

Lebanese Society for Educational and Social Development
- *Lebanese Baptist Society* –

UPDATE

Dear praying partners,

The on-off air-raids and shelling went on throughout the night with more losses in lives – which makes the intentional and systematic destruction of our infra-structure not worth mentioning.

The fairly calm morning developed in the Lebanese a sense of anxiety knowing that this is merely the calm that preceded the storm... and so it was.

We started our day with a joint devotion that brought together members of our respective teams and our visiting partners from the non-Arab world. We were uplifted and encouraged.

“I wouldn’t want to be elsewhere in the world at this time and day”, was a comment made by the leader of one of the partnering church groups visiting with us – all of whom are now staying on ABTS Campus.

We took advantage of the calm and a team of six people from the Lebanese Baptist Society and the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary (ABTS) drove to the Beirut Baptist School (BBS). Together with fellow BBS team members we made a round on the over 450 refugees who are now residing in 8 large classrooms.

The number had expanded by 250 since yesterday noon. Elderly people, women and children who had to flee their homes seeking some sort of safety though in reality no place is safe when the kind of bombs used are brining down whole building on their occupants. May God have mercy!

Our hearts were broken to see that those who had arrived during the night slept on the floor – children too. In each classroom we were met by those who were in dire need for medical care and medication. We tended to what we could handle on the spot through nearby pharmacies.



Figure 1: Worship and Prayer at ABTS



Figure 2: Displaced children sleeping on the floor in a BBS classroom



Figure 3: Nabil Costa and Paul Sanders at BBS playground; in the background are displaced children

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July 15th Update (Cont'd)

Following our tour in the BBS building, and based on our conversations with the people, our team put together relief parcels consisting mainly of detergents (Soap, disinfectant, shampoo ...) in addition to biscuits and coffee. For the second day in a row we offered them a very humble lunch meal. But much more needs to be done.



Figure 8: Preparation of relief parcels

It is worth noting here that around 1:30pm and as our team was preparing to distribute the food and the relief items, the bombing was resumed and with such intensity that the families were rushed into the building. Those coordinating the refugee situation rushed in search of basements in the vicinity of the school in preparation for the possibility of transferring the families should the situation become even worse.



Figure 9: BBS Scouts helped in the distribution process



Figure 4: occupants of one classroom – mainly women and children



Figure 5: Children restricted to the classrooms they occupy with their families



Figure 6: Infants too...

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July 15th Update (Cont'd)

Upon our return to ABTS, it was decided – and based on the request of the refugees – to purchase a TV set and send it to BBS to help distract the people's attention and that of the children from their difficult situation. Of course how much they can benefit depends highly on the availability of electricity.

Dear friends and partners, things have been deteriorating fast since early afternoon with new areas being targeted with bombs of horrific caliber. Please keep Lebanon, the Lebanese and the whole region in your prayers.

Please be praying as well for my negotiations with those who are coordinating the allocation of the displaced families. The influx of internally displaced families is tremendous and serious health issues arise when the number of people staying at BBS exceeds what the facilities can cope with. Moreover, the more the people the less effective is our intervention. This is a very delicate situation. These people are homeless and are desperate for shelter and it is not an easy matter to deal with.

Also, effective tomorrow our Seminary's chapel is open for open prayer meetings for our Christian community throughout the week. Our first prayer meeting starts tomorrow afternoon at 4:00pm. Please pray that the security situation allows people to come to ABTS.

Thank you again for your prayer support! We're counting on it.

In Him,

Nabil Costa