

The background image is a composite of two photographs. The top half shows a multi-story building that has been severely damaged, with debris and rubble visible. The bottom half shows a vegetable market stall with large piles of fresh produce, including leafy greens and potatoes. A person is partially visible behind the stall. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent teal filter.

LCPS

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The Lebanese Center
for Policy Studies

Report

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Public Perceptions and Lived Experiences in Lebanon Prior to the 2026 Military Escalation

Dima Smaira and Peter Chouayfati



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Founded in 1989, the Lebanese Center for Policy Studies is an independently managed, non-partisan, non-profit, non-governmental think tank whose mission is to produce and advocate for policies that improve governance in Lebanon and the Arab region. LCPS's current research agenda focuses on: enhancing governance, informing the process of economic growth and sustainable development, promoting inclusive and effective social policies, and informing the development of policies for a sustainable environment. Four themes cut across the above areas of focus, including gender, youth, conflict resolution, and technology.

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Executive Summary

Lebanon has faced an unprecedented convergence of crises since 2019, including economic collapse, political paralysis, the Beirut port explosion, and recurring conflict with Israel, most recently escalating in March 2026. These cumulative shocks have deepened socio-economic vulnerabilities, eroded trust in state institutions, and intensified insecurity, political disengagement, and emigration pressures. Structural governance failures, limited accountability, and persistent political divisions have further constrained recovery efforts despite both internal demands and external pressure for reform.

In this context, the Lebanese Center for Policy Studies (LCPS), with the support of the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Beirut, conducted a nationwide mixed-methods study examining citizen experiences and perceptions across key areas including socio-economic conditions, security and safety, governance and institutional trust, political representation, psychosocial well-being, gendered impacts, and displacement. The research combined a nationally representative survey of 2,400 respondents with 21 focus group discussions (FGDs) with participants from across Lebanon between January-February 2026.

Importantly, data collection was completed immediately prior to the renewed escalation of armed conflict in March 2026. The findings therefore provide an important baseline of citizen perceptions, experiences, and coping strategies on the eve of renewed large-scale armed conflict and displacement.

The findings reveal widespread economic hardship, deteriorating living conditions, and persistent insecurity across large segments of the population. Households reported relying heavily on austerity measures, reduced consumption, debt, and informal support networks to cope with rising living costs and declining incomes.

The study also highlights critically low levels of trust in public institutions and limited confidence in the state's ability to manage recovery, reconstruction, and service delivery. While many respondents expressed dissatisfaction with governance, corruption, and accountability failures, support for traditional political actors and sectarian structures remained resilient in some communities, reflecting the continued influence of sectarian, partisan, and clientelist forms of representation in Lebanon.

Psychological distress and uncertainty emerged as major cross-cutting concerns. Fear, anxiety, emotional exhaustion, and insecurity

were widespread, particularly among displaced populations, children, women, and conflict-affected communities. At the same time, access to psychosocial support remained limited due to affordability barriers, uneven service provision, and social stigma.

The findings further underscore significant regional variations in exposure to conflict, displacement, economic pressures, and perceptions of security. While concerns regarding rising living costs, economic insecurity, governance failures, and institutional distrust were evident across the country, conflict-affected areas faced additional pressures related to displacement, destruction of homes, infrastructure, and livelihoods, uncertain conditions for return, and fears of renewed attacks.

By capturing citizen perspectives immediately before the March 2026 escalation, this report provides important insight into the underlying vulnerabilities and expectations shaping Lebanese society during a period of deep uncertainty and fragility. The findings aim to inform more inclusive, evidence-based, and citizen-responsive approaches to governance, recovery, and crisis response.

As such, the findings also highlight a number of cross-cutting priorities relating to socio-economic protection and livelihoods, displacement and recovery, safety and security, social cohesion, governance and institutional trust, psychosocial well-being, and protection of conflict-affected and vulnerable populations. These priorities are reflected in the recommendations presented at the end of the report, which draw on both the research findings and insights generated through two expert roundtables.

Introduction

Since 2019, Lebanon has experienced a prolonged and multifaceted crisis marked by economic collapse, institutional paralysis, political fragmentation, and repeated security shocks. The country has faced one of the world's most severe financial crises in modern history, alongside the Beirut port explosion, the continued impact of the Syrian refugee crisis, deteriorating public services, and recurring conflict with Israel, including the large-scale escalation that began in October 2023 and intensified again in March 2026.

These overlapping crises have had profound social, economic, and political consequences. Living conditions have deteriorated sharply, poverty and insecurity have increased, and public confidence in public institutions has continued to erode. At the same time, political polarization, governance failures,

and limited accountability have constrained recovery efforts and weakened the capacity of institutions to respond effectively to growing public needs.

In this context, the Lebanese Center for Policy Studies (LCPS), with the support of the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Beirut, conducted a nationwide mixed-methods study between January-February 2026 combining a nationally representative survey of 2,400 respondents with 21 focus group discussions (FGDs) with participants from across Lebanon. Preliminary findings were subsequently discussed through two expert roundtables.

The research explored a range of interconnected themes, including socio-economic conditions and coping mechanisms, political attitudes and representation, institutional trust and governance, psychosocial well-being, perceptions of security and safety, gendered impacts, and displacement and return dynamics.

Importantly, the study was completed immediately prior to the renewed escalation of armed conflict in March 2026. The findings therefore provide a critical snapshot of public perceptions, vulnerabilities, and expectations on the eve of a new phase of conflict, displacement, and political uncertainty. By documenting citizen experiences at this pivotal moment, the report aims to inform more inclusive, evidence-based, and responsive approaches to recovery, reform, and crisis response. It concludes with a set of recommendations aimed at supporting policy, programming, and recovery efforts.

Background

The ceasefire agreement between Lebanon and Israel on November 27, 2024, created cautious hopes for de-escalation and recovery after more than a year of conflict. This period also witnessed important political developments, including the election of President Joseph Aoun after a prolonged presidential vacuum and the appointment of Prime Minister Nawaf Salam alongside the formation of a new government. Together, these developments generated expectations of renewed political momentum, institutional stabilization, and potential recovery and reform.

However, the broader context remained highly fragile. Despite the ceasefire, Israeli occupation and strikes continued across different parts of Lebanon, while uncertainty persisted regarding the possibility of renewed escalation. At the same time, Lebanon's structural economic and governance crises remained unresolved.

Years of economic collapse, financial crisis, and institutional dysfunction had already weakened state capacity and household resilience prior to the

2023-2024 round of conflict. The conflict further compounded these pressures through displacement, destruction of homes and infrastructure, disruption of livelihoods, and increased humanitarian needs.

Efforts to advance recovery and reconstruction also faced significant constraints. International support remained closely tied to reform conditionality related to governance, financial restructuring, and state authority and monopoly over weapons, while domestic political fragmentation continued to hinder implementation of meaningful reforms.

Although some measures were introduced — including amendments to the bank secrecy law, the Law on Bank Resolution and Restructuring, the Financial Gap Law, long-delayed judicial and public appointments, municipal elections, and efforts to extend state authority and monopolize the use of force— progress remained slow and uneven, without translating into broader structural change or significant improvements in protection and service delivery.

This fragile environment was further disrupted by the renewed escalation of armed conflict beginning in March 2026. At the time of writing, the ongoing 2023 war had resulted in 8,246 killed, 29,312 wounded, and over a million displaced ([Action on Armed Violence](#)). The escalation triggered new waves of mass displacement, extensive destruction, including of entire villages, and heightened insecurity across several regions, while also contributing to the postponement of parliamentary elections scheduled for May 2026.

Continued instability and concerns regarding the sustainability of subsequent ceasefire arrangements further reinforced uncertainty surrounding Lebanon's recovery trajectory. At the same time, the escalation placed additional strain on displaced and host communities, further burdened already fragile institutions and local governance structures, and heightened pressures on social cohesion.

Against this backdrop, understanding how citizens perceived their economic conditions, security environment, institutional trust, and political representation immediately prior to the renewed escalation becomes particularly important. The findings of this study therefore provide critical insight into the vulnerabilities, expectations, and coping dynamics that shaped Lebanese society on the eve of a new phase of crisis; insights which can help inform ongoing response, recovery, and policy efforts.

Methodology

To examine how different population groups experienced Lebanon's overlapping economic, political, and security crises, the study adopted a mixed-methods

approach combining quantitative and qualitative research methods. The research explored citizen experiences, perceptions, coping strategies, and expectations regarding governance, security, socio-economic conditions, and recovery during a period of heightened uncertainty and protracted crisis.

The study examined seven thematic areas:

- I. Socio-economic conditions and coping mechanisms;
- II. Perceptions of security and safety;
- III. Political attitudes and representation;
- IV. Trust in institutions and governance;
- V. Psychosocial well-being;
- VI. Gendered impacts and vulnerable groups; and
- VII. Displacement and intentions to return.

Particular attention was given to capturing variations across demographic, regional, sectarian, socio-economic, and vulnerable groups, including women, youth, and displaced populations.

The survey and focus group discussions were conducted between January and February 2026, shortly before the renewed escalation of armed conflict beginning in March 2026. While the findings do not capture perceptions during the escalation itself, they provide an important baseline of public perceptions, vulnerabilities, institutional trust, and recovery expectations on the eve of renewed conflict and displacement.

Nationwide Survey

The nationwide survey was conducted through face-to-face interviews using Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI). The survey targeted Lebanese citizens aged 18 and above residing across Lebanon and included a nationally representative sample of 2,400 respondents.

The questionnaire consisted of 49 questions covering demographic information and the seven thematic areas identified in the study. A pilot survey was conducted prior to implementation to ensure clarity and contextual appropriateness.

Sampling followed a Probability Proportional to Size (PPS) methodology to ensure representativeness across Lebanon's nine governorates. The sample was aligned with Central Administration of Statistics (CAS) population distributions and accounted for regional, gender, age, socio-economic, educational, and sectarian diversity. The survey has a margin of error of $\pm 2\%$ at a 95% confidence level.

Participation was voluntary and conducted in accordance with research ethics standards, including informed consent, confidentiality, and data protection.

Focus Group Discussions

Focus group discussions (FGDs) complemented the survey findings with more in-depth qualitative insights across the study's thematic areas.

A total of 21 focus groups involving 208 participants were conducted to represent all 9 governorates. Sessions included participants from diverse socio-economic, educational, professional, urban, and rural backgrounds.

To better capture gendered experiences and encourage discussion of sensitive topics, separate male and female focus groups were conducted representing each region. In addition, to better capture youth experiences, three mixed-gender youth focus groups targeting participants aged 18–25 were conducted with participants from Dahiyeh, Tyre, and Baalbek–Hermel — areas directly affected by conflict and displacement.

This design enabled comparative analysis across regions and demographic groups while ensuring greater inclusion of youth, women, and vulnerable populations within the study. FGDs were conducted in accordance with research ethics standards, including informed consent, confidentiality, voluntary participation, data protection, and safe moderation practices for sensitive discussions.

Expert Roundtables

Following completion of the survey and focus group research, LCPS organized two expert roundtables bringing together representatives from government institutions, parliament, international organizations, civil society organizations, academia, media, and other practitioners. The discussions provided an opportunity to present and discuss key findings, contextualize emerging trends, and identify policy priorities and programming considerations. Insights generated through these consultations helped refine and inform the recommendations presented in the final section of the report.

I Findings

Socio-Economic Conditions and Coping Mechanisms

Socio-economic impact of the war (January 2026)

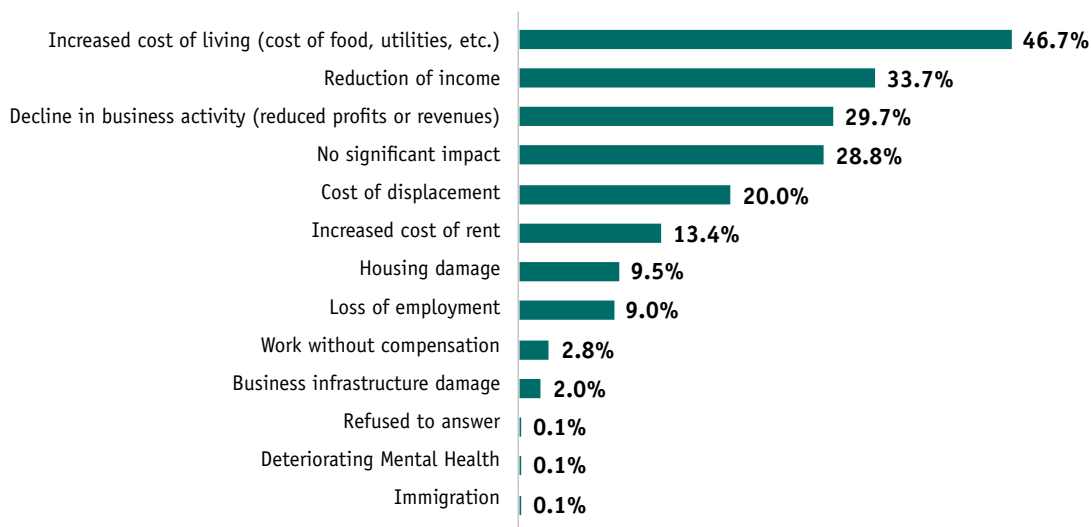
By early 2026, economic pressures were widespread across all regions. Participants described the war's socio-economic impact as an intensification

of an already prolonged crisis linked to economic collapse, loss of purchasing power, and institutional erosion since 2019. Rather than a single shock, the war was widely perceived as pushing households from chronic strain into acute insecurity.

Across regions, participants described periods of economic standstill during escalation, with work disrupted, markets slowing, and households entering survival mode. Insecurity and uncertainty discouraged investment, business expansion, and financial planning. As a male participant from the North noted: ‘Since COVID and before the war, the economic collapse started. The war brought a total standstill.’

Survey findings reflect these pressures: 46.7% of respondents cited increased cost of living as the war’s primary impact on their household, while 33.7% reported reduced income and 29.7% declining business activity.

How has the ongoing 2023 war affected your household (Jan 2026)? (Multiple response)



FGD participants highlighted rising costs across essential services—including electricity, transport, food, healthcare, education, and rent—alongside declining wages and increasingly precarious working conditions. Many described incomes no longer covering basic expenses, including healthcare and education. As a participant from Mount Lebanon noted: ‘I used to live on a retirement salary of \$1,200; now I struggle and they don’t even give me \$290.’

At the same time, displacement and housing-related pressures remained concentrated in areas directly affected by hostilities. Respondents in Nabatiyeh (80.7%), the South (48.5%), and Baalbek–Hermel (46%) identified relocation costs as a major burden. Participants also described rent inflation in perceived safer areas as a form of profiteering linked to displacement dynamics.

Impact of the War on Education

At the time of the survey (January 2026), the impact of the war on education did not emerge as a widespread national concern, with only 18.7% of respondents reporting an impact on their or their children's education. However, disruptions were highly concentrated in conflict-affected areas. Baalbek–Hermel recorded the highest proportion of respondents reporting educational disruption (57.3%), followed by Nabatiyeh (37.1%), and the South (34.2%).

Participants described how fear of airstrikes, shelling, and instability increasingly affected attendance, concentration, and learning outcomes. Public schools, often used as shelters or overwhelmed by displaced students, faced overcrowding and interruptions, particularly in heavily affected areas, while private education became increasingly unaffordable, and online learning was hindered by poor connectivity and limited engagement, exacerbating inequalities in access.

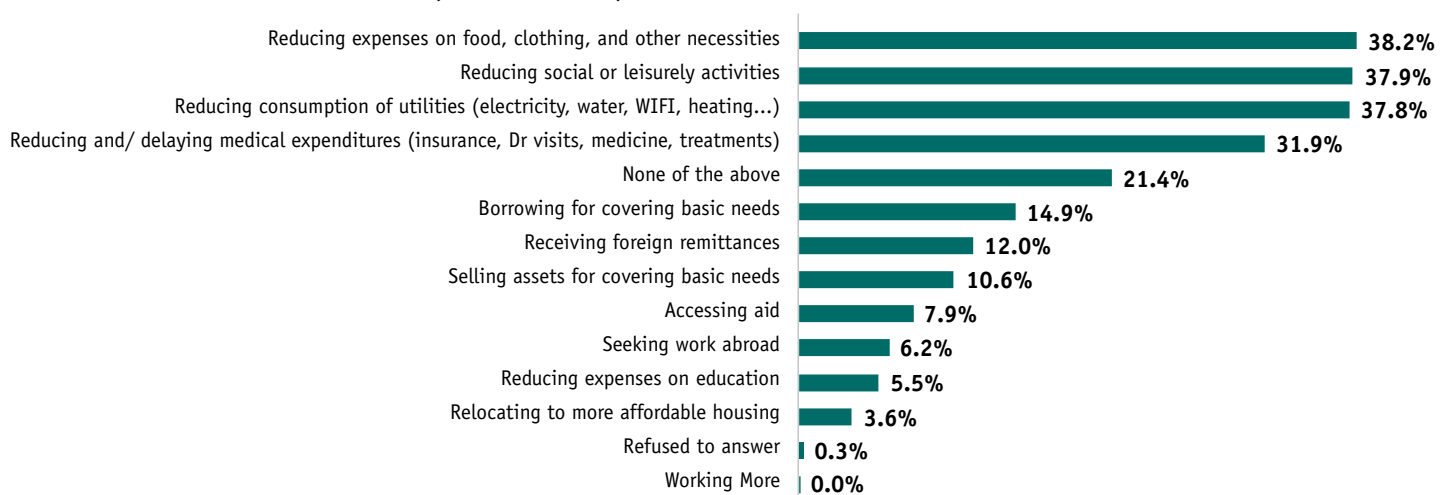
'I didn't study until the war finished. I didn't learn anything at all,' said a male university student from the Bekaa. Several participants also described moving children from private to public schools or withdrawing from university due to financial pressures.

Household Coping

Against this backdrop, households across Lebanon described relying primarily on austerity measures and reductions in daily consumption. Survey findings show that 38.2% of respondents reduced spending on food and clothing, 37.9% reduced social and leisure activities, 37.8% reduced utility consumption, and 31.9% delayed or reduced medical expenses. Other respondents relied on remittances, borrowing, or the sale of assets to meet basic needs.

In the last 6 months, which coping strategies has your household used (Jan 2026)?

(Multiple response)



Healthcare pressures were particularly visible, with participants describing medication shortages, delayed treatment, and rising barriers to accessing care. As one female participant from Baalbek–Hermel explained: ‘We sold gold, we lost our savings, moved our kids to public schools, we buy only what is necessary... we are in debt.’ Utility and healthcare-related coping measures were especially pronounced in Nabatiyeh, Keserwan–Jbeil, and Baalbek–Hermel.

Taken together, the findings indicate that while some impacts remained localized, economic strain was widespread across regions by early 2026. Household coping strategies increasingly reflected depletion of savings and assets to sustain basic needs.

Sources of Support

Despite widespread needs, support remained limited. While 17.3% of respondents reported receiving some form of assistance, 82.7% reported receiving none. Among those receiving support, assistance was primarily financial and came mainly from political parties (51.7%), the diaspora (30.8%), and religious charities (27.6%). Only 13.9% reported receiving support from state institutions.

Focus group discussions similarly highlighted the visibility of political parties and affiliated networks in providing cash assistance, shelter, food, fuel, and support for damaged property, although support was often described as delayed, temporary, or conditional. Municipalities also played a role in aid distribution, though participants frequently raised concerns regarding politicization, favoritism, and unequal access. Across regions, respondents described state support as minimal or largely absent, reinforcing perceptions of abandonment and increasing reliance on non-state actors.

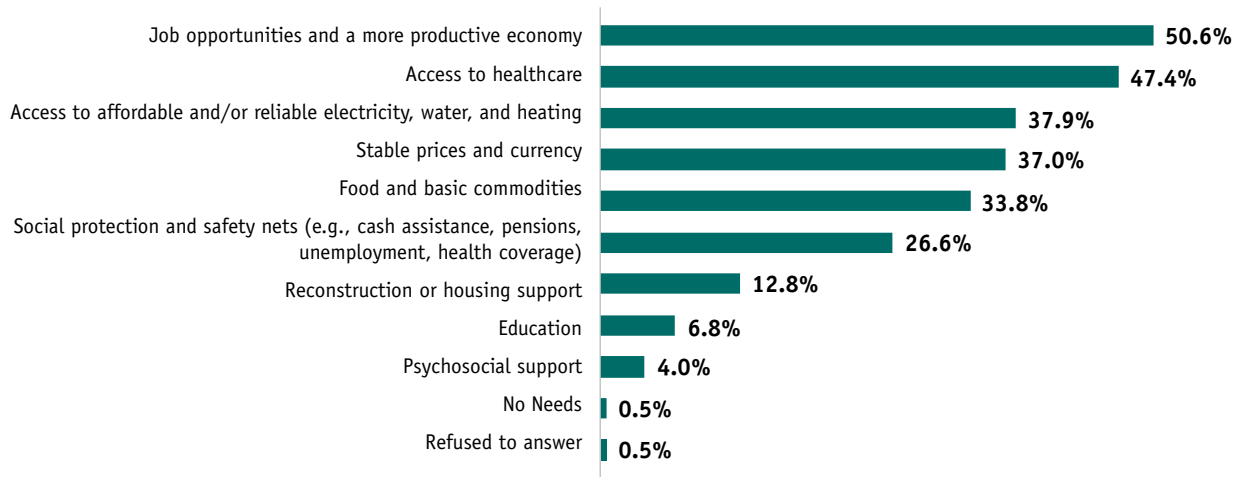
Inequalities in access, misuse of resources, and insufficient coverage left many households unsupported. While aid sometimes addressed short-term needs, it rarely compensated for broader structural gaps or supported long-term recovery. The findings further suggest that support systems remained fragmented and heavily reliant on non-state actors, family networks, and external assistance, reinforcing perceptions of limited state capacity to respond to growing needs.

Essential Needs

Household priorities for the following six months remained centered on basic services, prices, and livelihoods. Survey findings show that 50.6% of respondents identified job opportunities and economic recovery as the most pressing socio-economic need, followed by access to healthcare (47.4%),

affordable and reliable electricity and water (37.9%), stable prices (37%), food and basic commodities (33.8%), social protection (26.6%), and reconstruction or housing support (12.8%).

What are your household's most pressing socio-economic needs in the next 6 months (Jan 2026)? (Multiple response)



Overall, the findings suggest that by early 2026 many households remained focused on managing immediate economic pressures and meeting basic needs, with limited evidence of a broader transition from crisis coping toward recovery and longer-term stabilization.

II Perceptions and experiences of safety and (in)security

Overall erosion of safety and security

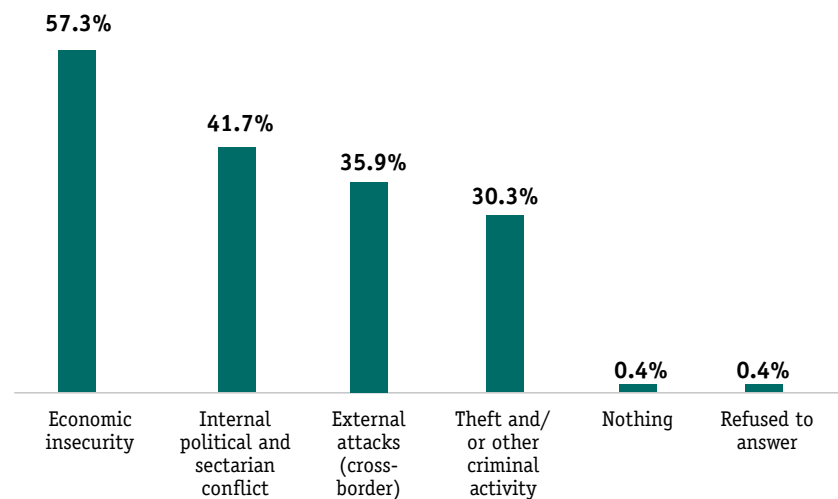
Even before the renewed large-scale escalation in March 2026, the November 2024 ceasefire had failed to restore a sense of security among Lebanese. While participants acknowledged a temporary reduction in the intensity of conflict, continued Israeli military operations across the South, the Bekaa, and Dahiye, alongside persistent fears of renewed escalation, meant that insecurity remained a defining feature of daily life.

Nearly half of survey respondents (49.4%) reported feeling less safe since the onset of the October 2023 war, including 20.9% who felt much less safe.

Focus group discussions reflected similar perceptions. Participants frequently described safety as fragile, conditional, and reversible, shaped by the unpredictability of military developments and the constant possibility of escalation. As one male participant from Nabatiyeh explained: 'You never know when they will strike. You might be walking behind someone who is targeted, how can you feel safe then?'

When asked about the threats that concerned them most, respondents identified economic insecurity as the primary concern (57.3%), followed by internal political and sectarian conflict (41.7%), external attacks (35.9%), and theft or criminal activity (30.3%).

Which threats concern you the most for your household today (Jan 2026)? (Multiple response)



External attacks and direct exposure to shelling were concentrated in governorates directly affected by hostilities, particularly Nabatiyeh, the South, and Baalbek–Hermel, as well as among Shia respondents. By contrast, concerns related to internal political and sectarian conflict and criminality were more pronounced in Keserwan–Jbeil, Mount Lebanon, and Beirut.

Which threats concern you most for your household today? (Multiple response)

	AKKAR	NORTH	BEKAA	BAALBEK - EL HERMEL	BEIRUT	MOUNT LEBANON	Keserwan - Jbeil	SOUTH	El Nabatieh
Economic insecurity	68.1%	33.0%	77.3%	40.7%	72.0%	56.4%	73.1%	51.9%	69.3%
Internal political and sectarian conflict	23.8%	45.5%	39.3%	27.3%	46.4%	45.4%	54.4%	35.4%	38.6%
External attacks (cross-border)	15.0%	28.8%	40.0%	82.7%	46.8%	29.0%	17.5%	43.5%	48.6%
Theft and/or other criminal activity	32.5%	31.8%	5.3%	11.3%	16.0%	37.1%	47.5%	30.0%	37.9%

While survey questions distinguished between external and internal threats, focus group participants often described insecurity as layered and interconnected. External military threats generated constant anxiety and uncertainty, but were seen as beyond their control, while internal threats—including theft, harassment, armed violence, and the spread of unregulated weapons—were experienced as more immediate and routine.

Participants frequently linked these dynamics to economic collapse, weakened state authority, ineffective law enforcement, and social fragmentation. Participants described these insecurities as having a particularly strong impact on the mobility, work, and daily routines of women and girls, especially at night or in poorly lit areas. As one female participant from the North explained: ‘I stayed in my area, near my work.’

Overall, insecurity in Lebanon was experienced through overlapping military, economic, and internal threats that varied across regions and communities, reinforcing a persistent sense of uncertainty and eroded safety.

Trust in Security Forces and Armed Groups

Lebanese Army and Non-State Actors

Trust in security actors varied significantly depending on exposure to conflict and local context. Nationally, an overwhelming majority of respondents (76.7%) identified the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) as the actor they trust most to keep their community safe, followed by political parties or non-state armed actors (10.8%). The LAF was the most trusted across all regions and sectarian groups, reflecting its broad institutional legitimacy and perception as the principal guarantor of national security.

Focus group participants similarly described the LAF as the ‘foundation’ of national security and the institution that should ultimately be responsible for public safety. However, important variations emerged in areas and among communities directly affected by conflict. While the LAF remained the most trusted across all sectarian groups, the gap between the LAF and political parties or armed actors was considerably narrower among Shia respondents than among other groups.

For example, 56.5% of Shia respondents identified the LAF as the actor they trust most to keep their community safe, compared to 30.3% who identified political parties or armed groups. By contrast, among Christian, Sunni, and Druze respondents, support for political parties or armed groups remained below 4%, while trust in the LAF exceeded 82%.

Participants also explained that in areas directly exposed to hostilities, including Baalbek–Hermel and Nabatiyeh, reliance on non-state actors

for defense was often linked to perceptions that the LAF lacked sufficient operational capacity, resources, or autonomy to provide full protection.

Trust in non-state actors was also associated with their visible local presence and their perceived ability to provide support and respond rapidly during periods of crisis. However, this trust was not uniform, with other respondents describing such actors as divisive, self-interested, or contributing to insecurity and political fragmentation.

United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)

Survey findings indicate limited confidence in UNIFIL's ability to protect communities during armed conflict. Nationally, UNIFIL received a mean trust score of 2.24 out of 4, with lower levels recorded in directly affected governorates and among Shia respondents.

Focus group discussions similarly reflected perceptions of UNIFIL's role as limited and largely symbolic during periods of escalation. While some participants acknowledged its contribution to local development projects and economic activity, UNIFIL was rarely viewed as a direct security guarantor. Discussions also revealed limited public awareness of UNIFIL's mandate, including its role in monitoring the Blue Line and cessation of hostilities, supporting the LAF, and facilitating humanitarian access.

As a result, participants often evaluated UNIFIL against expectations that extended beyond its formal responsibilities, particularly regarding protection from attacks and the prevention of hostilities. This suggests a gap between public expectations and understanding of UNIFIL's role and capabilities. As a participant from Nabatiyeh explained: 'They help with projects like restoring orphanages, water wells, or solar energy. But [...] they can't actually provide security.'

Social Cohesion

Survey findings indicate mixed perceptions regarding social cohesion during and after the conflict. During the 2023–2024 round of the war, 48.9% of respondents said social cohesion was clearly present, while 32% described it as somewhat present. Perceptions of strong cohesion were particularly high in Baalbek-Hermel, Beirut, and the South.

Focus group discussions reflected similar dynamics. Participants frequently referred to experiences of displacement and crisis as moments that generated solidarity, mutual support, human connection, and stronger feelings of national belonging across regions and sects.

However, these experiences were not uniform. Some displaced individuals described feeling unwelcome, watched, or judged because of their background,

while others highlighted how insecurity and targeted strikes limited trust and interaction. As one youth participant from Dahiyeh noted: ‘Generally, they say there was cohesion between sects, but that’s just the ‘on-screen’ image.’

By January 2026, perceptions of social cohesion had become more fragile. While 36.2% of respondents said cohesion had not weakened since the November 2024 ceasefire, 28.7% believed it had weakened and 32.3% said it had somewhat weakened. Participants described how displacement, coupled with political polarization, and online discourse often reinforced mistrust and revived pre-existing social and sectarian tensions. Social media and political rhetoric were frequently described as amplifying *fitna* (strife) and divisive narratives.

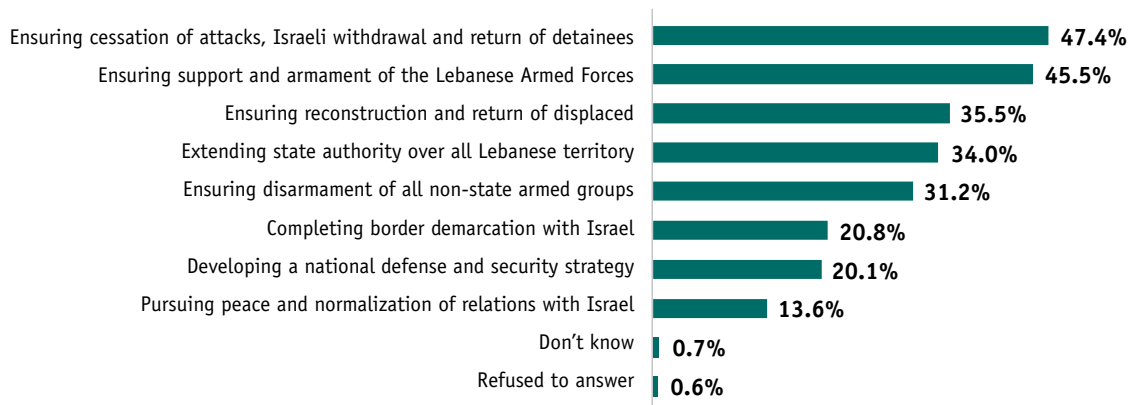
Overall, the findings suggest that while the conflict generated important moments of solidarity, it also exposed and intensified deeper political and social divisions. Social cohesion emerged as both real and fragile, strengthened temporarily by shared hardship, but constrained by extended insecurity, displacement, economic strain, politicization and long-standing tensions.

Priorities in Dealing with the Conflict with Israel

Survey findings reveal broad convergence around immediate security and recovery priorities, alongside continued divisions over how the conflict should be managed politically. Nationally, the most widely supported priority was ending hostilities, securing Israeli withdrawal, and ensuring the return of detainees (47.4%).

This was followed closely by support for strengthening the Lebanese Armed Forces (45.5%), reconstruction and return of displaced persons (35.5%), extending state authority nationwide (34%), and disarming non-state armed groups (31.2%). Pursuing peace or normalization with Israel remained a minority position nationally (13.6%).

In your opinion, what should be the Lebanese state’s top priorities in handling the armed conflict with Israel (Jan 2026)? (Multiple response)



Regional and sectarian variations reveal how priorities were shaped by exposure to conflict and political positioning. In governorates directly affected by hostilities—notably the South, Nabatiyeh, and Baalbek-Hermel—respondents prioritized ending attacks, Israeli withdrawal, reconstruction, and the return of displaced populations. In contrast, respondents in areas less directly exposed to military attacks, particularly Keserwan-Jbeil and Mount Lebanon, placed greater emphasis on extending state authority and disarming non-state armed groups.

Similar patterns appeared across sectarian groups, with Shia respondents prioritizing cessation of attacks and reconstruction, while Christian respondents placed greater emphasis on sovereignty and disarmament. Sunni respondents showed a more mixed pattern centered on support for the LAF.

These divisions became clearer when respondents were asked how the Lebanese state should manage the conflict with Israel. Nationally, no single approach commanded consensus. Strengthening the 2024 Ceasefire Monitoring Committee mechanism, pursuing direct negotiations, and rejecting negotiations altogether all received relatively similar levels of support (24.5%, 22%, and 21.5% respectively). Regional differences remained pronounced, with strongest support for negotiations in the North (45%) and strongest rejection of negotiations in Beirut (48%) and Baalbek-Hermel (40%).

Overall, the findings point to a central challenge for the Lebanese state: balancing urgent demands for security, protection, reconstruction, and support for conflict-affected communities with competing national debates over sovereignty, negotiations, disarmament, and the long-term management of the conflict.

III Political Participation and Representation

Political Participation and Engagement

Political participation appeared limited across multiple forms of engagement, reflecting broader frustration with political institutions and declining confidence in the ability of political processes to produce meaningful change. While voting in municipal elections emerged as the most common form of participation during the previous year (57.9%), 39.3% of respondents reported no engagement in elections, community meetings, campaigns, protests, or other political activities. Political disengagement was particularly pronounced among youth aged 18–24, among whom 65.1% reported no participation in any listed activity.

At the same time, the findings suggest that political disengagement should not be understood simply as withdrawal from political participation. A majority

of respondents (53.9%) reported voting in the 2022 parliamentary elections. Among those who voted, 68.8% reported supporting traditional political parties, compared to smaller proportions voting for independent or reformist candidates. Support for traditional political parties was particularly pronounced in conflict-affected governorates such as Nabatiyeh (96.2%), Baalbek–Hermel (93.1%), and the South (82.3%), although it also remained comparatively strong in Mount Lebanon (75.3%) and Keserwan–Jbeil (70.2%).

Focus group discussions similarly reflected ambivalent attitudes toward participation. While some respondents continued to view voting as a civic duty and an important means of protecting their community's interests, many also expressed frustration with entrenched political structures, sectarian clientelism, and the perception that elections do not produce meaningful political change. As one youth participant from Dahiyeh explained: 'They only come to your sectarian district to give you money for your vote so they can win.'

Electoral Trust and Representation

The findings point to a broader crisis of trust in the electoral process and political representation. Although 51.3% of respondents stated that they intended to vote in the parliamentary elections originally planned for 2026 before they were postponed, both intended voters and non-voters expressed significant skepticism toward the effectiveness and fairness of elections.

Among respondents not intending to vote, the most common reason was the belief that voting would not lead to meaningful change, followed by lack of trust in the transparency and fairness of the electoral process. Similar concerns were also shared by intended voters, suggesting that distrust extends beyond electoral abstention itself. As one female youth participant from Beirut stated: 'No enthusiasm at all because they all just make promises.'

At the same time, dissatisfaction with political institutions did not necessarily translate into dissatisfaction with one's own electoral choices. Among respondents who voted in the 2022 parliamentary elections, a majority expressed some level of satisfaction with the performance of the political actors they supported, with 40.4% reporting being 'very satisfied' and 41.5% 'somewhat satisfied.' These findings suggest that dissatisfaction with governance coexists with continued support for established political actors in many communities, reflecting the enduring influence of regional, sectarian, and partisan affiliations.

Perceptions of political representation were mixed, with approximately four in ten respondents reporting that their communities were not adequately represented in decision-making at the local (39%) and national (42.3%) levels.

Focus group discussions nevertheless linked perceptions of underrepresentation to persistent corruption, weak accountability, unequal service provision, and the dominance of sectarian and clientelist political structures.

Youth Participation and Political Inclusion

The findings indicate a significant gap between youth political participation and perceptions regarding their inclusion in decision-making processes. Political engagement was particularly limited among respondents aged 18–24, with 65.1% reporting no participation in political or civic activities during the previous year. At the same time, approximately half of respondents believed that young people are included and have a meaningful voice in shaping Lebanon's recovery process.

However, focus group discussions revealed widespread skepticism among younger participants regarding the responsiveness of political institutions and the possibility of achieving meaningful change through existing political processes. Lower levels of youth participation therefore appeared linked not only to apathy, but also to broader frustration with limited opportunities, weak accountability, and declining confidence that participation can influence outcomes.

Respondents also expressed support for reforms aimed at strengthening electoral accountability, fairness, and participation, particularly through an independent electoral commission, stronger oversight of campaign spending, effective mega-centers, and expanded diaspora voting rights.

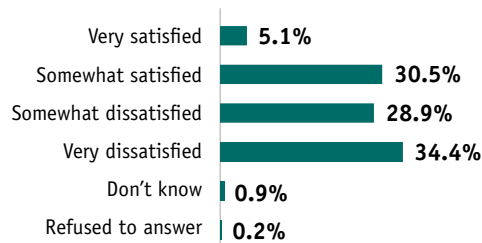
Taken together, the findings suggest that political disengagement in Lebanon reflects not simply declining interest in politics, but a broader crisis of trust in institutions and in the capacity of elections to produce meaningful political and socio-economic change. At the same time, enduring support for established political actors in some regions and communities points to the continued resilience of sectarian, partisan, and clientelist forms of political representation.

IV Trust in Institutions

Perceptions of Government Performance

Overall satisfaction with the government's handling of the crisis is low, with nearly two-thirds of respondents (63.4%) expressing dissatisfaction, compared to 35.6% reporting some level of satisfaction. Evaluations were largely based on the provision of everyday services, such as electricity, water, infrastructure, healthcare, and employment, as well as visible recovery efforts. While some respondents noted minor improvements, these were generally seen as insufficient.

How satisfied are you with the government's performance in handling the multifaceted crisis so far (Jan 2026)?



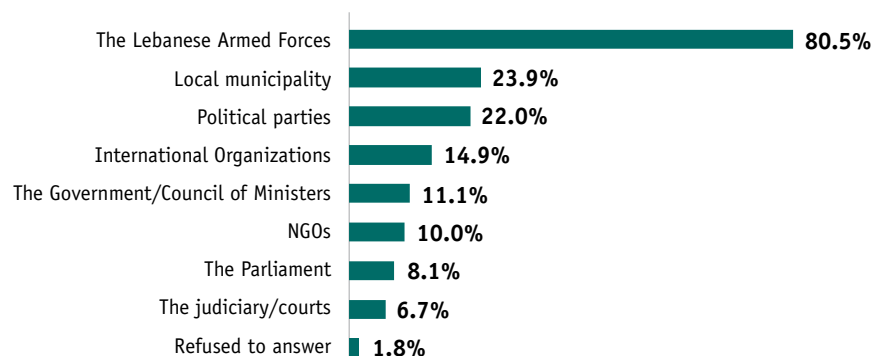
Dissatisfaction was particularly pronounced in conflict-affected areas, especially regarding delays in reconstruction, weak support for returnees, and limited state action to address affordability pressures. At the same time, relatively higher levels of satisfaction were recorded in Beirut, the Bekaa, and Akkar, reflecting regional differences in exposure to conflict and evaluations of the government's performance.

Focus group discussions reinforced these perceptions, with many participants describing the state as largely absent or ineffective. Weak service provision, limited economic recovery, and lack of visible progress deepened perceptions that state commitments and government responses had failed to translate into tangible improvements in people's lives. As a youth participant from the South noted at the time: 'There is no performance to even be satisfied with.'

Most Trusted Actors in Recovery

Despite broader distrust in public institutions, the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) remained the most trusted institution in relation to post-war recovery and stability, trusted by 80.5% of respondents. Municipalities and political parties followed at significantly lower levels (23.9% and 22% respectively), and trust in the government (11.1%), NGOs (10%), Parliament and the judiciary remained limited.

Which of the following institutions do you trust most in effectively handling the post-war recovery phase (Jan 2026)? (Multiple response)



Reform Priorities, Recovery Outlooks, and Emigration Intentions

Economic recovery emerged as citizens' primary reform priority (45.7%), followed by anti-corruption and accountability measures (31.3%). Other frequently identified priorities included electricity and energy reform, financial and banking reform, healthcare reform, while issues related to state authority and monopoly over weapons ranked sixth. In governorates directly affected by conflict, reconstruction and the return of displaced populations emerged as more immediate priorities (83.6% of respondents in Nabatiyeh, 43.8% in the South, and 36% in Baalbek–Hermel).

Survey findings further indicate that most respondents (64.7%) viewed reconstruction and compensation as primarily the responsibility of the state. However, nearly two-thirds of respondents expressed weak confidence in the government's ability to effectively manage reconstruction and compensation processes, highlighting broader concerns regarding state capacity and implementation.

Hope regarding reform and recovery remained fragile and uncertain. While 48.3% of respondents reported some degree of hope, a slight majority (51.2%) expressed pessimism regarding prospects for meaningful reform and recovery. Focus group discussions reflected those perceptions, with many participants describing the state as politically paralyzed and unable to deliver meaningful change.

These perceptions were also reflected in growing consideration of emigration, particularly among younger age groups (18-34). Economic hardship remained the primary driver of emigration considerations, while security concerns also emerged as an important factor for many respondents. As a youth participant from Dahiyeh explained: 'Young people's futures were affected ... their path was blocked. I am one of those people.' These trends may have significant implications for Lebanon's demographic, social, and economic future.

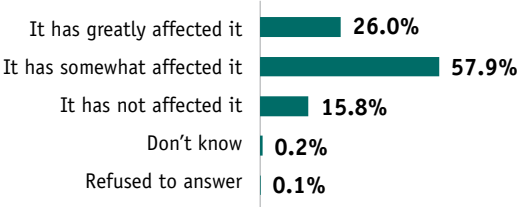
V Psychosocial Impact

The war deepened an already severe climate of psychological and social distress across Lebanon. Participants described living in a constant state of fear, anxiety, and alertness, with insecurity affecting daily life even outside periods of active escalation. Trauma linked to displacement, home destruction, and loss of loved ones contributed to sleep disturbances, anxiety, emotional exhaustion, and reliance on medication, particularly but not only among directly affected groups. As a youth participant from Baalbek-Hermel explained: 'We were affected psychologically, because most of us lost someone during this war.'

Survey findings similarly reflected a broader emotional climate marked by despair (41.5%), frustration (33.3%), and fear (30.8%), while only 27.4% of respondents identified hope as their primary feeling toward the current situation.

Survey findings show that 83.9% of respondents believed the conflict had affected their or their family’s psychological and emotional well-being (between somewhat and greatly affected). As a female participant from the Bekaa noted: ‘I can’t sleep, I take sleeping pills so I can sleep for even two hours.’

To what extent has the ongoing 2023 war affected your and your family’s psychological or emotional well-being (Jan 2026)?



Children and youth were consistently identified as among the most affected groups. Participants described heightened fear, concentration difficulties, disrupted sleep, and declining engagement in school. A male participant from the Bekaa explained: ‘As a result of the war, my son doesn’t sleep. He won’t sleep before I sit next to him.’

Access and Barriers to Psychosocial Support

Despite widespread distress, very few respondents reported seeking professional psychosocial support. Only 4.1% reported that they or a family member had sought specialized psychological assistance.

Affordability emerged as a major barrier to accessing support, with participants describing therapy sessions and medication costs as unaffordable for many households. Alongside financial constraints, accessibility and social stigma also remained as key obstacles in many communities. As a male participant from Baalbek-Hermel explained: ‘I used to not even know what psychological support was ... People used to think it was only for crazy people.’

At the same time, participants—particularly younger ones—described growing openness toward mental health support, especially as distress became more widespread. Psychosocial support for children was also viewed as more socially acceptable and urgently needed. However, many participants noted that available programs remained limited, inconsistent, or short term.

In the absence of accessible support, participants described relying primarily on informal coping mechanisms, including family networks, faith-based practices, emotional suppression, maintaining routines, and avoidance

behaviors. Many also reported adapting their daily routines to enhance safety, including restricting movement, avoiding certain areas, and limiting travel to essential activities. Even after periods of escalation subsided, many of these practices persisted.

Overall, psychosocial distress emerged as a central feature of the crisis, affecting daily life, family well-being, and children's development. Despite the scale of needs, access to psychosocial support remained extremely limited, highlighting a significant gap in existing response and recovery efforts.

VI Gendered Impact and Vulnerable Groups

Rising Safety Concerns for Women and Girls

Survey findings suggest that nearly one in five respondents (19.2%) believed women in their communities experienced increased threats to their personal safety since the outbreak of the war. Perceptions of increased threats were particularly pronounced in Keserwan–Jbeil, followed by Baalbek–Hermel and Mount Lebanon. Among respondents reporting increased threats, verbal harassment was identified as the most common form (39.3%), followed by physical (31.2%) and economic threats (23%), while sexual threats were less frequently reported (6.3%).

Focus group discussions similarly highlighted growing concerns related to women's and girls' safety, particularly in displacement settings and unfamiliar environments. Participants frequently referred to lack of privacy, discomfort using shared facilities, and fears of harassment or exploitation when living with other families, relocating to unfamiliar areas, or moving during periods of insecurity. These concerns often shaped decisions regarding mobility, education, work, and participation in public life.

Changing Roles and Household Responsibilities

Focus group findings indicate that women increasingly carried heightened caregiving and emotional responsibilities during the conflict, particularly in relation to protecting children, managing displacement conditions, and maintaining household stability. Participants also described women increasingly entering the workforce or assuming additional economic responsibilities to support household income amid worsening economic pressures. As one male participant from Mount Lebanon noted: 'Women get anxious for their children; the pressure on them increases.'

Survey findings paint a more mixed picture of changes in women's domestic responsibilities than FGDs. While most respondents reported no major changes, approximately one quarter indicated increased burdens on

women within the household. These changes were more pronounced in conflict-affected areas and among Shia respondents, particularly in Beirut, Baalbek–Hermel, and Mount Lebanon.

Participants also described shifts toward more flexible and collective household decision-making, particularly regarding spending priorities, schooling, relocation, and housing arrangements. In some cases, women assumed greater responsibility for managing household resources and daily decisions, particularly where displacement, job loss, insecurity, or the absence of male family members disrupted traditional family roles. As one female participant from Baalbek-Hermel explained: ‘Decisions became shared. Before, it was his opinion or my opinion. In this situation, it became a joint decision.’

At the same time, participants also highlighted the significant psychological and financial pressures experienced by men due to expectations surrounding economic provision during crisis and displacement.

Vulnerable Groups

Across focus groups, participants consistently identified children, elderly persons, and individuals with chronic illnesses or disabilities as among the groups most affected by the war. Children were described as particularly vulnerable to fear, psychological distress, and disruptions to education, while elderly individuals and persons with chronic illnesses or disabilities faced difficulties related to displacement, mobility, continuity of healthcare, and access to specialized care and support services.

Participants also highlighted how displacement and insecurity disproportionately affected individuals requiring continuous medical treatment or specialized care. As one female participant from Nabatiyeh explained: ‘The elderly ... those who are paralyzed, women with chronic diseases, those with Alzheimer’s ... when you move them to another place, they get lost.’

VII Displacement and Intentions to Return

Displacement during the first round of the war was widespread, with approximately one in four respondents (26.8%) reporting having been displaced between October 2023 and November 2024. However, displacement was heavily concentrated in governorates directly affected by hostilities, particularly Nabatiyeh (100% of respondents), Baalbek–Hermel (82.7%), and the South (67.7%). A large majority of displaced respondents were also Shia, reflecting the geography and intensity of the conflict.

Focus group discussions similarly highlighted the scale and disruption of displacement. Participants described overcrowded living conditions, financial

strain, uncertainty regarding safety and return, and fatigue associated with lack of privacy, unfamiliar environments, and prolonged displacement.

Before the renewed escalation of March 2026 and the subsequent large-scale wave of displacement, most displaced respondents (93.2%) reported having returned to their original areas of residence. However, return was often described as driven more by necessity than by a genuine sense of safety or stability. Many participants reported returning despite ongoing fears of renewed attacks, damaged housing, limited services, and economic hardship.

Survey findings show that 61.6% of returnees remained concerned about attacks near their place of residence, while 39.6% worried about livelihoods, 37.6% feared future or renewed occupation, 25.9% reported concerns regarding lack of services and infrastructure, and 19.4% cited damaged housing conditions.

Across focus groups, participants emphasized that attachment to land, inability to sustain displacement costs, and fear of property loss were major factors driving return, particularly in the South. As one participant explained: 'People went back because they weren't comfortable where they were. They'd rather sleep next to the ruins of their house than stay displaced.'

Even households with damaged homes often returned to unfinished or unsafe structures. Participants also expressed frustration with what they perceived as limited state support for safety, reconstruction, compensation, and sustainable return conditions. As a female participant from Baalbek explained: 'We were displaced and saw nothing from them. Even when we returned to our homes, there was nothing.'

At the same time, uncertainty regarding future displacement remained significant; approximately one quarter of returnees reported thinking about leaving again, reflecting the continued fragility of return and broader uncertainty regarding security and long-term stability. These concerns remain particularly salient in light of the renewed escalation of March 2026, subsequent waves of displacement, and continued fragility of ceasefire arrangements, which influence conditions for safe, dignified, and sustainable return.

Conclusion

The findings of this study highlight a Lebanon entering the renewed escalation of March 2026 under conditions of deep structural fragility. Even prior to the latest large-scale displacement and destruction, households across regions were already experiencing overlapping economic, security, psychosocial, and governance pressures that significantly constrained their capacity to cope with further shocks.

Across nearly all thematic areas, the research points to a widening gap between citizen expectations and institutional capacity. While the state remains the primary actor expected to provide security, reconstruction, compensation, and basic services, trust in public institutions and confidence in their ability to effectively deliver remain low. Participants repeatedly described governance failures, corruption, weak service provision, delayed recovery efforts, and the lack of visible improvements in daily life as central drivers of frustration and uncertainty.

At the same time, the findings reveal important regional and social variations in both the drivers and experiences of insecurity. Conflict-affected governorates faced more acute displacement, destruction, fear of attacks, and reconstruction pressures, while other regions expressed stronger concerns regarding internal instability, crime, and political fragmentation. Trust in security and political actors similarly varied depending on exposure to conflict, local dynamics, and sectarian or political positioning. These differences highlight the uneven geography of insecurity and vulnerability across Lebanon.

The report also demonstrates that economic hardship and insecurity are mutually reinforcing rather than separate dynamics. Households described moving from long-term economic strain into increasingly acute forms of vulnerability, relying on debt, austerity measures, depletion of savings, and informal support networks to sustain basic needs. Despite some reform and crisis response efforts, the scale of economic hardship and insecurity continued to constrain households' ability to move beyond immediate survival concerns toward longer-term recovery.

Psychological distress emerged as another defining feature of the crisis. Fear, anxiety, uncertainty, and emotional exhaustion were widespread across demographic groups, particularly among children, youth, displaced populations, women, and vulnerable groups. Yet access to psychosocial support remained extremely limited due to affordability barriers, uneven service availability, and persistent stigma.

The findings therefore suggest that the effects of prolonged crisis extend beyond material deprivation and increasingly shape individual coping, education, mobility, family dynamics, and perceptions of the future. The findings also point to growing strain on social cohesion and community relations, as prolonged insecurity, displacement, political polarization, and uneven experiences of conflict increasingly shape intercommunal perceptions, everyday interactions, and social relations.

At the political level, the findings point to a broader crisis of trust in governance and representation. While many respondents remained skeptical regarding the effectiveness of elections and the possibility of meaningful political change, support for established political actors and sectarian structures remained resilient in many regions and communities. This reflects the persistence of sectarian, partisan, and clientelist forms of representation and protection, particularly in contexts where state institutions are perceived as weak, absent, or unable to provide effective support.

The findings captured in this report represent perceptions and experiences prior to the renewed escalation of March 2026. Since then, renewed conflict, mass displacement, large-scale destruction, and political instability have likely intensified many of the vulnerabilities identified throughout the study. In this sense, the report provides an important baseline for understanding the conditions under which Lebanese households, communities, and institutions entered a new phase of crisis.

Taken together, the findings underscore that recovery in Lebanon cannot be understood solely in terms of reconstruction or macroeconomic stabilization. The challenges identified throughout the study are simultaneously economic, political, social, psychological, and institutional.

Addressing them therefore requires responses that move beyond short-term crisis management and combine protection, recovery, accountability, and inclusion. Rebuilding trust between citizens and institutions, strengthening social cohesion and community relations, and responding to the differentiated vulnerabilities experienced across regions and social groups will be critical to any sustainable path toward recovery and stability.

Recommendations

The findings point to several cross-cutting priorities for addressing Lebanon's overlapping economic, social, institutional, and security challenges. Given the ongoing conflict, continued displacement, and limited progress on structural reforms, responses should prioritize protecting vulnerable populations, maintaining essential services, supporting recovery, and strengthening more inclusive and accountable governance. The recommendations below draw on the survey and focus group findings and were further informed by discussions held during two expert roundtables.

1. Strengthen Socio-Economic Protection and Basic Services

Respondents consistently identified economic insecurity, affordability pressures, and declining access to services as among their most pressing concerns. While addressing these challenges ultimately requires broader economic, financial, and governance reforms, the findings also point to immediate priorities for protecting vulnerable households and strengthening resilience.

- Expand targeted social protection and emergency assistance programs for households facing severe economic pressures, particularly in conflict-affected and low-income areas.
- Support households facing rising living costs through mechanisms that improve affordability and stability in essential goods and services, particularly food, healthcare, fuel, and transportation.
- Strengthen continuity of healthcare, education, electricity, water, and local infrastructure services through targeted support to public institutions, municipalities, and frontline service providers, particularly in conflict-affected and displacement-hosting areas.
- Expand livelihood support and income-generation opportunities through support for small businesses, local economic recovery initiatives, vocational training, cash-for-work programs, and assistance to informal workers affected by conflict, displacement, and economic disruption.
- Support educational continuity through school retention initiatives, remedial education programs, teacher support, digital learning capacities where needed, and psychosocial services for students affected by conflict, displacement, and educational disruption.
- Develop contingency plans for displacement that support continuity of education through temporary learning spaces, alternative shelter arrangements, and clear protocols for balancing emergency accommodation needs with schooling.

2. Support Displacement Response and Recovery

- Strengthen preparedness and response mechanisms for repeated and protracted displacement through improved coordination, local response planning, and support for municipalities and host communities facing growing pressures on services, infrastructure, and local resources.
- Improve access to temporary shelter support, rental assistance, healthcare, and basic services for displaced populations and vulnerable households.
- Support rehabilitation and restoration of essential services and local infrastructure where, and as soon as, feasible, particularly in heavily affected areas facing repeated disruption.

- Prepare more transparent and inclusive recovery and reconstruction frameworks that can guide future recovery efforts once conditions allow, while ensuring that planning is locally grounded, responsive to regional disparities and varying conflict exposure, and incorporates local needs, safety concerns, livelihood recovery, and social, psychological, and institutional dimensions of recovery.
- Ensure that return policies and recovery planning are linked not only to physical return, but also to safety, housing conditions, service access, and economic sustainability.

3. Strengthen Safety and Security

- Strengthen the capacity and operational readiness of the Lebanese Armed Forces, the Internal Security Forces and other security institutions, to enhance civilian protection, support local stability, and respond to evolving security challenges.
- Support local authorities, municipalities, and security institutions in developing community-based safety and prevention initiatives, including local safety coordination mechanisms, community policing approaches, and violence-prevention programs that address local concerns related to crime, violence, unregulated weapons, and insecurity.
- Strengthen coordination between national institutions, municipalities, emergency response actors, humanitarian organizations, and local communities to improve preparedness, protection, and response during periods of tension, displacement, escalation, and humanitarian crisis.
- Promote inclusive national dialogue on security and defense that takes into account diverse regional experiences, security concerns, and perspectives on Lebanon's relationship with Israel and other threats.
- Approach discussions related to state authority, defense strategy, and the role of armed actors as part of an inclusive and nationally owned political process rather than solely as an immediate technical security issue isolated from broader political, social, and security considerations.
- Strengthen diplomatic, legal, and documentation efforts aimed at monitoring violations of international humanitarian law, supporting accountability mechanisms, and protecting Lebanese civilians, infrastructure, cultural heritage, and sovereignty from future attacks.

4. Strengthen Social Cohesion and Community Relations

- Support community-based initiatives that strengthen dialogue, trust-building, and cooperation between communities affected by displacement and conflict, particularly in areas experiencing heightened social pressures.
- Strengthen coordination between state institutions, municipalities, civil society organizations, and humanitarian actors to improve the coherence, inclusivity, and sustainability of response efforts.
- Encourage political leaders, public institutions, media outlets, and social media actors to adopt more responsible public discourse that avoids incitement, stigmatization, and divisive rhetoric and contributes to social cohesion.
- Promote public awareness and community engagement initiatives that reinforce shared civic responsibility, solidarity, and constructive dialogue across political, sectarian, and regional divides.

5. Expand Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

- Increase access to affordable and community-based MHPSS services, particularly for children, youth, displaced populations, caregivers, and conflict-affected households.
- Integrate psychosocial support into schools, shelters, primary healthcare centers, and community-based initiatives to improve accessibility and reduce stigma surrounding mental health support.
- Develop targeted psychosocial support programs for children and adolescents affected by conflict, displacement, educational disruption, and prolonged insecurity.
- Support awareness, outreach, and community engagement initiatives aimed at reducing stigma associated with seeking psychosocial care and strengthening community-based support networks.

6. Strengthen Protection and Inclusion of Women and Vulnerable Groups

- Improve protection measures for women and girls in displacement settings and public spaces, including safer shelter conditions, improved privacy, secure sanitation facilities, accessible reporting mechanisms for harassment or abuse, and measures that support safe mobility and access to services.
- Ensure that emergency response, displacement planning, and recovery efforts prioritize the needs of elderly persons, persons with disabilities, and individuals with chronic illnesses requiring continuous care, medication, or specialized services.

- Improve accessibility of shelters, healthcare services, transportation, and public facilities for persons with disabilities and vulnerable populations.
- Expand support services for caregivers and households facing increased caregiving burdens during conflict and displacement, including psychosocial services and assistance for families caring for children, elderly relatives, and persons with disabilities.
- Strengthen the meaningful inclusion of women and vulnerable groups within local recovery, community support, livelihood, and decision-making initiatives.

7. Rebuild Institutional Trust and Strengthen Governance

- Strengthen transparency and communication in recovery, compensation, assistance, displacement, and service delivery responses by expanding access to information, strengthening public outreach, and enhancing clarity regarding eligibility criteria, procedures, timelines, and responsibilities.
- Strengthen the institutional, technical, and financial capacity of municipalities given their central role in local crisis response, service provision, displacement management, and community support.
- Strengthen oversight and accountability mechanisms related to public spending, recovery assistance, and service delivery in order to improve public confidence and reduce perceptions of corruption and unequal treatment.
- Support reforms aimed at improving public participation, confidence in electoral processes, and citizen engagement, particularly among youth, through voter outreach, civic education, and efforts to strengthen the fairness, representativeness, accessibility, and transparency of elections.

8. Support Youth Participation and Future Opportunities

- Expand employment, vocational training, and entrepreneurship opportunities targeting young people, particularly for economically vulnerable and conflict-affected areas.
- Support educational, cultural, and civic initiatives that strengthen youth engagement and reduce feelings of exclusion, pessimism, and emigration pressure.
- Support and create more meaningful opportunities for youth participation in local governance, recovery planning, and community initiatives.



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