



Lebanon in Crisis

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The Situation in Lebanon

At the same time a huge explosion has just been unleashed on Lebanon, this tiny country on the Eastern Mediterranean is imploding politically, economically, and socially. The years of political and government corruption, mismanagement, overspending, and greed have finally taken its toll as Lebanon is on the brink of collapse. It is a complex state of affairs that would need volumes to explain fully, but suffice it to say, people are starving in Lebanon, a country that was once the breadbasket of the Roman Empire!

The straw that broke the camel's back:

In October 2019, devastating forest fires swept through the country, threatening people's homes and entire villages. Emergency services were hampered because donated firefighting equipment had not been maintained and was useless. Money designated to maintain this equipment had disappeared. The citizens turned out to fight these devastating fires, and some lost their lives in the process.

Then the government announced another move to collect more taxes from Lebanese citizens. They proposed to impose a \$6/month tax on free messaging and socializing services such as WhatsApp. Rumors began to circulate that the banking sector of the country was in trouble and would soon default on international loan payments. There were also rumors that salaries would default or be cut in half. (Later they were.) Some government workers, including teachers, had not been paid in months. Suddenly, the people could not take it anymore, and although the government canceled the tax, it was too late.

On October 17, the protests began. The protests have crossed both political and religious lines with the citizens joining hands to oust the corrupt government. The call to get rid of all the leading politicians, "Kulhun, yaani kulhun" (Everyone, we mean everyone), became the slogan of the protestors. The people have protested for several months, closing roads, and holding rallies across the country. However, the government has held out, refusing to step down completely and remaking itself with some new faces - but the old entrenched regime remains. The ordinary citizen and organizations have found themselves restricted as to how they can use the money in their current bank accounts and how much money can be withdrawn at a time, especially from their dollar accounts.

Then came the Coronavirus pandemic, and the government shut down the entire country, including the airport. People were ordered to stay in their homes and comply with strict health regulations. All businesses, offices, and services - except food suppliers, pharmacies, and hospitals - were closed for an extended period of time. Businesses (hotels, restaurants, clothing shops, etc.), already crippled by the political turmoil, began to close completely, letting their



employees go. Because of the lockdown, people could not find new jobs or even leave the country. And the situation became worse. A devastating explosion in the Port of Beirut on August 4 has caused untold death and destruction on a country already on the brink because of a political crisis and economic collapse.

Lebanon had been in a downward spiral before the latest catastrophe. Through no fault of its own, the Lebanese middle class has been decimated and has almost disappeared. Loss of employment from the economic downturn and the government-imposed quarantine for Covid 19 has brought the unemployment rate to almost 50% and the population to its knees.

Lebanese law dictates the retirement age of 64. While one is working and paying into the system, one can receive Social Security benefits – financial help with the cost of medications and health care. However, as soon as one becomes unemployed or retires, government sponsored Social Security stops – at a time when it is most needed. Basically, when you stop paying into the system, you stop receiving aid from the system. As a result, more than 50% of the population lives below the poverty line. In June, the cost of an average family’s weekly grocery bill was up to 500,000LL; minimum wage for one month is approximately 450,000LL.

Lebanon has the third highest GDP to debt ratio (152%), it has defaulted on its Eurobonds, the Lebanese Lira has lost nearly 85% of its value, the banks have imposed capital controls, unemployment is over 50%, and now people cannot afford to buy food. Imagine all of this going on during the coronavirus pandemic, and you have a recipe for disaster!

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What Does All of This Mean for the Person on the Street?

There are strict regulations about how much money you can take out of your bank account. Even if you have a dollar account, you cannot withdraw your dollars. You are forced to cash out your dollars for Lebanese Lira at the bank rate* and if you need dollars, you have to take your LL to the money changer and pay the market rate* to buy back dollars. “**Fresh**” money refers to money that has been transferred from outside Lebanon into Lebanon. In principle, those who receive “fresh” funds are able to withdraw the total amount in the foreign currency without having to change it into LL. Without “fresh” money, businesses can no longer transfer their dollars outside of Lebanon to buy goods, so businesses are closing, and people are losing their jobs. The lucky ones are receiving half salary.

*Please note the Lebanese Lira (LL) is sometimes referred to as Lebanese Pounds (LBP), and the terms are interchangeable. Currently, as of July 31, 2020, the bank rate is \$1 = 3900 LL while the market rate fluctuates between \$1 = 7500-8000 LL. That means if you cash out \$100 from your



bank you will receive 390,000 LL. When you go to the market to change your money back into dollars, you will receive between \$52 and \$48.75.

The ripple down affect is catastrophic. (Please note these videos are difficult to watch and have disturbing content.)

On what's behind the economic crisis: [video](#)

On being desperate: [video](#)

On being hungry: [video](#)

On being a Syrian refugee: [video](#)

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Members' Stories

Here are some stories from AWC Lebanon members:

Beirut Explosion

- **To forget about the danger:**

One member's home, located only a quarter of a mile from the port, was devastated, but she and her family were miraculously unhurt. Another member, 91 years old, lives half a mile from the port; she was alone at the time of the explosion and was seriously hurt. When I discovered her plight, my son and I, instead of driving away from the danger, drove towards it to rescue her and get her to a hospital. The roads were covered with broken glass and masonry from surrounding buildings as well as horrendous traffic. The trauma is still real. I was running on adrenaline yesterday which didn't dissipate until this afternoon, and then I realized how much danger there still was from the toxic ammonia dust suspended in the air while we were helping get our friend to a hospital.



To survive:

- My husband's relative could not believe he was still alive. He had been in an apartment across the street from the port at the time of the explosion. He managed to get down the stairwell from the severely damaged apartment, 11 stories to the ground floor. He had no phone. His car was destroyed so he began walking in the streets until he found someone in a car and asked for a ride to a hospital. He finally got 16 stitches in his leg and is now resting at home with his family.

- **To lose colleagues:**

- My son's office in Downtown Beirut is completely destroyed. Thank God he wasn't there. Two of his colleagues have died. My other son is fine as well. His restaurant is in bad shape.

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Currency Controls (Please note that at any time these regulations may change.)

- **To withdraw cash from your bank account:**

- There are no restrictions on withdrawing Lebanese Lira from your bank account.
- There are many restrictions on withdrawing US Dollars from your bank account. Each bank uses its own formula, which varies from bank to bank, based on the amount in your bank account. Accordingly, you can only take out a certain amount each month. An average amount that someone can take out per month is about \$500 (This could be as low as \$200/month and as high as \$5000/month, depending on the size of your bank account.) You will not be given US Dollars, instead you will be given Lebanese Lira (LL) based on the official bank rate of 3,900 LL. If you need US Dollars in cash, you must take your Lebanese Lira to the money changers and exchange it at the market rate which has fluctuated between 8,000 LL and 9,000 LL recently.



- **To transfer money abroad:**

- Initially, in the last months of 2019, families were able to transfer money directly to the foreign educational institutions to cover tuition for their children, but only after jumping through many hoops to prove that they were paying for tuition. They were unable to send money for their children’s living expenses. Now, no money can be transferred abroad.
- My daughter regularly transferred money from her account in Lebanon to the US so that she could pay for her medical expenses. Even after she sent a list of all her medical expenses, the bank refused to transfer her money.

- **To receive “fresh” money from abroad:**

The only way to withdraw US Dollars from your bank account is if the money has been transferred from outside of Lebanon. As of now, most banks will allow you to withdraw the full amount in cash if you give them twenty-four to forty-eight hours’ notice so that they can have the cash ready for you to withdraw, but a few banks will not give the full amount.

- **To use your credit card:**

One can still use a credit card if the charge is in Lebanese Lira. However, the banks have limited the amount of money, even in Lebanese Lira, one can charge on the card at one time.

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Paying Your Bills

- **To buy groceries:**

Grocery stores must charge higher and higher prices because the import suppliers of the goods they sell demand payment in dollars. The prices fluctuate, always higher, never lower. People can no longer afford to pay the prices and are looking for the “cheaper” Lebanese brands. Unfortunately, Lebanese manufacturers are charging high prices for their products because they must buy their ingredients from foreign suppliers. It is a vicious circle and the ‘man on the street’ is suffering most.



To illustrate the hardship, minimum wage in Lebanon is currently 675,000 LL/month. Prior to the crisis, this was equal to \$460. However, as of July 17, 2020, this minimum wage is equal to just over \$81 per month. In addition, most foods (meat, powdered milk, butter, rice, sugar, etc.) are imported, and food prices are pegged to the dollar making most food items out of reach for low wage earners. At the supermarket today, I purchased only 12 basic food items, and my bill came to 387,000 LL (more than half minimum wage).

- **To find and buy medications:**

Getting medications is becoming harder and harder for two reasons. First, since anything imported into Lebanon needs to be paid for in foreign currency, many importers without hard currency can no longer pay for medicines they bring in, which means some medications are no longer coming into the country. And if the medications are available, the prices in Lebanese Lira (in many cases the pharmaceutical suppliers will only accept US dollars) is too high for most people. This means people are facing life threatening situations. For example, diabetics are only using one-half or one-third of the injections they need. For cancer patients, it is a dire situation as some drugs to treat cancer are no longer available in Lebanon.

- **To pay for home care for the sick and elderly:**

Lebanon's population is getting older and Alzheimer's disease is on the rise. Many people with relatives who have Alzheimer's have gotten help for their care from foreign sources because there is no longer the social security safety net nor government assistance for retired persons, especially the elderly. You must have health insurance, and many health insurance companies do not pay for long time health conditions such as Alzheimer's. The foreign caregivers, and foreign domestic servants, are paid dollar salaries. With the bank restrictions on dollar accounts, it is difficult to pay these workers. Unable to pay their salaries, some households have had no choice but to let their foreign domestic workers and caregivers go. As many of these workers have no means to return to their home country, Lebanon's humanitarian crisis is compounded. Unfortunately, Lebanese caregivers are charging high wages to provide services – something many families cannot afford – and it is the sick and elderly who are suffering.

- My husband is in the fourth stage of Alzheimer's. We have three caregivers and a domestic servant to help with my husband, all foreign. I scramble monthly to get the \$1,600 to pay these people their dollar salaries.



- My mother-in-law is ill with Alzheimer's and has been bedridden for the last two years. We have a live-in foreign domestic helper and a Lebanese nurse who comes twice a day to help with her. Paying their monthly salaries is sometimes a challenge for the family, even though my father-in-law worked for the government and has a guaranteed lifetime income for her care.

- **To buy an airline ticket:**

With very few exceptions (Air France, for example), most airlines will not accept payment for air tickets in Lebanese Lira. One must pay in dollars and usually in cash – something the average citizen cannot do easily due to the imposed banking restrictions on the withdrawal of US dollars. The only alternative is payment in dollars from international credit cards drawn on international bank accounts.

- **To repair your car:** My husband owns a car repair garage. Often men will bring their cars into the garage for repairs, especially taxi drivers. The cost of repair parts is almost prohibitive; and although he has not raised his prices as other garages have, many times the bill is more than the car owner can afford.

- The taxi owner is faced with either paying the car repair bill or buying food for his family. Yet if his car is not repaired, he can no longer earn the money to buy the food. There are times when my husband offers an alternative method of payment (a service for services rendered); but my husband must pay his workers, and we must have money for our expenses as well. It is another vicious circle.
- One man who brought his car into the garage to repair badly worn out brakes. When told the price of the parts, he sighed, announced that he could not afford them, and drove away without the repair. This man depends upon his car for his work, but the vehicle is now perilous to drive. The danger is not only for him but other cars on the street and especially pedestrians. They do not always look when setting out to cross the streets or are walking in the roads at night. Drivers often do not see them until it is almost too late to stop.

- **To buy a book on Kindle:**

I have an internet card with a \$200 limit per month, but it can be topped up when the need arises. To stay informed, I used it for my Washington Post newspaper and some



magazine subscriptions. Occasionally I would buy a book on Kindle or Audible if the printed version were not available in Lebanon. But all that came to a screeching halt when payment for a book got rejected. I knew that I had enough money (\$200) in the account for a \$2.99 book, but when I got to the bank, I was told there was a new limit they had just instituted, without telling their customers. I could no longer go over a \$50/ month. This is just another example of having enough money in the bank and not being able to spend it. So, I must be extremely careful and monitor what I order.

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Day to Day Living

- **To be a migrant worker:**

Yesterday, while driving home, I saw a migrant worker with three children clinging to her, including a baby, crying, under the highway bridge. I pulled over to find out what was going on and the Bangladeshi woman told me she was in Lebanon with her husband. He still has his job, but her employers let her go as they could no longer afford domestic help. She had two children of her own, but the third child had been abandoned by another migrant worker, so this lady started to care for this child. She had no place to stay so she stayed out of the sun, under the bridge and begged for food. I gave her what I had in the car (cheese, yogurt and cucumbers) and called the Red Cross. They came after a short time and said they would find her shelter.

- **To have a steady supply of electricity:**

- Most, but not all, buildings have generators run on fuel oil because there has not been a steady supply of government electricity since 1975 when the Civil War began. Although the war ended in 1990, electricity cuts have continued for the last thirty years. Corruption and mismanagement have resulted in insufficient money to improve the power grid. Electricity, which has been rationed for years, is now rationed even more with some areas receiving only one and a half hours of electricity per day. Because of the US sanctions on Syria, the cost of fuel oil has risen, and significant amounts of the government subsidized fuel have been sent to Syria. As a result, there is less fuel oil to run the government electricity plants and the individual building generators. If you can get the fuel oil and are willing to pay the higher and higher price of it, your building can keep the generator running. The cost of candles has risen as well; more and more people sit in the dark after



sunset, without refrigeration and no air conditioning during the hot and humid summer months.

- I live outside a small village and am very blessed to own a generator. The village only gets two hours of electricity every day which makes it impossible for those with chronic diseases to keep their medications (for example, insulin, for diabetics) refrigerated. We have reached out to those in need and now we keep medications for several of the villagers in our refrigerator.

- **To live with the pandemic:**

Considering the multiple challenges facing the people of Lebanon, the light at the end of the tunnel is the incredible job that the Lebanese Ministry of Health (MOH) had been doing to fight the Coronavirus. Working with limited resources and a corrupt government, the MOH had managed, better than many countries, to make progress in keeping down the number of COVID-19 cases. Unfortunately, in spite of these efforts, COVID-19 cases are now on the rise and Lebanon is going into another lockdown, like so many other places in the world. Now the Lebanese are not only facing shortages of hospital beds, respirators and the electricity to keep the respirators working, but also the medication needed to treat COVID-19.

- **To have a pet:**

Just recently, my beautiful Labrador retriever died. I decided not to buy but get a new dog from a shelter to give it a home. BETA is a Lebanese registered non-governmental organization established to improve the lives of animals in the region. They currently have 850 abandoned dogs and 200 cats that they rescued from the streets. Lately, it has become a flood of discarded animals because people can't pay for their food due to the increase in prices of pet products as a result of Lebanon's currency crisis. A 15-kilogram bag of high-end dog food that used to cost 150,000 LL (around \$99) has doubled in price, and some products have disappeared from the market altogether because of the dollar shortage and rapid inflation of the lira. At times BETA will get a call from the owner asking if they can take in their pet, but most times, pet dumping occurs in isolated areas in the mountains or near garbage cans in the city. The shelter now houses two horses and a donkey in addition to the dogs and cats. I now have an adorable Husky, Bernese mountain dog mix named Ice-T.

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Is There Any Hope?

There may not be much hope for the near future, but the Lebanese have not given up and are displaying their remarkable resilience. On July 5, 2020, the well-known annual summer music festival, the Baalbek Festival, was held without an audience. Held at the site of the largest temple of the Roman world, the concert illustrates the amazing spirit of the Lebanese.

[Read about it.](#) See [the preparations](#), [a 5-minute glimpse](#), [the entire performance](#) (to skip the news coverage, fast forward to 13:05).

Here are a few other stories to show that the Lebanese have not given up hope quite yet:

- When the government hospital in Tripoli, a city in northern Lebanon, no longer had the medications to treat a young man with cancer, he was sent to Beirut. There, at the American University Hospital, a team of doctors and nurses, worked without pay and gave him the treatment that he needed.
- There are a few in the public sector who are doing their best to do their jobs. [Read](#) about the director of the Beirut Public Hospital.
- People from all walks of life have stepped up to help one another. Those who can make financial donations, while those with little money, are offering food or clothing to their neighbors. Everyone is doing all they can with their limited resources to help others. The best of the Lebanese is coming out, but they need help!

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Are You Going to Leave?

You may be asking yourself if AWC Lebanon members are planning on leaving the country and going back to America (or elsewhere). The answer is that very few have that option. Also, many of our AWC ladies have strong ties to Lebanon – their husbands and children, their homes, their jobs, and a deep-seated love for the country and its people. Our desire is to help as much as we can.

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The Appeal

AWC Lebanon has prepared a list of local NGOs that we have vetted and been working with. Many of these organizations have turned the focus of their projects to providing food and other support to the growing number of people needing such assistance. We hope that you will have a look at the brief descriptions of these organizations and note the projects that need urgent funding at this time of crisis. We hope that you or your club will choose to help some of these groups. Your money donations from outside Lebanon have a much greater value than donations from inside the country. AWC Lebanon will ensure that any donation is used as intended and will oversee how these funds are spent. AWC supports FAWCO, The FAWCO Foundation and the FAWCO Target Project and does not want to distract clubs from those donations. All we are asking is, if you are able, to support a sister club in time of unprecedented need, and if you are unable to, please just pass this message on.

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Background to the Charities

For more than 50 years, AWC Lebanon has worked with many local NGOs. We have established contacts and developed relationships with these organizations and the people that run them. Our Charity Committee policy has been for our members to make suggestions about NGOs in Lebanon that they recommend we visit. Many well-known international NGOs are working in Lebanon, like the International Red Cross, Caritas and others. Our focus has always been on the local, grassroots organizations that do not have the big donors from abroad. Although some of these organizations might be sectarian in nature, if they serve all communities in Lebanon without discrimination, we are open to visiting them. We have always strived to include all areas of the country in our outreach. Once we have selected an organization, several AWC Charity Committee members as well as other club members will visit them and establish a needs assessment for the organization. The assessment is made through the face to face visit and a survey that the organization fills for us. When we know what is needed, the Charity Committee will discuss the need and its cost, get Board approval for the purchase, make the purchase of the needed goods directly, and have them delivered. In this way, we can be certain that our donation is being used as intended. The club's past policy is to not give money directly to the organization, but to make our donation by purchasing the needed item. In the past we have provided items



such as fuel oil, tables and chairs, typewriters and electronic equipment, kitchen equipment and food for distribution through charity organizations.

For many years AWC held a Christmas Bazaar and invited all of the charities we work with to come, free of charge, to a venue we provided, open to the public, where they could sell their goods with all proceeds going to the charity. This was an extremely popular event that all looked forward to. Unfortunately, the security situation in Lebanon made this risky to continue, and we have not been able to offer this service to the community for several years, although the club is still exploring new organizations that have started as a result of the current economic and human crisis situation. We do, however, still use the same process we have always used for vetting any organization we help.

As a result of the current economic situation and banking restrictions on our own bank accounts, the club is looking actively for alternative ways to enable direct transfer of “fresh” outside money to support the NGOs that AWC Lebanon knows well. This appeal is one of those ways. For this reason, we have chosen to work with the following charities that we have had an established relationship with over the years.

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How to Donate

There are several ways for you to make a donation. Read through the [List of Vetted NGOs](#) to find out about the various NGOs and on which projects they are currently working.

- [Food Programs](#)
- [Working with Migrant Workers](#)
- [Working with Period Poverty](#)
- [Working with the Elderly](#)
- [Working with the Mentally Challenged](#)
- [Providing Medical Supplies](#)
- [Drug Rehabilitation](#)

Before the tragic events of the August 4 explosion in Beirut, AWC Lebanon was hoping to add a link here for you to be able to make a donation to AWC Lebanon, if you wished. Considering the extraordinary circumstances and the urgent need for outside assistance, AWC has decided to send out this document as is. There are direct donation links to all of the charities listed in the next section.

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List of Vetted Non-Government Organizations

Food Programs:

- **Food Blessed “Feeding the hungry, one meal at a time”**, co-founded in 2012, is a Beirut-based hunger-relief initiative that works with businesses and civil societies to reduce the number of people going hungry. Their volunteer food rescue program (they collect unsold foods from grocery stores and restaurants) helps to feed the hungry as well as address the problem of food waste in Lebanon.
 - **Direct Donations** can be made [online](#) or by [bank transfer](#)
 - **Access their [website](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)**

- **Lebanese Food Bank** is a non-profit, non-confessional, and non-partisan organization established by a group of Lebanese businessmen in 2012 and a member of the Regional Food Banking Network in Dubai. It is presently headed by Mr. Kamal Sinno and is backed by a number of board members. It strives towards the eradication of hunger throughout Lebanon through a range of food, development/training and awareness programs. They are working towards both short-term relief and a long-term sustainable solution to this pressing issue.
 - **Direct Donations** can be made [online](#) or by [bank transfer](#)
 - **Access their [website](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)**

- **Cedar Home for Girls** This Orphanage is a Christian humane society registered as an NGO since 1961. The mission of the society is to take care of abandoned girls and orphans and girls at risk in Lebanon regardless of race, color or religion. An ongoing current project is focused on relief to provide 150 individuals with monthly food and medication support.
 - **Direct Donations** can be made [online or by bank transfer](#)
 - **Access their [website](#) and [Facebook](#)**

- **Ayadina**, established as an NGO in 2004, works to fulfill its mission of developing the Nabaa/Sin El Fil community in greater Beirut. The organization addresses the needs of underprivileged youth and senior citizens through a number of programs at their community center. Their most important program at this time is the soup kitchen to alleviate hunger in the community. By selecting the Senior Citizens Club button on the donation page, you are helping to fund this soup kitchen and to feed the elderly.
 - **Direct Donations** can be made by [bank transfer](#)
 - **Access their [website](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)**



- **Ahlouna Association** is a civil society organization founded in 2001. This NGO provides sustainable educational and social services for women, youth, children, the elderly and disabled throughout the community of Saida, Lebanon’s largest city in the south. They are currently working to distribute food and other necessities to 1500 of those in need.
 - **Direct Donations** can be made [online](#) or by [bank transfer](#)
 - **Access their [website](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)**
- **Nusaned** (Arabic for “We support”) is a humanitarian, community based and volunteer organization with a focus on sustainability. They believe that the power to create change comes from working collaboratively. Their three main programs were created to provide shelter, food security and economic opportunities to under-privileged communities, supporting them to become self-sufficient and resilient. “Roofs that Shield” have rehabilitated 124 houses through September 2020, “Crops that Yield” hopes to distribute 4000 garden starter kits between June 2020 and June 2021, and “Goods in Need” has distributed over 3500 food parcels reaching over 15,000 individuals. When you make a donation, you can choose the program you would like to donate to.
 - **Direct Donations** can be made [online](#)
 - **Access their [website](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)**

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Working with Migrant Workers:

- **Egna Legna Besidet** (Amharic for “From us migrants for us migrants”) This is a community-based NGO (registered in Canada) working on issues concerning migrant domestic workers in Lebanon and Ethiopia. The group stepped in to assist Ethiopian domestic workers recently left at their embassy in Beirut with no means of returning to their homes in Ethiopia. Read [more](#).
 - **Direct Donations** can be made [online](#)
 - **Access their [website](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)**

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Working with Period Poverty:

- **Dawrati** (Arabic for “My period”) This a new initiative in the process of registering as an NGO in Lebanon. They are a group of women committed to ending period poverty. For many women in Lebanon their monthly period has been made more complicated by the economic crisis. They are forced to choose between buying food and buying menstrual supplies. Many women in depressed areas are being forced to use toilet paper, newspapers and rags during this time. Read more [here](#).
 - **Direct Donations** can be made [online](#) (Please note the [exchange rate policy](#) before making your donation.)
 - **Access their information** on [Instagram](#)

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Working with the Elderly:

- **Amour et Partage** is a home/shelter for homeless elderly. This NGO was established in 2003 by Mr. Salah Bouraad. Residents of the home are over 65 and have no children to care for them. The organization offers assistance to a number of people outside the home as well. Their current focus is on maintaining present services and providing food and medications to the elderly in their shelter as well as helping the surrounding community in this time of economic crisis and hunger. Information in English about the organization can be found in this [article](#).
 - **Direct Donations** can be made [online](#)
 - **Access their [website](#)** and [Facebook](#)

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Working with the Mentally Challenged:

- **Baitna** (Arabic for “Our house”) is a private voluntary NGO founded in 2006. Their mission is to provide a home for mentally challenged abandoned orphans. Due to the economic situation now, only one floor of the home has been completed. It is home to 15 mentally challenged young and older orphans. For each two orphans, there is one committed volunteer housemother who lives with them to care for them and create a family atmosphere. Baitna’s focus now is on continuing to be able to provide food for those in their care including the housemothers and the purchase of a much-needed new washing machine and small refrigerator, a project that is on hold.
 - **Direct Donations** can be made [online](#) or by [bank transfer](#)
 - **Access their [website](#)** and [Facebook](#)

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Providing Medical Supplies:

- **DiaLeb** is a non-profit organization founded in 2011 that aims to promote diabetes care and prevention and spread awareness about diabetes to make living with the disease more manageable for all those affected and their families. One of the organization's programs is to provide monthly medicines and supplies to a number of very poor people around Lebanon who suffer from diabetes. They are a grass roots Lebanese organization that provides medicines and supplies to extremely poor people around Lebanon who suffer from diabetes. Providing these medications costs the organization more than \$2,000 per month and the prices can change at any time. Sometimes it is difficult to acquire the medicine. Read [here](#) about their efforts to help during the pandemic.
 - **Direct Donations** can be made [online](#)
 - **Access their [website](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)**

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Drug Rehabilitation:

- **Skoun** was created in 2001 to provide drug dependence treatment and care, deliver tools to reduce drug-related harms, and advocate for drug policy reform. It is the first outpatient therapeutic facility in Lebanon to offer prevention and treatment for drug users. The organization is committed to bringing life, health, and hopes to people who use drugs and their families through a sustainable treatment model for Lebanon and the Arab region. Due to the economic crisis in Lebanon, Skoun has had to cut back on their staff and some programs. Their current emphasis is on the treatment center (which is most in need of assistance) so they can continue their treatment program for patients. More information can be found at [here](#).
 - **Direct Donations** can be made [online or by bank transfer](#)
 - **Access their [website](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)**

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References

- **AWC Lebanon Charity Policy**

“The AWC Charity Committee Procedures for Donations”

1. The board agrees on a yearly amount to be allotted for the Charity Committee donations.
2. A charitable organization can be suggested by any member of the club for the purpose of a visit and possible donation. The organization should be recognized by the Lebanese government and we give regardless of nationality or religion.
3. A visit is organized to check out the organization and to assess their needs. At least three members of the Charity Committee need to visit.
4. The NGO is discussed at the charity meeting and an amount for a donation is decided upon. At no time is cash given. The donation can also be agreed upon by e-mail or phone calls, in case a meeting cannot be held. A majority of the Charity Committee needs to agree.
5. Previously visited NGOs may be discussed for another donation without a visit, but should be visited if changes or circumstances have occurred at the NGO.
6. The Chairperson of the Charity Committee presents prospective donations to the board.
7. Upon agreement of the board and the Charity Committee, the organization is contacted to organize a shopping trip to purchase the items needed by that organization with at least two members of the Charity Committee attending.
8. The Charity Fact Form is then completed including a receipt from the point of purchase and from the organization. Checks should be photocopied and attached to the Charity Fact Form, as well as a receipt from the place of purchase along with the acknowledgement receipt from the NGO.
9. The donation is noted in the AWC Newsletter, and the Charity File where all contact information is listed with a short description of the NGO along with the dates and nature of purchased items for donations.
10. All donations for the year are reported to the treasurer and to all the members through the Newsletter.
11. The Chairperson is responsible for calling for meetings, writing the newsletter reports, compiling forms, organizing visits, attending the board meetings, and preparing the committee’s end of the year financial statement. She may keep her position for two years.

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News Links

- **Beirut explosion** August 5
 - <https://edition.cnn.com/middleeast/live-news/lebanon-beirut-explosion-live-updates-dle-intl/index.html>
 - <https://www.ft.com/content/d6264d46-7c40-427a-b1b8-928af6f304db>
 - <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/08/05/beirut-explosion-death-toll-could-top-100-ammonium-nitrate-stash-blamed.html>
 - <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-53659282>
 - <https://www.brecorder.com/news/40009958/after-port-blast-lebanon-has-less-than-a-months-grain-reserves-says-minister>
 - <https://www.ibtimes.com.au/emergency-aid-heads-lebanon-world-offers-support-1603228>

- **No reform, no bailout** August 4
 - <http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/273915-lebanon-govt-stalling-since-inception-say-european-diplomats>

- **Going after corruption** August 1
 - <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1712806/middle-east>

- **Failure of the October 2019 Revolution** July 29
 - <https://medium.com/@nourfouad/the-failure-of-the-2019-lebanese-revolution-669e250b1325>

- **Power shortages** July 29
 - https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-07-29/lebanon-s-late-payments-to-turkish-firm-may-worsen-power-crisis?utm_source=url link

- **Lebanese situation explained** July 25
 - <https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/is-it-too-late-to-save-lebanon>

- **Lebanese situation explained** July 23
 - <https://carnegie-mec.org/diwan/82348>



- **Medical/hospital shortages** July 20
 - <https://www.spiegel.de/international/world/lebanon-end-of-the-illusion-the-inexorable-collapse-of-lebanon-a-7095aa79-da81-4432-bd3f-6e39d41409ca>
- **Shop closures** July 19
 - <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2020/Jul-19/509178-hamras-shops-close-one-by-one.ashx>
- **Why Lebanon is in crisis** July 17
 - <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-53390108>
- **The 2020 fire season in Lebanon** July 17
 - <https://english.alarabiya.net/en/features/2020/07/17/Lebanon-likely-to-have-another-fire-season-amid-major-economic-crisis-Experts>
- **Hunger crimes** July 15
 - <https://www.france24.com/en/20200715-hunger-crimes-on-the-rise-in-crisis-hit-lebanon>
- **Bartering clothes for food** July 14
 - <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/12/world/middleeast/beirut-lebanon-economic-crisis.html>
- **Future of Lebanon** July 14
 - <https://www.forbes.com/sites/tatianakoffman/2020/07/09/lebanons-currency-crisis-paves-the-way-to-a-new-future/#2a90846a6a17>
- **Human Rights** July 10
 - <http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/273246-u-n-rights-chief-warnslebanon-crisis-spiraling-out-of-control>
- **Food shortage, blackouts, suicides** July 8
 - <https://edition.cnn.com/2020/07/08/middleeast/lebanon-economy-crisis-intl/index.html>
- **The US dollar** July 8
 - <http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/273184-hottest-commodity-inlebanon-s-economic-chaos-the-u-s-dollar>



- **Power cuts** July 7
 - <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1701066/middle-east>

- **Food crisis** July 2:
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JBOrvhSt0b8>

- **Pets abandoned** May 3
 - <https://www.thenational.ae/world/mena/meet-the-octogenariantaking-care-of-lebanon-s-abandoned-dogs-during-the-coronavirus-crisis-1.1014245>

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