



COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

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Insieme, per un mondo possibile.



Syrian crisis shelter response: diffused shelters or refugee camps? Lebanon, a study case

The images most commonly associated with refugee crises are refugee camps, but the reality is different: only just over one third of the world's 17 million refugees live in camps today. The rest choose to live outside camps, in cities or communities, renting apartments or small houses, conducting a more independent, if precarious, life in the host country.

This picture is valid also for the Syrian crisis. Since the beginning of the popular uprisings in March 2011 over three million persons flee Syria seeking protection in the neighboring countries — Iraq, Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon — mainly outside camps.

In Lebanon, the Government adopted an alternative to camps policy, ensuring protection and assistance to the Syrian population sheltered in apartments and Small Shelter Units diffused on the territory, but also to who is living in tents, collective shelters, collective centers, unfinished buildings or other substandard premises.

Although the positive impact, with the protracting of the crisis, it has become extremely difficult for local communities and infrastructures to absorb the increasing numbers of refugees: the rising tensions between refugees and host communities have led the Lebanese Government to consider a change in the assistance framework and set up refugee camps. Is it the best solution?

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