

KAFA'S RESPONSE TO AUGUST 4 BLAST

The August 4 blast had staggering repercussions on everyone in Lebanon. Whether physically, economically, or emotionally, the explosion affected nearly everyone in the nation. In times like these, it's important to offer assistance to the most vulnerable members of society. Today, Lebanon is going through a major turmoil, facing multiple crises of different natures, namely the financial downturn and the global COVID-19 pandemic.

In Lebanon, women and children are considered to be the most vulnerable members of society: women victims of domestic gender-based violence and abuse, women breadwinners, migrant domestic workers (MDW), and victims of human trafficking...

KAFA's mission is to help women and children and cater to their needs through multiple channels and services. However, post blast, things have changed drastically and special measures had to be taken to ensure physical, emotional, mental, and economic wellbeing of the affected groups. KAFA's various units carefully came up with exceptional ways to increase their outreach and help as many vulnerable women as possible.

The Support Center, the Child Protection Unit and the Anti-trafficking unit at KAFA were quick to action when the explosion first hit. The teams immediately contacted KAFA's beneficiaries living in the affected areas to check over their needs. In this vein, they established a needs assessment list. The assessment showed that many beneficiaries had lost their jobs, were displaced due to their homes being destroyed, some lost their breadwinners and some were even physically injured by the explosion and needed hospital visits.

Beneficiaries

In view of the huge needs that existed for all types of services, KAFA defined a set of criteria to identify the people who qualified for post-explosion assistance.

The below groups are among the beneficiaries who qualified to receive **KAFA's services**.

Affected women and/or MDWs who:

- Suffered from **physical injuries or death of a family member**.
- Had their **houses partially, severely or totally damaged**.
- Whose **household items were damaged**.
- Who **lost their job after the workplace was damaged or closed**.
- Who were **already unemployed and the opportunity to find a job had become very hard**.

Additional criteria were taken into consideration to prioritize assistance to the affected women/MDWs:

- Female headed household with children.
- Pregnant/lactating women.
- Women forced to relocate to another house after the explosion.
- Woman with chronic/ urgent medical conditions.
- Women and/or MDWs facing protection risks (risk of exploitation, abuse, trafficking, SGBV).
- Women and/or MDWs with limited coping mechanisms (limited access to income, limited financial resources, limited family and community networks, limited access to housing and good living conditions).
- Evicted from employer's household (for MDWs).
- Women and/or MDWs who did not received assistance from any other actor to address any of the above needs.

The above reveals the main beneficiaries who were and still are being helped financially socially and psychologically by the KAFA support Center, the Child Protection Unit, and the Anti-Trafficking Unit.

Services in numbers

Among the first steps that were taken was the distribution of food boxes over the beneficiaries, as well as non-beneficiaries who fitted the criteria and asked for help, in addition to packages of cleaning supplies and hygiene kits. Some emergency aid was also provided to pregnant women, infant and baby supplies such as diapers and formulas among other goods and some medical help where needed, in addition to distributing some in-kind support that KAFA received from individuals, like shoes, clothes, blankets and home supplies according to the needs.

At a later stage, KAFA started to provide cash assistance to women who fitted the criteria, air tickets to migrant domestic workers who opted to return back to their countries and house repairs to partially damaged houses, mainly repairing doors and windows.

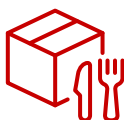


Until the end of 2020, the **Support center & the Child Protection Unit** were able to offer support to **711 BENEFICIARIES**, helping them sustain themselves during these tough times. The services provided were split as follow:



130

**CASH
ASSISTANCE**



629

**FOOD
BOXES**



695

**DIGNITY
KITS**



165

**DETERGENT
KITS**

In addition to distributing a total of **1,468 sanitary pads** and **940 Mini Hygiene Kits**.

House Repairs



84
HOUSES

were repaired in the areas affected by the explosion. The priority was given to KAFA's beneficiaries, & later the scope of work expanded to reach women who fit the criteria listed above.



Psychological Support

Children and their mothers were also offered assistance by KAFA, the team offered psychosocial support to children and caregivers. These services were offered in both Rmeil-Achrafieh and Mazraa areas.

KAFA conducted at its center:



77

PSYCHOTHERAPY to **BENEFICIARIES**
SESSIONS



11



Anti-Trafficking

KAFA's anti-trafficking unit was also quick to respond and take action. **290 migrant domestic workers** (MDWs) were identified as potential beneficiaries to be contacted for a rapid assessment after the blast. **251** of them were successfully contacted and an assessment of their situation and needs after the blast was done. The remaining 39 could not be reached. Out of the 251 contacted MDWs, **202** were directly affected by the explosion (home damages, job loss, physical injuries) and 49 were identified as indirectly affected and were facing problems in meeting urgent needs. Among the **202 directly affected MDWs, 189 had their houses totally to partially damaged, 138 had lost their jobs and became unemployed** (lack of job opportunities or workplace was damaged or closed due to the explosion), and **61 had physical injuries**. The most identified needs were cash assistance, food assistance and medical follow up.

KAFA identified other needs that these women had, that were not directly related to the explosion itself, namely to find a job and to be assisted in applying for repatriation.

The Anti-trafficking unit offered support to **202 BENEFICIARIES**.
The services provided were split as follow:



NB: KAFA did not restrict its services and assistance to its previous list of beneficiaries but also provided support to other beneficiaries who contacted the team through phone calls, physical visits or on social media and met KAFA's set of criteria to be eligible for assistance.

These services were provided till the end of 2020 and some of them will continue to be offered during 2021.