



Norwegian Refugee Council's **Country programme in Lebanon**

Under Lebanese law, Syrians in Lebanon are not considered refugees, but “guests” granted temporary hospitality. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees are also struggling to exercise their rights.

Humanitarian and political background

Although Lebanon is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention, it has the highest number of refugees per capita in the world. The estimated 1.5 million Syrian refugees and 310,000 Palestinian refugees amount to over a quarter of Lebanon's total population. Their presence creates pressure on public services and affects the country's demographic balance, at a time when its own political stability tilts precariously. Since 2015, Lebanon's borders have been closed to civilians fleeing Syria. It is difficult for refugees already in the country to renew their legal stay. Assistance and basic services, meanwhile, are limited.

Rampant poverty

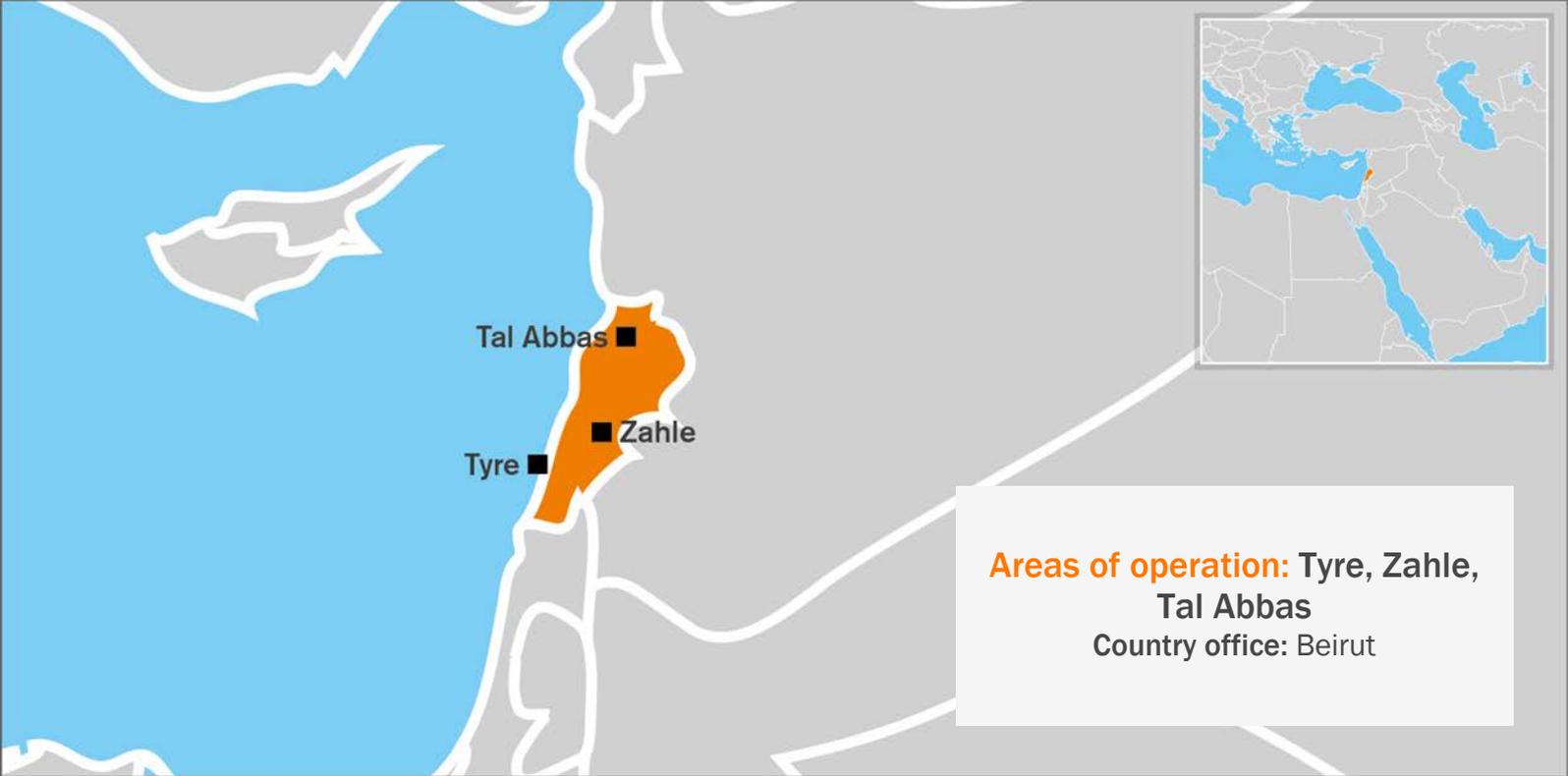
The Lebanese government opposes creating formal camps, and so Syrian refugees must find private housing. Monthly expenses for Syrian refugees are

In 2016 NRC reached
336,404
Individuals, with education, shelter, legal assistance (ICLA) and Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

Budget: 2017: 316 mill NOK | 2016: 282 mill NOK
International staff: 17
National staff: 415

on the rise. Rent, utilities permit renewals and administrative fees cost hundreds of dollars each month.

A minimum survival household income is more than 400 USD.



However, refugees cannot legally work, and struggle to find the money. Assistance does not cover 100 per cent of household needs.

As a result, poverty among Syrian refugees is at unprecedented levels. 70 per cent of Syrian refugees in Lebanon live below the national poverty line. Over 50 per cent fall below the minimum means needed for survival. Hundreds of thousands find themselves in a situation of increasing insecurity, hardship and destitution.

Palestinian refugees in Lebanon

Palestinian refugees have been living in Lebanon for almost 70 years. Their plight is highly politicised, and there is limited space for humanitarian agencies to help improve their situation. NRC is providing shelter, education, and legal support, assisting them in accessing their rights through the Lebanese legal system and achieving tangible outcomes to their legal problems.

NRC activities in the field

Through our Lebanon programme, we support everyone affected by displacement – refugees as well as host communities. We help them fight for their rights and overcome the everyday hardships they face. NRC opened our offices in Lebanon in 2006. We focus on providing legal assistance and shelter, and advocating for refugee rights inside the country, regionally, and internationally. NRC has offices located in Beirut, Tyre, Tal Abbas and Zahle. Because refugees in Lebanon live side-by-side with the Lebanese, we also work to serve the local communities hosting displaced people. In all NRC projects, our experts work together to maximise the impact of our activities.

Camp management

Our camp management teams work on collective site management and coordination in informal settlements.

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Our camp management activities:

- Strengthen the self-management of Syrian refugees who live in settlements.
- Build refugees' capacity in settlement coordination and enhance their involvement in aid, while reducing their dependency on it.
- Collaborate closely with the Ministry of Social Affairs, municipality leaders, UNHCR and other partners.

Education

We run education programmes at our community centres, alternative learning spaces, and in schools run by the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

Our education activities:

- Support access to schooling, and find ways to keep children in school.
- Create non-formal education opportunities to reach out-of-school children, such as with "catch-up classes."
- Train teachers in informal educational methods.
- Provide vocational training and language classes for out-of-school youth and young adults.
- Support UNRWA's schools for Palestinian refugees by training teachers on child-centred approaches to teaching.

Information, counselling and legal assistance (ICLA)

The ICLA programme provides information, counselling and legal assistance to refugees from Syria and Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. NRC supports their access to civil documentation, legal stay, and housing, land and property rights. We also monitor their circumstances through our assistance.

Our ICLA activities work to:

- Support refugees' access to civil documentation, especially in terms of

residency permit renewals and birth registration.

- Prevent housing disputes and forced evictions.
- Monitor individual cases, from assistance to referrals and follow-up systems.
- Conduct home visits to ensure families receive the information they need, and to identify special concerns.
- Raise awareness among refugees of their rights in Lebanon.
- Provide legal assistance and representation for Palestinian refugees, particularly in cases concerning property inheritance.

Shelter

An estimated 80 per cent of Syrian refugees rent rooms in apartments, unfinished or sub-standard buildings in urban areas. Our shelter efforts focus on providing affordable, quality housing to displaced families – and we are the main providers of such housing in Lebanon.

Our shelter projects aim to:

- Rehabilitate houses that do not meet basic standards in urban areas.
- Provide a minimum of 12 months of rent-free housing for Syrian refugees.
- Conduct home visits with ICLA specialists.
- Ensure that properties have adequate water, sewage and sanitation facilities.
- Provide materials for emergency weather proofing, or provide cash vouchers to purchase proofing materials in informal tented settlements and hard-to-reach areas.

Water, hygiene and sanitation (WASH)

Our WASH programme improves access to safe water and sanitation facilities and strengthens hygiene awareness. We work to expand water and sanitation services and improve hygiene practices among Syrian and Palestinian refugees, and local Lebanese communities.

Our WASH activities:

- Ensure that properties have adequate water, sewage and sanitation facilities.
- Construct water network extensions, including boreholes, to increase clean water supply to refugee and local communities.
- Set up new sanitation systems that use small-scale septic tanks to manage sewage. These systems reduce sewage pumping frequency and reduce long-term operational costs.
- Create WASH committees in informal tented settlements, to help refugees take care of WASH infrastructure maintenance and services.