



## Background

The socio-economic situation of many refugees continues to worsen. Refugees regularly state that the biggest challenge they face in Lebanon is securing adequate accommodation for their families. 70% of Syrian refugee households and 98% of Palestinian refugees from Syria are severely or highly economically vulnerable, which is exacerbated by the substantial restrictions on refugees' abilities to earn a livelihood.

Government policy does not permit the establishment of formal camps for Syrian refugees, who have to arrange their own accommodation through private landlords. Over 80% of refugees from Syria have sought refuge in urban and semi-urban areas in Lebanese communities that are themselves economically vulnerable, frequently in substandard, unsafe, and unhealthy conditions, that lack adequate water, sewage, and/or electricity services.

In addition to suffering from widespread poverty, Palestinian refugees from Syria face unique challenges in securing adequate shelter. These refugees have relocated to pre-existing communities of Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon in decades old refugee camps that are already severely congested.

## Shelter Programme Reach in 2018



**3,717** Occupancy free-of-charge housing units provided



**9** Lebanese schools rehabilitated



**12,546** Individuals benefited



**1,115** Emergency/Weatherproofing kits provided



**2,797** Household benefited



**\$5,28 M** Value of cash invested in local economies through shelter



**15,419** Supported beneficiaries:  
 ▪ 7,553 Males supported  
 ▪ 7,866 Females supported

## NRC Lebanon Shelter Response

NRC Lebanon's shelter programmes have supported thousands of families with rent-free housing, invested resources in local communities, stimulated economic activity in many host communities, and increased the availability of affordable housing in vulnerable neighborhoods and communities. NRC's shelter response includes:

- Transitional shelter through the Occupancy Free of Charge programme.
- Shelter renovations and upgrades for Palestinian refugees.
- Infrastructure support to Lebanese host communities, including schools and learning environments.

## Ongoing Shelter Projects

### Occupancy Free of Charge

The foundation of NRC's 'Occupancy Free-of-Charge' modality is the right to adequate housing. NRC works with property owners in Lebanese communities to upgrade unfinished houses and apartments to a habitable condition in exchange for hosting Syrian families rent-free for 12 months. This initiative provides vulnerable Syrian families with safe housing while also stimulating local economic activity and increasing the stock of habitable housing. Upgrades can include finishing floors, plastering walls, installing windows, toilets, and kitchen facilities, as well as providing electricity and water connections. Shelter projects are further enhanced by ensuring appropriate water and sanitation facilities, accessibility to basic urban services and social services and providing minimum protection standards for vulnerable social groups.

### Housing Support for Palestinian Refugees

NRC funds housing repairs in Palestinian refugee camps for buildings that have been partially or completely destroyed, and for houses that require small-scale upgrades. Many houses in the overcrowded camps are in a state of severe disrepair reflecting decades of poverty, underfunding, overcrowding, and intermittent conflict.



## 2019 Strategic Focus

NRC continues to strive to ensure that all its programming is protection-centred, efficient, effective and sustainable. In line with the Global Compact on Refugees, NRC expects to shift towards an area-based approach that entails greater support for host communities 'in a manner that supports refugee protection and the search for safe and dignified solution'. The main steps are:

- Mutual-benefit approach: Enhancing NRC's mutual benefit approach increases the positive impact on the local economy while developing a relationship with the host communities and local authorities.
- Invest in the human and social capital: that refugees build during the period of rent-free occupancy. Social capital helps fosters a community's resilience and makes refugees less dependent on aid.
- 'Do no harm': Continue to be aware of the impact of our programming on the host communities that are a direct consequence of our intervention.
- Increase cooperation with community actors and local authorities: Municipalities understand the needs in their areas, and closer cooperation adds a long-term lens to the response. Capacity building communities' own resources in dealing with the refugee crisis by adopting a community-based approach helps ensure longer-term sustainability.

**NRC Lebanon programming is made possible thanks to the generous support of:**

