



Humanitarian Statement Repercussions of Turkey Earthquake On the Palestinian Refugee Camps in Lebanon

The massive earthquake of Turkey and Syria was accompanied by less intense waves of shaking that hit neighboring countries, including Lebanon, where different regions of the country witness, on an almost daily basis, quakes measuring between 4.5 and 5 degrees, without any damage being reported. These repercussions have brought the issue of dilapidated buildings in the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon to the fore again.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA), indicates 5,500 homes in 12 Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon need to repair and restoring, including many classified as dangerous. The past two years have witnessed cases of roofs, balconies, and walls of houses falling in several camps, the most recent of which was the collapse of a balcony of a house in Burj al-Barajneh camp in Beirut on 14/2/2023.

Some sources indicate many cases of cracks in the foundations of buildings in the camps, days after the earthquake, as the households demanded the formation of a disaster management committee to conduct an examination of the buildings in risk of collapse and evacuate their residents.

The risk of collapse of dilapidated houses increases for their residents, especially in the winter season, as a result of rainwater leaking from the walls and ceilings.

The Palestinian refugees of the camp face and economic and legal complexities that strict their resilience to restore their homes, as these camps suffer from dire living conditions. The poverty rate in the camps, according to UNRWA, reaches 93%, especially with the country entering a state of economic collapse since 2019, when the Lebanese pound lost more than 98 % of its value while tens of thousands of people lost their jobs and income resources. Unemployment and destitution rates rose. The Lebanese authorities, according to a law issued in 1996, prevent the entry of building and restoration materials into the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon without a permit, while the Law No. (296) prevents Palestinian refugees in Lebanon from owning or building.





The Jafra Foundation for Relief and Youth Development calls on the concerned authorities, including donor countries and international humanitarian organizations, to assume their responsibility to provide protection for the residents of the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon against the danger of the collapse of their cracked homes, which threaten their children safety, especially after the quakes worsened the already poor structural condition of these dwellings, in addition to adopting a preventive action plan based on training and equipping an emergency team and to provide emergency shelters and medical facilities with the necessary staff and equipment. It also calls for action to provide the basic living needs of the residents of these camps, including health, education, food, and services, through sustainable intervention programs aimed at relief and empowerment of the neediest groups, which are among their most basic rights as refugees, especially in light of the disastrous economic conditions the country is going through.

Jafra Foundation for Relief and Youth Development

Beirut 24/2/2023

