ACHR

Situational Update:
Syrian Refugees in Lebanon

Access Center for Human Rights (ACHR)

www.achrights.org

1) Overview from September 23 to October 12:

The recent Israeli attacks on Lebanon, have severely impacted Lebanese civilians and as well others residing in the country including approximately **1.5 million** Syrian refugees and **490,000** Palestinian refugees. In less than three weeks of the escalations — with a total of **9,666** airstrikes and shelling incidents recorded, according to the Lebanese Presidency of the Council of Ministers —, over 1 million were displaced and thousands of civilians have been killed, injured, or have gone missing.

As of October 12, these attacks have led to widespread casualties and extensive property damage. According to the Lebanese Presidency of the Council of Ministers, there have been **2,255** fatalities and **10,524** injuries overall.

According to IOM, the total number of **internally** displaced people, both Lebanese and non-Lebanese, has reached **689,715** persons. Also, over **437,000** Syrian and Lebanese have, according to The Lebanese Disaster Risk Management Unit, fled Lebanon to Syria since September 23. Emergency response efforts remain minimal, leaving refugees, who are particularly affected, in dire conditions. They face discrimination and are often excluded from aid distribution, making it even harder for them to access basic necessities and services.

9666
Airstrikes

over
1 million
Displaced

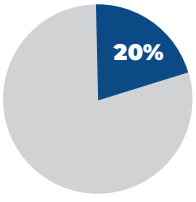
437,000
Fled Lebanon to Syria

2) Lebanese refugees and Syrian returnees to Syria

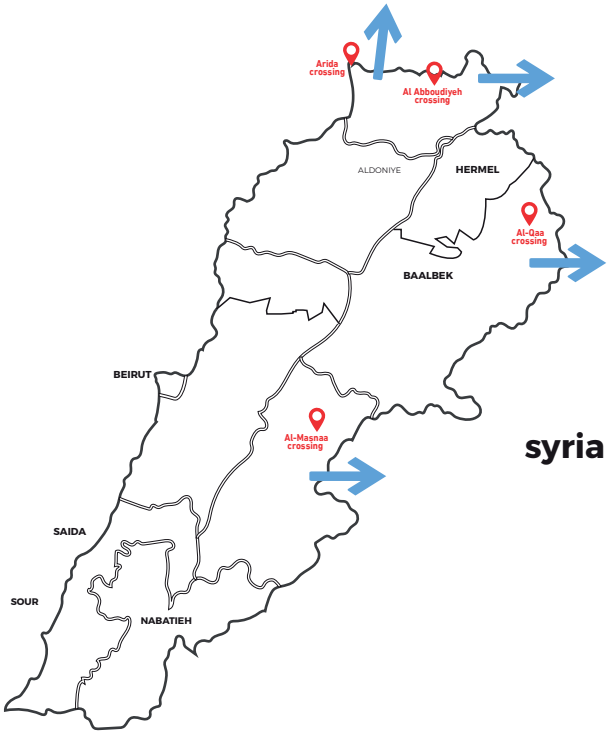
Alongside over **117,000** Lebanese who have crossed into Syria as refugees, many Syrians have been forced to return to Syria. The Lebanese Disaster Risk Management Unit reports that between September 23 and October 12, more than **320,000** Syrian refugees returned to Syria. Further, approximately **104,000** of them were assessed to have taken irregular routes.

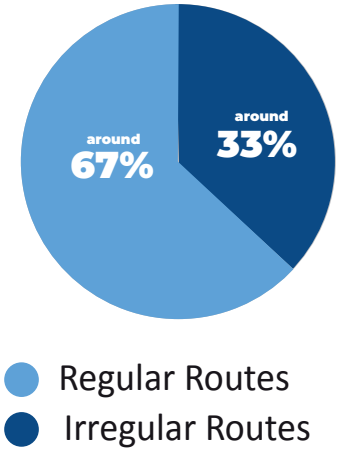
117,000
Lebanese who have crossed into syria

more than
320,000
syrian refugees returned to syria



Over
20%
of Syrian refugees in Lebanon has returned to Syria





3) Syrian Refugee Statistics:

The following statistics have been documented by ACHR with its own data collection tools. The tool aims to be comprehensive and reliable and uses an array of data sources including interviews that ACHR has conducted. The tools have the objective of analyzing displacement patterns, causes, and the challenges faced by refugees as this remains a notable key gap in ongoing developments. While the tool is unable to capture all affected refugees in Lebanon, it serves to highlight the severity of the situation.

- **Victims, injured, and missing**

ACHR has tracked **47** major incidents related to Israeli military attacks, primarily targeting areas with high concentrations of Syrian refugees. Although ACHR is unable to monitor and report on every case, it has documented **126** Syrian refugees killed, **29** wounded, and **4** still missing as a result of the ongoing Israeli attacks on Lebanon. However, the actual numbers are likely to be much higher.

126
killed

29
wounded

4
missing

- **Internally displaced Syrian refugees in Lebanon**

Syrians residing in Lebanon have been forcibly displaced by the very same conditions and violence that Syrians residing in Lebanon have been forcibly displaced by the very same conditions and violence that initially drove them to seek refuge in Lebanon. While estimating the exact number of internally displaced Syrian refugees in Lebanon remains challenging due to the lack of accurate figures, in South Lebanon alone over **70,000** Syrian refugees are recognized by UNHCR as residing in such areas prior to these latest developments. Additionally, tens of thousands more were displaced from other areas of Lebanon, such as Tyre, Saida, Nabatiyeh, and Baabda.

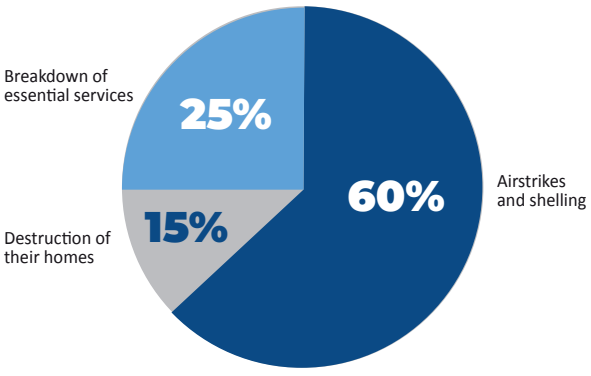
ACHR has monitored and recorded **1,545** cases of Syrian refugees who have been internally displaced in Lebanon, including **379** children and **215** women. ACHR documented 305 distinct displacement events involving individuals and families fleeing areas under direct threat from Israeli military operations. ACHR tools also relied on qualitative accounts from witnesses, survivors, activists, and volunteers, as well as open-source information.

Cities of origin in Lebanon	IDRs[1]
Baabda	329
Sidon	497
Tyre	406
Baalbek	119
Nabatiyeh	91
Other	103

Cities of Destinations Destination OCT 12	IDRs
Dennieh	669
Akkar	368
Beirut	168
Zahle	150
Tripoli	86
Other	104

• Challenges faced by Syrian refugees

Of the Syrian refugees that were captured in the ACHR monitoring tool, challenges they reported were significant. For the vast majority, violence in the form of direct attacks on residential areas by Israeli forces were the primary cause of displacement, with 60% citing airstrikes and shelling as the trigger. Further, 15% cited that their displacement was due to the destruction of their homes as a result of the Israeli attacks. Additionally, 25% reported leaving their place of residence due to the breakdown of essential services and many others have noted the pressing humanitarian need for assistance.



cause of displacement

[1] Internally displaced refugees

The emergency response is struggling to keep pace with the scale of the catastrophe and there are remaining gaps including the need for immediate shelter, healthcare services, increasing food insecurity. Ongoing racism and discrimination have meant that Syrian refugees have often not had equal access or treatment when attempting to access basic rights and services. For instance, while over **1,000** shelters were opened as a response to the significant displacement, most shelters have refused to accept Syrian refugees forcing Syrians into homelessness or overcrowded shelter spaces with relatives. The Lebanese government is implementing discriminatory measures that deny refugees their rights to safety, shelter, and assistance, in what seems to be an attempt to increase push factors that compel refugees to return.

Lack of Safety

Lack of adequate shelter

Food insecurity

Lack of information

Displaced Syrians in Lebanon face numerous challenges imposed by local municipalities, including restrictions on renting housing and freedom of movement between cities. Many displaced Syrian refugees are unable to find shelter and are barred from entering Lebanese shelters due to discriminatory policies, as Minister Bassam Mawlawi repeatedly stated that shelters are reserved for Lebanese citizens only. These conditions, alongside inadequate shelter, food insecurity, and financial struggles, leave refugees in dire situations. Despite efforts to seek help, all **1,545** recorded Syrian refugees who reached out to international organizations, like UNHCR, have not received emergency support yet, with only a small percentage receiving aid from refugee-led organizations and local initiatives in Bekaa and Tripoli.

• Syrian returnees

Syrian Returnees who return to Syria face significant challenges, including widespread violations of their rights as well as significant protection risks. They often encounter human rights abuses such as arbitrary detention, torture, and enforced disappearances, with many going missing under unclear circumstances. Despite the end of large-scale military conflict in Syria, the conditions for a safe and dignified return remain far from guaranteed. ACHR has documented **7** cases of refugee returnees who were arrested upon their return to Syria after 23 September. While access to returnees remain limited due to security concerns, ACHR is currently investigating the situation in various areas of Syria and plans to share the findings soon.