

# PARTICIPATORY NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT PLAN IN MAACHOUK TYRE

2022 - 2023



# PARTICIPATORY NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT PLAN IN MAACHOUK TYRE

2022 - 2023



Copyright © UNDP Lebanon, December 2023

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted, in any form or by means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior permission. The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Dotted and dashed lines on maps represent approximate border lines for which there may not yet be full agreement. The findings, analysis, and recommendations of this Report, as with previous Reports, do not represent the official position of the UNDP or of any of the UN Member States that are part of its Executive Board. They are also not necessarily endorsed by those mentioned in the acknowledgments or cited. The mention of specific companies does not imply that they are endorsed or recommended by UNDP in preference to others of a similar nature that are not mentioned.

This report is made possible thanks to the generous contribution of



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1

## CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW

- 2 1.1 Introduction
- 3 1.2 Methodological Framework
- 5 1.3 Maachouk Palestinian Gathering

21

## CHAPTER 2: SOCIO-ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

- 22 2.1 Socio-Economic Indicators
- 33 2.2 Recommendations for Socio-Economic Interventions

37

## CHAPTER 3: SPATIAL ANALYSIS

- 38 3.1 Existing Situation
- 45 3.2 Recommendations for Spatial Interventions

# ACRONYMS

AA	Adjacent Area
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
IP	Improvement Plan
LPDC	Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee
NEET	Not in education, employment or training
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
PRL	Palestinian Refugees from Lebanon
PRS	Palestinian Refugees from Syria
PwDs	People with Disabilities
SRS	Syrian Refugees from Syria
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees
VTE	Vocational and Technical Education
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene



## CH 1 | OVERVIEW

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the Neighbourhood Improvement Plan developed by UNDP in Maachouk in 2023. Maachouk Palestinian Gathering falls within the municipal boundaries of Tyre in South Lebanon and hosts an estimated population of 2,500, consisting mainly of Palestinian Refugees from Lebanon (PRL). The Improvement Plan aims at developing a blueprint for improving living conditions of dwellers living in Maachouk, as prioritized by the local communities. It was used to guide UNDP interventions aiming at improving the built environment as well as access to basic urban services in Maachouk. It also presents socio-economic indicators that were collected as part of a household survey commissioned to the Consultation and Research Institute (CRI) in Palestinian Gatherings (UNDP, 2022). The Improvement Plan builds on the results of the survey and local participatory tools led by UNDP, as well as analysis of the Maachouk Neighbourhood Profile and Strategy issued by UN-Habitat in 2017. This Plan will be shared with other UN agencies and organizations (NGOs) with the aim of guiding future programming in Maachouk.

The Improvement Plan was implemented during challenging times in Lebanon: a) an economic-financial collapse that has induced devaluation of local currency; triple digits inflation rates; a default on sovereign debt; the impairment of the banking sector and loss of deposits; and a severe economic contraction; b) effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic where Lebanon, as other countries, responded by lockdowns that further exacerbated the economic and financial stresses; c) a devastating explosion at Beirut Port; in addition to d) the protracted Syrian refugee crisis. All of these crises have exacerbated already existing vulnerabilities in Palestinian Gatherings, including Maachouk.

## 1.2 METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The Improvement Plan of Maachouk built on the Neighbourhood Profile and Strategy issued by UN-Habitat in 2017 as well as a number of participatory tools led by UNDP with the local community to finalize results. These include: household survey (2022), Participatory Rapid Assessment (2023) and an earlier community mapping. The Improvement Plan addresses two main strategic themes: the first theme covers the spatial dimension including the state of the built environment, basic urban services and infrastructure, the public domain such as roads and community spaces, facilities, housing, etc., while the second theme focuses on the socio-economic aspects including income generation, employability, youth status, etc.

### 1.2.1 OBJECTIVES

The Improvement Plan was designed to cover a two-year period and has the following specific objectives:

- Improving the state of the built environment, including housing
- Improving access to basic urban services and WASH infrastructure
- Activating public open spaces and community spaces
- Addressing the poor socio-economic conditions of dwellers in Maachouk as part of their wider context

### 1.2.2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Improvement Plan was guided by the following principles across tools and methods used:

- **People-centered approach** with a strong emphasis on community and local actors' participation to identify key priorities and potential solutions

- **Integrated area-based approach** addressing multi-sectorial needs and embracing social, economic, and physical development objectives in a geographically targeted area as part of its wider context
- **Conflict sensitivity** applied to analysis and programming, while engaging people from various groups in a localized, participatory and accountable way
- **Gender sensitivity** reflecting on the specific needs articulated by women and men
- **Ownership** of plan that belongs to local community
- **Transparency and Accessibility** of interventions for interested NGOs and stakeholders
- **Inclusion** by actively seeking the engagement of women, youth and vulnerable groups

### 1.2.3 PLAN COMPONENTS

The methodological framework of the plan is centred along three main components:

- **Neighborhood Profiling:** aiming to understand the spatial, social, economic, and cultural dynamics in Maachouk and to carry out an analysis of needs and opportunities
- **Developing a vision for improvement:** that includes priorities for interventions, suggested solutions and recommendations, and action plans for priority projects
- **Implementing quick-win projects:** to address pressing needs and strengthen trust with the local community

### 1.2.4 TOOLS

Data collection in the context of the Improvement Plan was carried out by the UNDP project team and local consultants, as per the following:

#### Desk Review

A thorough desk review was carried out of available studies and reports, cadastral and zoning maps, and the Maachouk Neighbourhood Profile and Strategy issued by UN-Habitat in 2017.

#### Household Survey:

A household survey was carried out by the Consultation and Research Institute (CRI) with a sample of 95 households in Maachouk as part of a survey commissioned by UNDP in Palestinian Gatherings in 2022. The survey included indicators in the sectors of housing (including basic urban services), education, health, labour and income, safety, and youth.

#### Participatory Rapid Assessment (PRA):

Led by local consultant, an RPA was carried out with two focus groups in Maachouk, mainly women and youth, in 2023. The main aim was surveying the needs of the local community with focus on the needs of women, youth, the elderly, and people with disabilities.

#### Participatory Urban Walks:

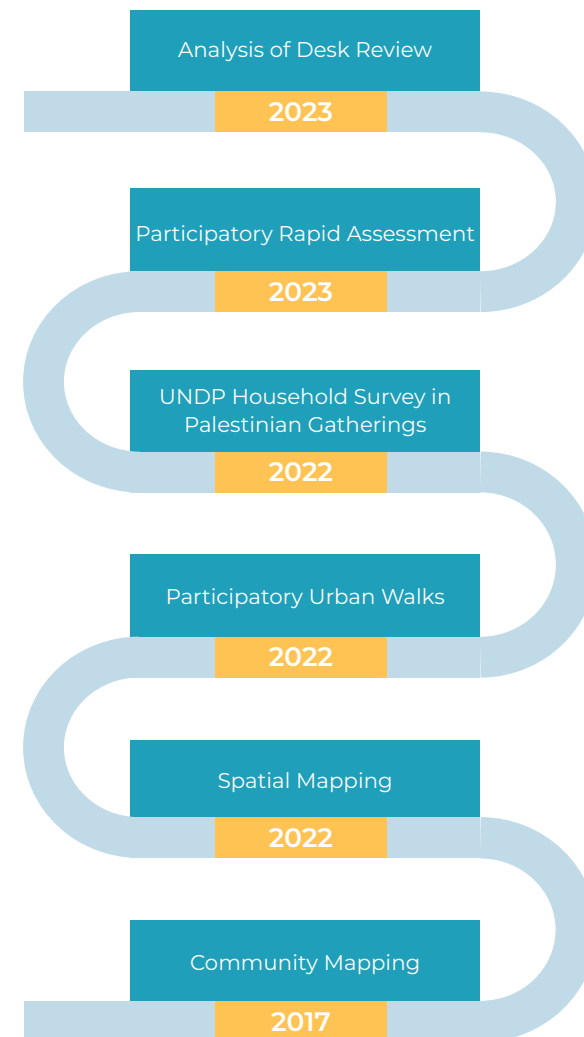
Group walks were carried out by UNDP team in the various neighbourhoods of Maachouk in 2022 with representatives of the local community, in order to learn more about dwellers' perceptions of their key problems, needs and priorities, etc. and map them.

#### Spatial Mapping:

A mapping process was carried out by UNDP team to reflect key issues and needs to guide UNDP interventions related to improving the built environment. A detailed spatial mapping was not carried out though by the UNDP team in Maachouk, in line with other UNDP Improvement Plans in Palestinian Gatherings, since the UN-Habitat Neighbourhood Profile and Strategy provided a thorough spatial profiling and analysis.

#### Community Mapping:

An earlier community mapping was carried out by Beyond Group Consulting firm to capture opportunities based on SWOT analysis in Maachouk in 2017. The mapping used interviews with local actors and key informants and focus group discussions for data collection and analysis.



## 1.3 MAACHOUK PALESTINIAN GATHERING

Maachouk is one of the Palestinian Gatherings in Tyre in Southern Lebanon. Palestinian Gatherings are defined as informal distinct geographic areas, where refugee communities composed of a minimum of 15 to 25 households are in need of humanitarian aid (Fafo, 2003). As such, a total of 42 Palestinian Gatherings were identified. A recent census conducted in Palestinian camps and gatherings by the Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee (LPDC, 2017) found that 55% of Palestinian refugees live in a total of 156 gatherings (outside camps) in Lebanon. The reason behind the increased number of Gatherings was due to lowering the number of minimum Palestinian households to 10. Unlike

camps, the status of Palestinian Gatherings is not officially recognized, which leads to a number of implications on refugees' living conditions, starting with their tenure security. While refugees living in Palestinian Gatherings have the right to access UNRWA health and education facilities, UNRWA's mandate to provide basic urban services is defined within the borders of the 12 officially recognized camps. At the same time, Palestinian Gatherings remain excluded from national development plans, local upgrading projects and the provision of municipal urban services in general. Refugees rely on short-term alternative solutions to access urban services, resources and jobs, which are usually

associated with informality, risks and lack of efficiency. The UNDP project "Improving Living Conditions in Palestinian Gatherings Host Communities" has been active since 2013 to cover the gap in service provision and to improve of living conditions in Palestinian Gatherings in Lebanon.

The household survey carried out by UNDP in 2022 in Palestinian Gatherings was an update to an earlier wave implemented in late 2017, following the multi-faceted crisis in Lebanon. The study sought to understand the changes since 2017 in the socio-economic conditions and the main vulnerabilities that inhabitants of Palestinian Gatherings face

when accessing housing and basic urban services, social services (education and health), the labour market and other income generating opportunities, as well as safety concerns. The study attempted to measure the particular impact of the economic crisis on the living conditions in Palestinian Gatherings and identify coping mechanisms to which households have resorted in response to the crises. In Maachouk, results of the household survey along with community needs assessment revealed high vulnerabilities and needs mainly in the sectors of housing, labour, health and safety.

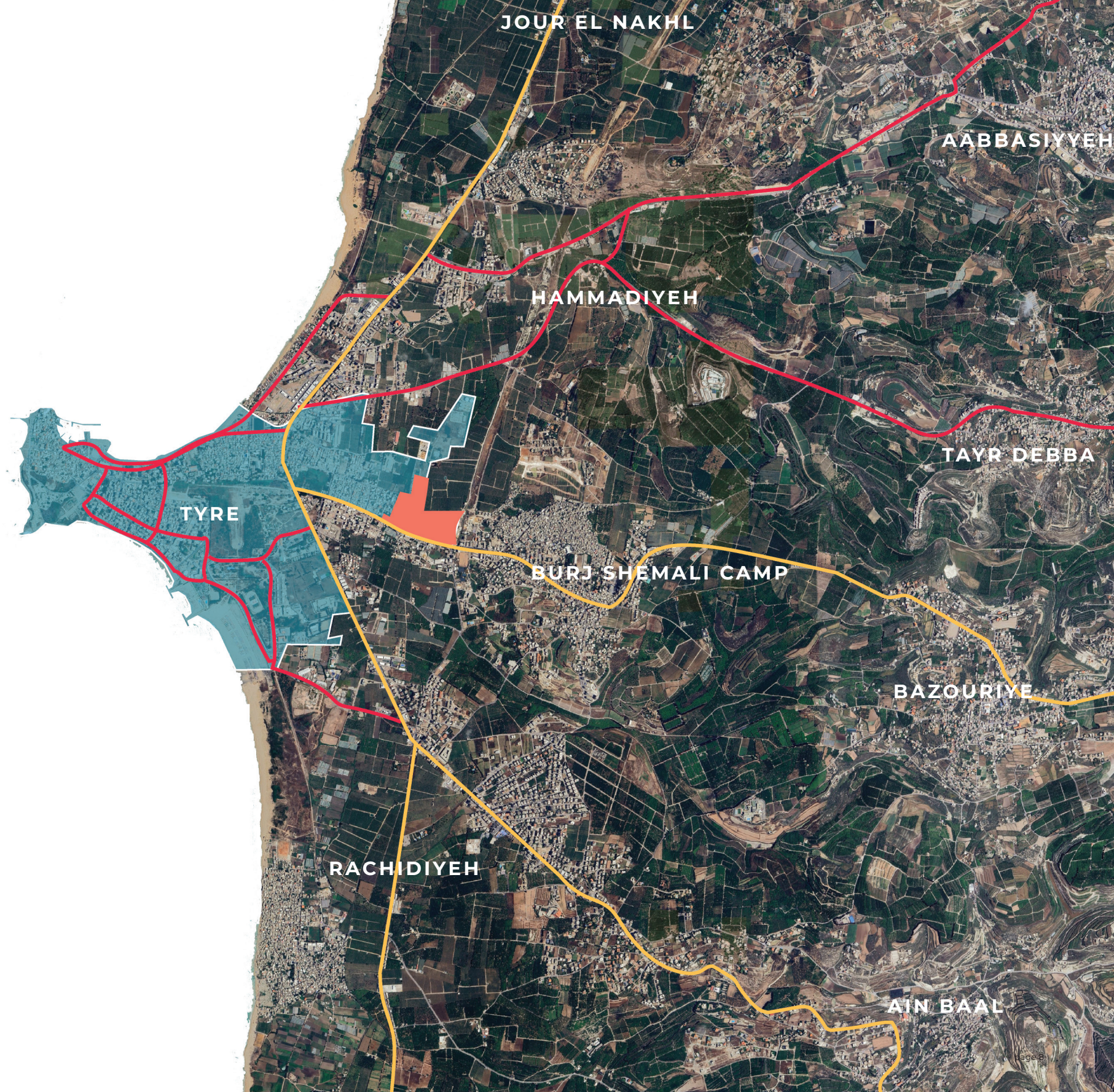


A panoramic view of Maachouk

## GEOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

Maachouk Palestinian Gathering is located in the eastern part of Tyre city, in Tyre district within the South Lebanon Governorate. It is bordered by the main highway to the South connecting Tyre to Burj Shemali Camp and surrounded by Burj Shemali Palestinian Refugee Camp to the East, El Buss Palestinian Refugee Camp to the West, and agricultural lands in Tyre and Abbassieh to the North.

Tyre is considered the main city in Tyre district in South Lebanon, with a total estimated population of 99,000: 47,500 Lebanese, 8,150 Syrian Refugees from Syria (SRS), 41,000 Palestinian Refugees from Lebanon (PRL) and 2,350 Palestinian Refugees from Syria (PRS) living in Palestinian Camps and Gatherings.



### LEGEND

- Tyre
- Maachouk
- Main road / highway
- Secondary road



TYRE

Burj Shemali Camp

LEGEND  
— Maachouk



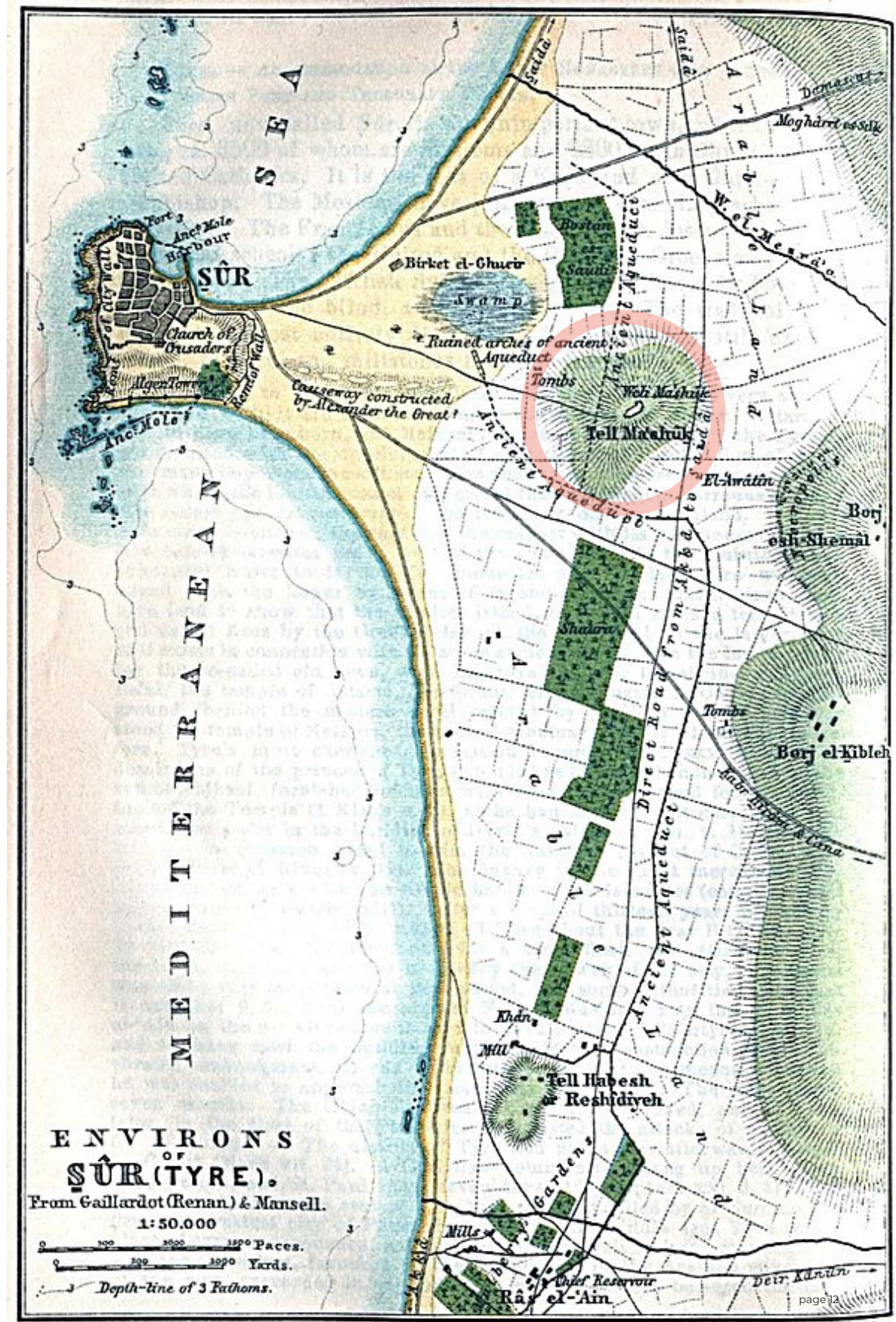
## HISTORY AND FORMATION

Maachouk Palestinian Gathering is part of the Maachouk area, where archaeological findings from the Phoenician, Greek and Roman time were found. The formation of Maachouk Gathering dates back to the early years following the Palestinian exodus (1948-1950), when Palestinians, mostly from the northern villages of Palestine, reached Maachouk and settled on public lands mainly owned by the Lebanese Government. Maachouk Gathering is considered one of the neighbourhoods with highest densities in Tyre. Population figures varies for Maachouk, depending on the geographic area considered by the various sources. The Maachouk Neighbourhood Profile and Strategy issued by UN-Habitat in 2017 cites a total of 3,374 dwellers living in Maachouk divided as such: 45% PRL, 29% Lebanese, 24% SRS and 2% PRS. The Census in Palestinian Camps and Gatherings issued by the Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee in the same year (LPDC, 2017), counts a total of 1,235 dwellers in Maachouk, 95% of whom are PRL. While the LPDC census considered a small area where the majority of PRL live, the UN-Habitat report included the surrounding areas in Maachouk. According to UNDP mapping of Maachouk Palestinian Gathering, an estimated 2,500 dwellers live within the boundaries of the Gathering. While the majority are Palestinian refugees (PRL), some of the Palestinian families have obtained Lebanese citizenship in the 1990s.

The Gathering is locally governed by a Popular Committee appointed by the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). Coordination between the Committee and Tyre Municipality is limited to formalities and addressing urgent problems. Urban services are administered and operated by the Popular Committee, through the limited resources they possess and local funds of small monthly amounts collected from households.

Palestinians living in Maachouk mostly work in Tyre, mainly in the industrial area surrounding the Gathering on the main road to Burj Shemali Camp and to the East of the Gathering. Residents from surrounding areas seldom enter the Gathering due to lack of major economic activity.

Maachouk Gathering is centralized around a hill, where the main neighbourhood is situated, renowned for two historical Islamic shrines dating back to the 18th century and built around the grave of Nabi Maachouk. This residential neighbourhood is more rural in nature, with adjacent houses and low-rise buildings built around narrow alleys. Due to the poor built-up conditions, UNDP focused its interventions in this area and its immediate vicinity. To the South, a mixed residential and predominantly commercial / industrial spine is formed around the main road connecting Tyre to Burj Shemali Camp, under which passes a historical aqueduct from the Greek period. From the other directions, the main neighbourhood is surrounded by lower density residential neighbourhoods of two to three story buildings, separated by internal roads. Two cemeteries exist on the Northern side of the main neighbourhood. There are six main entrances to the Gathering accessible by car, four from the South and two from the West and North, all connecting at the cemeteries.






# NEIGHBORHOOD TYPOLOGIES

TYRE

Burj Shemali Camp

## LEGEND

-  Main high density old residential neighbourhood (area of UNDP intervention)
-  Lower density residential neighbourhoods
-  Mixed commercial / industrial spine




# KEY MAP

TYRE

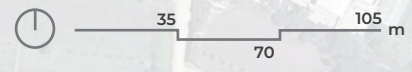
Burj Shemali Camp

## LEGEND

 Highway

 Road

 Main entry






# LANDMARKS

## LEGEND

### Community facilities

-  UNRWA school
-  PLO office
-  Borehole
-  Water tank
-  Football court
-  UNRWA clinic
-  Kindergarten

### Commercial facilities

-  Grocery store
-  Barber shop
-  Currency exchange shop

### Spiritual facilities

-  Mosque
-  Cemetery
-  Maachouk ancient dome





The ancient domes from the Ottoman era in Maachouk



## CH 2 | SOCIO-ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

The economic vulnerability in Maachouk has been significantly exacerbated by increased employment instability following the economic crisis, as reflected in the significantly higher underemployment rates and the migration from stable salaried employment towards less stable daily labour and self-employment. The majority of working individuals in Maachouk work in sales, followed by household services, construction, and manufacturing. As such, low unemployment rates mask rampant underemployment, as people lost their jobs or moved to the more informal economy as a result of the economic crisis. Youth are particularly disadvantaged, with higher unemployment rates than the average in Maachouk, and considerable high ratio of NEET youth.

The household survey conducted by UNDP in Palestinian Gatherings in 2022 revealed that while certain vulnerabilities pre-existed the economic crisis, other vulnerabilities have been severely exacerbated by the crisis, reaching the level of what may be called a humanitarian emergency. In Maachouk, as in other Palestinian Gatherings, high imbalance is reported between income and expenditures, as the vast majority of households struggle to pay for basic expenses. Findings of the survey reveal that many households in Palestinian Gatherings have been unable to secure needed medications or access needed health services; and more than half of the population had to cut down on food or were unable to pay for rent or generator expenses. As such, households are resorting to a variety of coping mechanisms to be able to survive. The most prevalent coping mechanism is buying on credit from store owners, borrowing from friends and relatives, and / or resorting to savings or sale of assets. Many households reported applying for aid for the first time, which is evident in Maachouk.

In terms of social services, Palestinian refugees living in Maachouk benefit from UNRWA health and education services. Education facilities available in Maachouk are limited to primary education; one preliminary UNRWA school exists in the Gathering where most students are enrolled. For intermediate and secondary education, students use UNRWA schools in surrounding camps or public schools in surrounding villages (given the ratio of PRL who have received Lebanese citizenship). School enrolment drops gradually for students in Maachouk until it reaches 50% for those aged 16-18. Following the crisis, more households have been reporting costly transportation as a main challenge to continuing education. There is one kindergarten operational at the western side of Maachouk, away from the main agglomeration. Health services in Maachouk are limited to primary health care. A mobile UNRWA clinic provides part-time services, and two dispensaries operated by local institutions provide part-time and full-time services. Dwellers use hospitals in the surrounding areas to Maachouk. It should be noted that the Household Survey in Palestinian Gatherings (UNDP, 2022) showed increased numbers of Palestinian refugees relying on NGO-run health care services following the crisis, due to affordability.

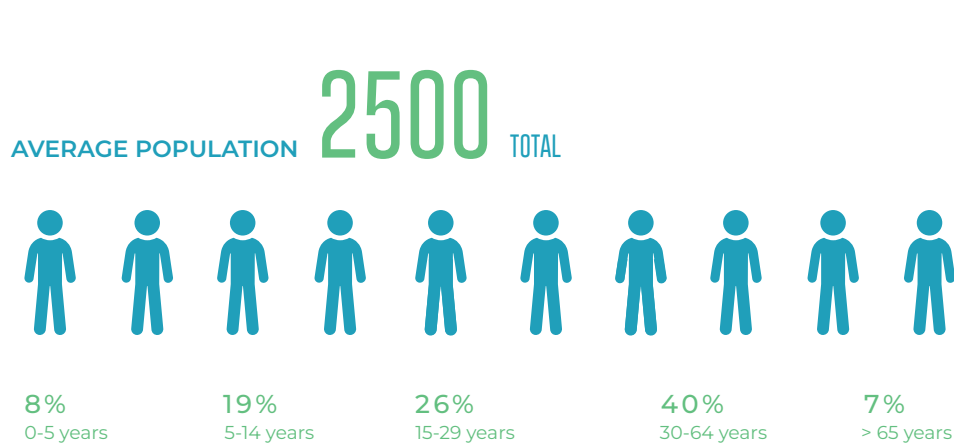
Maachouk lacked a functional community centre to host activities including those led by local NGOs. In 2021, UNDP complemented an indoor community centre established by UN-Habitat in an existing building in Maachouk with an outdoor community space. This has enabled NGOs to extend their programmes to the Palestinian Gathering of Maachouk and its surrounding. The next section presents findings of the household survey carried out by UNDP in Palestinian gatherings in 2022.

## 2.1 SOCIO-ECONOMIC INDICATORS

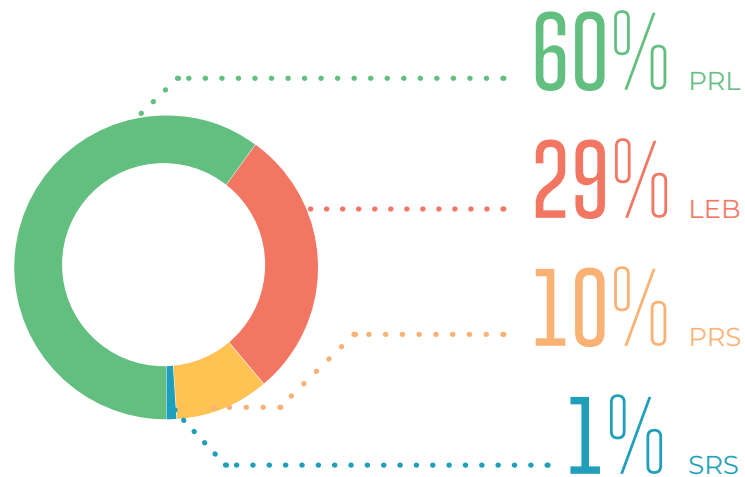
### POPULATION

Based on UNDP mapping, an estimated 550 households (2,500 individuals) live in the Palestinian Gathering of Maachouk. While the majority are Palestinian Refugees from Lebanon (PRL), some Palestinian families obtained Lebanese citizenship

in the 1990s. According to the household survey in Palestinian Gatherings conducted by UNDP in 2022, young population (below 30 years of age) in Maachouk represents 53%.



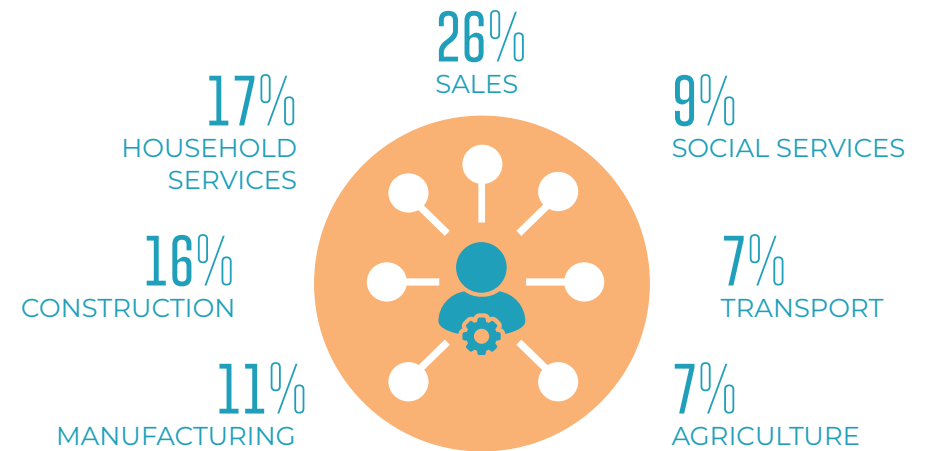
#### POPULATION DISTRIBUTION IN MAACHOUK



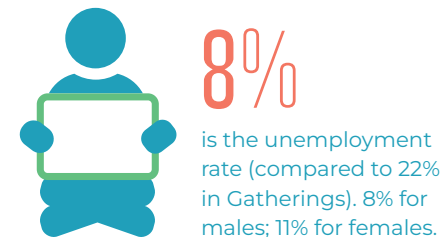
### LABOR

In Maachouk, while the unemployment rate is lower than the average in Palestinian Gatherings, it masks a rampant underemployment rate that is considerably higher than the average. This has been witnessed in the results of the Household Survey in Palestinian Gatherings (UNDP, 2022), as more employed people lost their jobs or moved to working as daily workers or in self-employment.

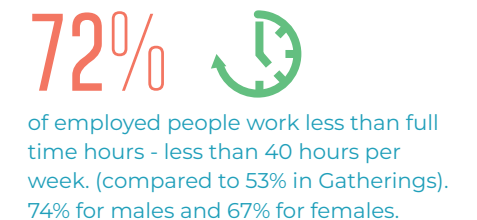
Unemployment and underemployment rates are compounded by gender gaps. Difficulty finding jobs were reported in the Participatory Rapid Assessment (PRA) led by UNDP in Maachouk, mostly affecting women seeking employment. It should be mentioned that Palestinian Refugees face legal restrictions to accessing all jobs, mainly syndicated jobs, under the Lebanese law.



#### UNEMPLOYMENT



#### UNDEREMPLOYMENT



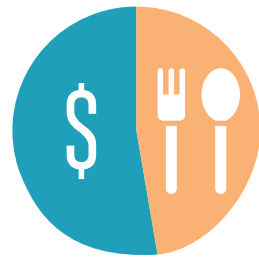
## INCOME

The average monthly income in Maachouk is lower than the average in Palestinian Gatherings (USD 75 compared to USD 100). Monthly household expenditure in Maachouk is considerably higher than the monthly income, as common in Palestinian

Gatherings. While around half of the households in Maachouk rely on labour earnings for their income, the other half rely on aid followed by remittances, revealing high vulnerability.

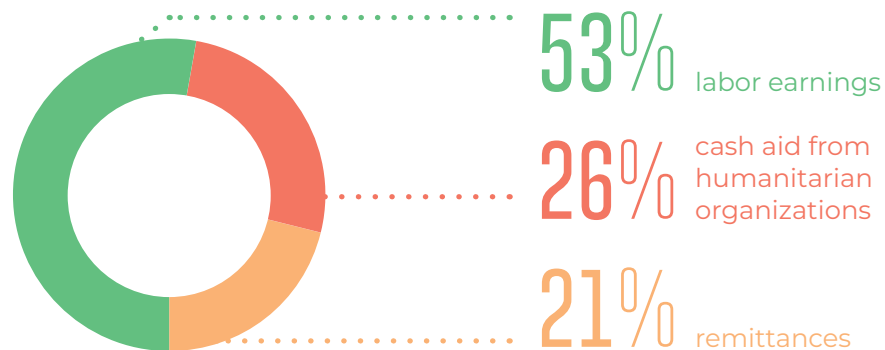
**LBP 3,747,000**

USD 187 is the average monthly household spending (compared to LBP 3,894,000 in Gatherings), higher than the average wage estimated at (LBP 1,500,000 or USD 75)



food accounts for 41% of total household expenditures, followed by 18% electricity/generator, 11% transportation, 8% gas and 8% health

### HOUSEHOLD EARNINGS



## HEALTH

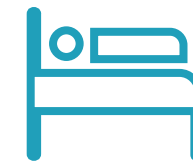
The share of dwellers with no health coverage in Maachouk is higher than the average in Palestinian Gatherings (29% compared to 22%). The population in Maachouk use public health services and those operated by UNRWA and NGOs almost equally, as Palestinian refugees in general resorted more to NGOs services following the economic crisis, due

to their inability to cover the difference in health coverage offered by UNRWA. The local community has access to the three health centres available in Maachouk as well as to surrounding hospitals. The Participatory Rapid Assessment (PRA) carried out in Maachouk revealed high needs among people with disabilities and the elderly.



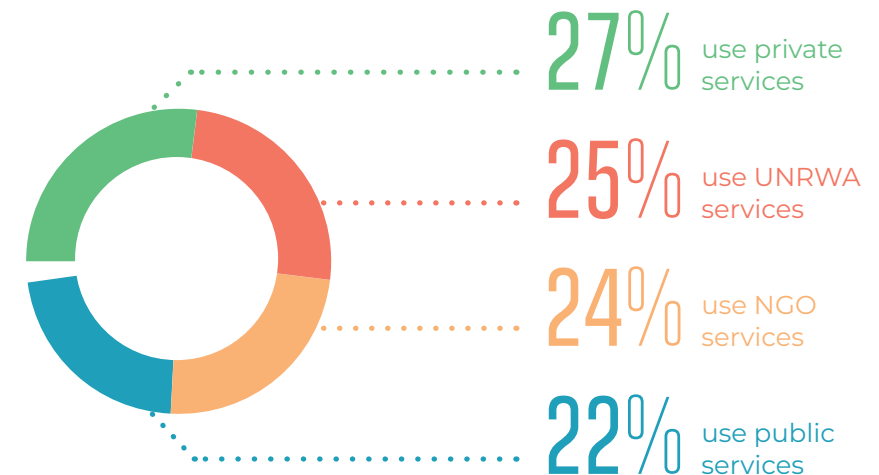
**33%**

of dwellers suffer from chronic illnesses (compared to 32% in Gatherings)



**63%**

of households reported having at least one family member who needed health treatment (three months prior to the survey)

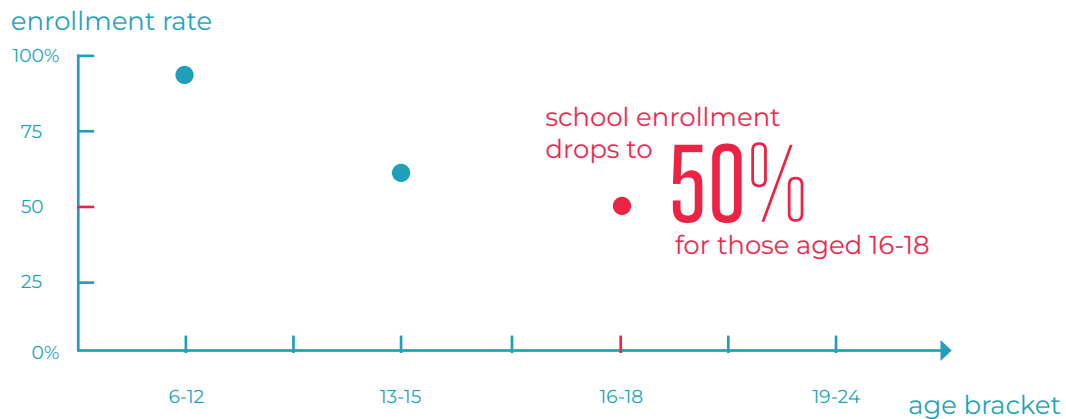
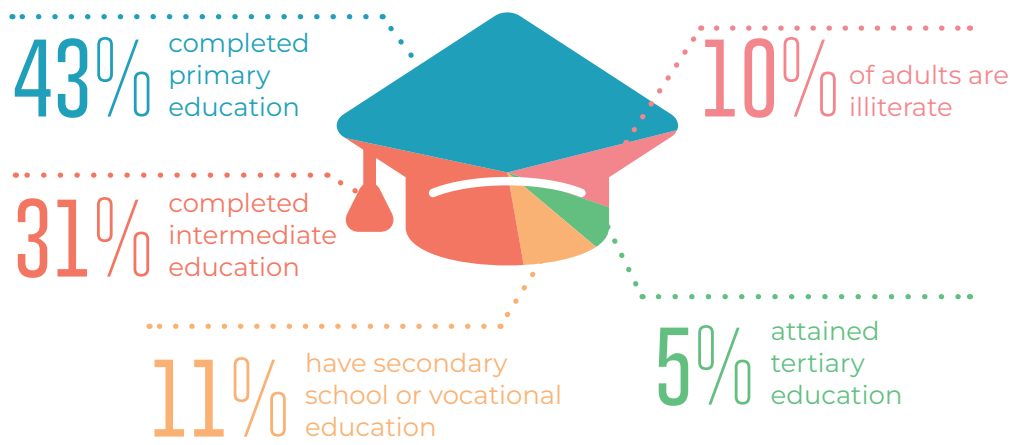




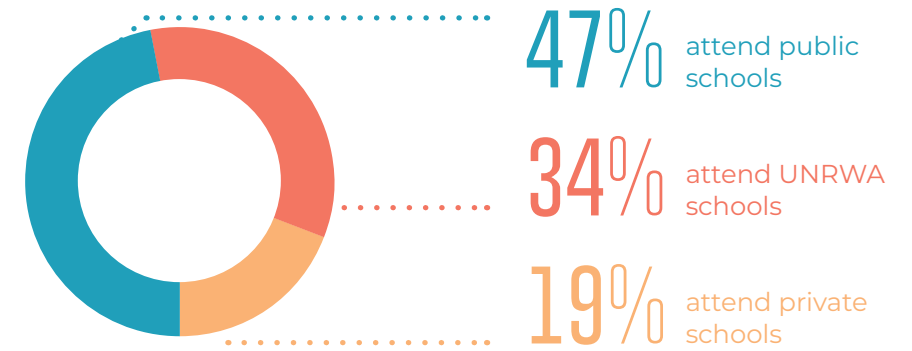
# EDUCATION

The share of population with no education is higher in Maachouk than in other Palestinian Gatherings (10% compared to 7%). Although school enrolment is high at primary stages, mainly due to the presence of UNRWA primary school in the Gathering, the level of enrolment drops considerably at the age of 16 to 18. For intermediate and secondary education, students

are enrolled in UNRWA and public schools in the surrounding camps and villages. It should be noted that Maachouk registers higher ratio of youth aged 19 to 24 who are enrolled in universities. The challenge of integrating students with disabilities mainly in vocational education was cited in the Participatory Rapid Assessment.



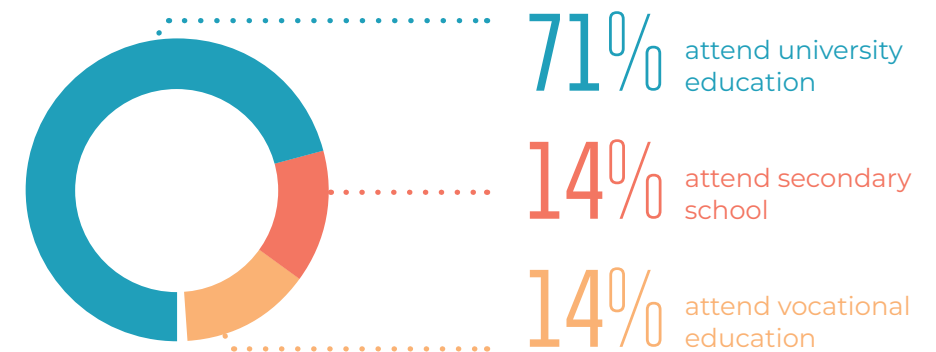
of students aged 6 to 18:



of students aged 16 to 18:



of students aged 19 to 24:



## HOUSING CONDITIONS

The majority of Maachouk was informally built on public lands. Households in Maachouk reported relatively higher levels of eviction threats than the average in Palestinian Gatherings. Around quarter of households in Maachouk live in rented accommodation and pay rent. As expected with

the economic crisis, blackouts have become much more severe, as is the case across the country. In the Participatory Rapid Assessment, participants reported high generator subscription bills and indicated the negative impact on other aspects of their lives such as education, work, and wellbeing.

**36%**

of households stated they have built their houses

**15%**

of households stated they have purchased their houses

**20%**

of households stated they have inherited their houses



**4%**

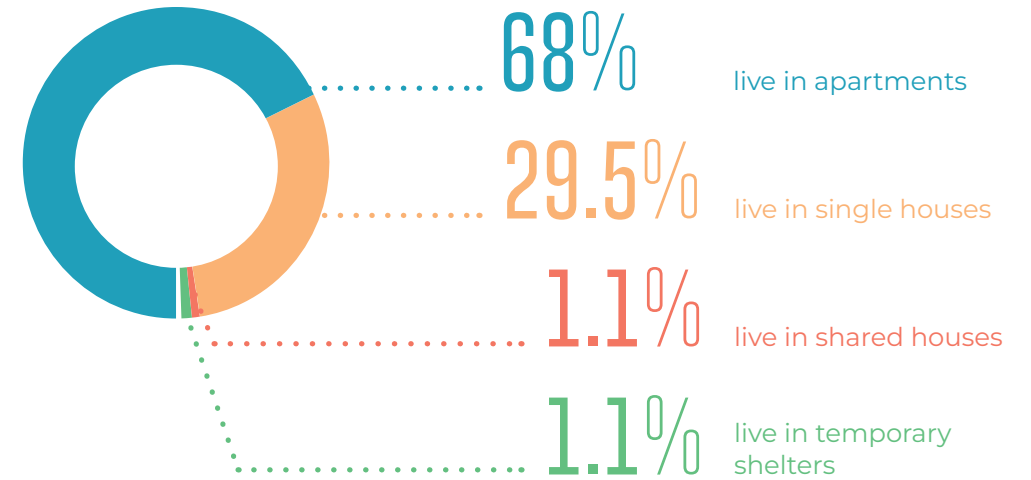
living in houses that belong to acquaintances

**25%**

of households reported living in rented houses

**LBP 575,000**

is the average monthly rent (USD 29)



crowding is at **1.3** persons/room

**32%**

of households are severely affected by dampness

**11%**

of households have benefited from renovation schemes

## YOUTH

Unemployment rate is higher for youth than the average population in Maachouk, with considerable gender gap. The main barriers that youth face in the labour market are associated with lower social capital and networks, information asymmetries, and a mismatch between their skills and qualifications and the demands of the job market. The ratio of

youth who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) is high in Maachouk. Youth also show low levels of engagement in political activities. Participants in the PRA also raised the issue of drug abuse, especially among male youth, as an increasingly alarming phenomenon.

**53%** are below 30 years old (compared to 60% in Gatherings)

**26%** of whom are aged 15 to 29

**16%** is the unemployment rate for youth, compared to an average of 35% in gatherings:

unemployment is higher for females compared to males

**22% VS. 14%**

employment is lower for females compared to males

**13% VS. 41%**

**43%** is the percentage of youth that is Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)



**57%**  
NEET females



**27%**  
NEET males

## SAFETY & MOBILITY

In Maachouk, higher ratios of households reporting incidents were found compared to the average in Palestinian Gatherings, with many cases related to

harassment. In terms of mobility, Maachouk is well connected to its surroundings; however, households reported relatively high transportation fees.



**18%** of households self-reported safety concerns, first due to fear of violence and second due to the conditions of the built environment

**4%**

of households reported difficulty of securing means of transport

**14%**

of households reported incidents (compared to 100% in Gatherings); 9% due to harrasment

## 2.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC INTERVENTIONS

Based on an analysis of the socio-economic indicators in Maachouk, a number of challenges were identified:

- High underemployment rates, low monthly income compared to needs and expenditure, and high reliance on aid and remittances
- Difficulty finding jobs mainly impacting women and youth
- Lack of easily accessible comprehensive health care services
- Increased school-dropouts within the higher age brackets; and high transportation costs to surrounding schools for intermediate and secondary level students
- Special needs for people with disabilities (health, education, social) and the elderly (health, social).
- High ratio of youth who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) and associated risky behaviours
- Sense of compromised security and reported incidents mainly related to cases of harassment

Based on analysis of collected data, including from the local community groups in Maachouk, the below interventions are recommended on the short to medium term.

### 2.2.1 ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT FOR YOUTH

#### Support to Vocational Training

There is a large presence of certified vocational training centres around Maachouk, with potential for enrolling youth. In order to improve the impact of vocational training and employability, the below is recommended:

- Expand technical training courses and provide certified training in demanded disciplines. These could include digital marketing, e-commerce and drop shipping, public relations and event planning, basic research methodology and data collection, website and app development, photography, videography, visual arts, and sound and video editing.
- Re-design existing generic life skills training and tailor them to youth depending on their specializations or disciplines (such as life skills trainings for engineers and designers, for self-employed business owners, etc.). Further details on life skills training are presented in this section.
- Include a component of post-graduation support as an integral part of these interventions. Further details on post-graduation support are presented in this section.

#### Diversified Life Skills Training

Life skills training has become a trend in livelihood interventions within the non-profit sector in Lebanon. However, multiple organizations often provide the same cycle of services or repeat the same trainings. This would occur in situations whereby participants are invited to participate either with very little information during the outreach, or under the assumption that the training they are receiving is an advanced module offering a different set of skills. Livelihood interventions are most effective when part of a broader package of holistic interventions. When administered efficiently, life skills trainings should provide both basic and advanced skills for: self-management, organization, and team building, independence and self-reliance, scalability of jobs, financial management topics (such as risk taking, conflict management, employee voice), online management skills (building and sustaining digital

image), etc. These trainings must be tailored to fit a purpose and a specific audience and discipline. To support youth employability, two types of trainings are proposed to upgrade the skills of youth seeking jobs:

- For higher skilled job seekers; training in language, CV preparation, contacting potential employers, job search methods, etc.
- For unskilled job seekers; training in a set of employable skills that are determined based on a participatory approach and a mapping of skills and needs in the area and its surroundings (such as plumbing, confectionery, auto mechanics, IT maintenance, trade, etc.). The mapping of skills should aim to select the particular skills that have the highest potential for employment in Maachouk and its surrounding in order to guarantee linkages to internships and apprenticeship.

#### Post-Graduation Support:

As mentioned earlier, it is important to design post graduate support as an integral part of training programs offered to youth:

- Conduct a mandatory tracer interview with participants who have completed any training six months after completion, in order to assess results and collect lessons learned.
- Link participants at the end of each module to a directory of companies and employers that may have openings in their fields and have expressed the willingness to employ Palestinians or that do not have explicit hiring restrictions.
- Organize networking job fair events for training graduates, trainers, experienced personnel and others where individuals of complementary disciplines are encouraged to meet (e.g. graphic

designers with digital marketers, data collectors with non-profit organizations, and photographers with interior designers or event planners).

#### Promoting Entrepreneurship

In order to expand and strengthen start-ups and build the capacity of entrepreneurs, a two-fold approach is recommended: addressing already established or struggling start-ups; and supporting new start-ups that rely on multiple intersecting disciplines.

- In light of Lebanon's ongoing economic and financial crisis, it would be wise to implement strategies that strengthen and support existing businesses that may otherwise fail under the current conditions. Supporting start-ups or medium sized companies owned by Palestinians or that express readiness to employ Palestinians could be carried out through collaboration with local partners to identify incubated business ideas.
- Promising start-ups could also be supported following market assessments. Preliminary assessments indicate that the future of entrepreneurship and freelance work is promising in the digital field, including digital marketing, social media management, copywriting, design, online communication, IT, coding and development, photography, and other audio-visual production tools. These fields are usually complementary to one another, and many businesses require low to medium budget marketing strategies and some social media management in this competitive market. Creating a digital platform dedicated to call for business proposals from Palestinian candidates could be developed.

## 2.2.2 WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

The need to support women seeking jobs was reflected in the Improvement Plan of Maachouk; the following suggestions were collected:

- Support women in the production of handcrafts and agro-products through training and post-training support, including the provision of needed equipment and tools
- The two fields of home caretaking (for sick people or the elderly) and event planning were proposed as a niche domain for women employment in Maachouk

## 2.2.3 STRENGTHENING SOCIAL SERVICES

The following priorities were proposed covering the various needs in education, health, and social life in Maachouk:

- Support surrounding health care services such as those operated by the Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS)
- Mainstream the inclusion of People with Disability in designed programs and interventions in Maachouk
- Support organizations providing services for People with Disability and the elderly, including those who are part of the Palestinian Disability Forum in Lebanon
- Support education and after-school programs to encourage children to stay in schools, following an assessment of the gaps in the current educational system
- Support local NGOs and CBOs extend their programmes, with focus on psychosocial activities for youth and children, by facilitating a well-equipped community centre

While Maachouk shares similar challenges with the rest of Tyre Gatherings, it is characterized by valuable historical and archaeological assets that could be utilized to enhance local economy. What follows

is a longer-term proposal, representing a more integrated and ambitious intervention.

## 2.2.4 EXPLORING THE TOURISTIC ASPECT OF MAACHOUK

Historical and archaeological assets in Maachouk could be capitalized on to include Maachouk as part of a wider tourist plan for Tyre. This would require the following actions:

- Conduct a study of the archaeological and historical sites in Maachouk to include as potential sites in the touristic map of Tyre area, in coordination with the Municipality of Tyre and relevant local and regional institutions
- Develop a plan around existing tourist programs, to include Maachouk, highlighting the win-win situation for involved stakeholders; spatially linking points of attraction in all areas
- Advocate for the preservation of the historic religious shrine and the Roman aqueduct in Maachouk and conduct restoration works for both monuments
- Organize guided tours of main attractions, including cultural events and heritage aspects such as food, in Tyre and Maachouk

Challenges identified are mainly related to the relocation of households living in the shrines in Maachouk along with major infrastructural challenges that need to be overcome.

## 2.2.5 OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

These further interventions were proposed as part of the Maachouk Neighbourhood Profile and Strategy issued by UN-Habitat in 2017:

- Capitalise on the design and management of small business trainings that UNDP has previously organized in the Gatherings of Tyre (in 2016);

support consumer-goods enterprises with retail best practices (marketing, food safety, quality control, accounting and technical skills) to maximise consumer experience and sales uplift

- Support small-scale business or household-based food processing opportunities mainly those related to citrus, olive oil and banana plantations in the surrounding of Maachouk. Similarly support animal farming utilizing empty lands in the surroundings

- Promote urban agriculture at houses' yards as an alternative to purchasing food
- Provide support to students' transportation to surrounding schools
- Address existing drug and alcohol abuse and juvenile delinquency by promoting collaborations with early intervention and prevention programmes





## CH 3 | SPATIAL ANALYSIS

Maachouk comprises an estimated 375 low-rise residential buildings of average one to three floors in height. Buildings are generally constructed of concrete with some existing corrugated iron roofs. Most buildings are for residential use; with few including commercial activities on the ground floor. The main commercial / industrial spine to the South includes a wider variety of stores and workshops.

Internal roads consist of narrow pathways, particularly in the central main residential area. Since this area is built on a hill, slopy roads that become slippery in winter with flooding of mixed sewage and stormwater represent a safety hazard. Many streets are left unlit during nighttime, posing additional accessibility and safety challenges for women, children and the elderly. Electrical connections along these roads are chaotic, entangled with generator, satellite and internet cables.

In terms of access to WASH services, households in Maachouk have access to reliable water network operated through solar energy, installed by UNDP in 2017. Maachouk suffers though from inadequate and non-maintained sewage network and lack of proper stormwater drainage in most areas. The Popular Committee of Maachouk is responsible for solid waste collection on daily basis, using a collection truck provided by UNDP, through the municipality of Tyre, in 2017. After the closing of Ain Baal sorting facility, sanitary discharge of collected solid waste became a challenge.

### 3.1 EXISTING SITUATION

The next section presents the results of the spatial assessment of the built environment and WASH systems undertaken by UNDP in Maachouk.

# SHELTER ASSESSMENT

In 2022, UNDP identified a total of 255 shelter units for assessment in Maachouk. Following the assessment, 104 units were selected for necessary rehabilitation works. Of those, 79 units were in need of major rehabilitation.



- LEGEND**
- Buildings that include shelters for urgent rehabilitation  
Priority 1
  - Buildings that include shelters for rehabilitation  
Priority 2



## ROADS ASSESSMENT

The main neighbourhood in Maachouk is characterized by narrow alleys and sloped pathways, used by pedestrians and motorcyclists, that are in poor conditions and slippery during winter. These steep roads lack basic safety measures such as paving, stairs or handles and some experience water sedimentation issues. On the other hand, external roads present a different set of challenges. Most are riddled with potholes, displaying poor conditions with no maintenance efforts in place. Agricultural roads have been converted into public use roads without proper planning. Solutions will have to address the poor conditions, safety, and drainage of the roads network.

Chaotic electrical connections exist along the streets, posing a threat to pedestrians. There is a lack of street lighting during nighttime due to lack of sufficient lighting points or non-functional existing points. Internal streets are particularly unlit, also posing safety challenges and protection issues mainly for women and children at night.



### LEGEND

-  Unpaved road in poor condition
-  Water ponding
-  Slippery pathways
-  Damaged stairs
-  Damaged pavement
-  Functional street lighting
-  Non-functional street lighting





## WASH ASSESSMENT

In 2017, UNDP installed a complete water network operated through solar pumping for all households in Maachouk. The photovoltaic panels were installed on the roof of UNRWA School in Maachouk. The 2022 assessment showed that households still had access to a reliable water system; minor maintenance-related issues were identified such as visible pipes along the alleys and some broken valves.

A sewage system mixed with rainwater connects most households; with few households still using septic tanks due to lack of connection. Due to inappropriate pipes sizing and sloping, broken manholes and missing manhole covers, wastewater blocking and flooding occur mainly in the main central neighbourhood of Maachouk.

Parts of a stormwater network exist in Maachouk, mostly characterized by broken pipes and flooding. In addition, a broken culvert exists on a main intersection used daily by a large number of dwellers.

### LEGEND

- 300mm functional sewage network
- 200mm functional sewage network
- 200mm sewage network in need for rehabilitation
- Partially or fully blocked sewage network
- No sewage connection
- Sewage manhole in need for maintenance
- Functional stormwater network
- Damaged stormwater channel
- Damaged stormwater culvert
- Water tank in need for rehabilitation
- Exposed water pipes



## 3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SPATIAL INTERVENTIONS

An area-based approach for spatial improvement in Maachouk should be followed, including some of the socio-economic recommendations mainly related to tourism and community spaces. The following spatial interventions could be summarized:

- Improving the structural, environmental and overall conditions of buildings and houses.
- Rehabilitation and paving of internal and external roads in poor conditions, addressing roads' poor and slippery conditions and water sedimentation.
- Improving safety and accessibility of internal alleys through repair of damaged stairs and addition of stairs to replace sloped pathways, while installing handrails.
- Strengthening areas identified for social gatherings, through floor upgrading and paving and installation of benches.
- Rehabilitating and repairing poor electricity connection and carrying out cable management solutions to organize and streamline electrical connections.
- Introducing solar street lighting, adding lighting posts where they do not exist.
- Maintenance works to the water connections including reinforced encasement of the visible pipes and replacement of broken valves.
- Maintenance works to improve the conditions of the main water collection tanks.
- Separation of sewage and stormwater systems.
- Rehabilitation of the sewage network through cleaning and maintenance of existing functional pipes, replacing damaged pipes and manholes, extending the system in areas that lack connection.
- Replacing missing manhole covers to prevent unauthorized access and ensure safety.
- Cleaning and repair of the existing stormwater system.
- Repairing and reinforcing the existing damaged stormwater culvert.



## REFERENCES

1. To access the UNDP report “Assessing Vulnerabilities in Palestinian Gatherings in Lebanon: Results of the 2022 Household Survey”: <https://www.undp.org/lebanon/publications/assessing-vulnerabilities-palestinian-gatherings-lebanon-results-2022-household-survey>
2. To access the report: MAACHOUK neighbourhood profile and strategy. Tyre, Lebanon | UN-Habitat ([unhabitat.org](http://unhabitat.org))
3. Improvement plans should be differentiated from longer term urban plans that are wider in scope and time frame.

## NOTES

Currency conversion rate between LBP and USD is taken from the household survey in Palestinian Gatherings (UNDP, 2022). At the time, 1 USD was equivalent to an average of LBP 20,000. It should be mentioned that at the time of writing this report, that exchange rate was close to 1 USD = LBP 90,000.



UNDP is the leading United Nations organization fighting to end the injustice of poverty, inequality, and climate change. Working with our broad network of experts and partners in 170 countries, we help nations to build integrated, lasting solutions for people and planet.

[www.lb.undp.org](http://www.lb.undp.org)