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ANNEX

Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) – Global Europe

Exceptional Assistance Measure regarding Lebanon

1. IDENTIFICATION

Action: Strengthening capacities of the Lebanese Armed Forces enabling stability and early recovery of affected communities and livelihoods

Action Reference: NDICI CR 2025 / 06; ACT-63096

Cost: EUR 12 500 000 (European Union (EU) contribution).

Budget Line: 14 02 03 10

Duration: Maximum 18 months. The authorising officer responsible may decide to extend this period twice by a further period of up to six months, up to a total maximum duration of 30 months, under the conditions laid down in Article 23(6) of Regulation (EU) 2021/947.

Lead service: FPI

2. ACTION SUMMARY

The 18-month measure seeks to contribute to efforts enabling the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) to play a central role in stabilising and securing the country at a critical juncture for the country, in line with EU's commitment to supporting Lebanon's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and state-building efforts, including strengthening the LAF (European Council conclusions, 19 December 2024). It will strengthen the capacities and operational readiness of the LAF in the following areas: explosive ordnance disposal and debris management; quick impact stabilisation activities in conflict-affected areas and restoring access to critical services; civil-military cooperation for enhanced cooperation with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNFIL), local authorities and civil society actors, including humanitarian and development actors; and the provision of necessary equipment and logistical support.

Close coordination with current EU support to the LAF through the European Peace Facility (EPF) will be undertaken, to ensure full complementarity both as regards content and timeframe (given the longer EPF delivery timelines). In this regard, the measure will include support that cannot be delivered through the EPF, notably support for non-military functions of the LAF, infrastructure rehabilitation and civil-military coordination, ensuring a sequential approach between the respective instruments. Close coordination will also be undertaken to ensure complementarity and synergies with ongoing, adopted and foreseen NDICI-funded assistance

managed by DG MENA in support to the LAF and other security actors, as well as in other relevant areas such as post-conflict recovery, disaster management and integrated border management.

3. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

3.1 BACKGROUND

Lebanon is navigating a complex landscape marked by recent conflicts, economic challenges, and political shifts. The 14-month war between Hezbollah and Israel, which concluded with a U.S.-brokered ceasefire in November 2024, inflicted severe damage on the country. According to the World Bank, reconstruction and recovery needs following the conflict are estimated at \$11 billion¹, with extensive damage and loss of civilian and critical infrastructure and utilities. Fires ravaged agricultural lands and disrupted agricultural activities, causing widespread destruction to lands and crops, particularly in South Lebanon. The conflict resulted in over 4,000 Lebanese fatalities and widespread displacement, reaching 900,000 persons (i.e. 20 percent of the country population) in November 2024. The violence and displacements due to the conflict have posed significant threats to an already fragile social stability, with local communities under immense strain, and intensifying pressures on resources and pre-existing socio-political tensions in sensitive regions. Concerns about security and the potential for renewed conflict remain amid reoccurring violations of the ceasefire agreement.

The majority of internally displaced persons have returned to their areas of origin since the ceasefire². They nevertheless face significant challenges as many homes and infrastructure have been damaged or destroyed, livelihoods severely disrupted, and access to essential services remains limited. This is particularly true of South Lebanon where agriculture and farming were dominant activities, representing the main source of income for approximately 80% of residents. The presence of explosive ordnance contamination is threatening civilian safety, delaying safe returns, recovery, and socio-economic development efforts.

The LAF are currently navigating this complex landscape with pressing operational demands and needs. The LAF play a critical role in ensuring the credible and timely implementation of the ceasefire agreement, in responding to emergency crisis, and conducting removal of unexploded ordnances operations. Additionally, the LAF are key to strengthening the State's security presence and function, and ensuring the "extension of the control of the Government of Lebanon over all Lebanese territory" (United Nations Security Council Resolution 1701³). This responsibility includes overseeing the withdrawal of Israeli forces and preventing unauthorised armed groups from operating near the border.

Strengthening the LAF is a strategic priority to promote peace and prevent the resurgence of extremist groups, and essential to enable the LAF to fulfil their mandate effectively and contribute to Lebanon's stability. However, the LAF, including the Lebanese Mine Action Center (LMAC), have not been spared by the multidimensional crisis. The institution and its service members are at the frontline of the response, while being themselves profoundly affected by the effects of the crises and violence. Over 20 soldiers were killed, 52 injured and

¹ [Lebanon Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment \(RDNA\) 2025 report](#)

² As of 6 February 2025, 890,830 IDPs have returned home (source: IOM, [Internally Displaced Persons in Lebanon, Perspectives on Return and Future Intentions](#), March 2025).

³ Adopted on the 11 August 2006

over 1800 reported having permanently lost their homes. Where the LAF were already struggling to maintain and procure essential equipment, they now have to cope with the increased responsibility of recruiting and equipping 6,000 service members, ensuring a smooth and effective positioning in the south of the country, while undertaking large-scale and urgent mine actions operations and maintaining security along the remaining borders. At the same time, the LAF must address an additional challenge that is instrumental to the success of their mission and to the country moving forward, that is, strengthening the relationship with the population of southern Lebanon. As a widely respected mainstay of Lebanon's institutional setting, consolidating the LAF is also essential to rekindle further state-strengthening efforts in Lebanon's post-conflict context.

The election of a new President in January 2025, and the creation of a new government in February 2025, have inspired hope for stabilisation, reforms and state-strengthening in Lebanon. The ability of the Lebanese State and of the LAF to address pressing issues, including providing security and services in the South are key to Lebanon's stability and recovery.

3.2 RATIONALE FOR CRISIS RESPONSE ACTIONS UNDER THE RAPID RESPONSE PILLAR OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD, DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION INSTRUMENT

The violence and displacements due to the recent conflict and the continued concerns about security and the potential for renewed conflict, constitute an exceptional and unforeseen situation in the sense of Article 4(4) (a) of the NDICI Regulation. An adequate response cannot be provided under any other European Union Instrument due to the urgency with which the funds are required and due to available resources already being firmly committed.

Annex IV, paragraph 1, second paragraph, points (a), (f), (g) and (j) of Regulation (EU) 2021/947 specifically provides for the use of the NDICI rapid response pillar to (a) support, through the provision of technical and logistical assistance, for the efforts undertaken by international, regional and local organisations and by State and civil society actors in promoting confidence-building, mediation, dialogue and reconciliation, transitional justice, women's and youth empowerment, in particular with regards to community tensions and protracted conflicts; (f) support for reinforcement of State capacity - in the face of significant pressures to rapidly build, maintain or restore its core functions, and basic social and political cohesion; (g) support for measures necessary to start the rehabilitation and reconstruction of key infrastructure, housing, public buildings and economic assets, and essential productive capacity, as well as other measures for the re-starting of economic activity, the generation of employment and the establishment of the minimum conditions necessary for sustainable social development, and (j) support for measures to address, within the framework of Union cooperation policies and their objectives, the socio-economic impact on the civilian population of anti-personnel landmines, unexploded ordnance or explosive remnants of war. Activities financed under the Instrument may cover, inter alia, risk education, mine detection and clearance and, in conjunction therewith, stockpile destruction.

3.3 RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

RISKS	LIKELIHOOD (High/Medium/ Low)	MITIGATION STRATEGY
Renewed conflict, posing increasing security threats.	Medium	Continuous assessment of the political and security situation and engagement with key national and international stakeholders. Activities will be adapted and adjusted depending on the nature and severity of the context.
The risk of an increase in incidents, particularly violence, between Palestinian and Syrian refugees in camps, and between Lebanese and Syrian refugees.	Medium-high	Close monitoring of the security situation, gathering accurate data and assessing and reassessing the action's feasibility and approaches.
The risk of unrest or armed confrontation due to extreme communal and political polarisation.	Medium	Close monitoring of the security situation, gathering accurate data and assessing and re-assessing the action's feasibility and approaches.

4. OBJECTIVES

4.1 OVERALL OBJECTIVE

The overall objective of the action is to contribute to efforts enabling the LAF to fulfil their role in maintaining security, enabling safe returns within the country, facilitating recovery, reducing the risk to civilian populations, and implementing the terms of the cessation of hostilities agreement and Security Council Resolution 1701.

4.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- 4.2.1 To mitigate the immediate threats posed by explosive ordnance and rubble;
- 4.2.2 To reduce tensions and strengthen the LAF's relationship with southern Lebanon's population, ensuring the extension of state authority and fostering longer term stability, and
- 4.2.3 To foster conditions necessary for socio-economic development in target areas of southern Lebanon.

5. ACTION COMPONENTS AND EXPECTED RESULTS

The main expected results/outcomes include:

Expected Result (1): The operational readiness and presence of the LAF in southern Lebanon are strengthened, and their capacities in explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) and debris management are enhanced.

Activities (indicative):

- 5.1.1 Provide the LAF's with necessary equipment and logistical support;
- 5.1.2 Equip and train the LAF/LMAC specialised units to remove unexploded ordnance and EODs remnants of war;
- 5.1.3 Provide necessary tools and equipment to support the non-technical and technical surveys, and EOD operation in support of debris management and conducting spot EOD tasks;
- 5.1.4 Provide strategic and technical advisory support;
- 5.1.5 Support the LAF/LMAC in the continuous adaptation of the National Mine Action Standards to align with the latest International Mine Action Standards;
- 5.1.6 Support the LAF/LMAC in intensifying interventions related to Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE), as it relates to communication capacities and their ability to ensure proper EORE awareness;
- 5.1.7 Identify, manage and dispose of contaminated rubble (such as of white phosphorus) according to international best practice; and
- 5.1.8 Strengthen coordination with international and humanitarian partners, including through the mine action sub-sector and the debris task force.

Expected Result (2): the LAF leads and supports quick impact stabilisation activities in conflict-affected areas and access to critical services is restored.

Activities (indicative):

- 5.2.1 Support the LAF in reviewing existing rapid needs assessments and conducting new ones where needed;
- 5.2.2 Support the LAF's relevant departments, including engineering, and provide the necessary material and supplies to cover electrical, sanitary, architectural and civil works; and
- 5.2.3 Establish early warning systems for disaster preparedness and response.

Expected Result (3): Livelihood opportunities in targeted areas are strengthened and diversified.

Activities (indicative):

- 5.3.1 Facilitate vocational skills and entrepreneurship development and employment creation;
- 5.3.2 Promote inclusive, viable, and sustainable value chains and market linkages;
- 5.3.3 Promote investment in agriculture production/marketing;
- 5.3.4 Support on-farm and off-farm income-generating activities and provision of small grants and inputs/ seed capital for projects;
- 5.3.5 Develop climate-resilient infrastructure (e.g. small-scale irrigation schemes, rainwater harvesting systems, gabion/retaining walls, etc.);
- 5.3.6 Promote resilience of productive renewable energy for diverse livelihood options; and
- 5.3.7 Support forest rehabilitation when feasible.

Expected Result (4): LAF civil-military cooperation (CIMIC) capacities for enhanced interaction with UNIFIL, local authorities and civil society actors, including humanitarian and development actors are strengthened.

Activities (indicative):

- 5.4.1 Carry out outreach initiatives and consultations with local communities, leaders and civil society organisations;
- 5.4.2 Provide specialised trainings on crisis management, communication and civil engagement to the LAF;
- 5.4.3 Establish information exchange mechanisms to ensure real-time data sharing on movements of internally displaced persons and returns, as well as border management, between the LAF and all relevant partners, and
- 5.4.4 Support strategic planning amongst humanitarian actors and armed forces (securing zones, protection of civilians, humanitarian access and space, relocation of people in danger, etc.).

6. IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 IMPLEMENTATION MODALITIES

The Commission will ensure that the appropriate EU rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures⁴.

6.1.1 Indirect management with a pillar assessed entity

This action may be implemented in indirect management with an entity which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria: operational and technical capacity, solid presence across Lebanon, established strong relations with relevant stakeholders and, in particular, with the LAF, and the capacity to rapidly start implementing the activities. The implementation by this entity entails addressing all specific objectives detailed in sections 4 and 5.

6.1.2 Changes from indirect to direct management mode (and vice versa) due to exceptional circumstances

If the preferred modality for either objective and result listed in sections 4 and 5, including partly, cannot be implemented in indirect management due to circumstances outside of the Commission's control, the whole or part of this action may instead be implemented in direct management with an entity which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria: operational capacity, thematic and regional/national expertise.

6.2 INDICATIVE BUDGET

The total European Union contribution under this Financing Decision **will not exceed EUR 12 500 000**. A breakdown among components is provided hereunder, and is indicative.

⁴ www.sanctionsmap.eu Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website, it is the OJ version that prevails.

Indicative budget breakdown

Components	EU contribution (amount in EUR)	Indicative third party contribution, in currency identified
Component 1: Strengthening the capacities of the Lebanese Armed Forces enabling stability and early recovery of affected communities and livelihoods, composed of: 6.1.1. – Indirect management	12 500 000	N/A
Total	12 500 000	N/A

6.3 ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The action shall be implemented under indirect management. It will be managed by the Commission, with the support of the European Union Delegation to Lebanon for the monitoring of the action.

6.4 PERFORMANCE AND RESULTS MONITORING AND REPORTING

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final report. Each report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (outputs and outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the Logframe matrix. The report shall be laid out in such a way as to allow monitoring of the means envisaged and employed and of the budget details for the action. The final report, narrative and financial, will cover the entire period of the action implementation.

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

6.5 EVALUATION

Having regard to the nature of the action, an evaluation will not be carried out for this action or its components.

The Commission may, during implementation, decide to undertake such an evaluation for duly justified reasons either on its own decision or on the initiative of the partner.

The financing of the evaluation shall be covered by another measure constituting a financing decision.

6.6 AUDIT

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audits or expenditure verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

6.7 COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

The 2021-2027 programming cycle adopted a new approach to pooling, programming and deploying strategic communication and public diplomacy resources.

In line with the 2022 “[Communicating and Raising EU Visibility: Guidance for External Actions](#)”, it will remain a contractual obligation for all entities implementing EU-funded external actions to inform the relevant audiences of the Union’s support for their work by displaying the EU emblem and a short funding statement as appropriate on all communication materials related to the actions concerned. This obligation will continue to apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, partner countries, service providers, grant beneficiaries or entrusted or delegated entities such as UN agencies, international financial institutions and agencies of EU member states.

7. COMPLEMENTARITY, COORDINATION AND FOLLOW-UP

The action complements ongoing EU support to Lebanon, including to civil society organisations, as well as ongoing and future support to refugees, migrants and internally displaced persons and vulnerable host communities in Lebanon. Complementarity will be ensured with the humanitarian assistance provided by the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), and current and future programmes to be funded under the geographic and thematic pillars of the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument - Global Europe. Particular attention will be paid to developing synergies with other EU interventions in related fields, including EU Member State initiatives, to maximise consistency and leverage of a broader EU intervention. Extensive consultations and close coordination with the EU Delegation in Lebanon were undertaken in the preparation of the action, and will continue to be ensured throughout its implementation.

Close coordination with current EU support to the LAF through the European Peace Facility (EPF) and through NDICI support managed by DG MENA will also be undertaken to ensure full complementarity both as regards content and time frame (given the longer EPF delivery timelines). The measure will include support that cannot be delivered through the EPF, notably support for non-military functions of the LAF, infrastructure rehabilitation and civil-military coordination. Consultations on the outputs and outcomes will be ensured throughout the planning and implementation of the action.