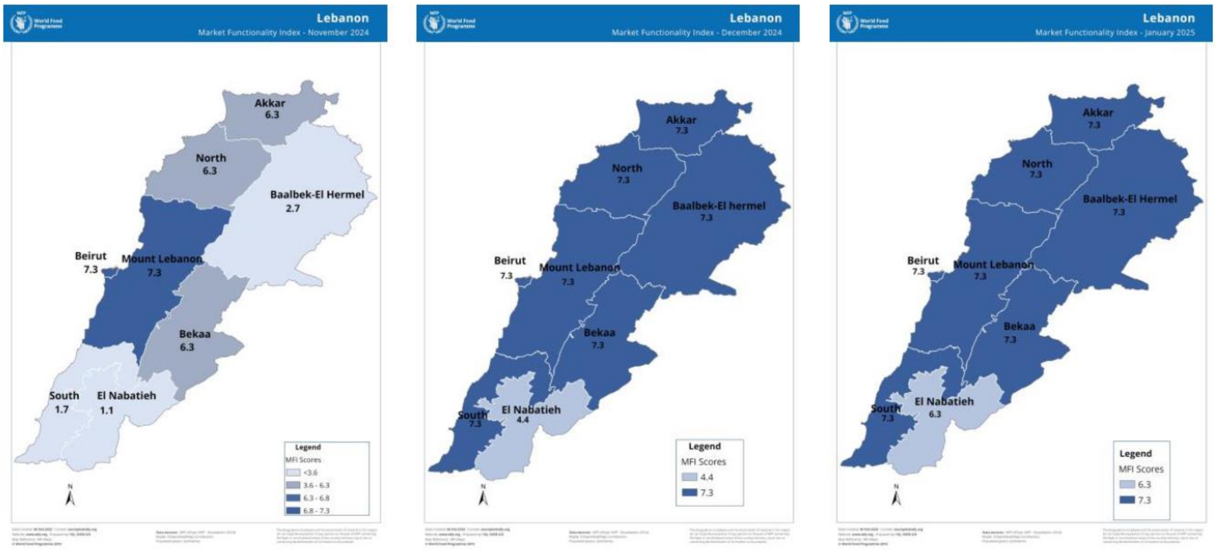
Solid market functionality was also observed in the remaining governorates, driven by good levels of assortment and availability of items, as well as strong resilience in supply chains. However, persistent issues with price predictability continued to affect MFI scores in some regions. In El Nabatieh, for example, shops reported price increases in non-cereal foods, leading to a slightly lower MFI score compared to other governorates.

48 WFP RAM | Food Security Analysis - Lebanon Market Monitor, January 2025. https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/wfp-ram-food-security-analysis-lebanon-market-monitor-january-2025

49 WFP's Market Functionality Index (MFI) is a quantitative measure of the functioning of markets based on a trader survey. It is designed to provide insights into the feasibility of market-based interventions. The MFI assigns the marketplace a score across different dimensions between zero (low functionality) and ten (high functionality) that can be interpreted consistently across time and locations.

MFI Scores

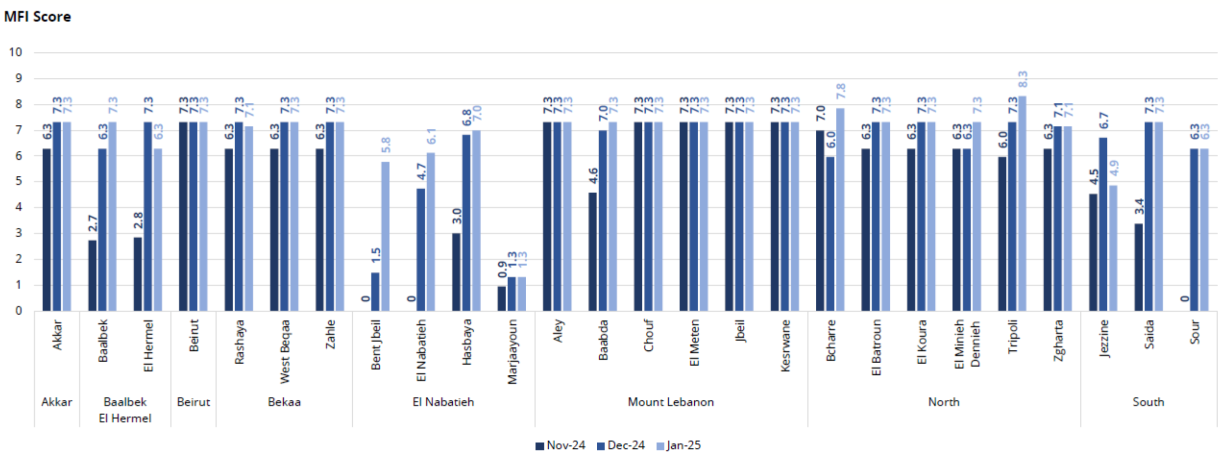
November 2024 **December 2024** **January 2025**



At the district level, significant improvements in the Market Functionality Index (MFI) are evident, particularly in the most affected areas. Bint Jbeil (0 to 5.8), Nabatieh (0 to 6.1), and Sour (0 to 6.3) in the South all showed substantial recovery, rising from a score of 0 to above 6. These areas, which were heavily impacted during the conflict, have seen the most notable progress.

Other districts also demonstrated improvements in MFI. Baalbak (2.7 to 7.3) and El Hermel (2.8 to 6.3) in Baalbek-El Hermel, as well as Hasbaya (3 to 7) in Nabatieh, all experienced a marked increase in functionality. Saida (3.4 to 7.3) in the South followed suit with a significant rise. However, Marjeyoun showed a more modest change, from 0.9 to 1.3.

These improvements highlight the recovery of local markets, particularly in the most conflict-affected districts, suggesting a stabilization of market conditions in key regions. While some areas still face challenges, such as Marjeyoun, the overall trend reflects a positive shift in market functionality across Lebanon.

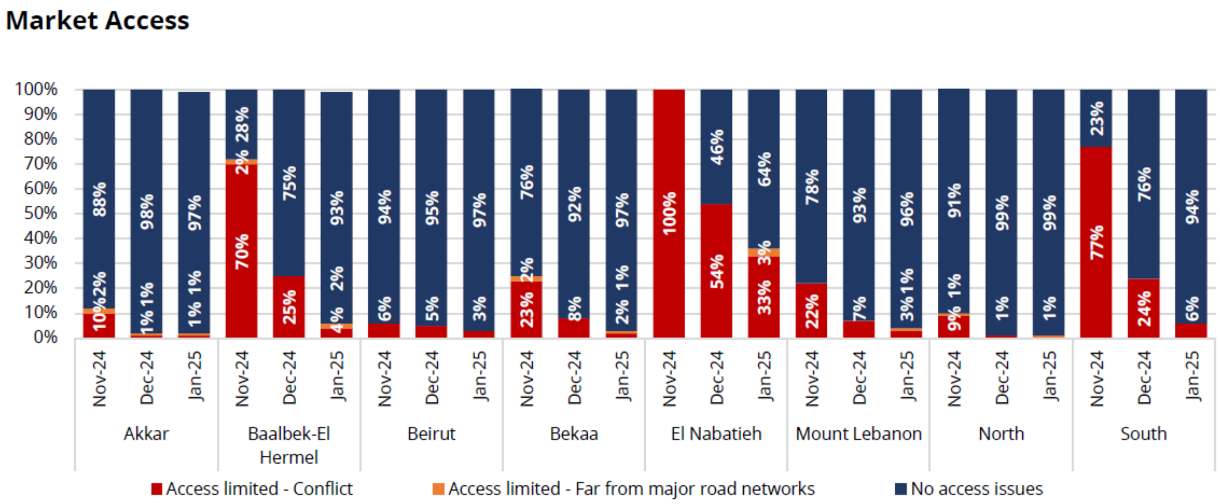


Market Access:

In January 2025, market access[50] indicators showed a notable improvement across Lebanon, particularly in Baalbek-El Hermel, Nabatieh, and the South, which were among the most affected by access limitations during the conflict in November 2024.

- **Baalbek-El Hermel**:
  - Supplier deliveries increased from **23%** in November to **81%** in January.
  - The percentage of shops reporting conflict-related access issues dropped sharply from **70%** in November to just **4%** in January.
- **The South**:
  - Supplier deliveries rose significantly from **24%** in November to **85%** in January.
  - Conflict-related access limitations decreased dramatically from **77%** in November to **6%** in January.
- **El Nabatieh**:
  - Supplier deliveries improved from **7%** in November to **61%** in January.
  - However, access constraints remained more prominent, with **33%** of shops still reporting conflict-related limitations, which was higher than in other regions.

These improvements in market access indicate a continued recovery from the conflict, with enhanced delivery capabilities and reduced access issues in key affected regions.



Supply Chain:

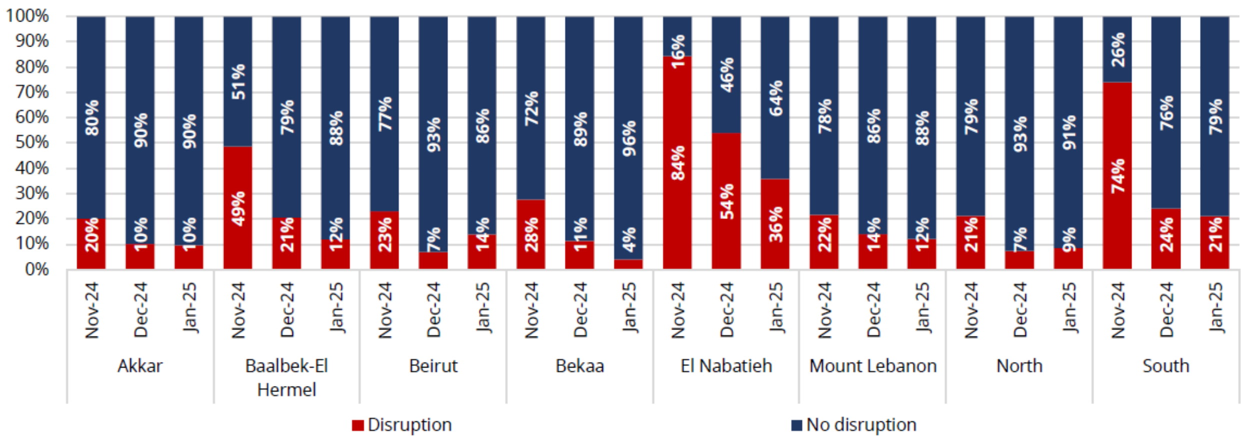
In January 2025, the geographic concentration of suppliers[51], which reflects localized disruption risks, continued to decline across most governorates, indicating an ongoing diversification of supply sources. This trend suggests that regions are increasingly less dependent on single suppliers, which helps mitigate risks associated with supply disruptions.

However, reliance on a single supplier, which signals dependence risks, showed mixed trends. While some governorates maintained or slightly increased supplier diversification compared to December, others—such as **El Nabatieh** and the **South**—experienced a renewed rise in supplier dependence. **Baalbak El Hermel** also followed this trend, with an increase in reliance on fewer suppliers. These changes highlight the varying

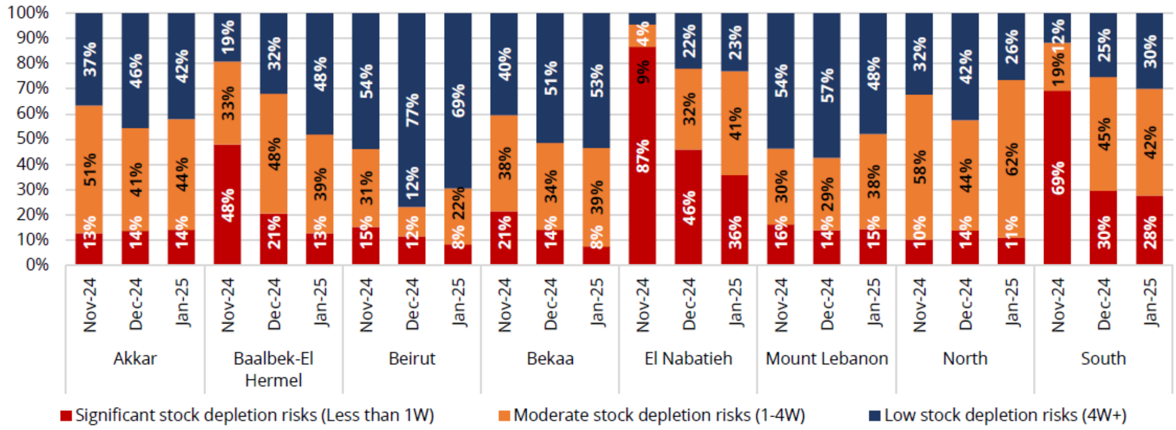
[50] WFP RAM | Food Security Analysis - Lebanon Market Monitor, January 2025. https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/wfp-ram-food-security-analysis-lebanon-market-monitor-january-2025
[51] WFP RAM | Food Security Analysis - Lebanon Market Monitor, January 2025. https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/wfp-ram-food-security-analysis-lebanon-market-monitor-january-2025

patterns of vulnerability in different regions, with some areas still facing challenges in diversifying their supply chains.

Disruption in the supply of essential food products

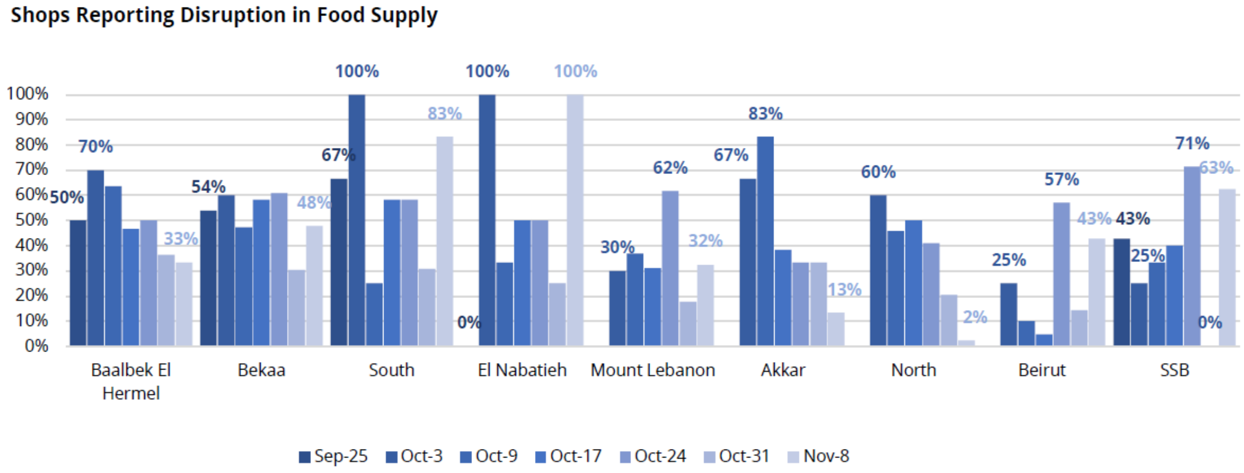


Stock coverage and depletion risks



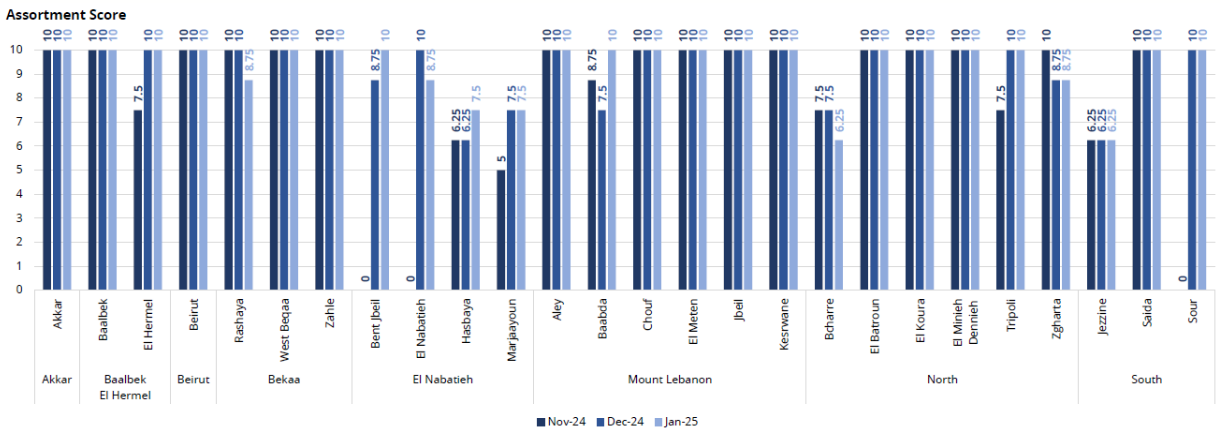
In January 2025, stock coverage continued to improve across most governorates, leading to a further reduction in significant stock depletion risks. There was a gradual increase in the number of shops reporting low depletion risks, with stock coverage now extending for more than four weeks in many areas. Additionally, the frequency of disruptions in the supply of essential food products continued to decline, reflecting improved stability in the supply chain.

The most notable improvements in stock coverage and supply chain stability were observed in **Baalbak El Hermel**, **El Nabatieh**, and the **South** governorates. These regions saw significant progress.



During the months of the conflict[52], disruptions in food supply were particularly high in November 2024, especially in the South, Nabatieh, and the suburbs of Beirut—regions that were heavily affected by the ongoing violence. However, by the end of November, the majority of shops in all governorates had managed to maintain at least two weeks of stock.

It is important to highlight that food imports through the Port of Beirut saw a significant drop in November 2024, falling to 118,000 tonnes due to the conflict's escalation. However, the situation quickly improved following the ceasefire in late November, with import volumes increasing to 153,000 tonnes in December and 156,000 tonnes in January 2025. This marked a rapid recovery in supply chains. Notably, while cereal and grain imports dropped significantly in November, they rebounded in the following months. Additionally, imports of vegetables, fruits, and nuts saw a sharp increase in January 2025, indicating a recovery in the availability of perishable goods.



The diversity of essential goods available in the markets also improved. The "assortment" dimension reached full recovery across all regions by January 2025. The national score for availability of essential goods increased from 9.5 in November to a perfect 10 in December and remained at that level in January. El Nabatieh, which had been lagging behind with a score of 6.3 in November, showed significant improvement, reaching 10 in December and sustaining it into January. Markets in the South, Baalbek-El Hermel, Akkar,

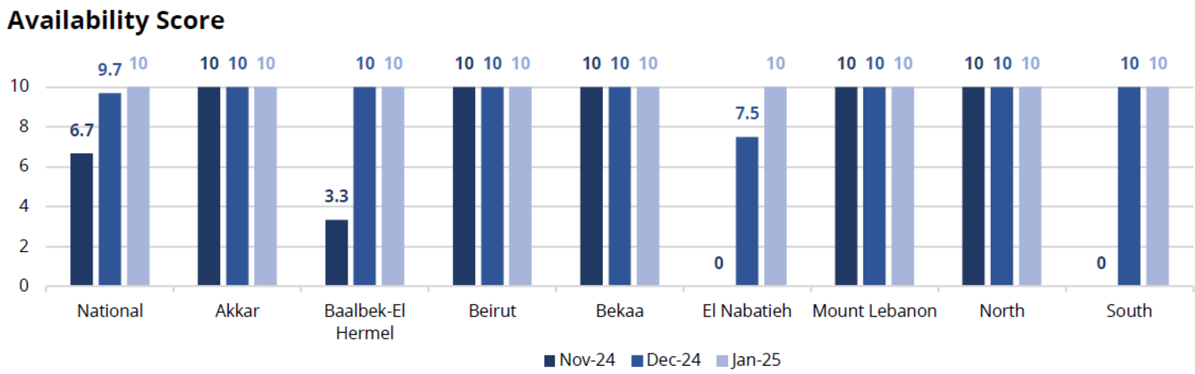
52 WFP RAM | Food Security Analysis - Lebanon Market Monitor, November 2024. https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/wfp-ram-food-security-analysis-lebanon-market-monitor-november-2024

Beirut, Bekaa, Mount Lebanon, and the North consistently maintained perfect assortment scores of 10 throughout the period, from November 2024 to January 2025, following the ceasefire.

At the district level[53], several areas saw sharp increases in the assortment of goods. Notably, **Bent Jbeil** (0 to 10) and **El Nabatieh** (0 to 8.75) in Nabatieh, as well as **Sour** (0 to 10) in the South, demonstrated significant improvements in the availability of a wider range of essential goods.

By January 2025, the risks of scarcity had significantly diminished across all governorates, particularly in the availability dimension[54]. The national score for availability[55] rose from 6.7 in November to 9.7 in December, ultimately reaching a perfect score of 10 in January. This upward trend indicates the elimination of major supply constraints across the country.

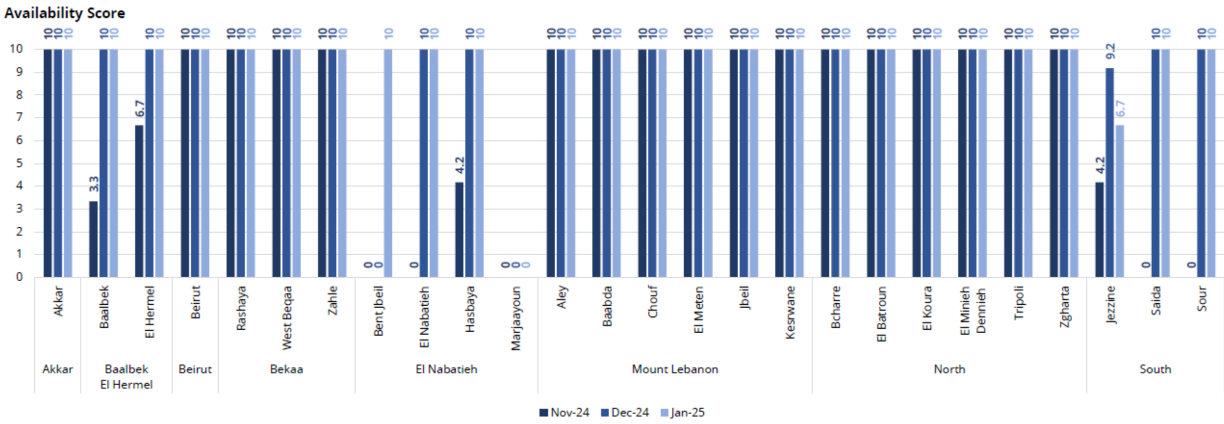
The most significant improvements were observed in the South and El Nabatieh, where the availability scores surged from 0 in November to 10 in January, signaling a complete recovery in supply chains and stabilized stock levels. Baalbek-El Hermel also showed a remarkable recovery, increasing from 3.3 in November to 10 in December, maintaining that score in January. Meanwhile, markets in Akkar, Beirut, Bekaa, Mount Lebanon, and the North consistently sustained perfect availability scores of 10 throughout the entire period.



At the district level[56], sharp improvements in availability were particularly notable in **Bent Jbeil** (0 to 10) and **Nabatieh** (0 to 10), both of which saw complete recoveries in supply. In addition, **Marjeyoun** remained at 0, indicating ongoing challenges in that district. In **Baalbak** (3.3 to 10), **Saida** (0 to 10), and **Sour** (0 to 10), significant improvements in availability were also observed, reflecting the restoration of local supply chains and the stabilization of essential goods availability.

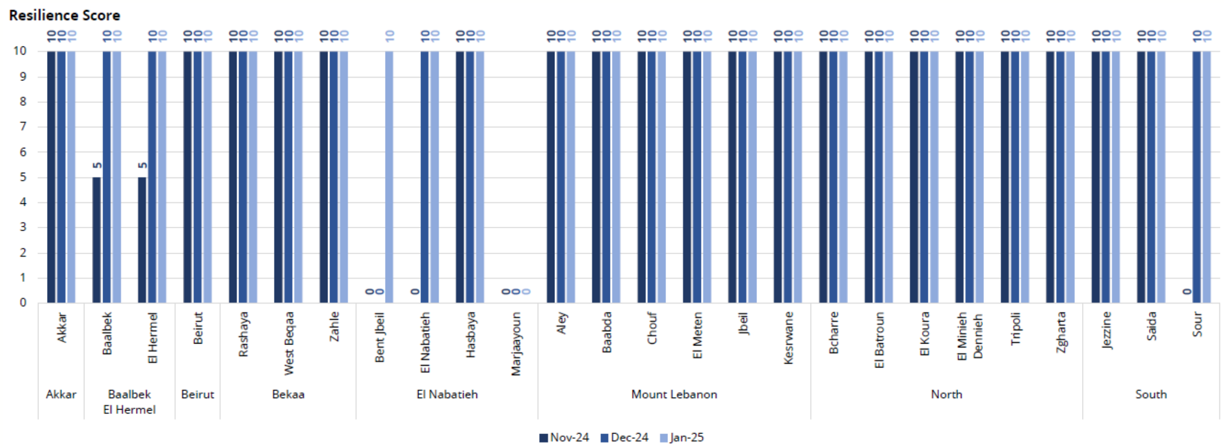
This recovery across all regions highlights the resilience and stability of the market post-conflict, with widespread availability of essential goods returning to pre-crisis levels.

[53] WFP Lebanon - Market Functionality Index (January 2025). https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/wfp-lebanon-market-functionality-index-january-2025
[54] Evaluates the current and short-term risks of scarcity
[55] WFP RAM | Food Security Analysis - Lebanon Market Monitor, January 2025. https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/wfp-ram-food-security-analysis-lebanon-market-monitor-january-2025
[56] WFP Lebanon - Market Functionality Index (January 2025). https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/wfp-lebanon-market-functionality-index-january-2025



Regarding supply chain resilience[57], the resilience dimension[58], achieved full recovery across all governorates by January 2025. This was reflected in improved supply chain responsiveness and stock coverage. The national resilience score rose from 6.9 in November to 10 in December, maintaining this level in January, signaling a strong recovery and stability in supply chains. Notable improvements were observed in **El Nabatieh** and the **South**, where scores surged from 0 in November to **10** by December, maintaining this level in January. Similarly, **Baalbek-El Hermel** saw significant progress, improving from **5** in November to **10** in December and maintaining that score in January. **Akkar**, **Beirut**, **Bekaa**, **Mount Lebanon**, and the **North** consistently maintained perfect resilience scores throughout the period.

At the **district level**[59], **Baalbak** and **El Hermel** in Baalbek-El Hermel showed improvements from **5 to 10**, while **Bent Jbeil** and **Nabatieh** in Nabatieh saw improvements from **0 to 10**. **Marjeoun** remained at **0**, but **Sour** in the South improved significantly from **0 to 10**, reflecting a broader recovery in supply chains across the country.



Price Changes:

In January 2025, the **price dimension**[60], showed gradual improvements across most governorates. However, price unpredictability continued to be a key concern nationwide, limiting the maximum attainable score to 5 out of 10. The national score for price stability increased from 2.5 in November to 4.5 in December, and further to 4.8 in January, signaling ongoing progress despite persistent price volatility.

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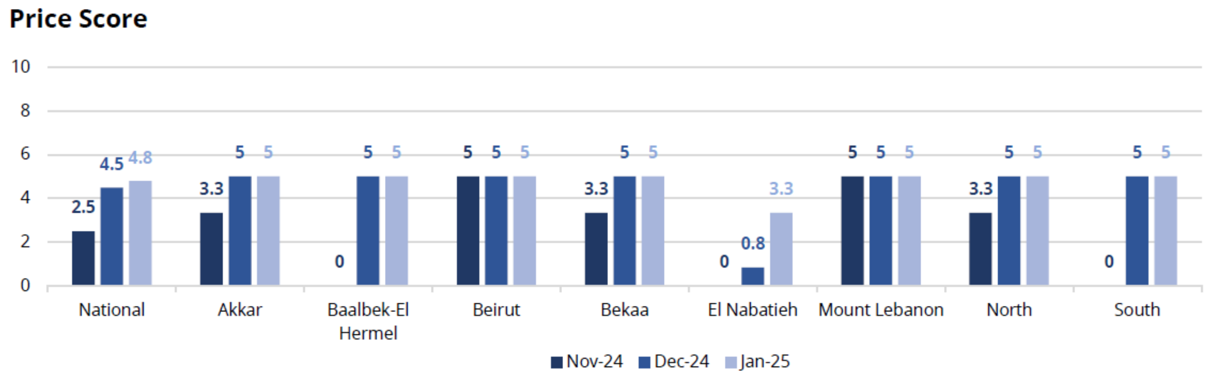
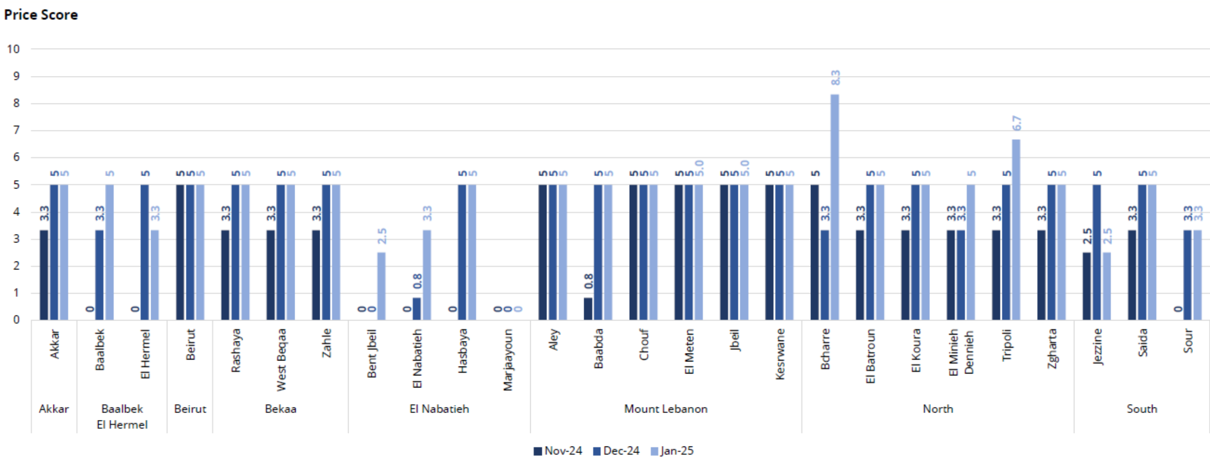
[57] WFP RAM | Food Security Analysis - Lebanon Market Monitor, January 2025. https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/wfp-ram-food-security-analysis-lebanon-market-monitor-january-2025
[58] Evaluates supply chain responsiveness and stock coverage
[59] WFP Lebanon - Market Functionality Index (January 2025). https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/wfp-lebanon-market-functionality-index-january-2025
[60] Assesses price stability and predictability.

Several governorates, including **Akkar**, **Bekaa**, **Mount Lebanon**, **Beirut**, **Baalbek-El Hermel**, **the South**, and **the North**, reached the maximum score of 5, indicating relatively stable price conditions in these regions. **El Nabatieh**, however, continued to face challenges but showed notable improvement, rising from 0 in November to 0.8 in December, and reaching 3.3 in January. This suggests a reduction in extreme price fluctuations, though it still lags behind other regions.

Particularly noteworthy was the improvement in **Baalbek-El Hermel** and the **South**, where scores surged from 0 to 5, reflecting a significant recovery in price stability in these conflict-affected areas.

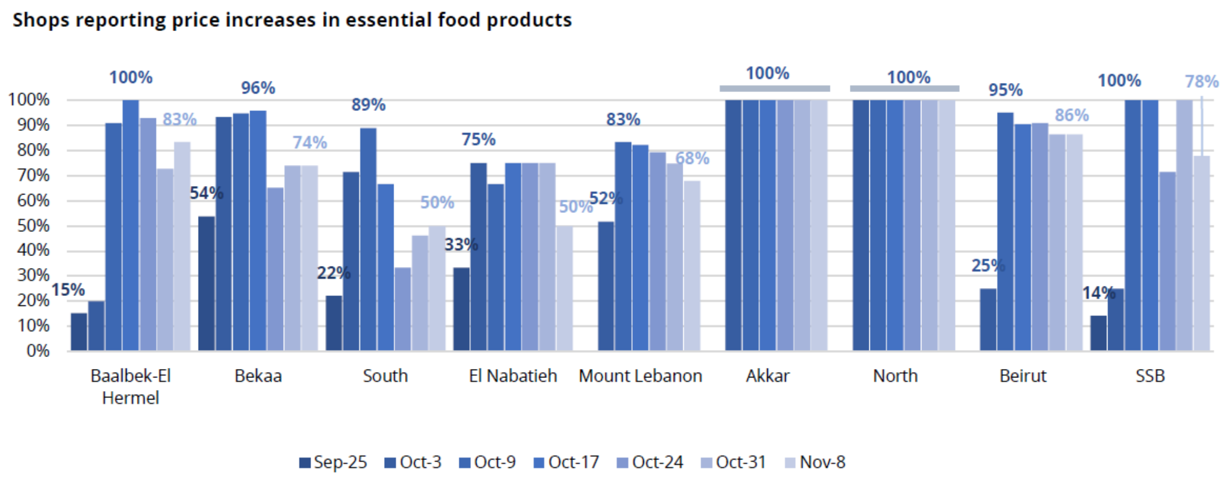


At the district level[61], significant improvements were seen in **Bent Jbeil** (0 to 2.5), **Nabatieh** (0 to 3.3), and **Hasbaya** (0 to 5), while **Marjeyoun** remained at 0, indicating ongoing price instability. In **Baalbak** (0 to 5), **El Hermel** (0 to 3.3), and **Sour** (0 to 3.3), sharp improvements were also observed, reflecting progress in price stabilization, although some districts still face challenges in achieving full price stability.



In the period leading up to January 2025, **price trends** were largely influenced by both local and global factors. Moving back to the period of conflict, prices of food products saw notable increases across all governorates, particularly between October 3 to October 17, 2024, with little decline in November. A staggering 100% of shops in **Akkar** and the **North** reported price hikes throughout October, which continued into November, highlighting the widespread nature of the price pressures.

[61] WFP Lebanon - Market Functionality Index (January 2025). https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/wfp-lebanon-market-functionality-index-january-2025



It's important to note that Lebanon's heavy reliance on imports has meant that global food price trends have had a direct impact on local markets. The FAO Food Price Index stood at 124.9 points in January 2025, a slight decline from its November peak of 127.7 points, but still 6% higher than in January 2024 (117.6 points). Notably, the Cereals Price Index continued its downward trend, reaching 111.7 points in January 2025, reflecting relative stability compared to December (111.4 points) and a 7% decline from January 2024 (119.9 points). Similarly, global wheat prices stabilized at USD 237/tonne in January 2025, following a dip in November 2024. This marked an 8% decrease from USD 257/tonne in January 2024, indicating improved global supply conditions. While global food and cereal prices are projected to gradually decline through 2025-26, some volatility is expected, particularly due to weather disruptions and supply chain challenges.

Despite the decline in global wheat prices, the cost of bread in Lebanon remained high, largely due to the removal of subsidies on imported wheat. The price of bread surged from USD 0.74/kg in January 2024 to USD 0.96/kg in December 2024, holding steady at that level through January 2025. The price of wheat had increased by 18% in September 2024 and 40% over the third quarter of 2024. Consequently, the price of a medium-sized pack of Arabic bread (840 grams) reached LBP 65,000 at bakeries, up from LBP 55,000 for 800 grams before subsidies were lifted. In response, the Lebanese Ministry of Economy and Trade issued a regulation in late January 2025, slightly reducing the weight of standard white bread bundles while maintaining prices. The weight of the medium bread bundle was decreased from 850 grams to 835 grams, with pricing fixed at LBP 65,000 at bakeries and LBP 77,000 at stores. Similarly, the weight of the small bread bundle was reduced from 400 grams to 392 grams, with prices remaining at LBP 40,000 at bakeries and LBP 45,000 at stores. This new regulation, effective from January 31, 2025, also mandates that bakeries and retail stores clearly display the prices and weights of both bundle sizes.

Population Demand:

S/MEBs[62]

In Lebanon, the costs of the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) and Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB)[63] have fluctuated due to the ongoing economic crisis. Between September and December 2024, a period marked by political conflict, the total cost of the SMEB rose by 2.6 percent in Lebanese pounds (LBP) and 3 percent in US dollars (USD). Annually, this increase reached 16 percent in LBP and 17 percent in USD.

[62] Established in 2014 and serve as a benchmark to estimate the cost of food and other basic needs of a Syrian refugee family in Lebanon. SMEB is the absolute minimum amount required to cover lifesaving needs. MEB is what a household requires to meet its essential needs. The S/MEBs are composed of three sub-baskets: food, non-food items, and non-food services. The SMEB and the MEB were last revised in 2020 and 2022 respectively.

[63] WFP Lebanon - Market Functionality Index (January 2025). https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/wfp-lebanon-market-functionality-index-january-2025

Similarly, the full MEB recorded a quarterly rise of 3.8 percent in LBP and 4.1 percent in USD, with annual increases of 21 percent in LBP and 22 percent in USD. The Food SMEB grew by 4.5 percent in LBP and 5.3 percent in USD quarterly, while the Food MEB increased by 5.1 percent in LBP and 5.6 percent in USD. Year-on-year, the Food SMEB rose by 9 percent in LBP and 10 percent in USD, mirroring the MEB's 9 percent increase in both currencies.
Rising SMEB and MEB costs highlight the persistent impact of Lebanon's economic crisis, with food expenses showing notable increases both quarterly and annually.

The Non-Food MEB increased by 2.7–2.9 percent quarterly and 34 percent annually in both currencies, while the Non-Food SMEB rose by 1.2–1.4 percent quarterly and 22 percent annually. The cost of Non-Food Items (NFI) within both categories also fluctuated, increasing quarterly by 1.8–2 percent in LBP and 2.7–2.9 percent in USD, with an annual rise of 1 percent in LBP and 2 percent in USD. The broader Non-Food Services (NFS) MEB recorded a 3 percent quarterly increase and a 44 percent annual surge, while the NFS SMEB rose by 1 percent quarterly and 29 percent annually.

By December 2024, one month after the ceasefire, WFP's latest data estimated the total cost of the SMEB for a household of five at LBP 40.4 million (USD 450), while the MEB reached LBP 51.3 million (USD 571). The SMEB saw a marginal 0.2 percent decline in LBP but a 0.3 percent rise in USD, whereas the MEB increased by 1.9 percent in LBP and 2.3 percent in USD. These discrepancies stemmed from retailers adjusting their exchange rates to align more closely with the informal market.

During the same period, the Non-Food SMEB and MEB reached LBP 23.4 million (USD 261) and LBP 28.7 million (USD 320), respectively. While the Non-Food SMEB recorded a slight 0.3 percent decrease in LBP and a 0.1 percent increase in USD, the Non-Food MEB rose by 1.5 percent in LBP and 1.8 percent in USD. A key driver of this increase was the 30 percent surge in education costs, included in the MEB but not in the SMEB, following the Central Administration of Statistics' annual adjustment of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for education.

The NFI SMEB was valued at LBP 4.77 million (USD 53.2) and the NFI MEB at LBP 5.23 million (USD 58.4), both experiencing a monthly decline of 3.1–3.3 percent in LBP and 1.5–1.6 percent in USD. This drop was largely driven by a 4.4 percent decrease in cooking gas prices. Meanwhile, Non-Food Services (NFS) costs per household stood at LBP 18.62 million (USD 208) for the SMEB and LBP 23.47 million (USD 262) for the MEB. The NFS MEB rose by 2.6 percent monthly, largely due to education-related inflation, whereas the NFS SMEB saw a modest 0.5 percent increase, mainly influenced by minor inflation in essential services such as water, electricity, and healthcare.

VARIATION OF S/MEB COST IN USD – DECEMBER 2024

	Full SMEB	Food SMEB	Non-Food SMEB	Full MEB	Food MEB	Non-Food MEB
Monthly (since Nov-24)	+0.25%	+0.47%	+0.10%	+2.27%	+2.86%	+1.81%
Quarterly (since Sep-24)	+3.0%	+5.3%	+1.4%	+4.1%	+5.6%	+2.9%
Yearly (since Dec-23)	+17%	+10%	+22%	+22%	+9%	+34%

VARIATION OF S/MEB COST IN LBP – DECEMBER 2024

	Full SMEB	Food SMEB	Non-Food SMEB	Full MEB	Food MEB	Non-Food MEB
Monthly (since Nov-24)	-0.22%	-0.15%	-0.28%	+1.95%	+2.52%	+1.50%
Quarterly (since Sep-24)	+2.6%	+4.5%	+1.2%	+3.8%	+5.1%	+2.7%
Yearly (since Dec-23)	+16%	+9%	+22%	+21%	+9%	+34%

Needs and social safety net schemes

During the conflict, food assistance targeted internally displaced persons (IDPs), but it was insufficient to reach all systematically. While the aid provided was essential, it did not fully cover the needs of all vulnerable groups. The escalating cost of living in Lebanon has pushed families to prioritize survival over long-term needs such as health and education. Vulnerable groups, including women, children, the elderly, persons with disabilities, refugees, and migrant workers, are facing heightened risks. According to the **Child Protection and Risk Analysis (CfRA)**, the **impact of the conflict** on families in Lebanon is stark. **15% of households** have been forced to withdraw their children from school, further disrupting **education** and **future opportunities** for children. Additionally, **33% of households** reported being unable to afford **life-saving medication** for their children, putting their health and survival at risk. Furthermore, **27% of families** have struggled to access **adequate baby hygiene items and diapers**, highlighting the **basic unmet needs** of infants and young children, and exacerbating the already dire conditions of **vulnerable families**.

Children in Lebanon, already struggling from the effects of months of bombardments, are experiencing prolonged vulnerability. This includes physical injuries, emotional trauma, loss of education, and inadequate nutrition, all of which threaten their health and development. Many children have suffered profound losses, having lost one or both parents, siblings, or close friends. In addition to the emotional trauma, communities have been shattered, with homes reduced to rubble, and essential infrastructure like water pumping stations, hospitals, and schools damaged or destroyed. Mental health concerns are also rising. According to UNICEF's latest Child Protection and Risk Analysis (CfRA)[64], 72% of caregivers reported that their children were anxious or nervous during the war, and 62% said their children were depressed or sad. This marks an increase from 59% and 45% respectively in the 2023 CfRA, indicating that the mental health impact on children is worsening as the conflict persists.

[64] UNICEF (2025). Shattered Childhood. https://www.unicef.org/lebanon/reports/shattered-childhoods

Before the conflict, Lebanon's economic crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic had already driven many households into poverty. Now, the devastation has deepened, leaving children and families in an even more desperate situation. Between January and April 2025, over 500,000 children and their families risk losing critical subsistence cash support from UN agencies, a move that will leave them unable to afford even the most basic necessities and push them further into desperation at a time of unprecedented crisis.

National social programs[65], such as AMAN/ESSN, continued to provide some support to beneficiaries, offering 20 USD per person per month for food needs (with a cap of six members per household) and 25 USD per household per month for non-food needs. These payments were resumed in October 2024 following a suspension in July 2024. However, by December 2024, the transfer values were enough to cover only 53 percent of food needs, down from 58 percent in December 2023, and 10 percent of non-food needs, down from 12 percent in the previous year.

In parallel, Lebanese residents were also supported through the Sock Responsive Safety Nets (SRSN) program, which was implemented by WFP in partnership with the Ministry of Social Affairs. This program has been providing assistance to around 50,000 households on a monthly basis since October 2024, with the assistance amounts similar to those provided through the AMAN/ESSN program. However, the continuation of this program beyond February 2025 will depend on the availability of funding.

For Syrian refugees, cash-based transfers were provided to cover food and other essential needs, through various modalities like restricted food vouchers or unrestricted cash for both food and non-food expenses. Typically, not all Syrian refugee households are eligible for the full assistance package covering both food and non-food needs. However, in response to the escalation of conflict, from November 2024, all assisted Syrian refugee households were given unrestricted cash transfers to provide maximum flexibility during the emergency.

The transfer value for Syrian refugees increased in November 2024 to USD 20 per person for the food component and USD 45 per household for the non-food component, a step that was initially planned for January 2025, but advanced due to the heightened conflict. By December 2024, the food component of the transfer value covered 53 percent of the Food SMEB, a significant increase from 40 percent in October 2024. The non-food component covered 17 percent of the Non-Food SMEB, up from 15 percent in November 2023, though still lower than the 19 percent coverage in December 2023 when the non-food transfer value was increased to USD 40 per household.

With the extent of damage to markets, livelihoods as well as housing; the housing sector was the hardest hit, accounting for US$4.6 billion (67%) of total damage. 95% of returning IDPs now reside in rental housing or host settings, with many having sold assets to cope with prolonged displacement, the conflict had effects on populations with many who will continue to struggle to afford basic necessities like food, clothing, and shelter[66]. The situation remains dire, with the humanitarian needs growing more pressing every day.

[65] WFP Lebanon - Market Functionality Index (January 2025). https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/wfp-lebanon-market-functionality-index-january-2025
[66] Lebanon - Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDNA), (March 2025). https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/lebanon-rapid-damage-and-needs-assessment-rdnamarch-2025-enar

45%
of households were forced to cut spending on health

31%
of households did not have enough drinking water in the month before the survey

33%
of households could not access life-saving medications for their children

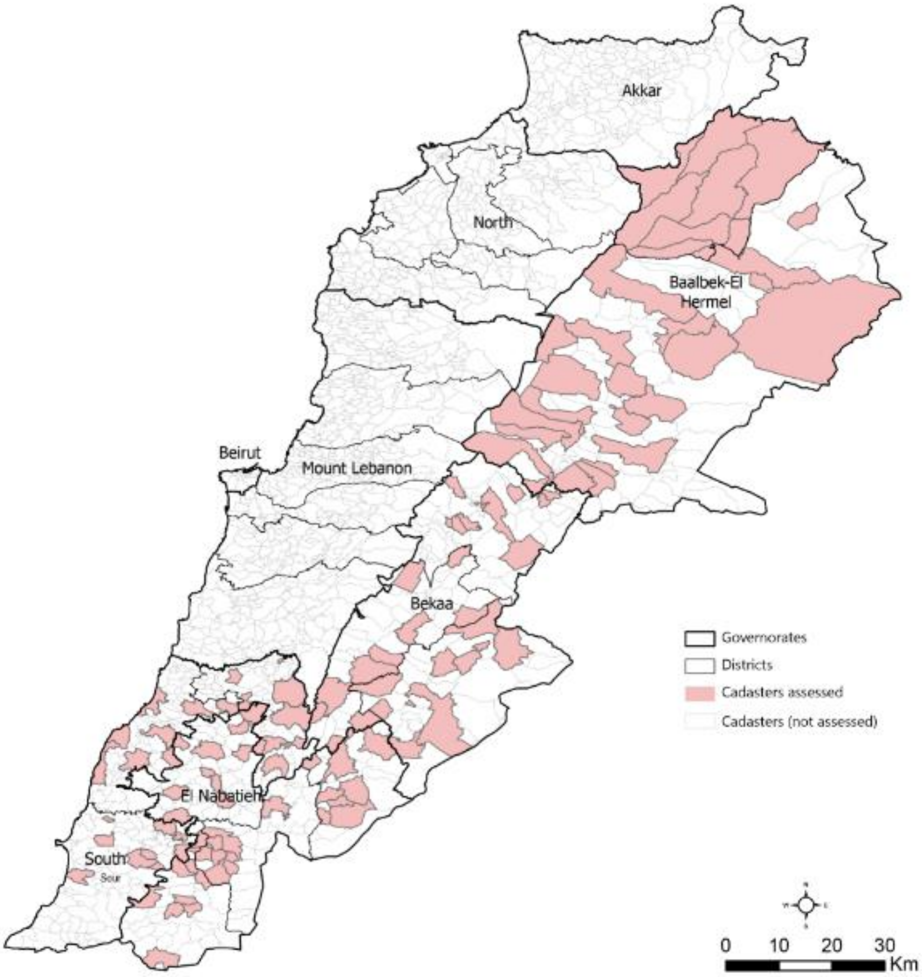
28%
of children did not have enough clothes to keep warm in winter

15%
of households withdrew their children from school entirely, while 30% reduced expenses on education so they could afford basic necessities

27%
of households could not access adequate baby hygiene items, including diapers.

22%
of households had no heating source for the winter

The returnees, majority from Nabatieh District (30%), Sour District (18%), and Baalbek-El Hermel (17%) face numerous challenges due to ongoing infrastructure damage and supply chain disruptions, which hinder their access to essential services such as WASH, healthcare, shelter, and education. Moreover, around 160,000 individuals remain displaced outside their home areas, further emphasizing the need for continued humanitarian assistance. The Humanitarian Situation Monitoring (HSM), tracked populations' most pressing needs. While other governorates may have experienced similar issues, **Nabatieh**, **Baalbek El Hermel**, and the **South** have been particularly impacted by the conflict, and their challenges are more thoroughly documented due to the availability of **published data.**



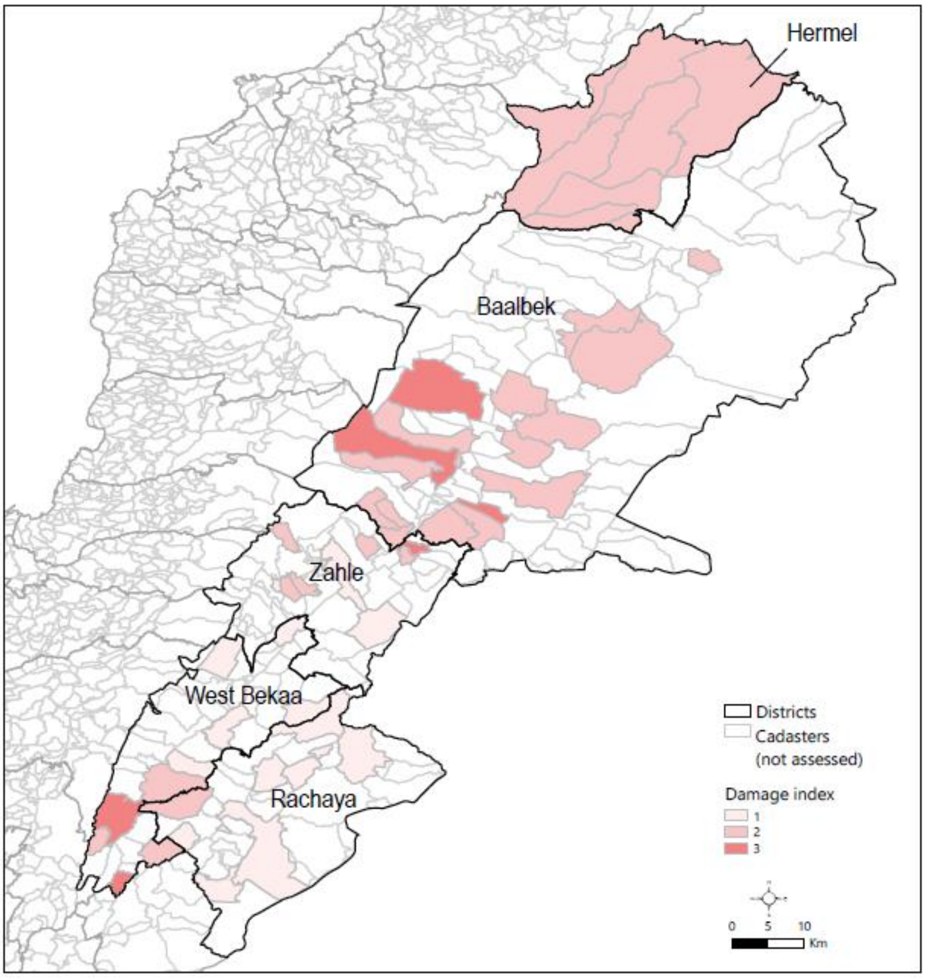
HSM selected cadasters

For the purpose of **geographic coverage**, a strategic selection of **28 cadasters** in the **South** and **33 cadasters** in the **El Nabatieh Governorates**[67] was made, ensuring that these areas, with significant conflict impact, were represented. Additionally, **28 cadasters** from the **Bekaa Governorate** and **24 cadasters** from **Baalbek El Hermel Governorate**[68] were also included, based on their vulnerability and population needs.

[67] REACH (2025). Lebanon: Humanitarian Situation Monitoring (HSM) South and El Nabatieh Governorates (January 2025). https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/lebanon-humanitarian-situation-monitoring-hsm-south-and-el-nabatieh-governorates-january-2025

[68] REACH (2025). Lebanon: Humanitarian Situation Monitoring (HSM) Bekaa and Baalbeck El Hermel Governorates (January 2025). https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/lebanon-humanitarian-situation-monitoring-hsm-bekaa-and-baalbeck-el-hermel-governorates-january-2025

Distribution of Cadasters Based on Access Index Scores



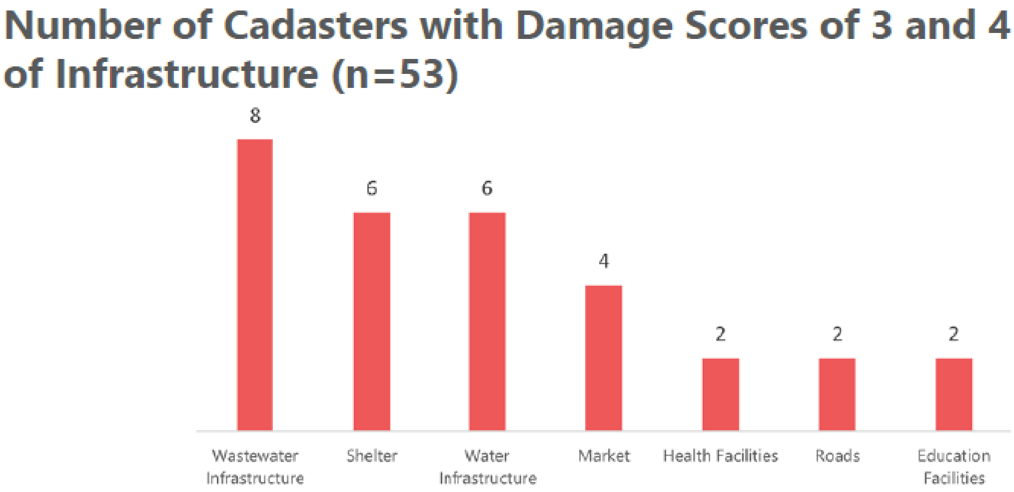
The damage assessment following the conflict in Baalbek, West Bekaa, and Zahle districts reveals a devastating picture of infrastructure destruction and its lasting impact on the population. Six cadasters, namely Khodr Baalbek, Bouday, Taraiya, Ali En-Nahri, Qelaya, and Machghara, classified as level 3 damage, represent the most severely affected areas. These districts are in urgent need of extensive rehabilitation to restore essential infrastructure and meet the immediate needs of affected populations.

In the remaining 47 cadasters assessed, most reported minor structural damage (scores of 1 or 2), such as broken windows and doors, with markets and housing infrastructure being the most significant contributors to the higher damage scores. Notably, half of the assessed cadasters (29/53) reported significant shelter damage, while 23 cadasters indicated substantial damage to market infrastructure, directly impacting the safety and living conditions of residents.

The Access to Services Index, which gauges access to essential services like markets, education, WASH, and housing, showed restricted access in several regions, particularly in Baalbek-El Hermel. 14 of 24 assessed cadasters in this region scored high (3 or 4), indicating severe limitations in access to food, healthcare, education, and water. In stark contrast, the Bekaa cadasters reported minimal to moderate service access challenges (scores of 1 or 2), with Baalbek City being the only exception in this region, scoring 1 for service access.

Complementing this with the CfRA findings, the nutrition crisis is dire, especially in Baalbek-Hermel and Bekaa governorates, where severe food poverty has worsened dramatically. In Baalbek-Hermel, 51% of children under two experience severe food poverty, a rise from 46% in 2023. Similarly, in Bekaa, 45% of children under two face extreme food deprivation, up from 28% the previous year. This malnutrition crisis is exacerbated by insufficient meal frequency, which impairs both physical growth and cognitive development. Nearly half of children (49 per cent) under age 18 in Bekaa and just over one-third (34 per cent) in Baalbeck-Hermel had only one meal on the day before the survey. Nationwide, the rate was 30 per cent.

In terms of education, the conflict has disrupted schooling for many children. Before the ceasefire, a staggering 65% of children could not attend school, and as of the survey, 25% remained out of school. Baalbek-Hermel and Bekaa continue to experience severe educational barriers, with 40% and 38% of children respectively still out of school after the ceasefire. Financial barriers, including the cost of school fees, transportation, and materials, have become the primary obstacle to education, with two-thirds of families citing this as the main reason their children remain out of school. The growing concern for the future of education is shared by 85% of caregivers, reflecting the widespread fear for children's ability to continue their education amid the ongoing crisis.



The most inaccessible services across assessed areas were financial facilities (19/53), health services (17/53), markets (14/53), and food supplies (10/53). Financial constraints, driven by income loss and rising prices, emerged as a major barrier to recovery, prolonging economic instability and limiting access to essentials.

The primary factor hindering access to basic needs was financial constraints, stemming from reduced income, limited cash availability, and rising costs. Among those struggling to access financial services (16/19), distance to the nearest facility was the most common barrier. In Baalbek-El Hermel, security concerns led to bank, OMT, and ATM closures in five cadasters, exacerbating cash inaccessibility. Nine cadasters had no financial facilities even before the conflict, highlighting a pre-existing challenge.

Access to healthcare was primarily restricted by financial barriers (10/17), compounded by increased medication costs (9/17) and unaffordable healthcare services (7/17). Medication for chronic diseases was unavailable in 10 cadasters, particularly affecting Bekaa. Health service access was particularly challenging, with medication shortages (30/53) and limited access to cancer treatments, including chemotherapy and radiotherapy (21/53), reported as top-priority needs. In Baalbeck, mental health services were a key concern, while in Bekaa, non-communicable disease treatments were more frequently cited.

Market access was similarly constrained by financial difficulties, with reduced income (11/14) and lack of cash (10/14) cited as primary barriers. Rising prices of essential goods (9/14) further restricted affordability. In Baalbek-El Hermel, physical damage to market infrastructure in six cadasters forced residents to travel long distances for necessities. Food accessibility was hindered by financial limitations (7/10), market destruction (5/10), and increased demand due to returning displaced populations (4/10), further disrupting supply chains.

Shelter conditions remained a pressing concern, with the most reported barriers being infrastructure damage (5/9) and lack of financial means to afford rent or repairs (5/9). In Baalbek-El Hermel, high rental costs (6/9) exacerbated housing challenges. Water access was also affected by both physical damage, such as broken water containers (7/7), and financial constraints. Shelter support was a higher priority for IDPs, whereas returnees and pre-conflict residents prioritized health services. Livelihood support was particularly critical for those who remained throughout the conflict.

Compared to the previous assessment, cash assistance remains the most inaccessible need, while healthcare inaccessibility has worsened. Initially, security concerns and physical damage were the primary barriers, but financial hardship has now become the dominant challenge. Limited livelihood opportunities further compound these difficulties.

Protection-related concerns were reported exclusively in Baalbek-El Hermel, affecting 7 of 28 assessed cadasters, including Nabi Chit, Brital, Serraaine Et-Tahta, and Qsarnaba. Cash and food support were universally identified as urgent needs, while priorities varied by population group.

Priority needs included:

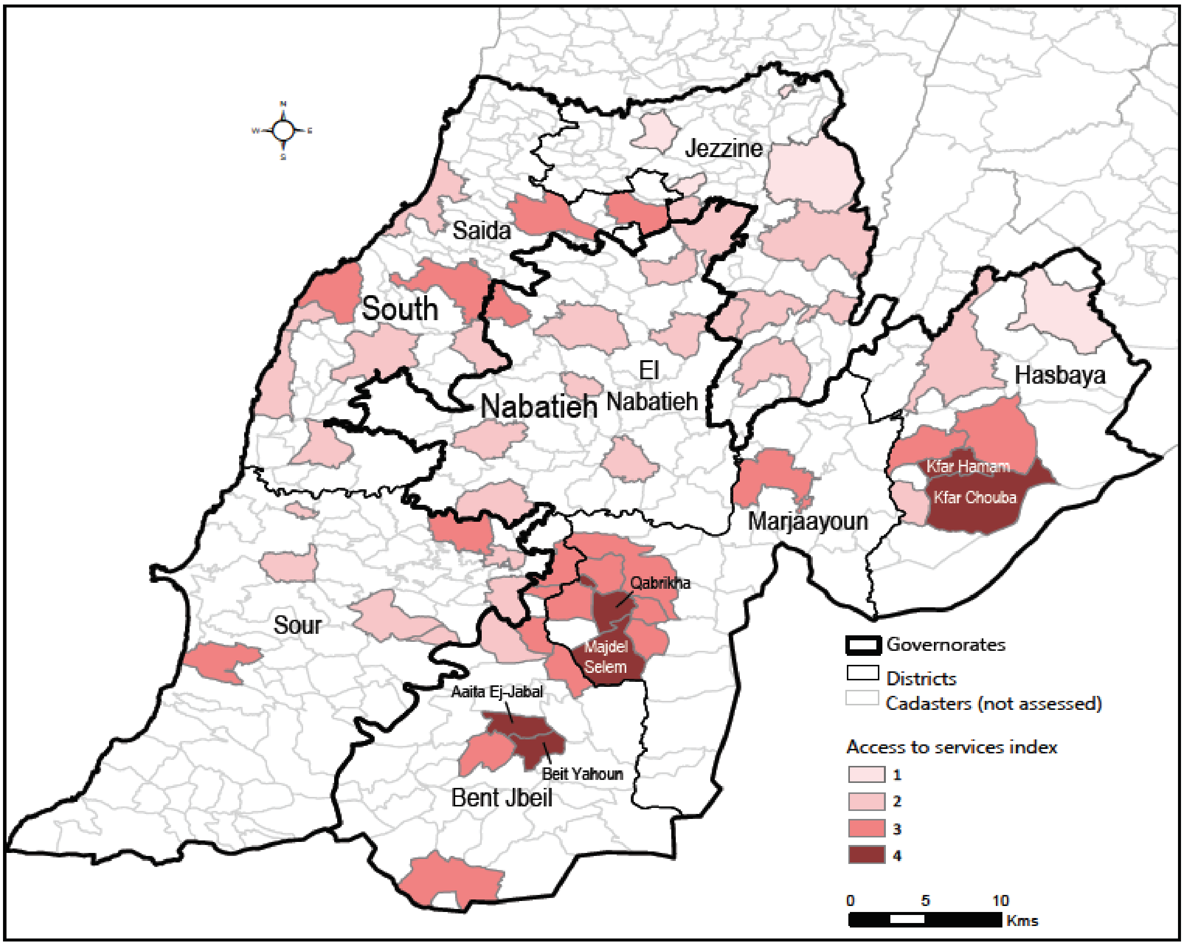
- **Cash Assistance:** A high-priority need, essential for improving access to healthcare, education, and shelter. Despite financial constraints being the most reported barrier to meeting basic needs, cash-based aid remains low.
- **Food Assistance:** Of 48 cadasters prioritizing food aid, key needs included cooking oil (28/48), rice (23/48), and meat (16/48). In 23 areas, KIs suggested cash assistance as a more effective solution.
- **Health Services:** Reported as a priority in 33 cadasters, with medication (24/33), healthcare equipment, and specialized treatments (21/33) being the most cited needs. Mental health services were highlighted in 7 areas, underscoring growing concerns over psychological well-being.

The Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) Index revealed widespread gaps in aid coverage, with 40 out of 53 assessed cadasters reporting high severity scores. The index considers the availability, continuity, and sufficiency of humanitarian and governmental assistance.

- In 20 cadasters, including Zighrine, Chaat, Machghara, and Qelaya, no humanitarian or governmental aid had been received at the time of assessment.
- Even in the 32/33 cadasters where aid was reported, it was largely deemed insufficient, with 23 areas—including Hadath Baalbek, Taraiya, Riyaq, and Taalbaya—receiving support that did not meet residents' needs.
- In 14 cadasters, humanitarian aid delivery was significantly disrupted, preventing assistance from reaching those in need. Notable cases included Hazerta, Iaat, and Zighrine Debbeh.

The assessment highlights the severe impact of conflict on infrastructure, access to services, and economic recovery, particularly in Baalbek-El Hermel. Financial constraints have emerged as the most significant barrier to accessing essential needs, replacing initial security-related challenges. Limited aid coverage, rising costs, and damaged infrastructure continue to hinder recovery efforts. Addressing these gaps requires urgent financial support, targeted humanitarian aid, and rehabilitation of critical infrastructure to ensure sustainable recovery for affected communities.

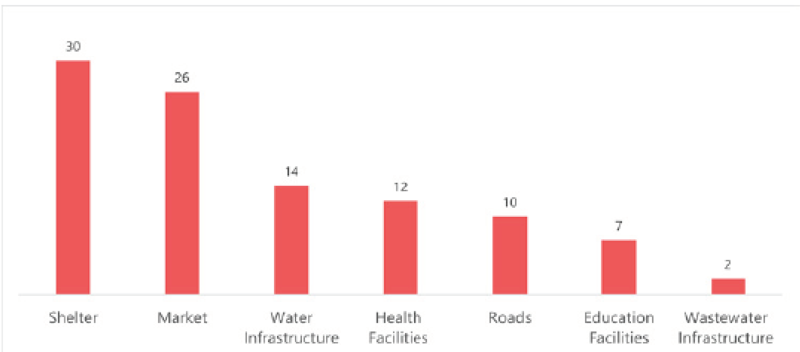
Distribution of Cadasters Based on Access Index Scores



A significant portion of the assessed cadasters (26 out of 62) scored 3 or 4, highlighting limited access to basic services. This includes areas such as Aaita El-Jabal, Majdel Selm, and Touline in Marjoun District, where residents are facing critical challenges in meeting essential needs. The correlation between higher damage scores and greater difficulty accessing services suggests that infrastructure destruction is a key factor driving service disruptions in these areas.

Most other cadasters reported a score of 2, indicating moderate access challenges, while only five cadasters—Kfayr Ez-Zait in Hasbaya District, and Jezzine, Machmoucheh, Sfaray, and Saydoun in Jezzine District—received a score of 1, which reflects minimal service accessibility issues.

Number of cadasters with damage scores of 3 and 4 by type of infrastructure (n=62)



KIs most frequently identified health services (35/62), financial resources (27/62), education (19/62), and shelter (15/62) as inaccessible. The inaccessibility is likely exacerbated by increased demand from returning IDPs, financial constraints, and damaged infrastructure.

- **Health Services:** The primary unmet needs differed by governorate: medicine and mental health support were priorities in El Nabatieh, while the South reported a need for medicine and first aid kits. Financial constraints (27/35), infrastructure damage (23/35), and unsafe locations (16/35) were the main barriers, significantly limiting access to trauma care, reproductive health, and hospitalization services.
- **Financial Access:** Long distances to financial facilities (21/27) and closures of banks, OMT offices, and ATMs due to damage (19/27) or security concerns (15/27) hindered financial access, directly affecting household recovery and their ability to meet essential needs.
- **Education:** Security concerns during travel (16/19) and challenges with online education (16/19), mainly due to inadequate resources (14/19), were the most reported barriers, particularly in El Nabatieh.
- **Shelter:** Damage to infrastructure (13/15), lack of financial means (7/15), and high rental costs (5/15) were the main challenges. In seven cadasters in El Nabatieh, safety concerns—particularly in Kfar Chouba, Kfar Hamam, and Aaita Ej-Jabal—were also reported.
- **Water and Sanitation:** Damaged or looted water infrastructure, including water containers (16/17), networks (13/17), and stations (10/17), affected supply continuity and quality. Conflict-related damage to toilets (6/10) and disrupted sewage services (5/10) were also noted, though only four cadasters reported challenges in accessing hygiene items.
- **Market Access & Food Security:** Market access was disrupted by infrastructure damage (10/12), forcing residents to travel for necessities. Financial constraints limited purchasing power (6/12), and increased food prices posed an additional burden (6/12). Food insecurity was mainly driven by financial constraints (7/10), market destruction (6/10), and disrupted supply chains (3/10), often linked to damaged roads. According to KIs, the highest level of damage was reported among residential and market infrastructure. Moderate to severe damage to markets, including structural impacts, was reported in **Kfar Hamam in bent jbeil, Aaita Ej-Jabal, and Merouaniyeh in Marjyoun**. Similar damage to shelters was reported in **Aaita Ej-Jabal, Touline in marjyoun, and Saksakiyeh in nabatieh**.

Protection concerns were reported across 22 cadasters including Meri (in marjeoun) and Mayfadoun (El Nabatieh) and Tayr Debbeh (in tyre) and Qatrani (in jezzine), with cash, heating, and food identified as the top priorities for all population groups. While IDPs prioritized shelter and returnees and pre-conflict residents emphasized health services, livelihood support was critical for those focused on long-term recovery.

Priority Needs:

The top three priority needs—cash, heating, and food—were consistently reported across all population groups, highlighting universal necessities. However, needs varied: IDPs prioritized shelter, returnees and pre-conflict residents emphasized health services, and livelihood support was crucial for long-term recovery.

Given that financial constraints were the most cited barrier to accessing services, cash assistance emerged as a primary solution. It would provide flexibility to access healthcare, education, and shelter—services identified as most inaccessible. However, despite its critical role, cash-based aid remains low in both governorates.

The Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) Index revealed critical gaps, with all but two cadasters receiving high severity scores. Key factors included the availability, continuity, and adequacy of NGO and governmental assistance.

- **Aid Distribution Gaps:** Of 62 cadasters, only 19 reported receiving humanitarian aid and 16 government support. A staggering 36, including Haddatha in Bent Jbeil, Aain Qana in Nabatieh, and Zefta in Nabatieh, received neither. Even where aid was provided, it was often deemed irrelevant or insufficient. Even where aid was received, it was often deemed irrelevant or insufficient. Specifically, 23 cadasters, including **Kfar Dounine in Marjeyoun and Mayfadoun** in El Nabatieh, as well as **Sarafand in Saida and Kfar Melki in Jezzine** in the South, were reported to have received assistance that did not address their needs at all.

- **Disruptions in Aid Delivery:** In 11 cadasters, including Ghaziyehin saida, Qatrani in Jezzine, and Tayr Debbeh in sour, aid was significantly disrupted, preventing it from reaching those in need.

The assessment of the situation across the governorates of Baalbek-El Hermel, Nabatieh, and the South reveals significant challenges in accessing basic services due to financial constraints, damaged infrastructure, and disrupted supply chains. Health services were among the most inaccessible, with financial barriers, infrastructure damage, and unsafe locations being the main obstacles, particularly in trauma care, reproductive health, and hospitalization services. In addition, financial access was severely hindered by long distances to financial facilities, and the closure of banks, OMT offices, and ATMs, further impacting households' ability to recover and meet their essential needs.

Education was also significantly affected, with security concerns and inadequate resources for online learning being the most common barriers. Shelter access was limited due to infrastructure damage, lack of financial means, and high rental costs, with some areas also facing safety concerns. Water and sanitation infrastructure was similarly damaged, further complicating access to clean water and functional sanitation services, although access to hygiene items was less of an issue.

Market access and food security were notably disrupted by infrastructure damage and financial constraints, with residents forced to travel long distances for basic necessities. The rising cost of food added further strain, exacerbating food insecurity in areas with damaged markets and disrupted supply chains. The most affected areas in terms of market and supply chain issues were Baalbek-El Hermel, Nabatieh, and Marjyoun, where residential and market infrastructure had sustained severe damage.

In conclusion, the assessment underscores the critical need for targeted humanitarian aid, particularly cash assistance, infrastructure rehabilitation, and financial support, to address the widespread inaccessibility of essential services. With ongoing security challenges and damage to infrastructure, these efforts are vital for enabling sustainable recovery and ensuring the long-term well-being of affected communities.

In summary, when considering market operationality and supply availability, it is evident that the districts within the governorates of Baalbek-El Hermel, Nabatieh, and the South were most heavily affected, with some areas further burdened by security concerns, particularly related to proximity to Israel, which put additional pressure on their markets and supply chains. While most districts have been in the process of recovery, Baalbek city, located centrally within Baalbek-El Hermel, has recovered relatively well and now has good access to services. However, surrounding areas of central Baalbek still struggle with access to services. On the other hand, the South continues to experience significant challenges in both supply and demand, particularly in districts like Bent Jbeil, Nabatieh, and Marjyoun, where the need for services is most pronounced. Additionally, it is important to highlight that child in Baalbek and Bekaa still face considerable challenges in meeting their basic needs. As emphasized in the study methodology, the selection of districts for assessment should be purposeful.

Annex 2: List of Participants

Channel	Number	Method
Save the Children program/technical advisors	3	KIIs
UNHCR/WFP/UNICEF (CVA/Market Experts)	3	KIIs
Basic Assistance Sector Leads	1	KII
District Level-Traders		
Wholesalers	5 in the central area of the district	Coded-qualitative questionnaire
Supermarkets	5 in the central area of the district	Coded-qualitative questionnaire
Food and NFI small Retailers	5 in the central area of the district	Coded-qualitative questionnaire
Pharmacies	5 in the central area of the district	Coded-qualitative questionnaire
School Supply Stores	5 in the central area of the district	Coded-qualitative questionnaire
Wholesalers	5 in the central area of the district	Coded-qualitative questionnaire
Supermarkets	5 in the central area of the district	Coded-qualitative questionnaire
Food and NFI Retailers	5 in the central area of the district	Coded-qualitative questionnaire
Pharmacies	5 in the central area of the district	Coded-qualitative questionnaire
School Supply Stores	5 in the central area of the district	Coded-qualitative questionnaire
Wholesalers	4 in the central area of the district	Coded-qualitative questionnaire
Supermarkets	5 in the central area of the district	Coded-qualitative questionnaire
Food and NFI Retailers	5 in the central area of the district	Coded-qualitative questionnaire
Pharmacies	5 in the central area of the district	Coded-qualitative questionnaire
School Supply Stores	5 in the central area of the district	Coded-qualitative questionnaire
Men	18 phone calls	KIIs
Women	22 phone calls	KIIs
Men	19 phone calls	KIIs
Women	19 phone calls	KIIs
Men	2 FGDs in field and 7 calls	KIIs/FGDs
Women	1 FGD in field and 14 calls	KIIs/FGDs
Key local authorities and community leaders	4	KIIs

Annex 3: Data Collection Tools

Attached as a zip folder