

Emergency Brief

Palestinian Refugee Camps in Lebanon Under Escalation

Overview

Since the November 2024 ceasefire between Hezbollah and Israel, Lebanon has witnessed **continuous violations and renewed large-scale military escalation**.

According to UNIFIL sources, more than **10,000 ceasefire violations** have been recorded, including near-daily airstrikes across the country. These attacks have resulted in **mass civilian casualties, destruction of infrastructure, and widespread displacement**.

In the past 2 weeks alone, intensified airstrikes across Lebanon, including Beirut, have:

- Killed over **900 people**
- Injured over **2,200**
- Forced **800,000 people to flee**

This marks a **new and dangerous phase of escalation**, with devastating humanitarian consequences.

Palestinian Refugee Camps Under Direct Attack

Palestinian refugee camps—among the most densely populated and vulnerable civilian areas—have been **directly and repeatedly targeted**.

Key incidents include:

- **Ein el-Hilweh Camp (November 2025)**
A drone strike killed **13 boys under 18** while playing football. Despite claims of a military target, local sources confirmed the victims were civilians.
- **Rashidieh Camp (November 26, 2024)**
Airstrike killed **6 civilians**, including a child, and injured 10 others in a densely populated area.
- **Ein el-Hilweh Camp (March 8, 2026)**
One killed, 10 injured in a recent air raid.

- **Beddawi Camp – Tripoli (March 6, 2026)**
A family home was targeted, killing both parents and injuring their daughter.
- **Multiple strikes (2024–2026)**
Including drone attacks and airstrikes causing civilian casualties, particularly in Ein el-Hilweh and Rashidieh camp.

These attacks demonstrate a **pattern of harm against civilian populations**, raising urgent protection concerns.



A Fragile Internal Situation

The escalation is compounded by a **deteriorating internal political and security environment** inside the camps.

The Palestinian Authority has moved to assert control, including attempts at disarmament in coordination with Lebanese authorities. However:

- Coordination with key factions such as Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine has been **largely absent**
- Joint coordination committees have been **suspended**
- A **security vacuum** is emerging

As a result, camps are witnessing:

- Rising armed clashes and assassinations
- Social unrest and family-based violence
- Weak or absent governance structures

This instability is increasing **fear, uncertainty, and vulnerability among refugees.**

Living Conditions: A Protracted Crisis

Palestinian refugees in Lebanon face **systemic marginalization and extreme poverty:**

- Estimated **480,000 refugees**, with **~280,000 in camps**
- Poverty rates of **70–80%**
- Severe overcrowding and deteriorating infrastructure

Legal restrictions continue to limit access to:

- Employment (including public sector exclusion)
- Property ownership
- Professional opportunities

The UNRWA remains the primary service provider but is **critically underfunded**, with only **~\$490 per refugee annually** available to meet basic needs.

Mass Displacement and Northern Pressure

The recent escalation has triggered **significant displacement flows**, particularly toward northern Lebanon.

On the night of March 17, the Israeli Military warned the population Tyre city and the surrounding area including Palestinian refugee camps and gatherings (Burj Shimali, Rashidieh, al-Bass, Jal el Bahr, Maashouq, and Shabriha), to evacuate their homes, which prompt thousands of families to leave hurriedly.



Camps such as:

- Beddawi camp
- Nahr al-Bared

are now hosting increasing numbers of displaced:

- Palestinian refugees
- Syrian refugees
- Lebanese families

These areas are becoming **overcrowded emergency hubs**, with limited capacity to absorb new arrivals.

Projection

- Displacement is expected to **increase significantly in the coming weeks**
- Northern Lebanon will face **critical pressure on already fragile services especially Nahr Bared and Beddawi camp**
- Without immediate support, conditions risk **rapid humanitarian collapse**

Current numbers

Location	Incident/impact	Number of IDPs from the camp	Number of IDPs to the camp	Destination of IDPs	Number of residents remaining in the camp
Ein el Helweh camp	1) Israel conducted an airstrike on the camp on March 08, killing one person and wounding other 10. 2) The camp continues to be impacted by Israeli strikes surrounding the camp, especially on Saida	100 HHs	200 HHs	Mainly to relatives, friends or to UNRWA run shelters. Some HHs (Syrians and PRS), however left to Syria.	17,000 HHs
Racshidieh camp	The camp was not yet directly targeted by Israel. However, Israel has been targeting several nearby areas which is impacting the buildings in the camp and preventing residents from moving freely.	-	234 HHs	Mainly to relatives, friends or to UNRWA run shelters.	1,500 HHs
Bourj shemali camp	The camp was not yet directly targeted by Israel. However, Israel has been targeting several nearby areas which is impacting the buildings in the camp and preventing residents from moving freely. Several shops have closed and services (including medical) have stopped which is preventing residents from securing their most basic needs.	-	280 HHs	Mainly to relatives, friends or to UNRWA run shelters.	13,500 HHs
Bourj el-Barajne camp	The camp was not yet directly targeted by Israel. However, due to its adjacent location to Dahye, it has been impacted by the ongoing airstrikes. On March 5, Israeli military warned the population of Dahye to immediate evacuation. The event caused a mass displacement out Dahye and its surrounding areas.	4,000 HHs	-	Mainly to relatives, friends in safer areas including Jadra, Jiyeh, Bshamoun, Aramoun and Beirut or to UNRWA run shelters in Tripoli PRL camps (Beddawi, Nahr el Barid)	50 HHs
Shatila camp	On March 5, Israeli military warned the population of Dahyet Beirut (Beirut southern suburb) to immediate evacuation. The event caused a mass displacement out Dahyeh and its surrounding areas including Shatila and Burj el-Barajneh PRL camps.	-	400 HHs	Mainly to relatives, friends or to UNRWA run shelters.	5,500 HHs
Beddawi camp	On March 6, Israeli air force targeted a family consisting of 4 members in the Beddawi Palestinian refugee camp - Tripoli, northern Lebanon. The raid resulted in the killing of the father and mother and the injury of one of their two daughters.	-	470 HHs	Mainly to relatives, friends or to UNRWA run shelters.	5,000 HHs
Nahr Bared camp	The camp was not yet directly targeted by Israel.	-	1,000 HHs	Mainly to relatives, friends or to UNRWA run shelters.	10,800 HHs

Urgent Humanitarian Needs

Immediate priorities include:

1. Food Security

- Emergency food parcels for newly displaced families
- Monthly assistance for the most vulnerable households

2. Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)

- Safe drinking water distribution
- Hygiene kits and sanitation support

3. Shelter and Non-Food Items

- Emergency shelter solutions
- Rehabilitation of damaged housing
- Distribution of mattresses, blankets, and essentials

4. Protection

- Support for children and vulnerable groups
 - Psychosocial support services
 - Community-based protection mechanisms
-

Why Immediate Funding Matters

- The situation is **rapidly deteriorating**
- Camps are **overstretched and under-resourced**
- Humanitarian actors face **funding and access constraints**

Without urgent donor support:

- Displacement will accelerate
 - Living conditions will further deteriorate
 - Protection risks will intensify
-

Call to Action

We urgently call on donors to **scale up flexible and rapid funding** to respond to the escalating crisis affecting Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.

Your support will:

- Save lives
- Provide dignity to displaced families
- Stabilize fragile communities at risk of collapse

Time is critical. Immediate intervention is needed to prevent a deeper humanitarian catastrophe.
