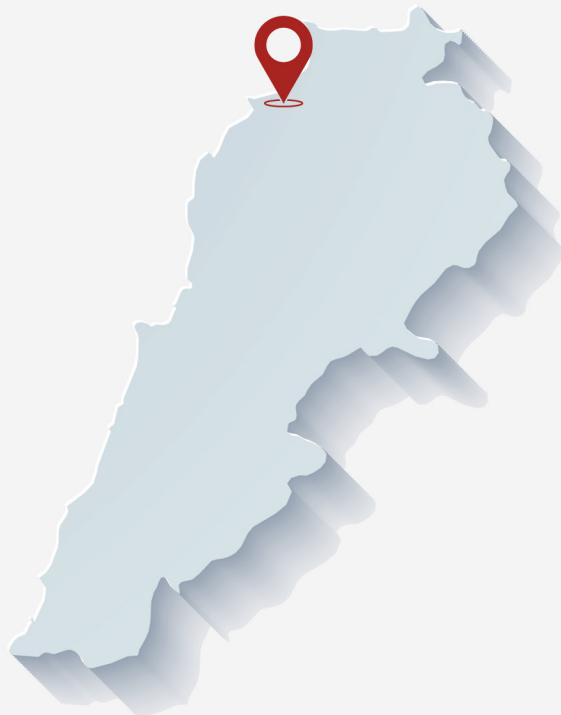




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# **NAHR ELBARED CAMP NEEDS ASSESSMENT 2024**



# Background

Palestinian refugees have been residing in Lebanon since 1948 when the Nakba (catastrophe), an event which saw the violent displacement and dispossession of Palestinians, and the establishment of Israel, forced hundreds of thousands of Palestinians to flee and seek refuge in neighbouring countries such as Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria. Following other forced displacements such as the Naksa in 1967, the number of Palestinian refugees currently residing in Lebanon is estimated at 489,292, according to UNRWA; of which almost 90% are living in dire conditions, and deprived from social protection and access to basic rights and services including shelter, water, food, and personal official papers.

According to UNRWA, 53% of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon are distributed amongst 12 official refugee camps and almost 150 informal gatherings. Camps in particu-

lar suffer from overcrowding, poor infrastructure, poor housing conditions, high unemployment, and extreme poverty. In addition to poor health and hygiene conditions, camps suffer from salty water and tangled electrical wires which have caused the electrocution of more than 50 residents in the past 6 years. The influx of approximately 30,000 Palestinian refugees from Syria further strained the overstretched infrastructure and limited resources in the camps.

Over the years, Palestinian refugee camps have suffered from atrocities inflicted during the Lebanese war; these include large scale massacres such as Sabra and Shatila (1982) and Tal El Zaatar (1976). In 2007, heavy armed clashes between the Lebanese Army and Fateh Al Islam destroyed 85% of Nahr El Bared camp, in Northern Lebanon, displacing almost all of its 35,000 inhabitants. Generally, the security situation in the camps remains very fragile and highly volatile, with frequent clashes taking place between armed factions and armed individuals.

Palestinian refugees in Lebanon are considered one of the most vulnerable populations as they are denied from their most basic rights and continue to be subjected to discrimination, marginalization, and unjust policies. Palestinian refugees are banned from 39 work domains in Lebanon, including medicine, law, engineering, and pharmacy, and are not allowed to work in professions that are governed by syndicates. Their status as Palestinian refugees subjects them to particular discrimination; according to the New York Times (Lebanon hands out and renews hundreds of thousands of work permits every year to people from Africa, Asia and other Arab countries... until now, only a handful have been given to Palestinians), hundreds of thousands of work permits are granted to foreign nationalities each year, compared to only a handful provided to Palestinian refugees. These conditions lead to very high unemployment and poverty rates which are further exacerbated by a complete absence of a social safety net.



# Nahr ElBared Camp

Nahr ElBared camp is named after its location at the mouth of Nahr ElBared River located in the area, north of the town of Tripoli. The camp was established in 1949 with an area of 198.13 dunums on a group of hills and dunes in the far south of the Akkar district by the IRCS. Nahr ElBared is the largest Palestinian Refugee camp in Lebanon. The camp is located 16 km north of the city of Tripoli, close to the coastal road in the North Lebanon Governorate, and is approximately 191 km away from the Palestinian-Lebanese border. The estimated population of the camp is 29,257 origins of most of them go back to the Al-Hula Plain in northern Palestine, Safouria, the district of Nazareth, the district of Galilee.



In May 2007, the camp was entirely destroyed during clashes between militants and the Lebanese army. The whole population of 33,000 individuals were displaced to other places. 48 civilians were killed and other tens injured. Due to the succession of security and economic crisis, hundreds of families escaped to Beddawi camp.

In Nahr El Bared camp, there is a popular committee that represents the PLO. In May 2007, the popular committee formed the relief committee, which later turned into the "Palestinian Higher Committee to Follow Up on the Reconstruction of Nahr El Bared Camp." In addition, several civil associations were established that deal with community rehabilitation and care for children, orphans and the elderly.

## Current Humanitarian Conditions

Currently, UNRWA is providing Palestinian refugees from both, Syria and Lebanon; with cash assistance (\$50 USD per individual every three months). Additionally, the Social Support Society is providing the Palestinian refugees from both, Syria and Lebanon with agricultural assistance. Furthermore, Palestinian refugees from Syria and Lebanon receive medical aid from UNRWA and medical clinics.

Humanitarian relief aid provided by local or international organizations do not cover all the needs of the camp residents. Many families are in need for humanitarian relief aid, specifically Palestinian refugees from both, Syria and Lebanon who collectively live in one house or households who have children, elderly, injured, sick, or people with special needs, or people who are displaced because of the war.

## Livelihood and Food Security

Local associations such as Najdeh Association and Social Support Society provide vocational trainings to residents in the camp, while Sawa provide development trainings. However, the unemployment rate in the camp reaches 65%, while the income of people who have work ranges between 200 and 500 USD. Main income sources in the camp include agricultural practices, simple trading, jobs in the private sector, jobs in the government sector, financial transfers, humanitarian financial aid, debts and manual labor. Palestinian Factions provide food assistance mostly include meat, canned goods, dates, and grains to affiliated individuals. Food aid, however does not reach all beneficiaries extreme poverty, as there are no clear criteria set by the factions in distributing food aid. A household in the camp typically spend around 120\$ per month on food.



*Food Processing for Women  
inside the Palestinian Camps*

Most vulnerable residents who need food assistance are Palestinian and Syrian families who collectively live in one house or households who have children, elderly, injured, sick, or people with special needs, or people who are displaced because of the war.

The main obstruction that affects access of families to food supply is the lack of sustainable economic resources to buy food items. Mainly, fostering mothers depend on their milk or baby milk products to feed their babies. However, most pregnant and fostering mothers receive insufficient food and nutrients to bring their babies and feed their children who are younger than 6 months. Additionally, insufficient food and nutrients contribute to the prevalence of high rates of anemia within the camp. Furthermore, the inadequate intake of essential food and nutrients is contributing to the high prevalence of anemia within the camp.

A holistic approach is needed to ensure the provision of adequate and consistent food aid to these vulnerable populations. Jafra is committed to a sustainable approach in skills development, aiming to empower these vulnerable groups with skills that enable them to generate income and access essential needs. Establishing agricultural initiatives and food processing activities with cash for work modality not only contribute to addressing the immediate food security challenges faced by residents but also foster long-term sustainability. By incorporating farming practices, the camp can become more self-sufficient, reducing its reliance on external aid. This approach not only ensures a more consistent and reliable food supply but also empowers individuals within the camp by providing them with valuable skills and resources for sustainable livelihoods.

**About  
1500  
of the individuals  
living in Nahr ElBared  
camp are in  
urgent need for food  
assistance**

## Education

Nahr ElBared camp relies on six schools provide educational services for the students, seven kindergartens, three elementary schools operating on two shifts but with no specific period designated for Palestinian students arriving from Syria; they are integrated within the Palestinians raised in Lebanon. Two intermediate schools, and one secondary school serving all the camp.

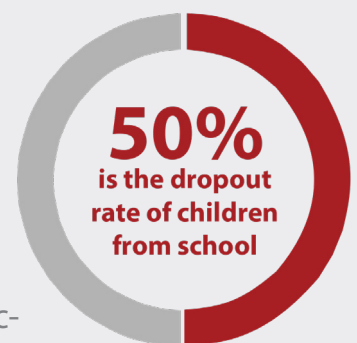
Education is a concrete challenge not only to refugees from Syria, but to the host community (Lebanese and Palestinian) living in Nahr ElBared camp. The over-crowded classrooms are the biggest challenge in this sector. UNRWA is responsible for education inside the camp, so enrolled students are of Palestinian nationality, whether they are from Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, or any other country. Additionally, Lebanese individuals with Palestinian mothers, benefit from the free education services provided by UNRWA. There are no private schools inside the camp; all schools belong to UNRWA, benefiting Palestinians (Syrian Palestinians, Lebanese Palestinians, Iraqi Palestinians, etc.). As for Syrian refugees, they benefit from educational services within private schools outside the camp, contracted with UNHCR. Notably, there are no expenses or yearly registration fees for children. The enrollment rate is 100% for elementary schools and for intermediate schools, while the enrollment rate for secondary schools is 80%. Students face several issues regarding their education due to overcrowded classes, refusal of registration due to the lack of personal papers the children and the teachers experiencing psychological pressures, the families are in need for financial assistance, early marriage, lack of inclusion for students with special needs. Therefore, education in the area needs support through providing financial aids for families to afford the school costs of their children, following up with dropout students and increasing educational support sessions.

The lack of access to education in the camp has far-reaching consequences for children, impacting various aspects of their lives. Beyond limiting personal and intellectual development opportunities, the lack of education leads to economic disadvantages, hindering the potential for secure and well-paying employment in the future. Moreover, the vulnerability to exploitation and various forms of abuse increases when children lack access to education.

Efforts to improve access to quality education are not only essential for individual development but also for the broader well-being and progress of the entire community. Support for education in the camp should include financial assistance for families to meet school expenses, proactive measures to prevent dropouts, and an expansion of educational support programs. Jafra objective is to grant children and young people the opportunity to receive quality education, enabling them to carve a path towards a brighter future. Education serves as a safeguard, empowering children and youth, as well as their families and communities, to rebound from crises and enhance their resilience.



*The Only Secondary School inside the Camp*



## Water and Sanitation

The water situation in Nahr ElBared Camp is considered good, however, there are specific areas in the Camp suffering from high salinity in the water supply. Residents in Nahr ElBared Camp receive their water supply through the UNRWA network, there are also houses with wells within the scope of the new camp. Concerning the daily use water, UNRWA supplies it to all sectors of the camp. However, drinkable water is purchased from private facilities within the camp, as the camp accommodates no less than 10 drinkable water companies.



There is an urgent need for interventions to address water network maintenance issues and ensure the provision and quality of water within areas suffering from water salinity. There are three artesian wells that are closed and require maintenance and cleaning to be able to supply residents in those areas with daily use water. After the 2007 war, and due to the deterioration of the infrastructure in the camp, some wells that supply the areas of Al-Abdeh and Al-Kornish, extending to the Cooperative area, were affected. Consequently, they began providing the camp with saline water. However, it is clean as it is subject to UNRWA's control in terms of monitoring and regular inspections

**3 wells require maintenance and cleaning to be able to provide drinkable water to the residents**

UNRWA works on monitoring all wells and public reservoirs that supply the camp in terms of maintenance and purification. The available daily use water in the camp is not suitable for drinking, therefore camp residents purchase water from water establishments, and not all residents can afford the cost of buying it.

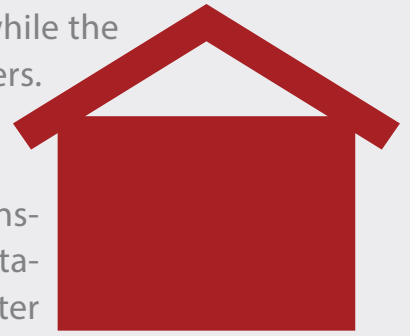
Waste collection services are regularly conducted by UNRWA staff in the camp but it is not sufficient due to the high population density. UNRWA oversees waste collection points. Residents of each neighborhood gather their waste at the entrance of the neighborhood (on the road), and in the morning, UNRWA collects the waste from these disposal points. There are no containers in the camp, so residents dispose of their waste on the roadside, causing harm to surrounding homes due to unpleasant odors, diseases, and epidemics. There is no mechanism for waste sorting in the camp. As for sanitation, UNRWA works on maintaining the sewage networks



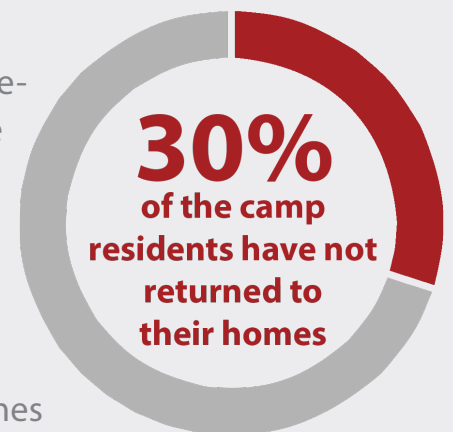
*Accumulated waste inside the Camp*

## Shelter and Infrastructure

The electricity in the Camp is only available for five hours daily, while the residents cover the remaining hours through electricity suppliers. Maintenance of the electrical networks is a priority due to the deterioration of the power supply lines, as the camp experiences prolonged power outages due to continuous damage to the transmission lines. As for water pumping, UNRWA operates water stations for 5 hours daily, responsible for all logistics to deliver water to branch networks. The electricity companies (Electricité du Liban and Qadisha Electricity) coordinate with Palestinian popular committees to maintain the networks belonging to the country. Regarding private generator networks, it is the responsibility of generator owners to maintain them.



Many families live in dire accommodation conditions which resulted from the delay in completing the reconstruction of the camp, as 30% of the camp residents have not returned to their homes and are renting inside the camp. Also, the distortion of residential spaces that have been reconstructed, not proportionate to the size of the families.



However, UNRWA recently worked on assisting those whose homes have not been reconstructed by providing them with \$50 monthly until they are able to return to their homes. As a result, the landlords of the rented houses increased the rent to \$50, whereas the rental cost in the camp used to range between \$20 and \$30. This adversely affected those who are not benefiting from the assistance, and they constitute the majority of the renters. During the registration process for families benefiting from the temporary rental assistance provided by UNRWA, 300 families have applied for assistance and have met all the eligibility criteria, except that they do not own a house in the camp before the year 2007, i.e., before Nahr ElBared War.

Prioritizing infrastructure maintenance is an essential proactive measure to prevent the deterioration of essential services, ensuring a sustainable living environment for the residents within the camp.



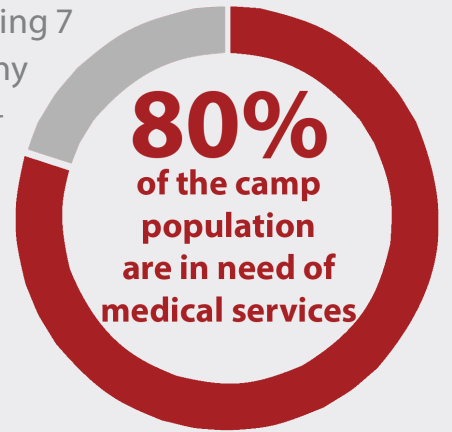
*Rooftop Gardening inside the Camps*

## Medical Services

There are no hospitals inside the camp, but there are three health centers serve residents with health care services, twenty clinics with different specializations (basic medical and dental care services), and four laboratories including one for UNRWA. There are ten pharmacies offering medicines for residents in the camp. The costs of medications vary depending on the patient's condition and the type of required medication.

The situation of health sector in Nahr ElBared camp is threatening where approximately the whole population are in urgent need for medical services including refugees who do not have income or have one breadwinner, or those who suffer from chronic and dangerous diseases, injuries or elderly, people with special needs, children, and fostering or pregnant mothers. Health and medical issues spread in the camp include chronic diseases and cancer

Urgent interventions are needed to support the health sector in the camp, there is an urgent need of a hospital, with the nearest hospital being 7 kilometers away from the camp. This has led to the death of many medical cases during their transfer outside the camp for treatment, especially those experiencing heart and brain attacks.

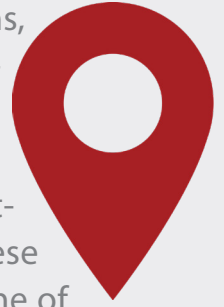


Limited medical services inside the Camp



## Localization

The camp includes various associations, scouts, alongside numerous clubs such as Sports club, social groups, and student associations. In addition to Palestinian factions, there are committees such as the Popular Committee and Security Committee. Also, the Palestinian Civil Defense, operates in the Nahr ElBared camp. The PCD is a local organization in which it provides first aid medical services through its First Aid Clinic as well as leads firefighting missions inside and outside of the camps. In the past, the PCD has provided assistance to the Lebanese Civil Defense in firefighting assignments across Lebanon and the PCD was one of the main organizations that managed the COVID-19 crisis in the Palestinian camps.



Given the pivotal role of the Palestinian Civil Defense within the Palestinian camps, Jafra is actively collaborating with the PCD to strengthen the skills and management capabilities of its staff. Jafra is committed to equipping PCD with the essential tools to navigate future financial challenges, fostering the sustainability of PCD as an autonomous entity capable of effectively meeting the diverse needs of the community. This strategic approach underscores the significance of transforming PCD into a sustainable business model. It is crucial to emphasize that the presence of PCD in the camp is indispensable, and Jafra engagement aims to fortify PCD's role in contributing to the well-being and development of the camp.

Moreover, Jafra embeds a holistic strategy of fostering localization and providing support to local community actors and institutions, enabling a more effective response to the specific needs of targeted camps. Jafra is committed to making long-term investments in the development of local leadership capable of addressing local issues and priorities through innovative solutions and programs. The overarching goal is to enhance localization for local civil society actors, fostering institutional and organizational growth and development, ultimately increasing their capacity to address the needs of affected populations.

Consequently, Jafra has established subcommittees at a camp level, with one dedicated to each camp. In Nahr ElBared camp, the subcommittee includes AlJaleel, Dinamo Akkar, Sawa, and Rouya that are convening monthly meetings. These meetings serve as platforms to comprehensively grasp localized concerns and gather community input on potential resolutions for these issues. Each year, the subcommittee alongside their team members attend tailored trainings aimed to enhance their capabilities, following the trainings, an initiative is implemented with an objective that solve key community grievances and empower marginalized men and women.

## Who We Are

Jafra Foundation for Relief and Youth Development is a non-governmental organization working to serve vulnerable groups in Palestinian refugee camps and gatherings in Syria and Lebanon. It was established in 2002 by the grass-roots efforts of young Palestinian in Yarmouk Camp – Damascus City.

### Check our platforms



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