
Lebanon

**Total area:**

10,452 km²

Population:

6,184,701 (2015)

Literacy:

92%

Official languages:

Arabic, French

GDP (PPP) per capita:

\$19,128 (2017 est.)

Life expectancy:

73 years

Religions:

56% Muslim, 26% Catholic, 8% Greek Orthodox, 5% Druze, 5% other religions

Prayer points

Jobs bring joy

Unemployment is high in the Palestinian refugee camp at Dbayeh, Lebanon, and with it comes frustration and a lack of self-confidence. Embrace's partners, The Pontifical Mission to Lebanon and the Joint Christian Committee, are working together to improve the prospects of women and young people. They provide job training and scholarships to break down the obstacles preventing people from going into further education. Please pray for these women and young people dreaming of a productive future. (Embrace the Middle East - February 2019)

Helping hearing impaired children

Embrace's partner, The Learning Centre for the Deaf, in Baabda, Lebanon, works with very young hearing impaired children to get their communication skills off to a good start. As refugees continue to arrive from Syria, the centre is also adapting its programmes for older children who have never before received assistance. Pray for these children. (Embrace the Middle East - February 2019)

Trading trauma for hope

Syria is still facing extreme violence and unrest as families continue to be forced out of their homes to find safety. Another 100 Kurdish families have recently entered Bourj Hammoud in North Lebanon after fleeing deadly violence and persecution. These families have experienced terror, lost loved ones, and are left hopeless. The Free Evangelical Association of Lebanon is supporting refugees by providing food, clothing, blankets and other essentials as well as sharing the good news of Jesus and offering prayer support. Please pray for all the refugees who have been through such trauma, and ask

that they will find peace and hope in Him. (WorldShare - September 2018)

Training for Lebanese women

The Inter-Church Network for Development and Relief (ICNDR) works in two areas of Lebanon to help Lebanese refugee women become more independent and confident. The project offers vocational training depending on the interests of each group of women. Computer skills, business organisation, handicrafts, and English are all popular, and are enhanced with life skills such as stress management, nutrition, and internet safety. One group is training as care workers for elderly and infirm people in the community. ICNDR has discovered a high demand for these programmes from women excited about the opportunity to earn a living. Pray for these women as they learn new skills and grow in their independence. (Embrace the Middle East - July 2018)

Emerging Leaders

Lebanon is the smallest country in the Middle East and has maintained a Christian identity with some religious freedoms. Give thanks for the training of 25 emerging leaders held in Lebanon in February for students and graduates from the IFES movement from another country in the Middle East. Pray for participants as they use their training to help lead student Bible studies, organise events and share Christ with their friends. Ask God to open the hearts of students in this unnamed country to see, in the midst of many challenges, that there is hope and true peace to be found in relationship with God. For visa reasons they were unable to attend training last year, but the group has now expanded significantly, which is wonderful. (IFES - March 2018)

Trauma Healing Workshops

Thank the Lord for the holistic assistance, Bible distribution and trauma healing programmes reaching Syrian and Iraqi refugees. It helps victims of trauma to talk about their experiences, consider issues such as why there's suffering, and rape as a weapon of war, and to reflect on what the Bible has to say on their circumstances. The head of the Bible Society in Lebanon, Mike Bassous, said, "Christians have always been builders of hope and peace. Our mandate is to take care of people holistically." Pray also for effective testimonies and the empowerment of the Church in the Middle East to help the refugees. (Bible Society) (Bible Society - July 2017)

Spiritual hunger

The continued conflict and unrest in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region are directly impacting the lives of more than 50 million Arabic speakers. As a result, there is a spiritual hunger for truth, change and peace. Amidst danger and uncertainty, SAT-7 viewers are grappling to live faithfully for God. One way in which SAT-7 is seeking to teach and equip Christians is through the TEACH project (Theological Education for Arab Christians at Home). TEACH aims to provide systematic theological teaching for Arab believers who often have no other means of receiving it. Please pray for all those receiving this teaching to be built-up and equipped to share the gospel and spread the flame. (SAT-7 - May 2017)

Loving Acceptance, Active Care

News from the Middle East and North Africa almost always depicts war and tragedy. While there is certainly truth in this, it is only part of the story. God is working through His people to demonstrate the gospel in action. There are nearly 2 million refugees in Lebanon, a country of about 4.5 million people. They often encounter hostility and suspicion but the Lebanese churches are responding with loving acceptance and active care, opening them up to hearing the message of Jesus. Please pray that God would encourage these Christians to continue to show His love in practical ways with the resources they need to continue their service. (Serving In Mission - March 2017)

MP3 players for Christ

A MECO worker in Lebanon gives MP3 players with songs and scripture to housebound maids. "One maid who has barely been allowed out of the apartment in over four years showered me with tears,

prayers, and blessing when she was able to slip out on a pretext to thank me. Negotiations are under way for the next shipment. I can hardly wait to get distributing them!" Pray that these MP3 players will bring many people to Christ who would otherwise never hear the gospel. (Serving In Mission - July 2016)

Safe outlets

It's not everyday that you hear a strong declaration of faith in Christ from someone raised in a Muslim majority country. But Hosni contacted the media team via WhatsApp with this urgent request for spiritual support: "I believe that Jesus is God... I need to know more about Jesus and the Bible." Pray that social media will continue to be a safe outlet for Muslims to seek Jesus. (Arab World Ministry of Pioneers - May 2016)

Refugee children

Eight million children are estimated to be in urgent need of assistance inside Syria and neighbouring countries due to conflict. Viva is working alongside local Lebanese NGO, LSESD, and its networks of church partners in Syria and Lebanon, to develop child-focused programmes. Please pray for the development of child friendly spaces - safe places for children to come every day where they can play, learn and receive support - and for the growing number of informal education projects. In today's world of often unpredictable and long-lasting conflicts, churches are willing to be involved in caring for children and their families for the long-term. This is critically needed right now. Pray that leaders will be encouraged in tough circumstances and that refugee children would rediscover a joy, peace and hope. (Viva - May 2016)

Overwhelmed communities

Please pray for Lebanon as local communities are feeling overwhelmed by the number of refugees from Syria (at least 1.9 million in a country whose population is normally 4 million). Many churches and organisations are trying to do what they can to provide emergency support but now, 5 years on, there is a growing feeling among some Lebanese that Syrians are taking over, primarily because many of them will work for a lower wage than Lebanese people and putting the poorer Lebanese out of work. Pray that churches would continue to respond and show God's unconditional love, and that relations between the host and refugee community would be peaceful and integrated and not cause unrest and conflict. (Embrace the Middle East - May 2016)

Refugees from Syria

With the increase of civil and religious war, Syrians are fleeing their country and crossing borders into Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon. Workers report that multitudes of refugees are disenchanted with Islam due to the abuses they have experienced at the hands of other Muslims. They describe the eagerness among Syrians to embrace the secure hope that we have in Christ. A team recently reported, "God is moving in an unparalleled way among the Syrian people. As we went from home to home, visiting families we shared the good news of Jesus, explaining how his sacrifice covers all sin, and in every single home we visited, God opened eyes and hearts...every single home yielded fruit. The harvest in this part of the world is ripe and we must pick now. It cannot wait!" Pray for Syrian refugees, that many would have the chance to hear the gospel as workers minister to them with compassion and love. Ask God to send more labourers who will courageously follow Jesus to love refugees and displaced peoples. (Frontiers - November 2015)

Humanitarian emergency

As the Syrian war enters its fifth year, with no sign of an end to the suffering, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has called it 'the biggest humanitarian emergency of our era'. At least 1.2 million displaced Syrians have taken refuge in Lebanon, where the effects of the crisis ripple through the fabric of society. As well as providing emergency humanitarian aid, Embrace's Lebanese partners are responding to the challenges of rising poverty, tensions between communities and an economy at breaking point. Please pray for them as they continue to respond in the love of Christ. (Embrace the

Middle East - July 2015)

Lebanon prison ministry

SAT-7 aired a LIVE Maundy Thursday service at Roumieh Prison in Lebanon. It is the largest and most overcrowded jail in the country with a population of 5,500 inmates. Maronite Cardinal Bechara El Rahi, a highly respected Christian leader in Lebanon, washed the feet of the prisoners. This inspiring act of servanthood could not come at a better time. The prison has experienced security problems, made adjustments and is now attempting to maintain order. Pray that this message of peace and faith builds bridges of conviviality between religions in one of the most disturbed regions of the world. (SAT-7 - May 2015)

Student ministries without restrictions

Lebanon has maintained a Christian identity – around 40% of the population is Christian. Freedom of religious practice, speech and human rights are protected under the Lebanese constitution. Religious freedom allows LIFV to work with students without any restrictions. They thank God that they are seeing new students committing their lives to Christ and new leaders stepping forward to serve the Lord through the movement. They are also grateful for the continuity of the ministry over many decades, a result of hard work and prayer. Their major challenge is that graduating student leaders have a tendency to leave the country to work abroad so the movement loses out on their experience and support. Pray for the continued growth and discipleship of students coming to faith and for the equipping of student leaders to minister to the next generation. (IFES - March 2015)

New studio

SAT-7 want to praise God for their new studio opened in Lebanon – over 400 people joined together in November to dedicate the facility for the glory of God. Continue to pray for the protection of this facility and all who work there and that the programmes that are broadcast will draw people into a living relationship with Jesus. (SAT-7 - January 2015)

Christians welcoming 2 million refugees

Lebanese TV presenters and musicians have shared how Christians in the Middle East are seeking to share the love of Christ to people fleeing conflict and atrocities in Syria and Iraq. Joyce Saddi and Rawad Daou - two hosts of a weekly live youth show from Beirut broadcast on Christian satellite channel shared that close to 2 million refugees have come to Lebanon, putting immense pressure on Lebanon's services. This has resulted in power cuts and water shortages, and has fuelled rocketing rental charges. Some Lebanese fear or resent the influx of refugees from a country that occupied Lebanon for nearly three decades, but many churches are welcoming them. Rawad and Joyce's church currently assists over 120 families with food vouchers and welcomes many to their services. (SAT-7 - November 2014)

Hope in challenging conditions

In July the UNHCR reported the presence of over 610,000 registered Syrian refugees in Lebanon, a country with a population of around four million Lebanese. Moreover, the country also has the largest concentration of unregistered Syrian refugees. BMS' Lebanese partner is working to provide effective assistance through local churches in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan. In highly challenging conditions, they are bringing vital hope to both Christians and those of other faiths. Please pray for them. (BMS World Mission - January 2014)

Breaking point

As the conflict continues to rage unabated in Syria, refugees are still pouring over the border into Lebanon. Our partner on the ground, the Lebanese Society for Education and Social Development, tells us that there are now 1.2 million refugees in Lebanon. With an indigenous population of just 4 million the strain on Lebanon's infrastructure is stretching it to breaking point. LSESD is supporting 25 thousand of these refugees with food parcels and education for the children. Please pray for them as

they show the compassion of Christ to war's innocent victims and pray too for the people of Lebanon as they look for ways to cope with this overwhelming humanitarian disaster. (Embrace the Middle East - November 2013)

The message of reconciliation

The instability and fear currently gripping the country did not deter LIFV Lebanon from recently holding a student conference halfway between Beirut and the Syrian border tackling the issue of reconciliation. A former member of UCCF in the UK who is volunteering with LIFV, shared: "Lebanon is a country that is divided both politically and religiously. So this message of reconciliation is incredibly important. We looked at 2 Corinthians 5, how God reconciled us through Christ, and now we have become his ambassadors who follow his example. We can only become reconciled with others because God reconciled us to him first... This message has never been more apt than in these uncertain times." (IFES - November 2013)

Syrian refugees

Nearly 2 million Syrian refugees are struggling to build their lives after escaping their homeland's bloody conflict. Pray for our partners in Jordan and Lebanon who are working to help these refugees. Over the winter they provided blankets, mattresses and wood-burning stoves, alongside help with accommodation, and over the summer they've been doing food distributions. Many churches are playing an active role providing food, hygiene packages as well as bedding. A worker who recently visited the region, said, "Local churches are visiting refugees, seeking to help meet their needs and loving them - we saw some wonderful examples of church being church." (Tearfund - September 2013)

Building the church

Believers in the Middle East and North Africa, where Christian resources are often very limited, are now able to participate in free online seminary courses. *Bounian* means 'building' in Arabic. The vision of the *Bounian* course is to help Middle Eastern and North African believers build the Church, in a region where it is often suppressed, by providing culturally relevant spiritual training and guidance for new Christian leaders in the Arabic-speaking world. *Bounian* currently offers a selection of six courses, written by the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary in Lebanon. The site will soon offer more courses, as development is proceeding towards a total of 32 courses. (SAT-7 - May 2013)

Liberty and luxury?

Lebanon is marketed to tourists as the home of liberty and luxury in the Arab world and it is undeniably an important commercial hub in the region. Yet, what the undiscerning visitor does not see is that nearly 30% of the population lives below the poverty line. Moreover, this United Nations figure doesn't include foreign populations such as migrant workers and Palestinian refugees. Pray for the church in Lebanon as they seek to reach out to the poor in their midst. (BMS World Mission - November 2012)

Pulled in many directions

Lebanon is a nation which is pulled in many directions by a variety of internal and external influences, including pro-Iranian parties. The country's political fragility was demonstrated by the collapse of the National Unity Government in January. Furthermore, Lebanon is still rebuilding following the 15 year civil war ending in 1990 and more recently the month long conflict between Israel and Hezbollah in 2006. Nevertheless, there are significant openings for service in this land, particularly through education. Pray for Christians to be instrumental in shaping Lebanon's future. (Echoes International - March 2011)