

# SYRIAN REFUGEES IN LEBANON

In 2005, following the assassination of former Sunni Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, youth of all walk-of-life took the streets and began the very first of the Arab Springs. So if promising, the «Cedar Revolution» led in a few months the withdrawal of the Syrian army after nearly thirty years of occupation.

Eight years later, the country is facing a new crisis: The Syrian refugees. A human avalanche crosses borders to escape the bloody struggle between the regime in Damascus to the rebels.

According to UNHCR official data, registered refugees are already more than 800 000 and should reach one million by the end of the year. But non-governmental organizations says the real number is close to one million and a half, the equivalent of a quarter of the Lebanese population.

Refugee struggle for food, shelter and jobs. Mostly of them, from low and middle class, but even from the syrian bourgeoisie, fled their country without nothing, only a bag of clothes. They lives in tent camps or insalubre rooms, paying a huge monthly rent to have a place to stay. Children dropped out of school and often begging to help their families that run out of money.

With the ongoing of the crisis, they lost even the hopeless to have their life back.

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Just arrived from Hama, Syria, this man went to the refugees register office to receive assistance. Jadawel Aikheer Bureau, local partner of Oxfam GB, Tripoli, Lebanon.



Muna, 30 years old, lives with 5 children and 6 other people in a large room with no running water or electricity. In Yarmouk, Syria, she lived in a large property house with a terrace. Her life, she says, has completely changed: «My husband is always in Yarmouk, I don't have any news of him since the Syrian army closed the camp. My father died without a chance to see him. My brothers failed to escape because now Palestinians people are arrested at the Lebanese border. This room costs 100\$ per month, that we pay with some daily tasks that men are able to obtain. We live with the nightmare of having to stay here forever. If we didn't got the international aid, we would all died of hunger.»





Wavel is the smallest Palestinian camp in Lebanon and the closest to the Syrian border. Built in the 1948 to host 100 families, now lives there some 7500 people. 52% of residents live below the poverty line. From the beginning of the Syrian crisis the camp received about 8,000 exiles. This means double stress on water, health and education structures and the increasing of unemployment rate, already at 35%. Wavel Camp, Baalbeck, Lebanon.



Due to overcrowding in the Palestinian camps, many Syrian-Palestinian families seeking temporary housing elsewhere. However, they still gather around the camp, as they cannot receive assistance outside. Bar Elias, Lebanon.





Zgharta, the capital of the homonymous Maronite Christian district, has 75 000 inhabitants and more than 7,000 Syrian refugees already registered (but in the next six months they expect another 1500). Residents think that newcomers brought instability, took their jobs and fought off the tourists. This conflict blew the black market of rents: Lebanese rent all kind of place to Syrian at very high prices. In this garage lived some 170 refugees including 90 children. Zgharta, Lebanon.



Hampo Aswap, 70 years old, escaped from Syria across Mansa border, in northern Lebanon. He lives with his wife in an underground garage without sanitation, water or windows. He shares the garage-home with other people in order to pay the rent of \$ 100 per month. His only desire is to come back at home, in Hama, Syria. Zgharta, Lebanon.





The number of refugee children at school age is higher than the number of Lebanese children who attend the school. The lack of appropriate school infrastructure encourage the spread of child labor, such as collecting recycling plastic for few dollars a day. Rayak, Bekaa Valley, Lebanon.





Internal conflicts explode in this tent camp inhabited by families coming from Alep, one of the mostly affected area of Syrian conflict. Kalamoun, Lebanon.





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Ilssa, 14, escaped from Alep, Syria, 2 months ago. Now he lives in Tripoli and every night a van brings him to the richest neighborhoods of Beirut to beg. He works with other children 3 hours a night. Gemmayzeh, Beirut, Lebanon.



For years many Syrians come to work in the Bekaa Valley during the harvest season. Now, many of them take refuge in the same areas where they had previously work. Owners rent them plots of land but don't allow any structural change from international organizations, such as sanitary or water tanks. Alfayda, Lebanon.





Syrian refugees wait to receive the voucher for the purchase of food, hygiene and childhood kit, distributed by the municipality through a partnership with the NGO Oxfam Italy. Vouchers could be spent only in some approved magazines: this allows the inhabitants to benefit indirectly of the international assistance and promote the integration of refugees among the residents. Zgharta, Lebanon.



A man with a 10\$ voucher to purchase hygienic kit for children. Refugees arrive without nothing, a suitcase of clothes and a many kid. They survive thanks to international aid, however their condition is critical and could get worse with the arrival of winter. Zgharta, Lebanon.





Samar, with her daughter aged of three months, is just arrived from Racca, Syria. She don't found a place inside the Wawel Camp, so she moved with other families in a gathering. She complained she don't receive assistance because she is far away from the distributions centers. However, her husband manage to get some work day to day. Bar Elias, Lebanon.



Mohamed Khaled El Aswad lives in one of the 18 garage - home in a building few blocks far away from the center of Zgharta. He comes from Hama, Syria, with his wife and six children and shared the garage without heating or windows with another family. He pays a rent of 100\$ per month by collecting recycling plastic for a few dollars a day. Zgharta, Lebanon.





Many Syrian families decide to seek an accommodation in the Palestinian camp of Sabra, one of the poorest areas of Beirut, as they hope to reduce their expenses. With the ongoing crisis in Syria, even the wealthiest families run out of money and can no longer cover the cost of housing. Sabra, Beirut, Lebanon.





In Lebanon live half of the 455,000 Palestinians who fled Syria. The camp of Sabra was overpopulated and with an unemployment rate of 35% before of the refugees emergency. The great number of newcomers from Syria worsened the situation of the residents.





A Syro-Palestinian boy in the yard of his new home, Bar Elias, Lebanon.



Lebanon is the more accessible country from Syria because of the geographical proximity and also because a Syrian document is enough to cross the border. The number of entries has decreased but the constant flow made Lebanon the country with the highest number of Syrian refugees. Masna border, Lebanon.





This Palestinian, 70 year old, has an heart surgery recently. He is a refugee for the fourth time in his life. Because he couldn't pay a rent, he found hospitality in a mosque near the Wawel Camp. TV is a novelty as there wasn't electricity until one month ago. Baalbeck, Lebanon.



A Syrian girl in her new home in the Palestinian camp of Sabra. Her parents chose Sabra because they wanted to integrate into the community rather than living in a tent camp for refugees. They also hoped children can go to school, but with a rent of \$ 300 a month they don't know if they will succeed. Beirut, Lebanon.