



Photo by Dominiek Benoot

profile: no.1 camp nablus governorate

Overview

Camp No. 1 was established in 1950 and borders the Nablus municipality. It was the first camp established in the Nablus area and was thus named Camp No. 1. Because the camp previously received water from a nearby spring, it is also known as Ein Beit el-Maor or 'Spring of the House of Water'.

The camp is located on the main road between Nablus and Tulkarm, a road that is often utilized by Israeli security forces (ISF). ISF incursions in the camp are not uncommon and frequently result in arrests, as well as damage to shelters. In 2014, one adult was killed in an ISF-related incident.

Camp No. 1 is today one of the smallest camps in the West Bank. However, with nearly 7,500 registered persons in the camp, Camp No. 1 is also the West Bank's most densely populated camp. Overcrowding has led to a lack of living and recreational space, which negatively affects residents' mental and physical health.

Camp No. 1 has a very active civil society with numerous community-based organizations (CBOs) in the camp.

UNRWA in No. 1 camp

General information

- **Established:** 1950
- **Size:** .045 sq km
- **Population before 1967 (OCHA):** 3,125
- **Estimated population (PCBS):** 4,600
- **Registered persons (UNRWA):** 7,500
- **Estimated density:** 166,666 per sq km
- **Places of origin:** Cities of Lydd, Jaffa, and Haifa, some are Bedouin origin

UNRWA in No. 1 camp

Main UNRWA installations:

- Two schools
- One health centre

UNRWA employees working in No. 1 camp:

- Education: 56
- Health: 25
- Relief and Social Services: 2
- Sanitation services: 7
- Administration: 2

Education

Two schools in Camp No. 1 – one for girls and one for boys – serve about 900 students. Facilities in the schools include libraries and computer and science laboratories. UNRWA psychosocial counselors are present in both schools. While remedial classes in Arabic and mathematics are offered on Saturdays, there is a lack of other after-school activities that would benefit the students and children.

Dropouts are a particular concern at the boys' school in Camp No. 1, with many students being affected by socioeconomic issues at home. Some students are forced to leave school in order to support their families. School faculty members work closely with psychosocial counsellors and parents to encourage these students to return to school.

Relief, Social Services and Emergency Response

UNRWA social workers conduct regular home visits in the camp to identify families requiring special assistance. Through the Social Safety Net Programme, UNRWA provides food parcels to approximately 590 impoverished refugees in the camp (approximately 8 percent of registered persons in the camp). Additionally, the Emergency Cash for Work Programme assists food insecure families by offering three-month work opportunities inside the camp. The family receives a cash subsidy in return for their work, helping them to meet their basic food needs. The projects are designed to benefit the camp community as a whole, such as the rehabilitation of community centres or the construction of sidewalks.



Photo by Dominiek Benoot

Health

The UNRWA health centre in Camp No. 1 provides primary health care, including reproductive health, infant and child care, immunizations, screening and medical check-ups, and treatment of communicable and non-communicable diseases. The centre also has access to an x-ray machine. Psychosocial counselling and family and child protection are also available at the health centre, while a dentist is available three times per week. Physiotherapy is not available in the health centre, and residents must travel to Balata camp to access this service.

The centre recently implemented the Family Health Team approach. This new approach focuses on the family with the aim of providing comprehensive, continuous care. The Family Health Team has improved patient flow and reduced the number of consultations that doctors perform, though this number remains high. An electronic health information system for patient files has also been implemented. This system increases the accuracy of data and health information, as well as health service efficiency in the centre.

Because the health centre in Camp No. 1 was built in the mid-1990s and serves both camp residents and refugees from nearby neighbourhoods in the Nablus municipality, it has been prioritized for reconstruction. The centre lacks adequate space to effectively implement the Family Health Team approach, is frequently overcrowded, and offers neither privacy nor confidentiality to patients.

Environmental Health

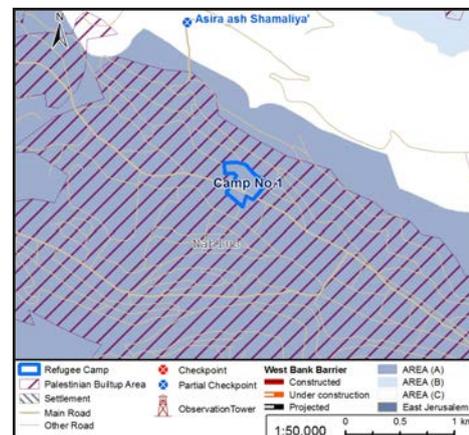
The UNRWA sanitation foreman conducts daily water examinations and manages the team of sanitation workers. Six sanitation workers collect solid waste from shelters and streets five days per week. The waste is transported by the Nablus municipality to al-Sierafi Collection point, east to Nablus City, and then to the Zahrit al-Finjan Landfill. The UNRWA sanitation team also maintains the sewerage network in the camp.

Access to water for many camp residents remains problematic. Many residents are not connected to the water network and depend on potable water. Although water is delivered to the camp three days per week by the Nablus municipality, shortages are common in the summer months.

Main Challenges

Unemployment

Many Camp No. 1 residents previously depended on Israel for employment opportunities. The current permit regime and access restrictions imposed by Israel on Palestinians have severely affected socioeconomic conditions in the camp. Unemployment and food insecurity remain high, even among the better educated, with many no longer viewing a university education as a means to employment.



Overcrowding

Overcrowding is among the most serious problems in Camp No. 1. Given the limited land available in the camp, as well as the increasing population over the years, residents have had to build upwards to accommodate the growing population. Overcrowding has also contributed to poor infrastructure and a lack of living space and privacy for families, while the lack of recreational spaces means that children often play in the narrow streets. These difficulties add to the mental and physical strain experienced by camp residents.

Shelter and infrastructure

The lack of living space in camps has meant that construction has increasingly encroached onto streets and open spaces. Many shelters in Camp No. 1 have more than four floors and are built on foundations that were originally meant to support no more than two stories. These shelters are often structurally unsound. Many shelters are also in poor shape, having deteriorated over the years, and are now subject to poor ventilation, humidity, overcrowding and a lack of privacy for family members. In recent years, UNRWA has rehabilitated 26 shelters in Camp No. 1.

Spotlight: Shelter rehabilitation in Camp No. 1

Adequate housing was recognized as part of the right to an adequate standard of living in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Other international human rights treaties have since recognized or referred to the right to adequate housing. UNRWA considers the provision of adequate shelter to be a fundamental right and need of Palestine refugees, and a core UNRWA goal is ensuring the most vulnerable are assisted with securing adequate living conditions.

In 2012, UNRWA received funds from the Saudi Fund for Development to rehabilitate or construct shelters in the West Bank. By the end of 2014, the programme had worked in 13 camps to rehabilitate 750 shelters and reconstruct an additional 135 shelters. Camp No. 1 was allocated US\$ 54,000, which allowed for the rehabilitation of seven shelters. Most new shelters consist of two bedrooms, a kitchen and a bathroom. Shelters chosen for the project were selected on the basis of need, a process that involves the camp service officers, UNRWA engineers and social workers.



Photo by Kelly McDermott

“I still believe education has value.”

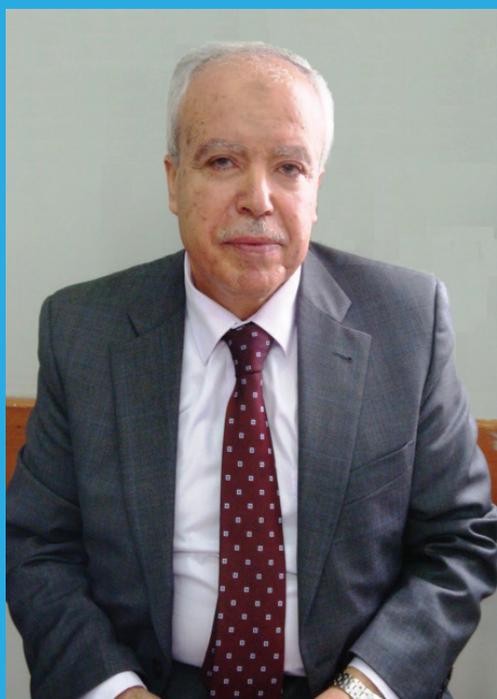


Photo by Kelly McDermott

At 60 years of age, Muhammad Abdullah Nour has accomplished much in life. He holds a PhD in organic chemistry from the State University of New York, and currently has full professorship status at An-Najah University. Muhammad, however, is not simply an academic scholar. He is also a refugee, born in Nablus and raised in Camp No. 1.

“It was a difficult life here,” says Muhammad as he gazes out of the window at the streets of Camp No. 1. “My mother and father had very little in terms of education. We were a big family. There were six of us kids – three girls and three boys.” He relates the difficulties caused by eight people living in a shelter that had only two rooms. “There were many hard times,” he says, “but we were very happy.” He describes the camp community as familial, with helpful and friendly neighbours. “Everything is different now,” he says, and for this, he blames the continued occupation.

Muhammad says he owes his academic ambitions to his family. He attended elementary and preparatory school in the UNRWA Camp No. 1 Boys’ School. Immediately after graduating from the ninth grade, Muhammad moved to Iraq to pursue his academic goals at Mosul University. “My father saved enough money to ensure that I could attend university,” he says. “I wanted to study engineering, but I didn’t have the right connections, so I decided to study organic chemistry.” The decision stuck, and after achieving high marks for his Bachelor’s degree, Muhammad was awarded a scholarship to continue his studies at Mosul University, where he ultimately graduated with a Master’s degree in organic chemistry.

Muhammad returned to the West Bank, where he taught at An-Najah University for a number of years. He then travelled to Buffalo, New York, where he received a PhD in organic chemistry. Muhammad was also a Fulbright Scholar in 1998 and produced extensive research on cancer cells. He returned to the West Bank again in 2012 and received full professorship status at An-Najah University. He is currently on sabbatical at the Arab American University in Jenin, where he teaches organic chemistry and organic synthesis.

Recent times, however, have not boded well for young university graduates in the West Bank. “Most university graduates here are jobless,” says Muhammad. He explains the limited opportunities for work in the West Bank, and the even fewer opportunities in the Israeli labour market, as few West Bank university graduates are able to obtain work permits. “It wasn’t like this when I was young,” he says. Despite the troublesome lack of job opportunities, Muhammad maintains that education is vital to success. “I still believe education has value,” he assures us. When we ask what stands in the way of employment opportunities and prosperity, Muhammad lowers his eyes. “We need peace in order for the job market to change,” he says. “No new opportunities will come from this unrest. Peace is still missing.”

General Overview West Bank Refugee Camps

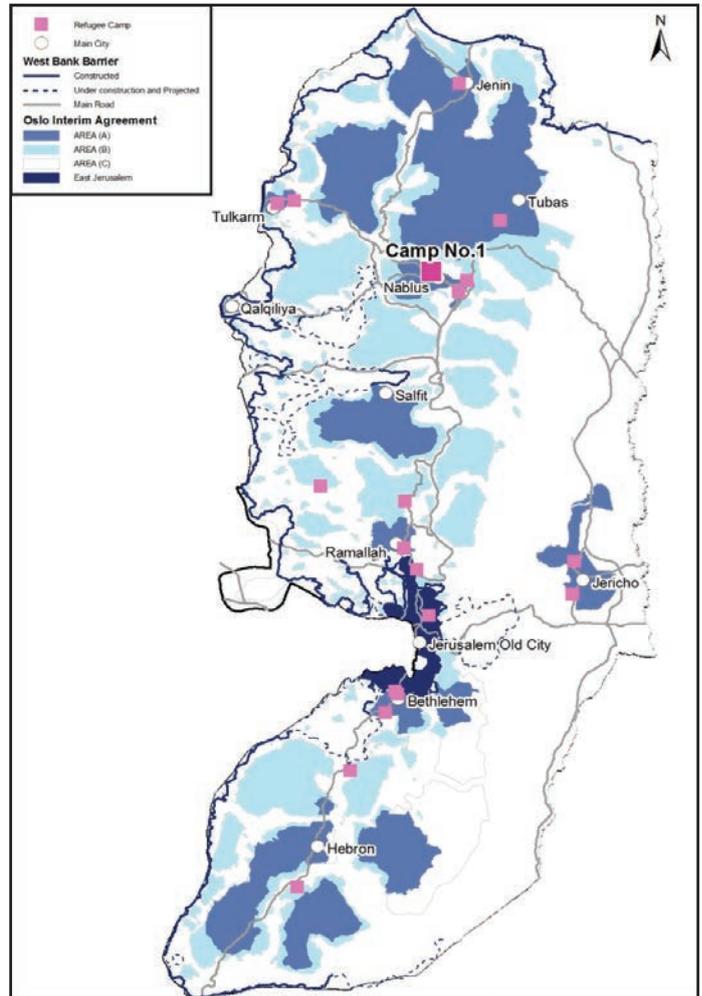
Who is a Palestine Refugee?

A Palestine refugee is defined as any person whose normal place of residence was Palestine during the period from 1 June 1946 to 15 May 1948, and who lost both home and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 conflict. The descendants of Palestine refugee males, as well as legally adopted children, are also eligible to register as refugees.

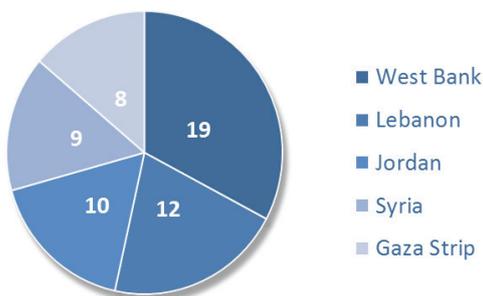
Palestine Refugee Camps

There are 58 Palestine refugee camps located in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Gaza and the West Bank. The camps were first established as temporary tented cities for Palestine refugees who fled their homes during the 1948 conflict. For more than 60 years, this unresolved situation has challenged the camps and its residents.

The 19 Palestine refugee camps throughout the West Bank have since developed into urban areas home to more than 200,000 people (almost a quarter of the total registered persons with UNRWA), with the population in each camp varying from 2,500 to 27,000. The camps face challenges related to overcrowding, poor infrastructure, high levels of unemployment, food insecurity, and protection issues.

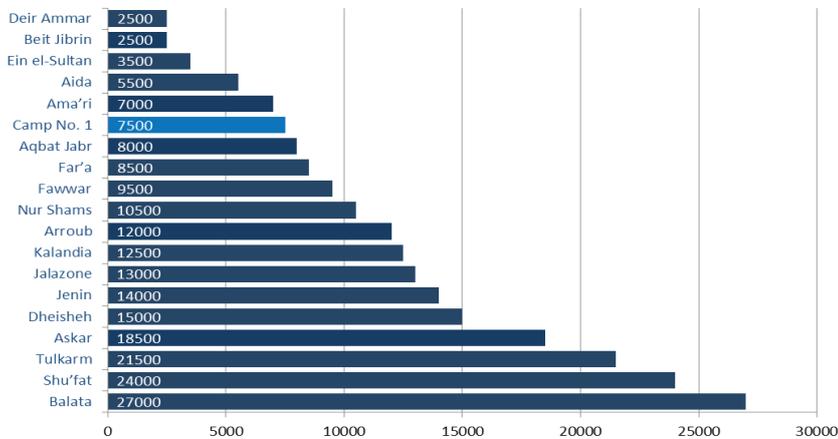


Number of UNRWA Refugee Camps per Field

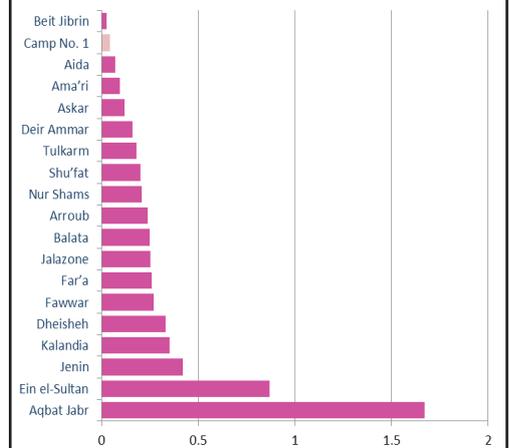


West Bank Refugee Camps
Estimated populations

Total population West Bank camps: 222,500



West Bank Refugee Camps
Camp surface in square kilometer



united nations relief and works agency
for palestine refugees in the near east

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UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and is mandated to provide assistance and protection to a population of registered Palestine refugees. Its mission is to help Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank and the Gaza Strip to achieve their full potential in human development, pending a just solution to their plight. UNRWA's services encompass education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, microfinance and emergency assistance. UNRWA is funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions.