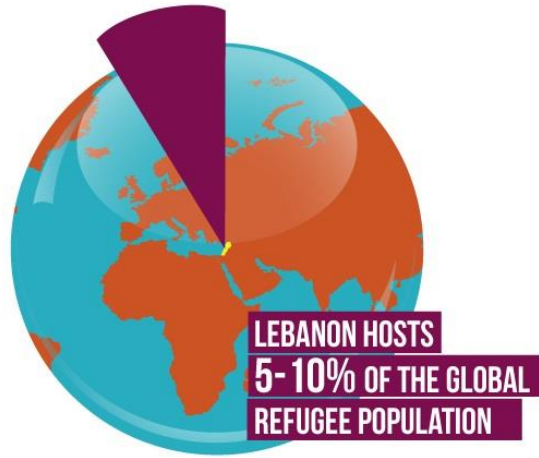
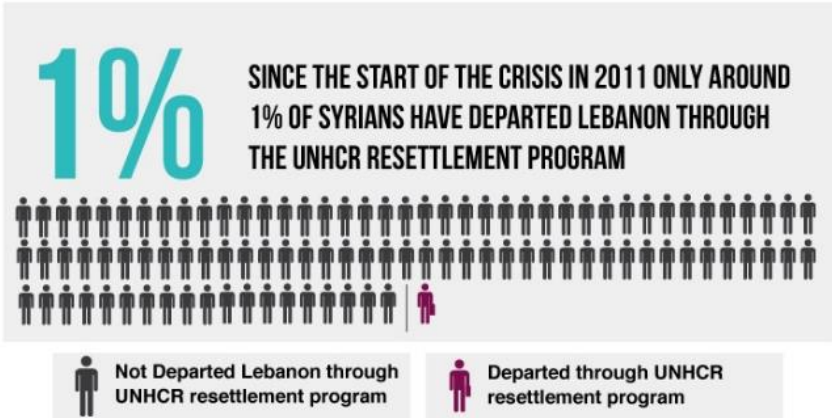
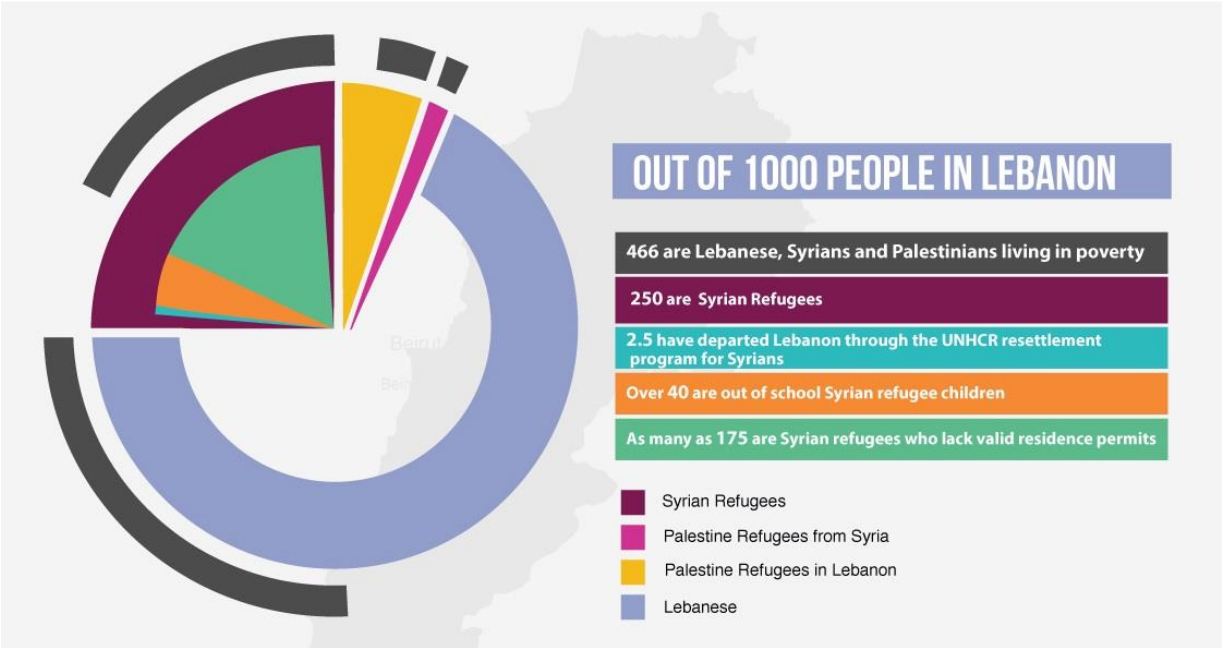


SYRIAN REFUGEES IN LEBANON

1 IN 4 PEOPLE
IN LEBANON IS A SYRIAN REFUGEE



RESETTLEMENT AND HUMANITARIAN ADMISSIONS PATHWAYS FOR SYRIAN REFUGEES LIVING IN LEBANON MUST BE EXPANDED SO THAT AT LEAST 10% ARE ABLE TO ACCESS ASYLUM OUTSIDE LEBANON IN 2017



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Lebanon currently hosts 5-10% of the global refugee population, shouldering a vastly disproportionate share of the global responsibility to provide protection to the millions of people who have fled the horrific violence inside Syria. Before the start of the conflict in Syria, the Lebanese population was roughly 4.5 million. As a result of the influx of refugees, the number of people living in Lebanon has increased by approximately 27%. This would be the equivalent of the USA hosting two times the population of Canada plus the population of Cuba. **1 in 4 people living in Lebanon is a refugee.**

The people of Lebanon have generously been hosting refugees from Syria within their communities for 5 years, but the sheer scale of both the economic and human impact of the crisis has led to a deterioration of the quality of asylum for refugees in Lebanon, increased poverty levels among the most vulnerable Lebanese, and strains on public services and infrastructure.

- ❖ 70% of Syrian refugees and 89% of Palestine Refugees from Syria are currently living in poverty in Lebanon
- ❖ Over 50% of Syrian refugee children – more than 235,000 – are out of school
- ❖ As many as 70% of Syrian refugees in Lebanon lack valid residence permits, which puts them at serious risk of arrest and detention, severely limits their freedom of movement, and curtails their access to employment and basic services

Since 2011, less than 20,000 Syrian refugees living in Lebanon have been resettled through the UNHCR resettlement program. This is only a little over 1% of the estimated 1.5 million Syrian refugees in Lebanon.

Without the humanitarian assistance delivered by NGOs and other partners, the situation for refugees from Syria and vulnerable Lebanese would be far worse. International donors have pledged \$6 billion to respond to the impacts of the Syria Crisis in the region in 2016, and approximately \$1.1 billion was available for Lebanon as of 30th June. However, this financial support has not been matched by equivalent generosity in providing safe and legal routes for Syrian refugees to access international protection outside of neighboring countries. Many countries around the world are in fact making it increasingly difficult for refugees to access asylum outside of Syria's neighboring countries, by closing their borders or making it harder for families to reunify.

In a context where there is no solution to the Syrian conflict on the horizon, safe and voluntary return to Syria is not currently an option. It is also not viable to expect Lebanon to continue to host as many as 1.5 million refugees from Syria. The durable solution of refugee resettlement to 3rd countries must be maximized in support of Lebanon. **UN member states, and especially those attending the Leaders' Summit on the Global Refugee Crisis on 20th September, must prioritize and expand resettlement and humanitarian admissions pathways for refugees from Syria living in Lebanon by:**

- ❖ **Committing to provide a proportionate share of humanitarian admissions and resettlement places to refugees from Syria living in Lebanon.** At a minimum this should enable 10% of the refugees from Syria in Lebanon (as many as 150,000) to benefit, in line with the UN Secretary General's recommendation for resettlement or other means of admission for at least 10% of the total global refugee population.
- ❖ **Addressing resettlement processing capacity constraints in Lebanon.** Embassy and UNHCR capacity constraints that are hindering or delaying resettlement from Lebanon should be addressed in order to remove unnecessary barriers.
- ❖ **Applying more flexible criteria for resettlement and humanitarian admissions programs to ensure that the most vulnerable refugees are able to access these opportunities.** Resettlement countries and UNHCR must address barriers to resettlement for the most vulnerable, including refugees with serious medical conditions. In addition, while alternative pathways, such as student visas or private sponsorship, are essential for expanding international protection outside of neighboring countries, it is imperative that these alternative pathways do not replace options based on vulnerability and protection criteria. Those most in need and least able to access protection in their current host country must be able to access resettlement and humanitarian admissions.
- ❖ **Expand and expedite family reunification programs.** Flexible and expansive family reunification criteria are needed, based on a broad definition of a family unit, to facilitate refugees from Syria who have accessed asylum outside the region to be reunited with their families in a timely manner.