



ACHR

THE 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

ON THE PROMINENT HUMAN RIGHTS
VIOLATIONS AGAINST SYRIAN REFUGEES
IN LEBANON

Access Center for Human Rights (ACHR)

This report is a comprehensive investigation based on direct testimonies and documented evidence of the major human rights violations committed against Syrian refugees in Lebanon during the year 2024. It places these issues within the larger socio-political landscape of Lebanon, where anti-refugee sentiment is on the rise. ACHR's meticulous detailing of these violations aims to increase awareness and advocate for more protection for Syrian refugees in Lebanon.

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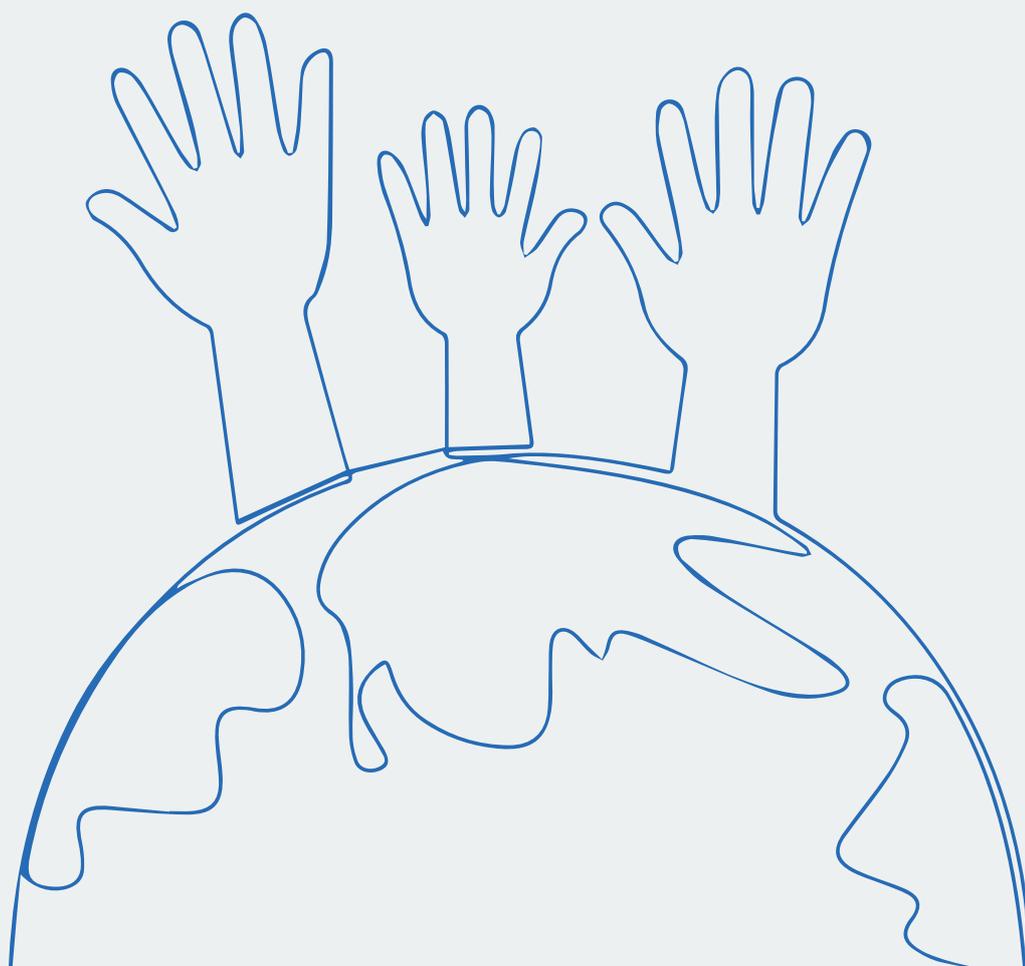
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BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

Access Center for Human Rights (ACHR) is a non-governmental, non-profit organization run by Syrian law, human rights, and journalism professionals. As pro-democracy activists in Syria, they were forced to seek asylum in Lebanon. **ACHR works to strengthen the rule of law and ensure accountability for all.** The organization is non-religious, non-sectarian, and is politically independent. It advocates for the collective and individual rights of refugees and meticulously researches and publicizes violations of international law to which they are subjected. ACHR also works for the voluntary, dignified, and safe repatriation of refugees to their countries of origin. It has been officially registered in Lebanon since 2017, under 1716/2019, and in France since 2020, under W931023779. It operates with charitable status in both the United States and Canada.

To promote legal accountability, international law, comprehensive refugee policies, and awareness of human rights violations in Lebanon, ACHR has published over 109 reports, campaigns, research papers, press releases, policy documents, and advocacy letters since 2019. The organization has also led or co-led numerous advocacy campaigns. In addition, ACHR maintains the only database in Lebanon, which comprehensively and rigorously records violations. It has since become one of the organization's main databases for publications and is an important resource for the work of its partners.



METHODOLOGY FOR RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION

Based on ACHR's methodological principles, several different techniques are used to gather information. **ACHR's field officers interview survivors or witnesses by telephone or online communications.** Through careful multi-source verification and rigorous questioning, our field officers establish the identity of interviewees and verify their testimonials to maximize the credibility of the information gathered. Reports, campaigns, statements, and other forms of publication are then produced from this information. This approach makes our documentation deeper and more reliable.

The steps include:



- **Gathering information**

Information comes from face-to-face interviews, phone calls, email, and social media.



- **Data validation**

Validating the information involves cross-checking the data with other sources, either from other activists or partners and sometimes open-source data.



- **Analysis of information**

Data is researched, categorized, and tested for reliability and validity.



- **Documentation**

This involves establishing liability and damages for human rights abuses and thoroughly documenting information based on legal standards of evidence, such as in cases of torture, using forensic evidence. Documentation informs the public, institutions, and organizations interested in human rights through the dissemination of reports and documentation results.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE REPORT

This report details numerous human rights violations that refugees in Lebanon were subject to in 2024. ACHR identified the violation's perpetrators, geographical locations of where violations took place, and other details to shed light on the dire situation of Syrian refugees in Lebanon and the systemic abuses perpetrated against them. It gives in-depth information on each kind of violation, including:



- **Abuse of Power**

Characterizing the misuse of institutional power against refugees to influence, manipulate, or control them.



- **Arbitrary Arrest/Detention**

Documenting the ad hoc nature of arrest and detention of refugees, most often without due process and/or formal charges.



- **Arbitrary Rejections and Pushbacks**

Documenting rejection of asylum without a fair, just, or legally justifiable process. Pushbacks involve intercepting and forcibly returning refugees attempting to flee Lebanon via irregular sea routes, often leading to their deportation to Syria.



- **Ban from Accessing Medical Services, Shelters, Etc:**

Highlighting the inequitable basis that poses barriers to refugees accessing basic and essential services.



- **Seizure of Official Documents**

Underscoring cases where identity documentation such as cards and passports have been withheld, revoked, and has as a result restricted movement and access to services.



- **Discrimination on the Basis of Race, Thought or Belief:**

Emphasizing cases of discrimination against refugees which adds to their misery and prevents them from accessing essential services.



- **Enforced Disappearances**

Recording cases of refugees taken into custody without legal charge and without the knowledge of their families.



- **Forced Deportation**

Recording how refugees have been deported with force used in the process, often without due process or legal basis.



- **Forced Evictions**

Describing how refugees have been forcibly removed from their homes or camps without guarantees of adequate alternative housing.



- **Ill-Treatment and Torture**

Identifying cases of refugees who have been subjected to physical torture or psychological or cruel and inhuman treatment.



- **Incitement to Violence and Hate Speech**

Highlighting instances of rhetoric and actions by Lebanese officials that directly and indirectly encourage hostility and discrimination against Syrian refugees.



- **Kidnapping**

Documenting the unlawful detention of Syrian refugees by force, threat, or deception.



- **Raids**

Detailing cases of sudden, targeted security raids conducted by authorities.

SUMMARY OF VIOLATIONS

In 2024, Access Center for Human Rights (ACHR) documented **8,471** cases of violations committed against Syrian refugees in Lebanon.

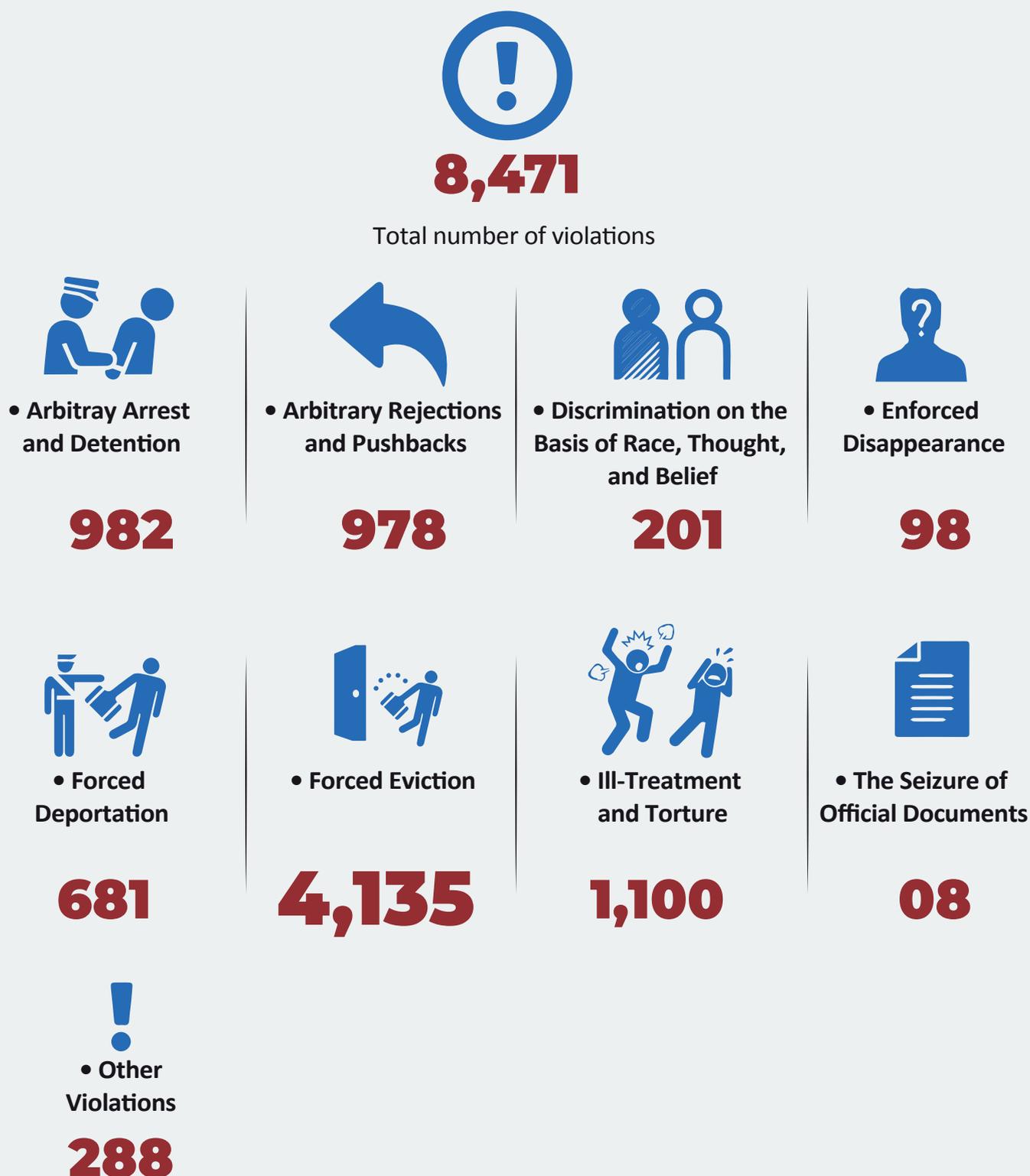


Figure 1: Infographic showing the types of violations.

*It should be noted that the number of violations Syrian refugees were subject to in 2024 exceeds the documented figures.

Arbitrary arrest and detention cases were documented in different governorates of Lebanon in 2024 with a total of **982** cases recorded. According to the data, most cases were documented in Tripoli (**334** cases) followed by Zahlé (**205** cases), and then Rashaya (**137** cases). While all these areas are geographically dispersed, all are areas host a large concentration of Syrian refugees and some of these areas border Syria and so likely have increased security presence.

Several military and security organizations shared responsibility for the arbitrary arrest and detention of refugees. The Lebanese Armed Forces remains the primarily actor with a documented 736 cases followed by The Lebanese Army Intelligence (responsible for 130 cases) and followed lastly by the General Security (86 cases).

A significant majority of victims of arbitrary arrest and detentions are males. This often reflects gendered assumptions that male refugees are security threats.

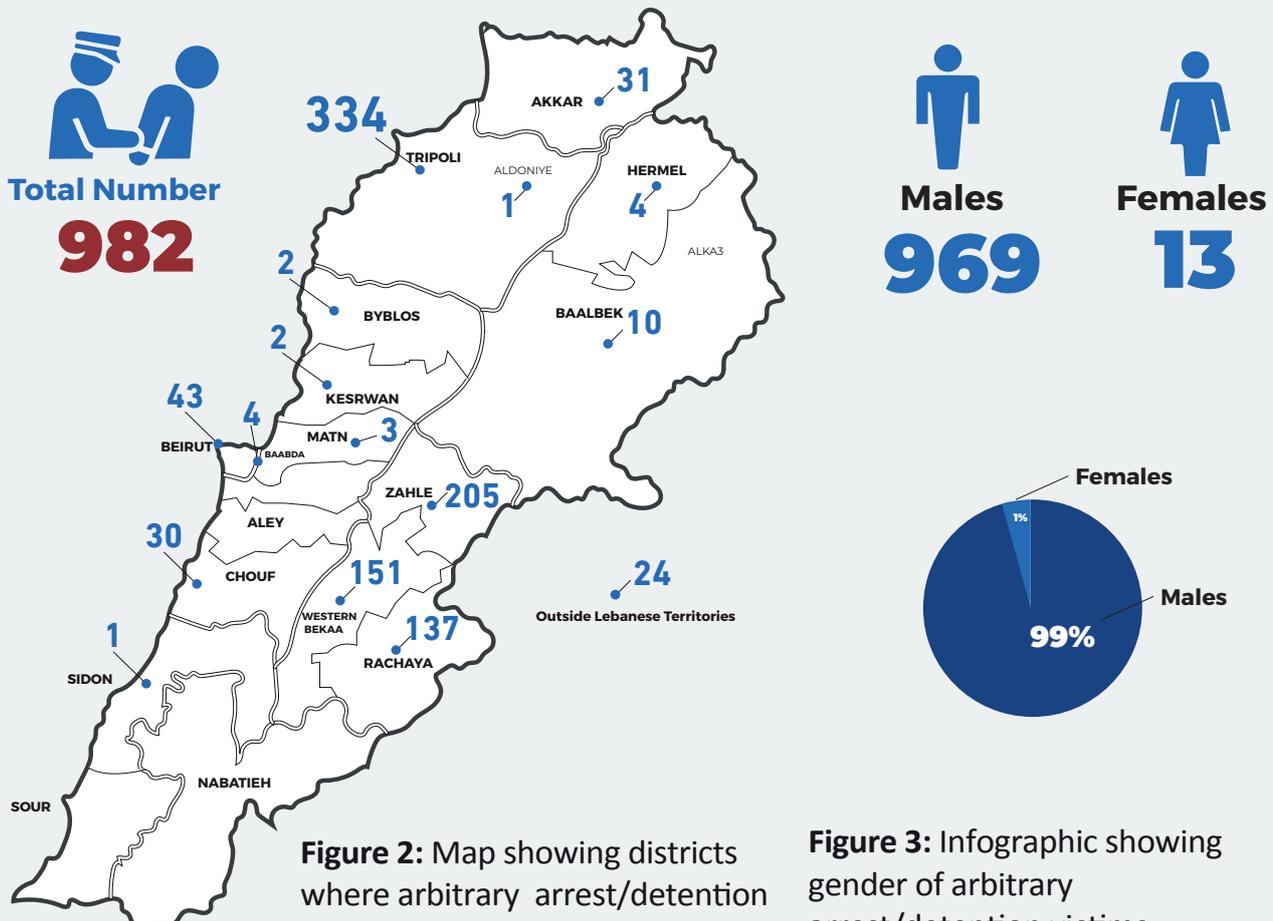


Figure 2: Map showing districts where arbitrary arrest/detention took place.

Figure 3: Infographic showing gender of arbitrary arrest/detention victims.

Entities Responsible	Lebanese Army Intelligence	General Security Directorate	Lebanese Armed Forces	State Security	Entities Outside Lebanon	Gendarmerie	Lebanese Coast Guard
Number of Victims	130	86	736	01	24	04	01

Figure 4: Table showing perpetrators of arbitrary arrest/detention.

DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF RACE, THOUGHT, AND BELIEF

In 2024, ACHR documented **201** cases of discrimination on the basis of race, thought, and belief. There were **150** cases of discrimination in Matn, **50** in Western Beqaa, and **01** in Baalbek. The Matn area is predominantly Christian and therefore the significant numbers of violations potentially reflect sectarian-religious biases towards Syrian refugees.

Discrimination cases against Syrian refugees were perpetrated by several agencies. A total of 50 cases were perpetrated by the Lebanese Army Intelligence, 150 by Lebanese political parties and 1 by the Gendarmerie.

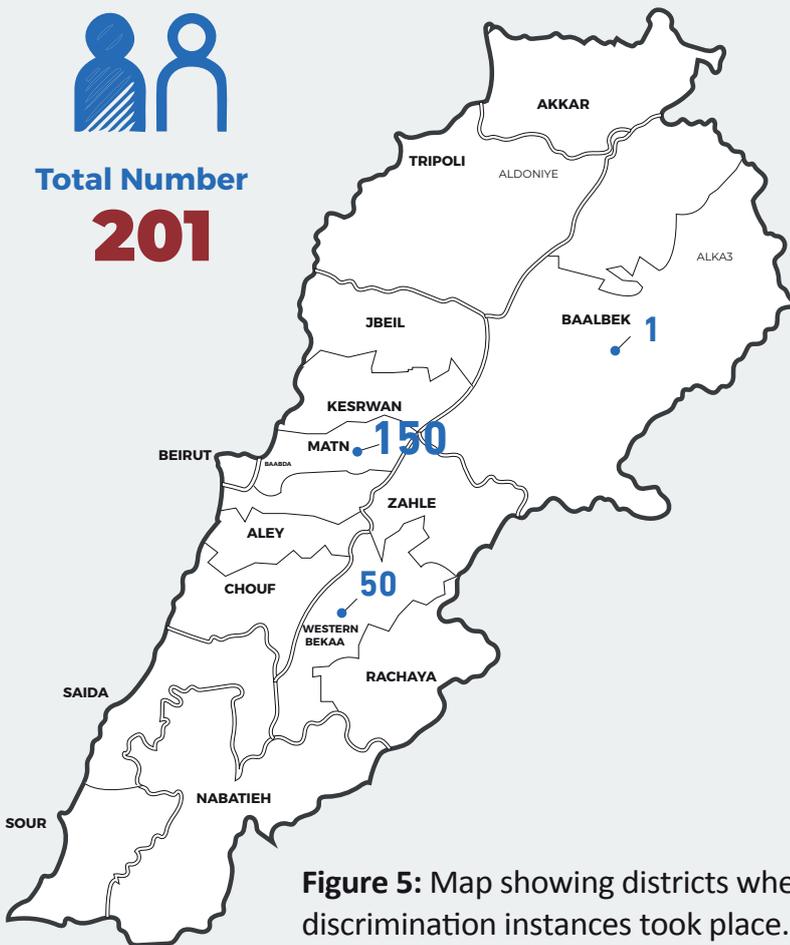


Figure 5: Map showing districts where discrimination instances took place.

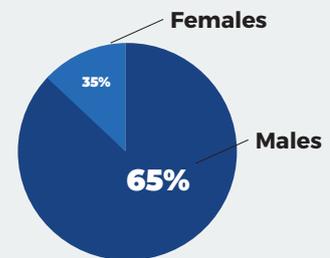
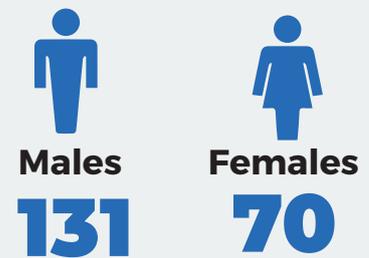


Figure 6: Infographic showing gender of discrimination victims.

Entities Responsible	Lebanese Army Intelligence	Lebanese Political Parties	Gendarmerie
Number of Victims	50	150	01

Figure 7: Table showing perpetrators of discrimination.

ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE

ACHR documented **98** instances of enforced disappearance in 2024. From the total, **2** cases were documented in Beirut, **2** in Zahlé, **1** in Hermel, and **93** cases outside Lebanese territories. The Lebanese Army Intelligence is responsible for 1 case, 2 cases by the General Security Directorate, 1 case by the Lebanese Armed Forces, 8 cases by entities outside Lebanese territories, 85 cases by unknown entities within Lebanese authorities, and 1 case by Armed Groups. **Enforced disappearances was a longstanding tactic used by the former Syrian regime and its affiliated security entities. The high number reflects the extent of this tactic and its widespread nature.**

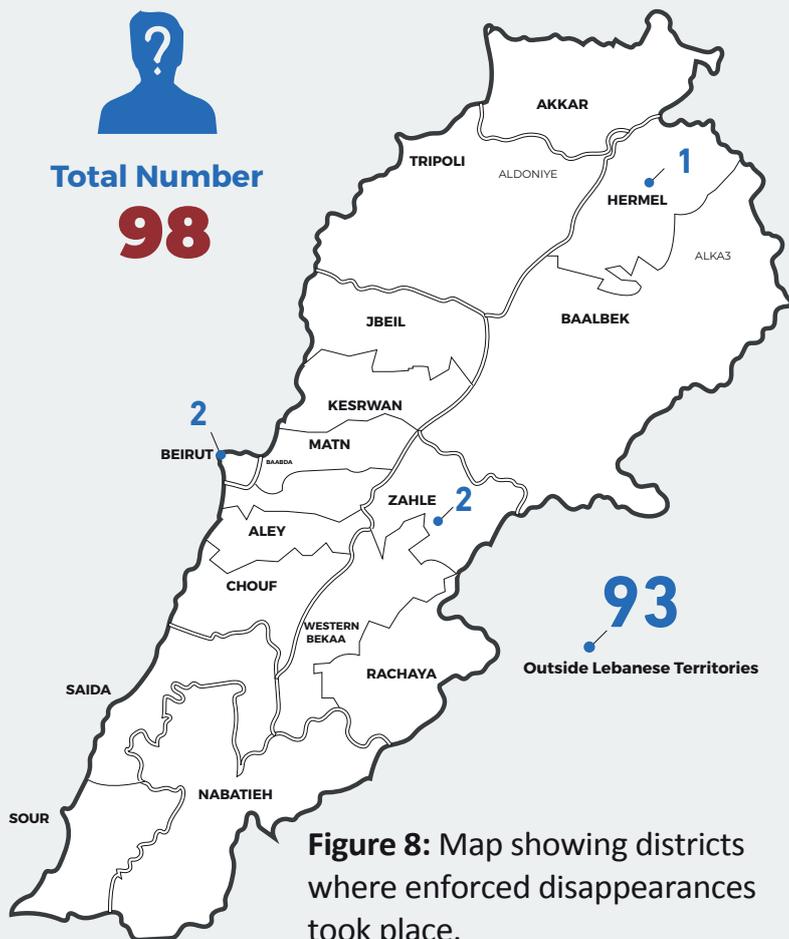


Figure 8: Map showing districts where enforced disappearances took place.

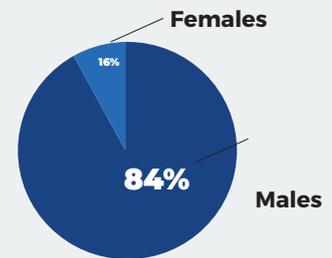
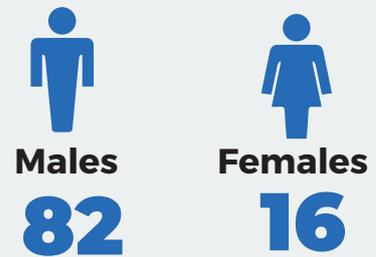


Figure 9: Infographic showing gender of enforced disappearance victims.

Entities Responsible	Lebanese Army Intelligence	General Security Directorate	Lebanese Armed Forces	Entities Outside Lebanon	Armed Group	Unknown Entities within Lebanese Authorities
Number of Victims	01	02	01	08	01	85

Figure 10: Table showing perpetrators of enforced disappearance.

FORCED DEPORTATION

ACHR documented **681** cases of forced deportation in 2024. A majority of cases (**280** cases) were documented in Tripoli, followed by Western Beqaa (**100** cases) and **102** in Rashaya. These cases were perpetrated by 3 specific security agencies, primarily the Lebanese Armed Forces (512 cases), the General Security Directorate (95 cases) and 74 by the Lebanese Army Intelligence.

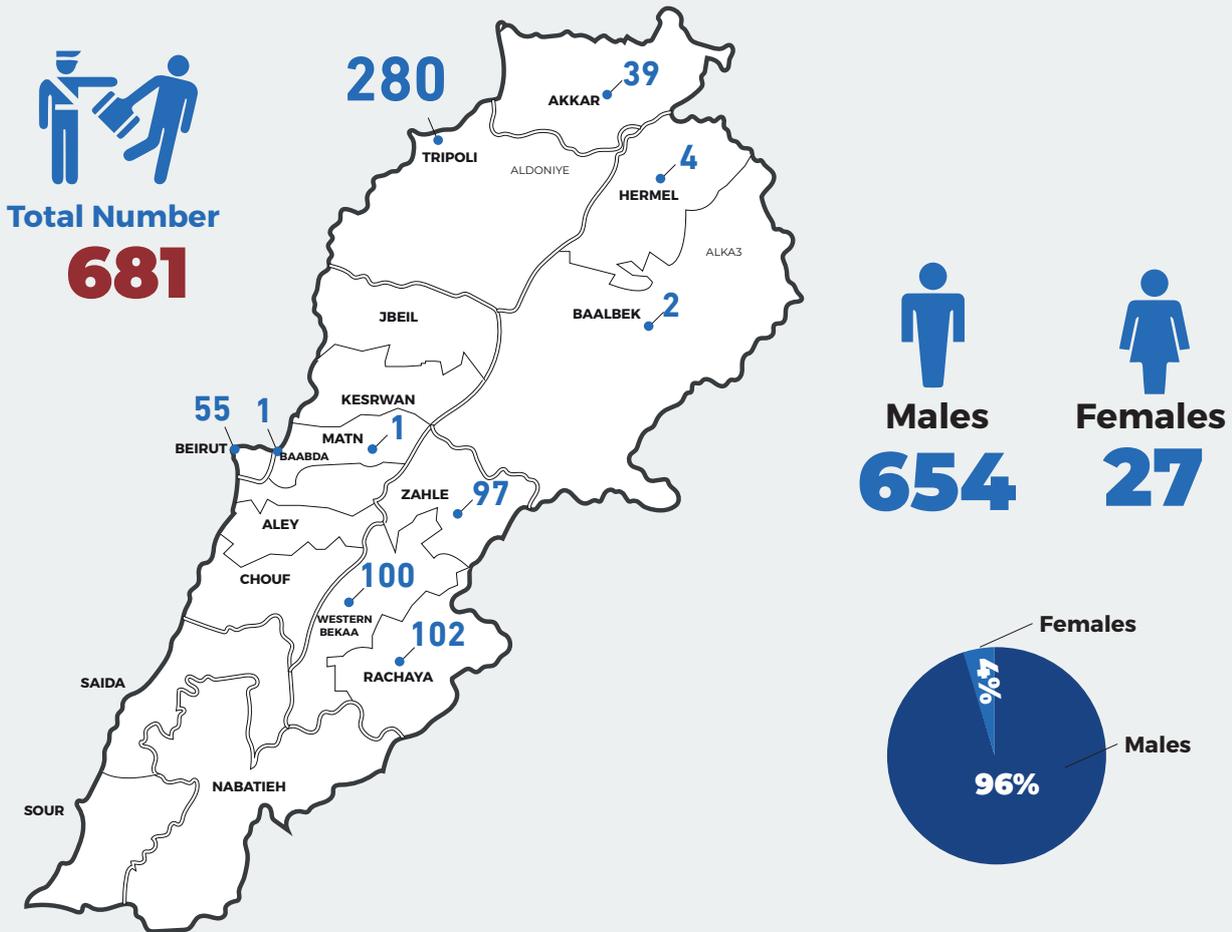


Figure 11: Map showing districts where forced deportation cases took place.

Figure 12: Infographic showing gender of forced deportation victims.

Entities Responsible	Lebanese Army Intelligence	General Security Directorate	Lebanese Armed Forces
Number of Victims	74	95	512

Figure 13: Table showing perpetrators of forced deportation

FORCED EVICTION

In 2024, **4135** cases of forced evictions were documented in Lebanon. A majority of cases were documented in Koura, **1601**, followed by **801** in Western Beqaa and **696** in Zahlé, These areas all have a high concentration of Syrian refugees who often reside in tented settlements where security raids are common. Their vulnerable position and lack of security in terms of settlement likely makes them more vulnerable to forced eviction. .

Of those perpetrating forced evictions, 2249 cases were by the State Security, 1381 by the Lebanese Armed Forces and 470 by the Municipal Police. These different security actors – all with varying mandates - who all partake in forced evictions suggests that the pattern is widespread and systemic.

Further, given the systematic and widespread nature of the violation, both genders are almost equally impacted.

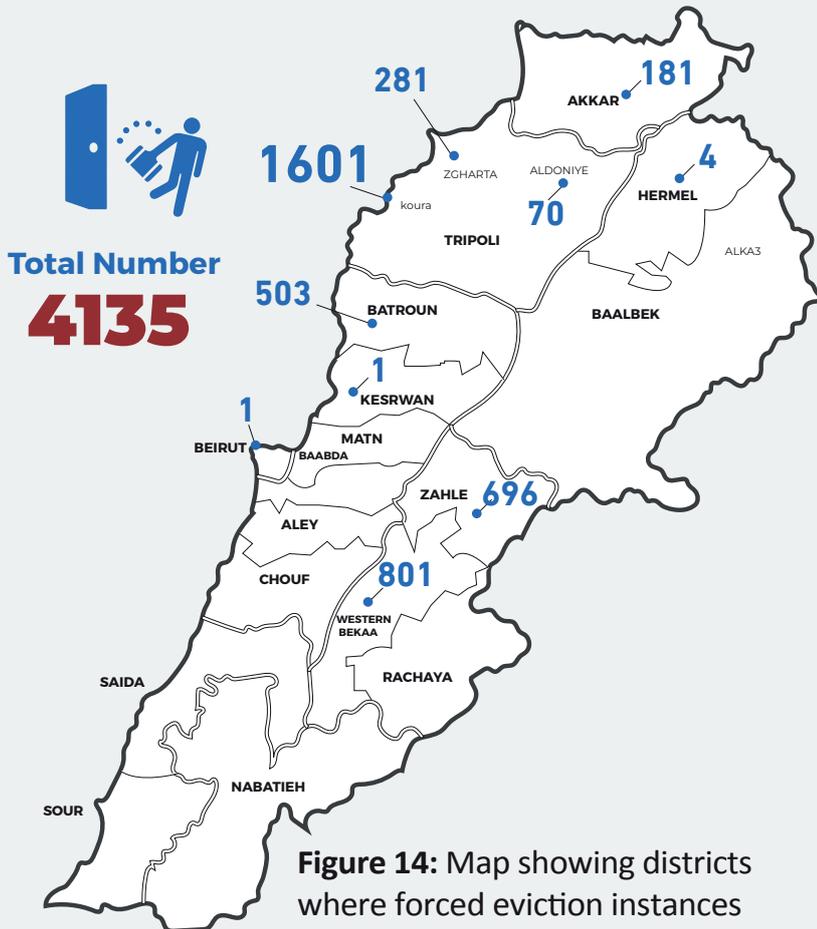


Figure 14: Map showing districts where forced eviction instances took place.

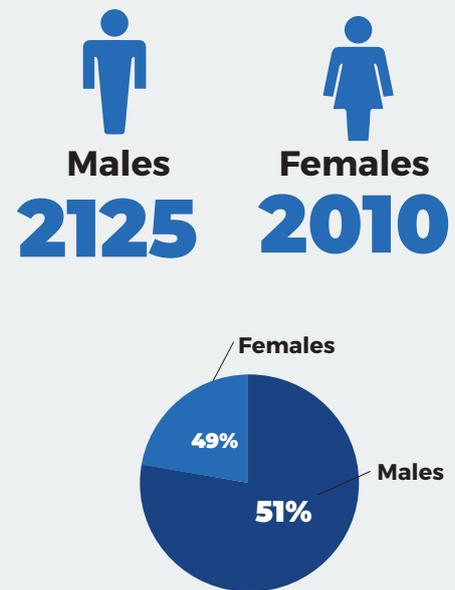


Figure 15: Infographic showing gender of forced eviction victims.

Entities Responsible	Armed Groups	Unknown Entity	Political Parties	State Security	Lebanese Army Intelligence	Municipal Police	Lebanese Armed Forces
Number of Victims	01	01	01	2249	32	470	1381

Figure 16: Table showing perpetrators of forced eviction

In 2024, ACHR documented **1075** cases of ill-treatment and **25** cases of torture, totalling to **1,100** cases. Ill-treatment is significantly more documented and is most often documented in Baalbek **661**, then **238** in Zahlé, and **70** in Dinniye. While all security actors engage in ill-treatment, this is most often documented by the Lebanese Armed Forces (a total of 707 cases). The violation of Torture is most often documented in Zahlé (6 cases), Western Beqaa (5 cases) and Hermel (4 cases), and in all cases, males were the gender most victim to torture.

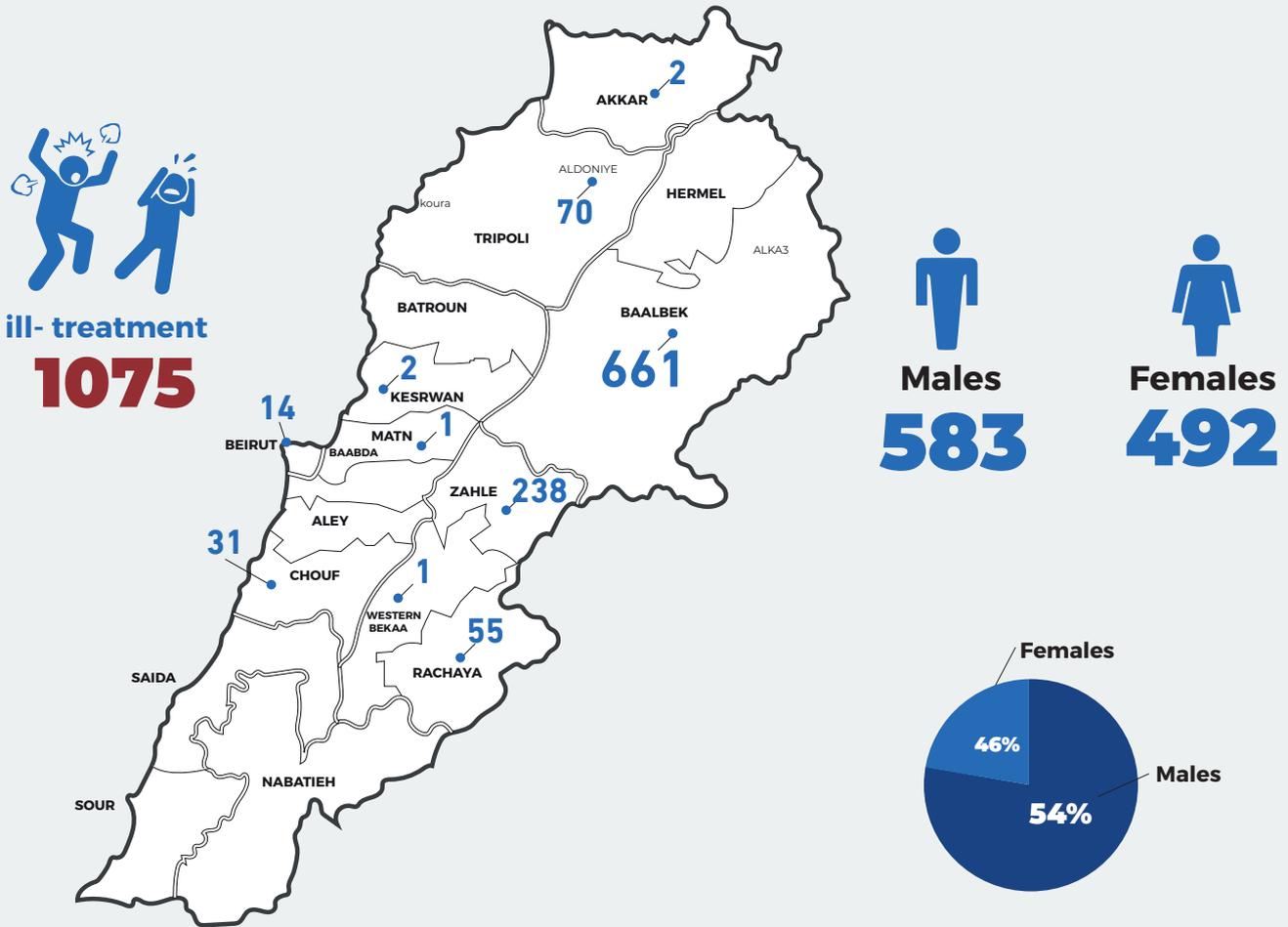


Figure 17: Map showing districts where ill-treatment cases took place.

Figure 18: Infographic showing gender of ill-treatment victims.

Entities Responsible	State Security	Lebanese Armed forces	General Security Directorate	Lebanese Army Intelligence	Armed Groups	Public or Private Institutions
Number of Victims	73	707	01	262	31	01

Figure 19: Table showing perpetrators of ill-treatment

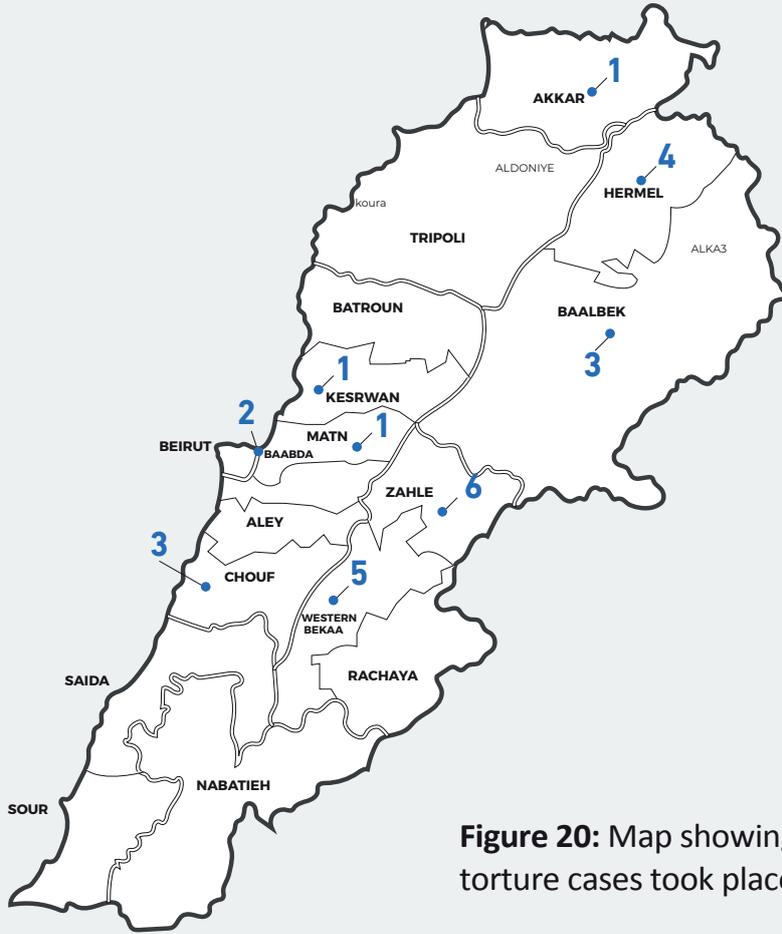


Figure 20: Map showing districts where torture cases took place.

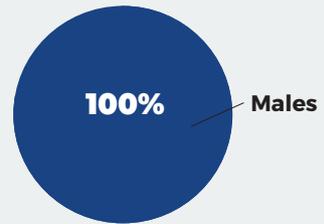


Figure 21: Infographic showing gender of torture victims.

Entities Responsible	State Security	Lebanese Armed Forces	Lebanese Army Intelligence	Armed Groups
Number of Victims	3	8	12	2

Figure 22: Table showing perpetrators of torture

SEIZURE OF OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

ACHR documented 8 cases of the seizure of official documents. There were 3 cases of seizure in Beirut, 2 in Zahlé, 1 in Matn, and 2 in Western Beqaa. Further, 7 cases were perpetrated by the General Security Directorate and 1 by the State Security. While these case numbers are relatively low, it is very likely that it is under-reported and occurred alongside other violations through coercive means.

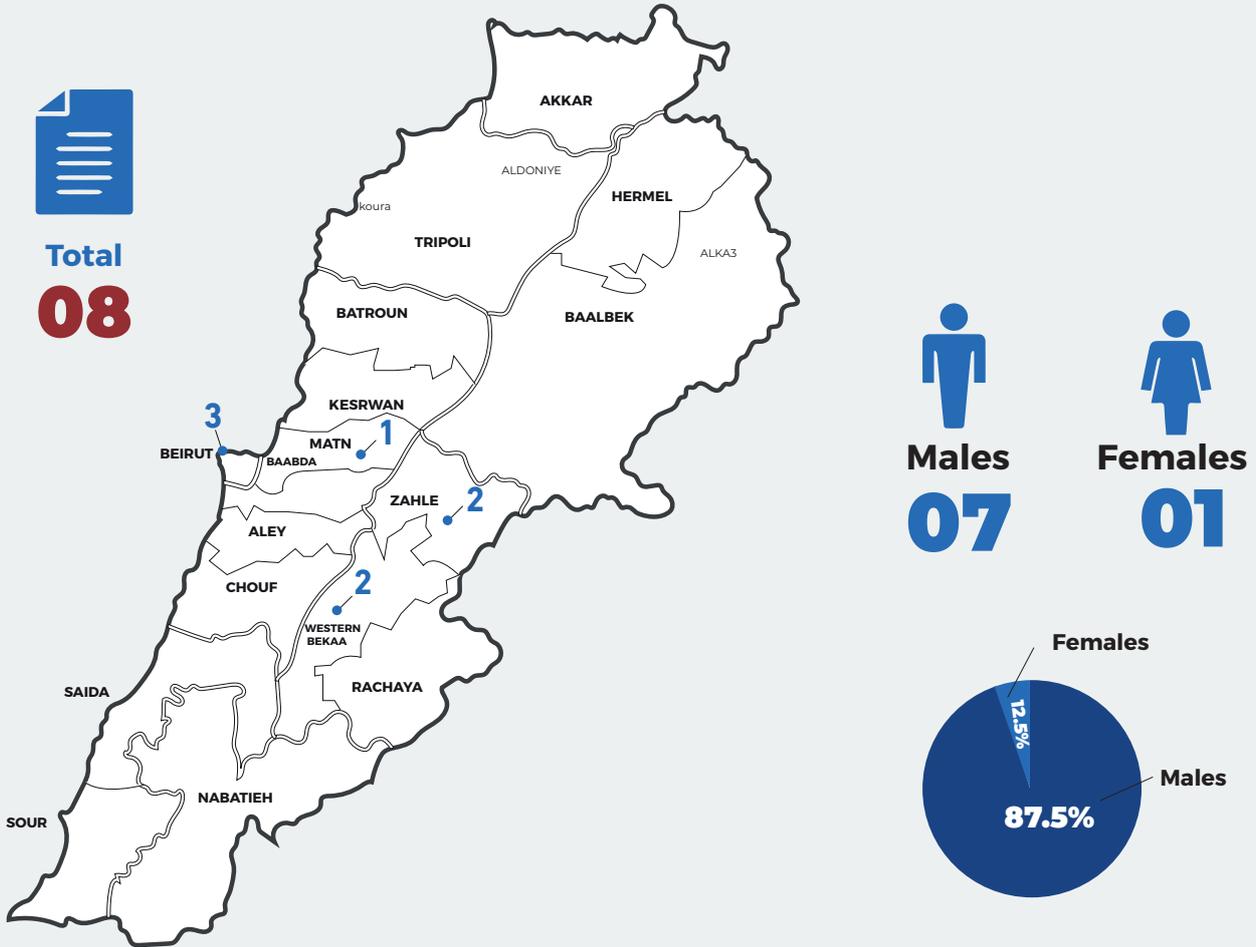


Figure 23: Map showing districts where document seizure cases took place.

Figure 24: Infographic showing gender of document seizure victims.

Entities Responsible	State Security	General Security Directorate
Number of Victims	01	07

Figure 25: Table showing perpetrators of document seizure

ARBITRARY REJECTIONS AND PUSHBACKS

In 2024, **978** cases of arbitrary rejections and pushbacks were monitored. All incidents occurred **outside Lebanese territory** and were carried out by entities **outside of Lebanon**, primarily Cypriot authorities. A significant majority of cases recorded were male.



Total Number
978



Figure 26: Infographic showing gender of arbitrary rejections and Pushbacks victims.

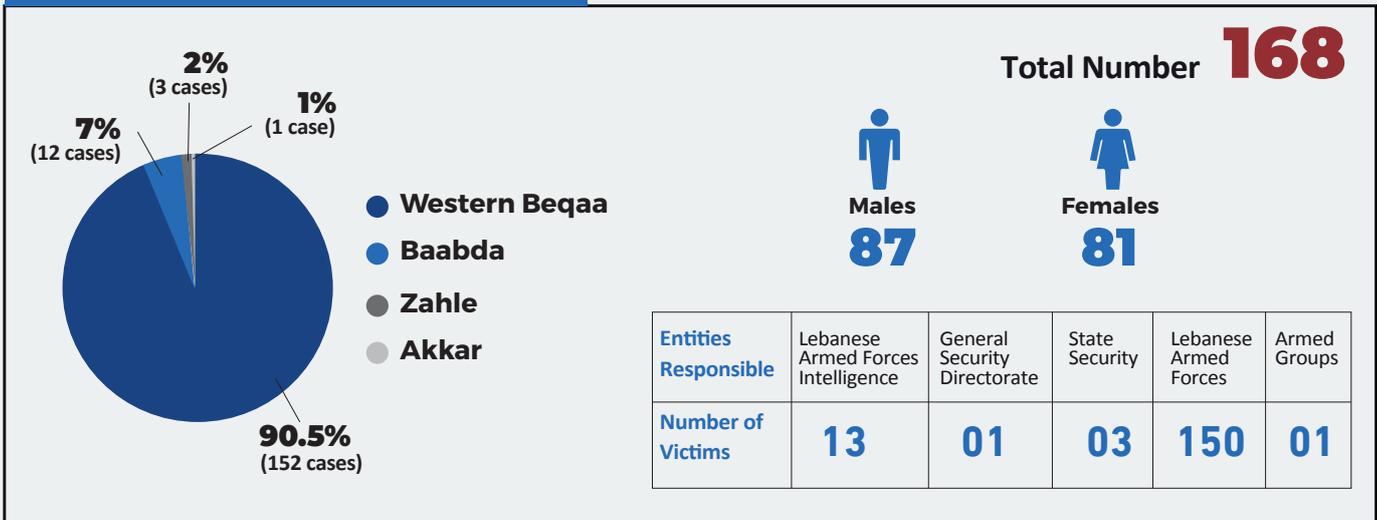
OTHER VIOLATIONS

Other prominent human rights violations Syrian refugees are subject to in Lebanon include **abuse of power, bans from accessing medical services and shelters, incitement to violence and hate speech, intentional killings, kidnappings, and raids.**



Total Number
288

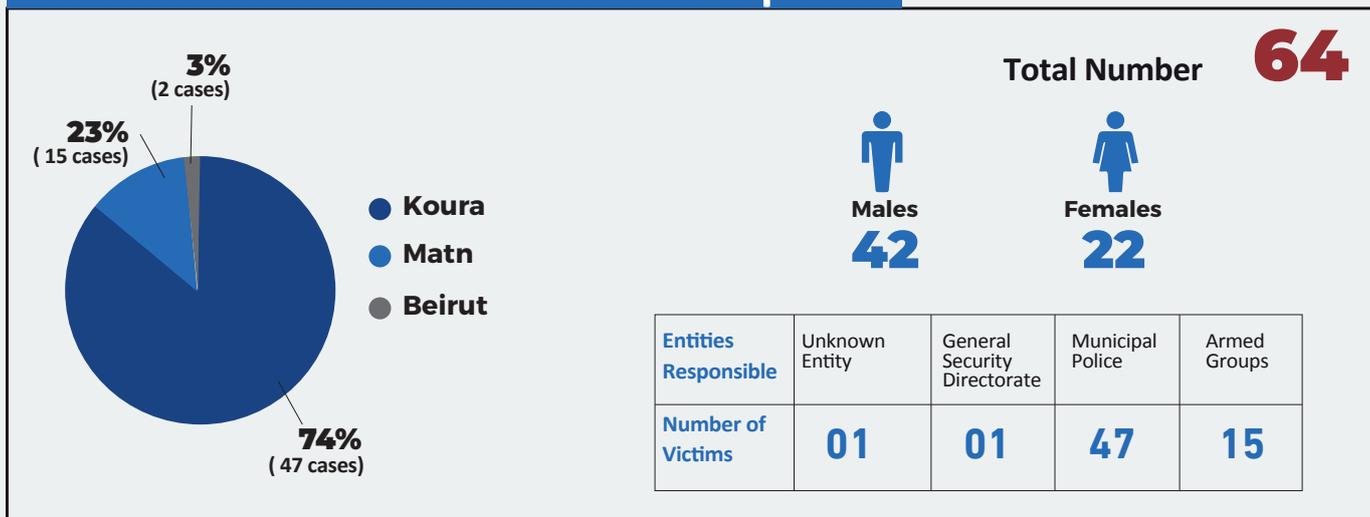
Abuse of Power



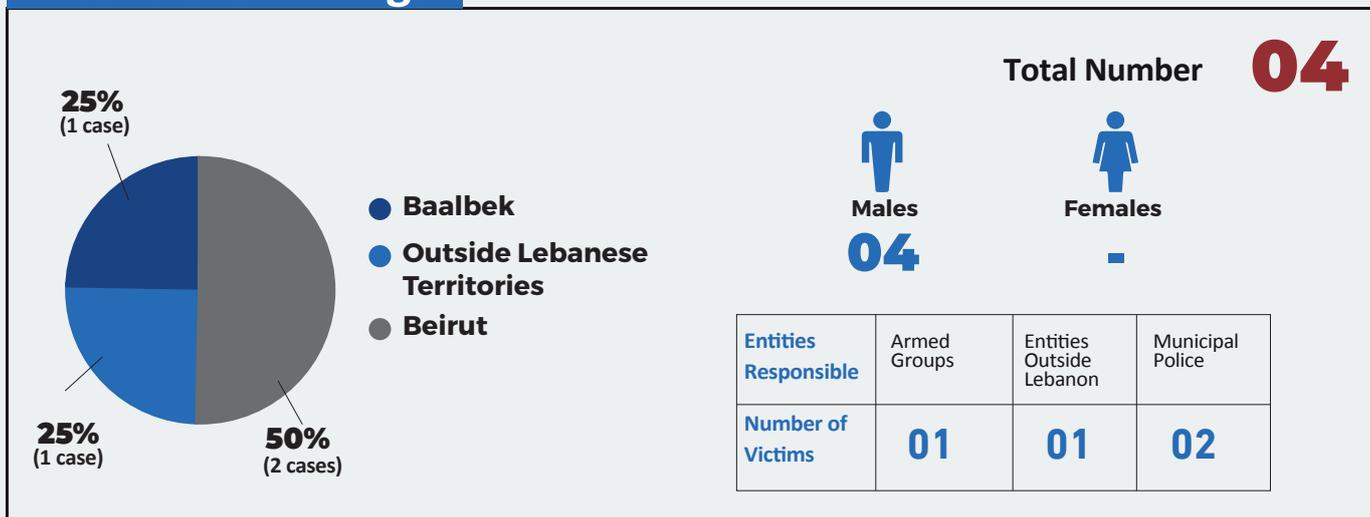
Bans from Accessing Medical Services and Shelters



Incitement to Violence and Hate Speech

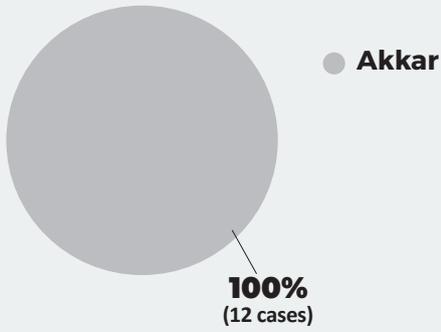


Intentional Killings



Kidnappings

Total Number **12**



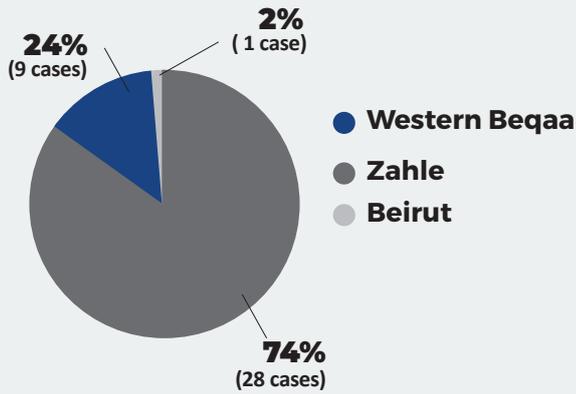
Males **10**

Females **02**

Entities Responsible	Armed Groups
Number of Victims	12

Raids

Total Number **38**



Males **38**

Females **-**

Entities Responsible	Lebanese Armed Forces
Number of Victims	38

VIOLATIONS DURING THE HOSTILITIES IN LEBANON

Throughout the intense months of fighting between Israel and Hezbollah, ACHR issued 8 detailed situation updates, providing the latest figures, details of developments, and key challenges facing Syrian refugees in Lebanon.

From 23 September to 22 October, ACHR documented:



55

Major
Incidents



422

Distinct displacement
events have been recorded.

A significant number occurred in the first few weeks of the conflict in areas that were targeted by Israel including the south of Lebanon and areas in the Beqaa. However, displacements occurred in several waves over time as Syrian refugees faced other forms of pressure from local authorities such as lack of access to housing or shelter, lack of access to basic needs and services etc. While a ceasefire was reached, communities and especially Syrian refugees continue to be displaced within Lebanon.

From 23 September to 03 December:



4,165

Syrian Refugees
have been Internally
Displaced



172

Syrian Refugees killed



106

Men



62

Women



63

Children



49

Wounded



14

Shelters across
Lebanon that accept
Syrian refugees.



08

Missing



31

Refugee returnees
who were arrested



7

Enforced
disappearances

RECOMMENDATIONS



TO THE LEBANESE AUTHORITIES

- To adhere to the principle of non-refoulement and immediately stop the forced deportation of Syrian refugees.
- To halt the forced eviction of refugees from their homes and camps/informal settlements.
- To comply with the Convention Against Torture and ensure those who may be involved in torture or other forms of ill-treatment against Syrian refugees, are brought to justice.
- To facilitate the procedures for Syrians to obtain refugee status and other basic forms of identification that provide access to basic services and rights and provide them with the right to appeal in cases of refusal.
- To cease holding official documents of refugees' hostage for blackmail or punishment.
- To end the detention of Syrian refugees without legal justification or warrants and compensate those who have been subjected to this treatment.
- To remove all discriminatory measures taken by municipalities and provide legal mechanisms to prevent such measures against refugees.
- To prevent physical and verbal violence during refugee camp inspections by security agents, in compliance with both local and international laws.
- To Ensure that local media adhere to responsible journalism practices, refraining from incitement and avoiding inflammatory reporting on Syrian refugees.

TO UNHCR

- Closely and comprehensively follow up on the cases of refugees at risk of deportation, particularly activists, military defectors, and defenders of human rights.
- Strengthen the Protection Office by providing legal support through independent or UNHCR-affiliated lawyers.
- Engage with Lebanese authorities to ensure Syrian refugees rights are protected especially issues related to basic identification as well as legal residency and work permits.
- Monitor conditions in Lebanese prisons and detention facilities to ensure the protection of detained refugees.
- Enhance communication channels with refugees and develop more effective methods of engagement to ensure their protection.

TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

- Urge the Lebanese government to uphold its international obligations and ensure the protection of all individuals on its territory, including Syrian refugees.
- Strengthen and support local civil society and refugee-led organizations in their advocacy efforts to reduce human rights violations and discriminatory practices against refugees in Lebanon.
- Increase diplomatic and financial support for humanitarian efforts that protect refugees and safeguard their fundamental rights in Lebanon.



ACCESS CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (ACHR)
Centre d'accès pour les droits de l'homme

TOGETHER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

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