

FACTSHEET / January - August 2025

## SHELTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

After years of living in unsafe and deteriorating conditions, Syrian refugee Mohammad and his family finally found relief when their home in Mount Lebanon was rehabilitated with UNHCR's support. The repairs provided them with secure doors, safer staircases, and functioning bathrooms—restoring not only the family's safety but also their dignity and sense of stability. © UNHCR/Houssam Hariri



### Why shelter?

The multiple crises facing Lebanon in recent years have severely undermined access to adequate, safe, and affordable housing. Vulnerable Lebanese and refugees alike face unprecedented challenges in securing shelter, with war, soaring rental prices, increasing eviction risks, and widespread deterioration of housing conditions.

According to the [Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon \(VASyR\) 2024](#), the average rent increased by 45 per cent in one year, reaching over LBP 8 million (USD 90 approximately) monthly, with the steepest increase observed in non-permanent shelters where costs surged by 242 per cent. Nearly half of refugee households (45 per cent) reported being late on rent, exposing them to heightened eviction risks. Shelter conditions remain dire: 52 per cent of Syrian refugee households live in overcrowded, substandard, or structurally unsafe shelters. Overcrowding is particularly acute in non-permanent shelters (28 per cent) and in governorates such as Baalbek-Hermel, Mount Lebanon, and Bekaa. Alarming, 19 per cent of households reside in shelters at risk of collapse, with the highest rates in South Lebanon (33 per cent) and Nabatiyeh (30 per cent). These conditions exacerbate health and protection risks, particularly during Lebanon's harsh winters, when families in informal tented settlements face recurrent flooding, snow accumulation, and fire hazards. For households unable to afford heating, exposure to cold significantly heightens vulnerabilities. In 2024, one third of households reported having no source of heating, with rates rising to 70 per cent in Beirut and 58 per cent in the North.

In 2025, UNHCR supported **60,752 refugees and 22,964 vulnerable Lebanese across all eight governorates** through different intervention in informal tented settlements (ITS), Urban-Peri-urban areas. The response also included assistance to **10,983 new arrivals**, ensuring that families recently displaced could access basic services.

## Shelter programmes

### IN INFORMAL TENTED SETTLEMENTS (ITS)

- **Weatherproofing and emergency assistance:** support to **7,529 refugee families** with shelter kits for reinforcement and winterization. Following technical assessments and a participatory approach, kits were tailored as Light, Medium, or Heavy, addressing specific repair and reinforcement needs in each targeted area.
- **Site improvements:** 44 sites upgraded to improve living conditions **among refugees** and reducing health and safety risks through flood risk reduction, settlement decongestion, levelling, and drainage enhancement where feasible for 946 refugee families.
- **Fire mitigation:** 526 fire extinguishers distributed with awareness sessions for community members conducted for **1,723 refugee families**. Fire risk in ITS and collective shelters remains a persistent and serious threat to life.

### ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2025



**43,427 refugees assisted**

28%

Target: 156K people



**6,003 refugees assisted**

86%

Target: 7K people



**13,213 refugees reached**

32%

Target: 41K families

## IN URBAN/PERI-URBAN AREAS

- **Rehabilitation of substandard shelters:** **564 refugee families and 11 Lebanese households** with upgraded shelters and secure tenure, through written lease agreements and one year of rent-free occupancy. Activities aimed to improve dignity, protection, and living conditions of highly vulnerable refugees residing in or moving into residential or non-residential substandard shelters.
- **Upgrades of common areas:** **31 refugee families** benefited from safer and more accessible shared facilities, including rehabilitated bathrooms, staircases, entrance doors, and roofs. Improvements to building vicinities also contributed to reducing social tensions with host communities.
- **Collective shelters:** **2,112 refugee families** benefited from the repair and weatherproofing work on government-approved collective shelter facilities, including the installation of partitions and light water access and sanitation repairs. This improved access to essential services while ensuring privacy and protection.



**2,736 people reached**  
**2,693 refugees & 43 Lebanese**

**45%**

**Target: 5k** Refugees & Lebanese



**220 refugees**

**44%**

**Target: 500 people**



**9,813 refugees assisted**

**+100% - Target: 7k people**

## EMERGENCY RESPONSE



*Amid displacement, UNHCR helped displaced women and children to find safety in a collective shelter. Adaptations and newly installed partitions restored their privacy and dignity, offering them a sense of security and hope within a safe space to rebuild their lives.*  
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Amid the escalation of hostilities in Lebanon in 2024, UNHCR rapidly adapted its shelter response to address urgent needs. Thanks to flexible funding and timely earmarked contributions from donors, in 2025 more than 23,000 people were assisted in urban and peri-urban areas through life-saving shelter interventions.

Support included Cash-for-Shelter for 10,782 displaced Lebanese and 463 Syrian refugees unable to safely return home, enabling them to cover urgent housing needs such as minor repairs and utility costs while residing in host or rental accommodations. 12,139 displaced Lebanese from 2,864 families returning to damaged homes received emergency shelter kits, allowing for quick repairs to mitigate protection risks and ensure weatherproofing.

In 2025, Cash-for-Shelter was discontinued due to funding cuts, leaving many vulnerable families without support to secure safe and dignified housing. The lack of resources also forced the phase-out of other critical activities, particularly those targeting Lebanese households affected by the war, such as the repair and adaptation of collective shelters and assistance for host communities. These cuts have not only limited UNHCR's ability to address urgent shelter needs but have also reduced the support extended to Lebanese families, further straining social cohesion at a time of heightened vulnerability.

**Shelter assistance remains a lifeline for refugees and vulnerable Lebanese alike.** From weatherproofing in informal settlements and site improvements that reduce flood and fire risks, to the rehabilitation of substandard homes, these interventions directly safeguard dignity, health, and protection. Yet, with more than half of refugee households still living in inadequate shelters, the gap between needs and available resources is widening. UNHCR calls on donors to sustain and expand their support for shelter activities in Lebanon. Flexible and timely funding is critical to ensure that families can live in safe and dignified conditions, mitigate protection and health risks, and strengthen social stability at a time when communities are under immense strain.

The Shelter Sector in Lebanon is led by UNHCR, in partnership with the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA), and brings together UN agencies, national and international NGOs, and local partners to ensure a coherent, principled, and efficient response. Coordination is conducted under the Lebanon Response Plan (LRP) framework and aligned with inter-agency mechanisms at both national and field levels.

UNHCR chairs the national Shelter Working Group and co-leads regional coordination platforms in Bekaa, North, South, and Mount Lebanon, ensuring that activities are harmonized across governorates. Regular coordination enables information-sharing, joint planning, and the development of technical guidance such as Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for shelter upgrades, weatherproofing, and site improvements.

The Shelter Sector also works closely with other sectors — including WASH, Protection, and Basic Assistance — to ensure integrated interventions in informal settlements, urban neighborhoods, and collective shelters. This joint approach enhances efficiency, reduces duplication, and promotes accountability to affected populations.

Given the fluid context, coordination efforts in 2025 have prioritized preparedness for emergencies, targeting of the most vulnerable, and advocacy for increased resources to sustain life-saving shelter interventions, amid decreasing funding.

## Impact of underfunding

UNHCR, together with the wider humanitarian community, is facing an unprecedented decline in funding in 2025. Uncertainty around funding flows and limited visibility on future projections are already forcing UNHCR Lebanon to make difficult decisions on the scope of its activities, with a focus on lifesaving and core mandate interventions. At the same time, in light of cross-border movements triggered by the conflict escalation and the fall of the Assad regime in 2024, UNHCR launched a nationwide presence verification exercise in 2025 as part of its population data management strategy. This effort aims to ensure accurate data for protection and assistance targeting within the new operational and funding landscape.

Despite the generous support of donors, UNHCR's response in Lebanon has been consistently underfunded. In 2025, the situation has worsened significantly: as of 31 August, only 26 per cent of the resources needed have been received.

The impact of funding cuts is severe. Thousands of vulnerable people who depend on cash assistance are no longer being supported, and essential activities linked to protection, return, and durable solutions are at risk.

- As of the end of August, UNHCR's Cash-for-Shelter programme has been fully discontinued following a 90% reduction in the number of people assisted since March. Coverage dropped from 95,000 to just 11,000 individuals, leaving around 83,000 vulnerable people without support after the first quarter of the year.
- Weatherproofing shelter kits, and site improvements were restricted to the most critical settlements, reducing overall 42,000 people will also no longer receive this assistance, a cut of 20%.
- Rehabilitation and repairs of substandard homes were limited to minimum standards and restricted to referred cases, resulting in a 17% reduction in planned targets from 6,081 people to 5,099. Area-based approaches were discontinued, reducing community-wide impact.
- Upgrades of common areas in collective shelters and residential buildings were narrowed to only the most critical sites linked to eviction risks or protection concerns with a reduction of 80%, reaching only 220 people from 1,100.
- Fire preparedness was curtailed as procurement of new fire extinguishers was halted. Only existing stocks are being distributed to the most congested sites, while awareness campaigns and fire barriers were scaled back.

UNHCR urgently appeals to the continued solidarity of the international community. Increased, timely, and flexible contributions are essential to sustain life-saving protection and assistance programmes, and to prevent further cuts that would place already vulnerable families in Lebanon at even greater risk.

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# Thank You!

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to shelter programmes such as the [European Union](#), [Italy](#), [Netherlands](#), [Republic of Korea](#), the [United States](#) and [UN Central Emergency Response Fund \(CERF\)](#) as well as major donors of earmarked and unearmarked funds.



## Other softly earmarked or unearmarked contributions:

Australia for UNHCR | España con ACNUR | Japan for UNHCR | Private donors in Italy | Private donors in the Republic of Korea | UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe | Other private donors

## CONTACTS:

Juliette Stevenson, External Relations Officer, [stevenson@unhcr.org](mailto:stevenson@unhcr.org)

Fabien Faivre, External Relations Officer, [faivre@unhcr.org](mailto:faivre@unhcr.org)