



Health & Psychological Assistance Commission Report for the Victims of War in South Lebanon

**Khiam Rehabilitation Center for Victims of Torture (Lebanon) &
El Nadim Rehabilitation Center for Victims of Violence (Egypt)**

A committee constituted of stakeholders in both KRC and EL-NADIM visited some villages in south Lebanon between September 4th & 7th, 2006. This post-war exploration tour extended to Marjeyoun, Tyr & Bint Jbeil.

The visited villages are listed as follows: El Mansouri, Aita El Chaeb, Saddikin, Zebkin, Jebal El Botem, Deir Serian, El Taybe, Deir Kanoun El Nahr.

The committee drawn up the herein findings: The residential condition:

Upon cease-fire, many families returned to their homelands. Unfortunately, some of them found pills of stones instead of their belongings and houses. Moreover, the boundaries of yesterday disappeared.

Families are trying to gather in semi-destroyed homes; others are living on the stones of what used to be their homes. Many southern citizens shared with us their fears of the first rain starting to drop on the South as from early October.

The committee inspected the significant damage of the public water tanks and electrical stations serving the villages as well as fuel stations. All vital services are still absent. The citizens are getting water from wells or remains of water installations mounted by the UNIFEL forces. Amongst the visited villages, we have noticed a water tank of the UN delivering water. Notwithstanding the significant effort deployed by the international forces, the health of the citizens is of real concern namely in terms of stocking water.

Thereupon, it is crucial to repair diligently the water tanks and purify water in order to preserve the health of the citizens.

It is worth to mention that all the social centers in villages are still closed.

The medical condition

Upon field canvassing, residents' testimonials, and medical consultations performed by our accompanying medical team, we found out that the majority of the southern villages lack sufficient medical care. This state was recurrent and not a result of war.

The medical system in Lebanon relies on private insurance for the public or private employees. Public Hospitals are located in major cities far away from medical care seekers. Public hospitals offer quite free of charge services provided that the patient produces



evidence attesting the absence of any other insurance and that his financial condition does not allow a private care. These factors combined hinder the provision of medical care to the ones in need. War added insult to injury. A matter of real concern is the absence of ambulances in villages providing instant medical care or moving critically wounded or recently injured persons by fragmentation engines.

We found out that many persons suffer from severe or chronic diseases and need urgent medical care. These persons need permanent treatments. They are suffering from asthma, diabetes, urinary diseases, Thyroid hyper secretion, hypertension, coronary and heart diseases, bones and cervical disease, colons and stomach ulcer, and many psychological illnesses requiring long-term treatments.

A lot of other severe cases and bad health conditions due to clustering in shelters and displaced camps appeared amongst which digestive system inflammation, upper respiratory system inflammation, skin irritation or allergy and general weakness. Children were the most vulnerable to these diseases.

The absence of an integral medical network in the south does not reduce the significant role carried out by hospitals and medical care centers during war.

The psychological condition

During our visit, we met civil institutions providing medical services or offering food aids. The psychiatrics of KRC and EL-NADIM were the first to provide psychological assistance to south Lebanon citizens since the cease-fire. The committee met several ex-detainees, victims of torture, of which the war added over their suffer where being detained again was the terrifying thought that haunted them during bombing.

They have detected in more than 10 southern villages many women and children suffering from PTSD.

These patients needed various kind of psychological care and medical treatments. The most vulnerable persons were parents, children and siblings of martyrs and war victims. A collective psychological assistance must be provided for such patients who shall participate in sports, music, and acting or entertainment groups. The committee deems it necessary to enhance the psychological support in all its aspects namely in providing medical treatment for those in need.

Conclusion

The Committee concluded that:

- 1) All civil, public and international stakeholders must combine their efforts in order to wipe off the aftermaths of war in South Lebanon;
- 2) The rehabilitation of the victims of war must be community based one and;
- 3) there is a vital need to provide humanitarian services for those regions namely the “right of residence” medical care services, and comprehensive preventive hygienic services.



It also suggests the herein recommendations:

- 1- To promptly clean wreckage from devastated areas. To remove from under stones remains of dead animals.
- 2- To edify fully destroyed homes and renovate semi ruined ones. To equip such homes with vital services water, electricity and sanitary installations.
- 3- To establish primary health care centers, or to equip each village or congregation of nearby villages with an ambulance equipped to deal with simple cases and to transport persons in need to public hospitals... and / or equip a vehicle to provide medical care services (moving clinics) that shall visit regularly such villages according to a prefixed schedule.
- 4- To insure psychological care to the most damaged zones “doctors – psychologists – medicines”
- 5- To supply suitable areas for collective psychological care provided to teachers, parents and any person dealing with children.
- 6- To provide training sessions for persons dealing with children with respect to P.T.S.D. symptoms and treatments thereof.
- 7- To edit flyers and brochures and to distribute them in schools and amongst the citizens.
- 8- To equip schools with audio-visual pedagogical equipments, and attractive educational methods. Such materials shall enable children to overcome the psychological effects of a PTSD i.e. de-motivation, lack of concentration, weakness of assimilation etc....
- 9- To equip schools with sport equipments, musical instruments, drawing tools and handcraft materials. Such tools shall contribute in overcoming some problems such as isolation and aggressiveness.
- 10- To provide land parcels on which senior, teens and junior clubs shall be edified and to equip the same with creative, sportive, artistic and cultural materials.
- 11- To encourage non-governmental organizations; to uphold volunteering in social activities namely in the South and to sustain centers and institutions endeavoring to fight violence and torture.

The war didn't only destroy the infrastructure of the country; it caused a social paralysis and destruction that require parallel efforts to the re-building process through the rehabilitation of the victims of war and facing the psychological traumas. The Khiam Center calls for prompt swift steps announcing for a hot line for psychological assistance on the following mobile number: **03-706406**

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**Khiam Rehabilitation Center for Victims of
Torture (Lebanon) “KRC”**

&

**El Nadim Rehabilitation Center for Victims
of Violence (Egypt)**