

Youth Mental Health in Imminent Risk & SIDC is Responding

For more than a decade, Lebanon has been enduring an accumulation of unfortunate events that ignited the birth of the revolution against injustice, on **October 17th, 2019**.

Throughout this period, various private and public sector establishments were closed including academic institutions upon decisions made by both, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education. Road closures were ongoing during this period, preventing young employees from reaching their workplaces, and in many cases, were dismissed from their jobs. As a result, there was a noticeable rise in the need for mental health support from youth aged between 14 and 28, based on which, SIDC

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conducted an assessment to prioritize youth's mental health by assessing their needs during the revolution. The study began mid-December 2019 and was conducted over a month, concluding whether we were directly or indirectly impacted by the massive explosion that shook and destroyed Beirut and its people, we are all NOT feeling okay. We are overwhelmed with the loss of innocent lives, the destruction, the feelings of terror and fear and the uncertainty of what's next. It is normal not to feel okay. It is normal to take as much time as you need to heal and cope. But in the process, don't forget to reach out for professional help to provide you with the needed counseling and support. Contact SIDC's free hotline for more info:

Hashtags:

#Mental_Health_in_Emergencies #Beirut_Blast #Psychological_Trauma #Pray_For_Lebanon

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During the study in January 2020. From the 302 youth reached, approximately **73%** expressed their need for mental health support, due to the stress and anxiety they are experiencing. Additionally, **48%** of the youth reached were referred to SIDC's ESCALE center for psychosocial and psychological support from

November 2019 till March 2020.

Lebanon was already struggling with its worst economic crisis compounded with hyperinflation and devaluation of its currency, which was topped off with the COVID-19 pandemic. **Ever since February 2020, Lebanon witnessed a sudden outbreak of the coronavirus which further exacerbated the populations' mental health.** This led to an influx of mental health support services' need by vulnerable youth to help them cope with the ongoing situation. However, as a result of the lockdown enforced in the country, youth were unable to reach SIDC's centers, and thus, the multidisciplinary team at SIDC (social workers, peer educators, psychotherapists) started conducting the sessions remotely over online platforms (zoom, skype... etc n), chatting applications, and over the phone to serve as many youth as possible and to assist them over

the past few months. **130 individuals were provided with mental health services. Of these, 8% were aged less than 17 years old, 47.6% were aged 18 -25, 33.8% were aged 26-35, and finally, 10% were aged 35+.**

The explosion on **August 4th, 2020** in the port of Beirut was deadly, devastating and ripped through all of Beirut leaving thousands of people in its wake dead, injured, and homeless. Given the impact of the

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explosion, a wide range of responses are needed, however, the most immediate are shelter, health, and protection. As a response, SIDC immediately contacted all its beneficiaries to assess their current situation and the impact of the explosion on them. Moving forward, SIDC will focus its efforts on intervening through mental health support on **SIDC’s Hotline: 76-028221.**