



Ignored, Displaced and Powerless: Lebanon's IDPs Caught Between Escalating Hostilities and Government Neglect

The article unpacks Lebanon's ongoing internal displacement crisis in light of the recent major escalation of hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah since September 2024. It highlights the severe humanitarian challenges faced by displaced Lebanese citizens, Syrian refugees, and Palestinian refugees. The government's strategic disengagement from formally recognizing internally displaced persons (IDPs) has left displaced populations without access to essential protections and services. The lack of formal IDP status and the overwhelmed humanitarian response have compounded the crisis, with many displaced individuals relying on under-resourced NGOs. The article emphasises the long-term socio-economic, psychological, and infrastructural impacts of displacement on Lebanon's vulnerable communities, warning that without government intervention, the crisis risks perpetuating instability and marginalisation for both the displaced populations and the country.

Published on 10 October 2024

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Introduction

The dramatic escalation of hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah in [September 2024](#) has unleashed a profound humanitarian disaster in Lebanon, exacerbating the country's [already fragile](#) social, political, and economic conditions. Following decades of periodic border hostilities, the most recent conflict began with Hezbollah joining attacks against Israel on

October 8, 2023 and quickly morphed into daily tit-for-tat skirmishes [on the border](#). By November 2023, there were approximately [100,000 IDPs](#) from South Lebanon. Hostilities slowly escalated but dramatically increased on September 17, 2024 when pagers that formed the core of Hezbollah's communications network exploded, [killing over 40](#), wounding thousands, and terrorising populations in regions that had a significant Hezbollah presence, namely South Lebanon, parts of the Beqaa, and Dahiyeh (the southern suburbs of Beirut). This attack was followed the next day by the remote explosion of Hezbollah [walkie-talkies](#), leading to panic and wide scale movement from the affected regions.

Two days later, Israel started launching massive attacks in Dahiyeh, expanding far beyond southern Lebanon and specific sites in the Beqaa. With Israel launching intensified [military operations](#), including airstrikes, artillery shelling, and missile bombardments targeting both Hezbollah strongholds and civilian areas across southern Lebanon, the Bekaa and areas of Beirut, the fallout has been catastrophic. As of October 4, [over one million people](#), including Lebanese citizens, Syrian refugees, and Palestinian refugees, have been [forced to flee](#) their homes, seeking [shelter](#) in overcrowded and under-resourced areas farther north. The sheer scale of the displacement, occurring in such a short period of time, has [stretched](#) Lebanon's capacity to respond to its limits, leaving many without adequate shelter, food, water, or medical care.

This wave of internal displacement has hit some of the most vulnerable regions of the country—areas like Tyre, Nabatieh, and Saida, which have historically been [neglected](#) by the central government and have long suffered from economic deprivation, underdevelopment, and inadequate infrastructure. The conflict has not only devastated homes and livelihoods but has also [cut off](#) entire communities from access to clean water, medical supplies, and basic sanitation. As a result, many displaced families are now living in [collective shelters](#), such as schools and public buildings, where conditions are deteriorating rapidly due to overcrowding and lack of resources.

Lebanese citizens, who make up [the bulk](#) of the newly displaced population, are not the only ones impacted. The displacement crisis has also hit [Syrian](#) and [Palestinian](#) refugees, many of whom were already

living in precarious conditions in camps or informal settlements before the escalation. Now, these communities face the impossible choice of fleeing further within Lebanon, where [anti-refugee sentiment](#) is rising, or risking return to Syria, a country [still reeling](#) from its own civil war, with [reports](#) of torture, enforced disappearances, and military conscription awaiting those who go back. Meanwhile, Palestinian refugees, especially those living in camps like [Ein el-Hilweh](#), which have been sites of recent violent clashes between Palestinian factions, are again being uprooted, their fragile existence further destabilised by the violence at Lebanon's southern border.

The displacement crisis is compounded by Lebanon's [socioeconomic collapse](#). Since fall 2019, the country has been grappling with an economic crisis that has caused widespread [poverty](#), [hyperinflation](#), and the near [collapse](#) of public services. This pre-existing situation has left the government virtually [incapable](#) (and unwilling) of managing the influx of displaced people or delivering the basic humanitarian aid needed to sustain them. Government institutions, already paralyzed by political deadlock and underfunded due to the economic meltdown, have struggled to organise a [coherent response](#), though this may be interpreted as a deliberate disengagement with the displacement question entirely. While Lebanon's [National Emergency Plan](#) outlines steps to shelter and support displaced populations, its implementation has been slow and largely ineffective due to lack of funding, coordination, and leadership.

At the same time, humanitarian organisations are facing immense difficulties as they attempt to provide relief to those affected. Organisations such as [UNRWA](#), [UNICEF](#), and [Save the Children](#) have been quick to mobilise emergency aid, distributing hygiene kits, food parcels, water, and blankets, but the scale of the crisis far exceeds their capacity to respond. Funding shortfalls, logistical challenges, and the overwhelming number of displaced people have severely hampered [relief efforts](#) and coordinated responses. With public [schools](#) converted into shelters, the education system has also ground to [a halt](#), further disrupting the lives of displaced children, many of whom are already showing signs of severe [psychological distress](#) due to the violence and upheaval. The divides between wealthy private schools, which have

rapidly moved to online education, the increasing majority of less-resourced private schools, and already severely underfunded public schools is widening quickly and may become [a flashpoint](#).

At the time of writing, national authorities had reported that the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Lebanon has surpassed [1 million](#), with [250,000](#) of them seeking refuge in shelters – though official numbers are lacking. This ongoing displacement crisis is not only a test of Lebanon’s already crumbling infrastructure but also raises significant concerns about the broader humanitarian impact on the country’s population. The situation is pushing Lebanon closer to the brink of total collapse, with public [health risks](#) rising, [food insecurity](#) growing, and [social tensions](#) escalating as the strain on resources worsens. If the armed conflict between Hezbollah and Israel continues to escalate, there is a very real risk that Lebanon’s already dire situation could spiral into a full-blown [humanitarian catastrophe](#), with devastating long-term consequences for its people, including further protracted displacement, increased poverty, and continued instability in the region.

A Surge in Displacement

The escalation of violence between Israel and Hezbollah in late September 2024 has triggered an unprecedented surge in displacement across Lebanon, with civilians fleeing their homes in massive numbers. In just a few days, anywhere between [100,000](#) and [400,000](#) people were reportedly forced to evacuate southern Lebanon alone, alongside thousands more from conflict-affected areas around Beirut and the Bekaa, marking the largest internal displacement crisis in Lebanon since [the 2006 war](#). This recent wave of displacement comes on the heels of nearly a year of cross-border hostilities that began in October 2023, bringing the total number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Lebanon to [500,000](#) by 25 September —representing nearly ten percent of the country’s population. Of these, [175,000](#) were children.

The scale and speed of the displacement have overwhelmed Lebanon's already fragile infrastructure and limited resources. Entire towns and villages near the Israeli border have been [evacuated](#), with thousands of families making desperate journeys northward to safer areas in Beirut, Mount Lebanon, and the Bekaa Valley. The Lebanese government's

inability and unwillingness to support escalating humanitarian needs has largely led NGOs and international organisations to take the lead in managing the crisis. Only as of early October did the [caretaker Lebanese Cabinet decide](#) that “all aid in response to the escalation of Israel's war will be funneled transparently through the United Nations, in coordination with Lebanese ministries.” It is hoped that this will allow for better sharing of information—including accurate numbers on and more details about the displaced, as to date there is no centralized data gathering mechanism.

While national authorities estimate the displaced population to number over one million, estimates from the UN and respected NGOs are much less reflecting the lack of accurate data in the midst of a rapidly accelerating displacement event. According to the International Organization for Migration’s [\(IOM\) Displacement Tracking Matrix](#), there are over 520,000 IDPs, with more than 162,000 IDPs currently being housed in 797 collective shelters, primarily public schools, spread across Beirut and Mount Lebanon governorates. According to Save the Children, the decision to repurpose schools as shelters has had a significant impact on Lebanon’s already weakened education system, leaving an estimated [1.5 million children](#) without access to schooling for the foreseeable future. The Ministry of Education and Higher Education postponed the start of the school year and closed down universities until [November 4](#), though it remains uncertain when, or if, schools will be able to resume normal operations.

The conditions inside these shelters are deteriorating rapidly due to severe [overcrowding](#) and lack of basic amenities. Families often find themselves crammed into classrooms, hallways, and gymnasiums with limited access to sanitation facilities, clean water, or medical services. Humanitarian organisations have described [chaotic scenes](#) in some shelters, where displaced families are struggling to find space and volunteers are scrambling to provide essential items like mattresses, blankets, pillows, and water. As the armed conflict expands, the displacement crisis is [not limited](#) to the southern regions of Lebanon. As Israeli airstrikes expand into previously unaffected areas such as the Bekaa Valley and the northern suburbs of Beirut, tens of thousands of

residents in these regions have also fled, exacerbating the strain on shelters and aid distribution networks.

As is often the case with Lebanon's weak and strategically disengaged state, internally displaced persons and families have sought to meet their own needs through renting properties in 'safer' areas to the north and east of Beirut and in the Metn, Keserouan, and Koura regions. While some property owners have been welcoming and made apartments available for rent, others have engaged in [price gouging](#). Where rental units have been unavailable or too costly, some displaced people have resorted to accessing [vacant](#) apartments and buildings. With the massive Israeli bombing campaigns starting Friday, September 27, thousands of displaced have [streamed onto the streets](#) of Beirut and other regions, having no direction regarding where they can find refuge and support. That same evening, thousands of people reportedly lined Beirut's public beach, [Ramlet al Baida](#), sleeping or sitting on mats, cardboard, and blankets. Many had first fled South Lebanon, then Dahiyeh after massive bombings and targeted political assassinations.

Further complicating the situation is the fragile state of Lebanon's [healthcare system](#), which is already under immense strain due to the economic crisis and previous conflicts. According to the Ministry of Public Health, [32 Primary Health Care Centres](#) (PHCCs) have been forced to close due to their location in high-risk areas, leaving tens of thousands of people without access to vital medical services. Additionally, UNICEF reports that [11 satellite PHCC](#) units have had their operations disrupted by airstrikes, particularly in Nabatieh and the Baalbek-Hermel Governorates. Efforts to provide healthcare to the displaced are further hampered by [shortages](#) of medical supplies and the closure of key health facilities, with UN agencies stepping in to deliver emergency health kits and resuscitation equipment to support hospitals dealing with mass casualties.

The surge in displacement is not only a result of physical destruction but also the psychological and emotional toll the conflict is taking on civilians. Many residents of southern Lebanon have [vivid memories](#) of the 2006 war between Hezbollah and Israel, and the current violence is reigniting those traumas, prompting people to flee at the first sign of danger. The situation

is particularly acute in villages near the Israeli border, where the fear of airstrikes and shelling has caused entire communities to evacuate, leaving behind homes, businesses, and farmland that sustain their livelihoods—land that has been the target of [white phosphorus](#) attacks by Israel for over a year now. This mass exodus is creating a ripple effect, with displaced people pouring into regions that are already economically depressed and struggling to accommodate them.

In response to the unfolding crisis, the Lebanese government has been slow to react. Although Prime Minister Najib Mikati and the Lebanese Armed Forces have [reiterated](#) that Lebanon “does not want to enter the war,” the reported “[National Emergency Plan](#),” designed to address the needs of displaced populations, has been hampered by funding shortfalls, an overwhelming lack of political will, and the well-known and enduring poor coordination between government agencies. [Municipalities](#) in the south have been left to manage much of the crisis on their own, relying heavily on support from NGOs and international organisations to provide shelter, food, and medical care.

The Long-term Implications of Lebanon’s IDP Crisis

The ongoing conflict between Israel and Hezbollah has rapidly escalated into the largest internal displacement crisis Lebanon has faced since the [2006 war](#). However, the current displacement crisis, involving Lebanese citizens, Syrian refugees, and Palestinian refugees, is distinct in both its scale and the profound long-term implications it carries for these populations. The majority of those displaced are from villages along the [Blue Line](#), Lebanon’s southern border with Israel, where destruction has been widespread and fear of further attacks remains constant. Villages like Dahayrah, located just a few hundred metres from the border, have been [nearly emptied](#) multiple times, while in Rmeich, over [60 percent](#) of the population fled early on in the conflict.

The immediate focus has been on providing emergency humanitarian response — food, water, and shelter — but the long-term consequences of this mass displacement, especially for vulnerable groups like Syrian and Palestinian refugees, are yet to be addressed. While the immediate focus remains on humanitarian needs, the longer-term and intergenerational impacts of this displacement are yet to unfold. Displacement not only

uproots people from their homes but disrupts their [entire social fabric](#), economic livelihoods, and access to education and healthcare. Southern Lebanon has long been a [region of neglect](#) and underdevelopment, and this new wave of displacement is hitting already vulnerable communities the hardest. Many of those fleeing the violence were already living in poverty or close to the poverty line, relying heavily on [remittances](#) from family members abroad. The conflict has [destroyed](#) homes, farms, and small businesses, leaving families with little hope of rebuilding their lives in the near future. The ripple effects of this mass exodus are being felt across the country, with displaced families competing for limited resources in areas that are themselves struggling economically.

Moreover, the displacement crisis has severe implications for Lebanon's already crumbling infrastructure and public services. In addition to the [economic devastation](#), there are growing concerns about the [social tensions](#) that will inevitably arise between displaced populations and host communities, particularly as both groups compete for increasingly scarce resources such as water, food, and shelter. This is particularly true now in [hosting regions](#) where residents harbour "deep resentment" towards Hezbollah.

The intersectional nature of this crisis — encompassing Lebanese citizens, Syrian refugees, and Palestinian refugees — makes it all the more complex. [Syrian](#) and [Palestinian](#) refugees, many of whom had already been displaced multiple times, are now forced to navigate a new wave of upheaval, compounding their vulnerabilities. Palestinian refugees, for example, already face significant [legal restrictions](#) and are confined to overcrowded camps with poor infrastructure. Syrian refugees, meanwhile, must contend with rising [anti-refugee sentiment](#) and discriminatory policies that limit their access to shelter and aid. Despite their distinct backgrounds, these communities share a common experience of being [excluded](#) from the protections typically afforded to displaced populations, with their long-term prospects remaining bleak.

Amidst the focus on immediate humanitarian response and protection efforts, there has been little or no public conversation about the long-term and intersecting challenges faced by the displaced populations. There has been little consideration of how factors such as age, gender,

ability, and socioeconomic status compound the hardships experienced by Lebanese IDPs, Syrian refugees, and Palestinian refugees alike. Displaced women and girls, for example, face [heightened risks](#) of gender-based violence and exploitation, while children — many of whom are already showing signs of severe [psychological distress](#) — are losing access to education and long-term developmental opportunities. [Elderly](#) and [differently-abled](#) individuals, too, are often overlooked in emergency responses, left without adequate medical care or mobility support. The economic divide also plays a critical role, as those from poorer communities were already on the [brink of survival](#) before the conflict, and now find themselves disproportionately affected by displacement. The lack of tailored responses for these different groups highlights a major gap in the current humanitarian strategy as we continue to focus on broad, short-term solutions rather than addressing the specific, intersecting needs of the most vulnerable. We have not even begun to scratch the surface of how these vulnerabilities will shape the long-term recovery of displaced individuals and communities, as the focus remains primarily on immediate survival.

The Blurring Lines between ‘Refugee’ and ‘IDP’

The escalation of conflict between Israel and Hezbollah continues to have profound impacts on [Syrian](#) and [Palestinian](#) refugees in Lebanon. For these communities, already living in precarious conditions, the current crisis marks yet [another chapter](#) of displacement and uncertainty, compounding years of hardship and trauma. Many of these refugees, who originally fled violence in their home countries, now find themselves uprooted again, forced to navigate a conflict that has engulfed Lebanon. The situation highlights the intersecting vulnerabilities of refugees, who must contend with both the immediate dangers of war and the ongoing challenges of discrimination, lack of resources, and limited protection.

For Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, the recent violence is a grim reminder of the longstanding instability and precariousness of their situation. Lebanon hosts around [250,000 to 300,000](#) Palestinians, most of whom live in overcrowded and under-resourced refugee camps that have long been the focal point of tension, poverty, and violence. In addition, Lebanon is home to approximately [32,000](#) Palestinians from Syria, who

fled the Syrian civil war and settled in Palestinian camps or informal settlements across the country. These refugees, some of whom have been displaced multiple times over the decades, are now facing a new wave of uncertainty.

The situation in Ein el-Hilweh, the largest and most densely populated Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon, is especially dire. Home to around [80,000 residents](#), the camp has been the site of recent [violent clashes](#) between Palestinian factions, which displaced thousands of residents even before the latest round of Israel-Hezbollah hostilities. The camp's infrastructure is severely underdeveloped, with inadequate housing, insufficient sanitation, and limited access to healthcare, making it highly vulnerable to external shocks such as war and displacement. As Israeli airstrikes continue to target southern Lebanon, including areas near Saida (where Ein el-Hilweh is located), many camp residents are [once again](#) fleeing, unsure of when — or if — they will be able to return.

[Reports](#) indicate that Palestinians from the Tyre and Saida regions, including Adloun, Ansariya, Zahriya, and Nabatiye, have been forced to leave their homes due to the escalation of hostilities. Many have sought refuge in other Palestinian camps, moving to Burj Shemali, Rashidieh, and El-Buss in Tyre, while others are staying with relatives or in makeshift shelters. UNRWA has mobilised to provide emergency shelters for those displaced. As of late September, UNRWA had opened shelters in Toubas School in the Nahr el-Bared camp (northern Lebanon), Siblin Training Centre in Saida, and Nablus School in Saida city to accommodate displaced Palestinians, Lebanese, and Syrian refugees. However, the shelters are already overcrowded, and UNRWA expects the number of displaced Palestinians to double in the coming weeks as the conflict intensifies.

The situation for Syrian refugees in Lebanon is equally grim. Lebanon [hosts](#) around 1.5 million Syrian refugees, of whom 815,000 are registered with the UNHCR. These refugees, who fled the Syrian civil war, now find themselves trapped in a country that is once again teetering on the [edge of war](#). For many, this is a tragic repetition of their original displacement, with bombings, military operations, and displacement becoming all too familiar. The prospect of being caught in another conflict has left many

Syrian refugees contemplating impossible choices: staying in Lebanon and enduring further violence or [risking a return](#) to an anarchic Syria.

The option of returning to Syria is [fraught with dangers](#). The country remains unsafe for many refugees, especially those who have fled government-controlled areas. [Reports](#) of arbitrary detention, torture, and extrajudicial killings continue to emerge, particularly for Syrians perceived as dissenters, former opposition members, or those with affiliations to anti-government groups. For sexual and gender minorities, human rights activists, and individuals critical of the Assad regime, Syria [remains a hostile](#) environment. In addition, the lack of documentation, such as passports or official papers, makes returning to Syria even more dangerous as refugees risk being [detained](#) at the border or inside the country.

Faced with these threats, many Syrian refugees are reluctant to return, but their situation in Lebanon is becoming increasingly untenable. [Anti-refugee sentiment](#) has been on the rise in Lebanon, with Syrian refugees often scapegoated for the country's economic collapse and political dysfunction. In recent years, the Lebanese government has implemented restrictive policies toward Syrian refugees, including forced [deportations](#), [curfews](#), [expulsions](#) and the [demolition](#) of informal settlements. As the conflict with Israel intensifies, these tensions have only grown. Reports indicate that Syrian refugees have been [rejected](#) from shelters across the country. Many Syrians are opting to stay in makeshift camps or with relatives in overcrowded housing, further exacerbating their precarious living conditions. Even in environments where anti-Syrian sentiment is not endemic, [increasing competition](#) for limited resources makes for a volatile situation.

Most recently, almost a quarter of a million Lebanese and Syrians have [fled into Syria](#) to escape the escalating violence, many waiting for hours in traffic or being processed at overcrowded border crossings. The situation is a reversal of fortunes as Lebanon still hosts over one million Syrian refugees who had fled their country's civil war. Now, Lebanese and returning Syrians are seeking safety in Syria, a country [still grappling](#) with its own economic collapse and ongoing conflict. [UNHCR](#) and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent have been coordinating relief efforts, but the long-

term prospects for these displaced populations remain uncertain, especially as Syria struggles with its own humanitarian challenges.

This new wave of displacement underscores the cyclical nature of the displacement crises in the region, where refugees and host communities frequently exchange roles as conflicts erupt. The flow of people from Lebanon into Syria highlights the desperation of those seeking refuge and the fragile state of regional stability, with few options for long-term safety and security. The reliance on Syria as a refuge also raises questions about the adequacy of international support and the capacity of both Lebanon and Syria to manage the compounding humanitarian crises.

Discussion and Conclusion: Lebanon's Strategic Disengagement from Displacement

Lebanon's long-standing approach to internal displacement, particularly during times of armed conflict, has been one of strategic disengagement, reflecting a calculated avoidance of formal recognition and responsibility toward displaced populations. Indeed, we wrote about this tendency at the beginning of the current crisis in [November 2023](#), when the numbers of IDPs were approximately 100,000 and the fighting between Israel and Hezbollah was confined to the border region between Lebanon and Israel. This [strategy](#) has profound implications for the Lebanese state's capacity to protect and support its citizens, especially those displaced by the ongoing Israel-Hezbollah conflict.

Historically, Lebanon's government has adopted a posture of non-engagement when it comes to formally recognizing IDPs, preferring to frame the conflict in a manner that sidesteps its legal and moral obligations to provide protection and aid. This refusal to acknowledge IDP status is deeply rooted in Lebanon's political culture, where displacement is either minimised or ignored as part of a broader strategy to reduce government intervention and accountability. By not officially designating individuals displaced by conflict as IDPs, the government avoids the international obligations and responsibilities associated with such recognition, effectively deferring the entire displacement question to international organisations and local humanitarian actors.

This strategic indifference not only leaves displaced Lebanese citizens in a state of legal limbo but also exacerbates the challenges they face in securing basic needs, such as shelter, healthcare, and security. Without formal IDP status, displaced individuals cannot access the full range of protections guaranteed under international law, including the [Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement](#), which emphasise the responsibility of national governments to prevent displacement and protect those who are forcibly uprooted.

For many displaced persons in South Lebanon, the government's reluctance to engage with the displacement question creates a vicious cycle of neglect. Displaced individuals, accustomed to the lack of state intervention, often rely on informal networks and community support for their survival. This has led to a normalisation of displacement, particularly in regions like South Lebanon that have [historically](#) borne the brunt of Israeli hostilities. As a result, many displaced people we speak to in our work do not “self-identify” as IDPs, not because they do not meet the criteria but because the government has effectively erased this category from its response framework. This dynamic perpetuates a sense of invisibility among displaced populations and entrenches their marginalisation.

Lebanon's disengagement from the IDP issue also reflects a broader policy of [selective engagement](#) with conflicts that involve Hezbollah. The government's official [stance](#) that “Lebanon does not want a war” serves as a rhetorical tool to distance itself from the hostilities in the south, allowing it to sidestep the need to take full responsibility for the consequences of the conflict. This non-engagement narrative not only obscures the reality of the situation for thousands of displaced Lebanese but also allows the government to avoid taking the political and financial steps necessary to address the humanitarian crisis unfolding within its borders. In many ways, this is indicative of a choice of much of the political class to refuse any culpability for their refusal to elect a President and for election postponements.

Furthermore, the government's disengagement complicates the efforts of humanitarian organisations operating in Lebanon. Without formal acknowledgment of the displaced, organisations such as IOM, UNHCR,

UNRWA, and international and local NGOs are left to fill the void, providing essential services and protection to those affected by the conflict. However, the absence of government coordination and the lack of a national displacement policy significantly hinders these efforts, leading to fragmented responses and gaps in protection. It remains to be seen whether the caretaker Lebanese Cabinet's decision to let the UN lead in coordinating the response to the displacement crisis will significantly improve the situation, given the lack of government will.

The long-term and intergenerational impacts of this mass internal displacement, including the psychological, social, and economic toll, have yet to be fully examined. As the immediate focus remains on providing basic humanitarian aid, there is a glaring lack of attention to the deeper, structural consequences that this displacement will have, not only for the current generation but for future generations. The displacement crisis in Lebanon is not merely a short-term emergency; it is an evolving catastrophe with deep-rooted implications that will require sustained international attention and intervention. Without a coordinated, long-term strategy that addresses both immediate needs and future recovery, the cycle of displacement and marginalisation is expected to continue, leaving entire communities trapped in perpetual crisis.

This disengagement from displacement also has long-term implications for [Lebanon's state legitimacy](#). By failing to protect and support its own citizens in times of crisis, the government risks further eroding public trust and reinforcing the perception that Lebanon's political system is incapable of addressing the country's most pressing challenges. The normalisation of displacement, combined with the government's refusal to engage meaningfully with the issue, threatens to destabilise the already fragile relationship between the state and its citizens, particularly those in marginalised regions like South Lebanon.

In conclusion, Lebanon's strategic disengagement from the displacement question has created a legal and humanitarian vacuum that disproportionately affects the country's most vulnerable populations. The government's refusal to recognize displaced persons as IDPs allows it to evade responsibility, leaving those affected by conflict to navigate the complexities of displacement with minimal state support. This approach

not only perpetuates the marginalisation of displaced populations but also undermines the credibility of Lebanon's government in the eyes of its citizens and the international community. As the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah continues to escalate, the need for comprehensive displacement policies and government accountability becomes more urgent than ever. Without a shift in the government's stance, the cycle of displacement and neglect is likely to continue, with far-reaching consequences for both Lebanon's internal stability and the well-being of its displaced populations.

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