



Nophotozone Portfolio



# Contents

who are we ..... 03

Message from ..... 05  
the Director

our mission ..... 09

Activities ..... 10

who are the ..... 18  
beneficiaries?

Feedback from ..... 19  
participants

Our Partners ..... 21

A view ..... 22  
to the future





# who are we

An individual tragedy turned into a societal beacon, especially for those who are voiceless. Thus, NoPhotoZone began its journey, from the suffering of one person, by mobilizing the simple energies and support available, to raise the voice of those who were left after the disappearance of their loved ones for their suffering in various walks of life without support, without a platform, and in most cases, without rights.

NoPhotoZone was established officially and as a legal entity in France. It was registered on March 20, 2019 in Paris, as a non-governmental organization concerned with the issues of detainees, the forcibly disappeared and their families. This thorny file, which is marginalized by the main actors in the Syrian affairs.





Since the beginning of the Syrian tragedy, cases of enforced disappearance and arrest have been repeated systematically. And there is no way to know the fate of those people, their whereabouts, or even the place of their burial. As the number of such cases multiplied, this file has turned into a thorny and complex one, that is rarely approached seriously in conferences and meetings concerned with the Syrian issue. The concerned people forget or turn a blind eye to the fact that, behind each of these cases is a story of unfinished dream and life, and a sudden loss, with all the repercussions and pain associated with it.

NoPhotoZone has specifically addressed this profound humanitarian aspect since its early inception, through its concern and support for the families of detainees and forcibly disappeared, and helping them to deal positively with their various cases, and keep their voice heard in a space full of noise.





Noura Ghazi

## Message from the Director

From the outset of the conflict that began in Syria in March 2011, and the violence that accompanied it, firstly, by the Syrian authorities, and then, by the de facto authorities, the severity of the violations have intensified. Consequently, the impact of these violations has been increased on the lives of Syrians at all levels.

From my point of view, the most prominent and notable profile of the bloody Syrian scene, is the file of arbitrary detention and enforced disappearance. It is worth noting that this blatant violation of human rights did not begin with the beginning of the conflict; these unfair practices began in the mid-sixties of the last century, but its intensity intensified exponentially during the conflict, as one of the main causes for its outbreak was the demanding to release prisoners of conscience.

Detention and enforced disappearance were limited, at first, to the activists and political opponents, but after that, extended to tens of thousands of Syrians and non-Syrians inside Syria. So, it has become very difficult to enumerate the possibilities or causes that lead to detain a person, in addition to the multiplication of the parties that commit detention.





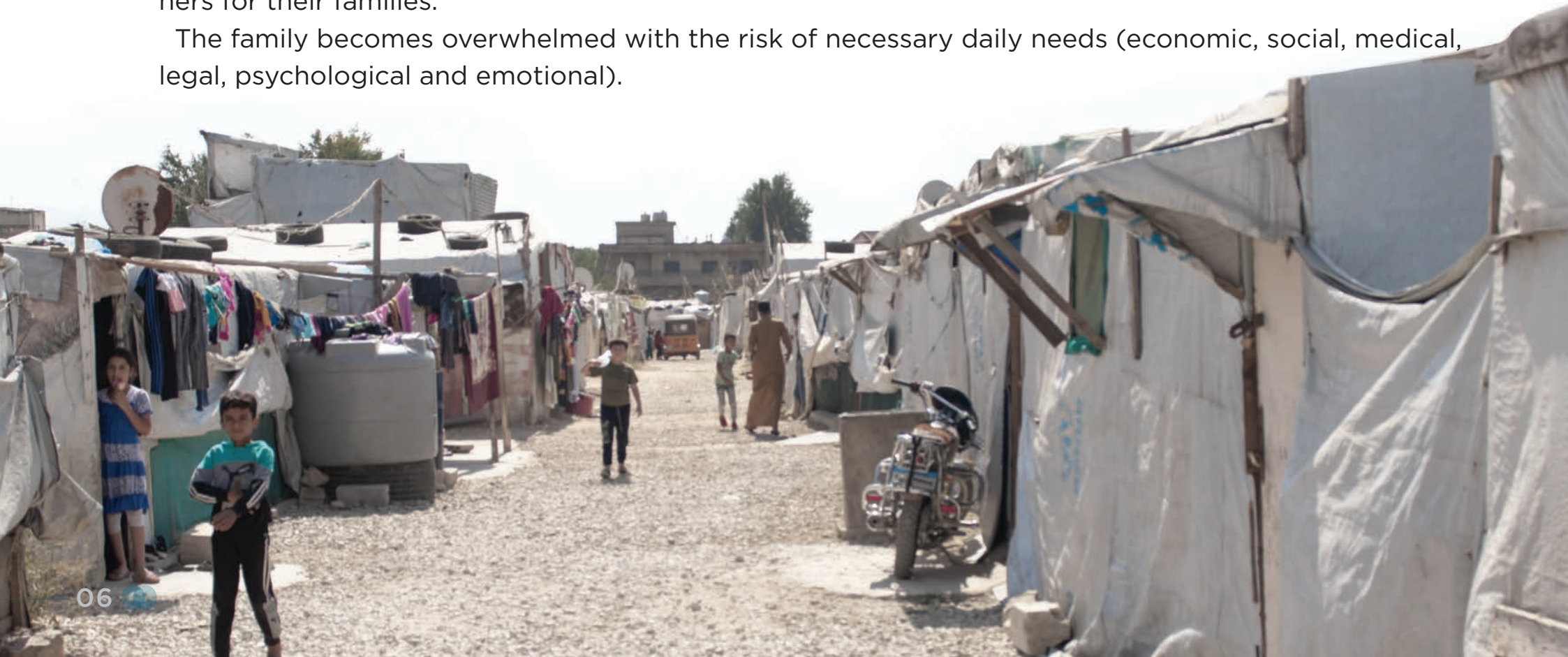
When we hear about a detained or disappeared person, the first thing that comes to our minds and feelings is the pain that this person experiences because of torture and ill-treatment. As well as, the pain that surrounds his family because of loss, waiting and fear of the unknown.

We imagine his mother's tears, as she wonders, is he eating well? Is he feeling warm? Is he....? Is he...? We imagine his children's questions, where is Dad? When will he return?

By our emotional nature, as human beings, we feel sympathy and solidarity with any tragedy. But, if we expand our thinking a little, we will find that the problem is more complex than just pain.

The problem is that the absence of this person, in an unusual way, causes problems for his family at all levels, especially since most of the disappeared and detainees are men who are often the breadwinners for their families.

The family becomes overwhelmed with the risk of necessary daily needs (economic, social, medical, legal, psychological and emotional).



We shouldn't overlook an important fact here, most of the families of the detainees and the disappeared are from environments that have been affected by the conflict in multiple ways, such as bombing, siege, displacement and asylum, which means more crises, and consequently more needs.

Most of these families, not only do not enjoy, what I would call, the luxury of grief over the absent beloved, but also, they have worries that exceed their ability and tolerance.

NoPhotoZone, as an organization concerned with the affairs of detainees, missing and forcibly disappeared persons, was a common dream for me and my husband Basil Khartabil Safadi. So, after receiving the news of his execution in prison, I and a group believers in the idea, launched the organization as one of the ways to revive his memory, and



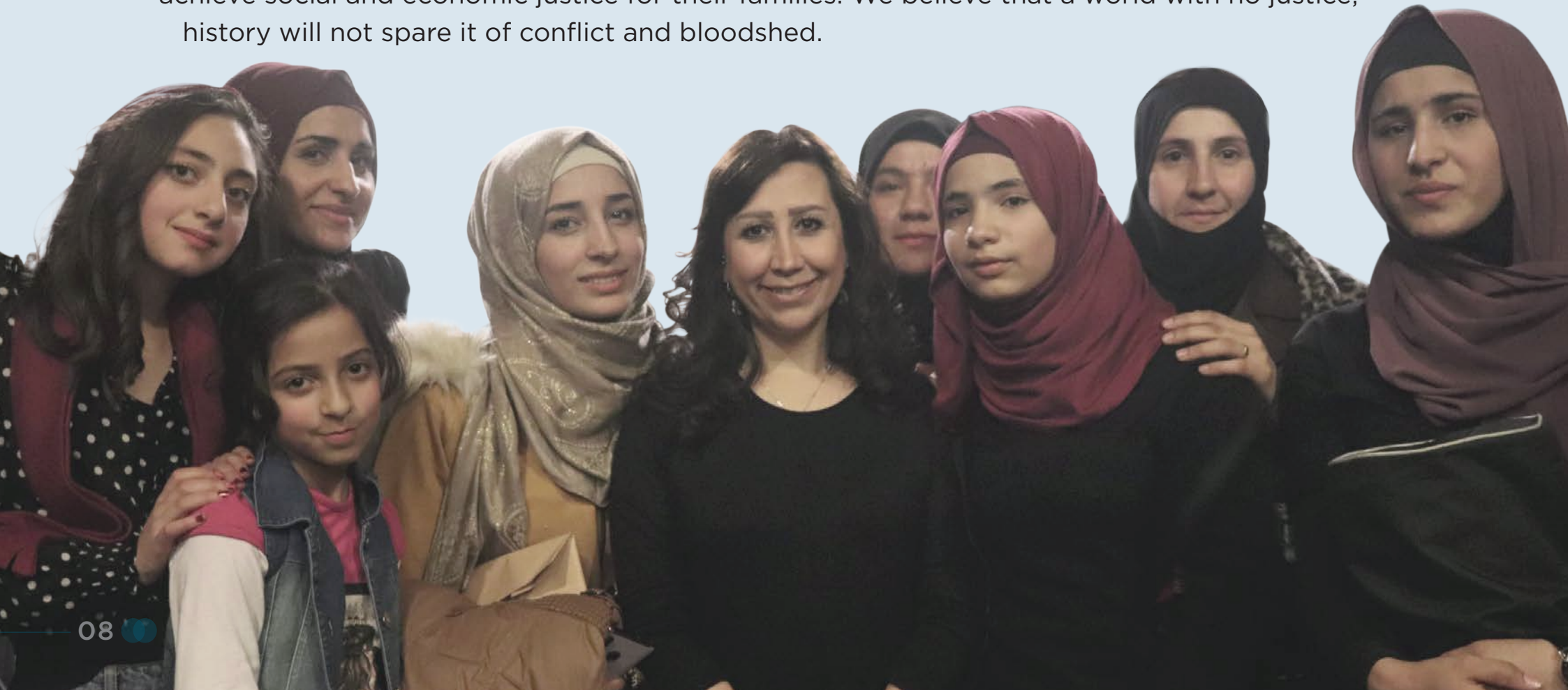


pursue his dreams for justice in the detainees' file. All the founders of NoPhotoZone were affected by detention in some way, and in different ways. All of them believe in the need to work in a unique way on this issue, a way that brings Syrians together in one goal and one pain.

That is what we achieved at the end of 2018, with the support of many friends and organizations.

Now, we see that we have reached the point that we are satisfied with our work so far, despite the short time. The accumulation of experience, greatly contributed to reaping excellent results. We have begun to achieve partial goals, which increase our belief in our ability to achieve our vision, one day.

Our vision remains to reach justice in the file of detainees and forcibly disappeared, as well as, to achieve social and economic justice for their families. We believe that a world with no justice, history will not spare it of conflict and bloodshed.





# our mission

Access to justice in the file of the detainees and forcibly disappeared persons, hold perpetrators accountable, and ensure legal, psychological, social and economic fair living conditions for the families and surviving detainees.

This is done through our concern for the disappeared or the detainee himself and his family, in terms of taking care of all its requirements, and for all its members, in a way that helps to achieve an effective deal with the reality of missing one or more persons in the family.



# Activities:

NoPhotoZone carries out the following specific activities in order to achieve its vision:

**1• Empowering women:** The vast majority of detainees and forcibly disappeared are men who are either heads of families, or members of families and have sisters and mothers. Consequently, the burden placed on the shoulders of women in those families is very heavy, which may start with securing a living for the family, and not end with pursuing the issue of the detainee or forcibly disappeared person. The women empowerment activities carried out by NophotoZone focus on the following:

**a• Legal empowerment:** Women are introduced to the laws related to detention or disappearance in a simple and smooth manner, being that they are not competent in the law. In addition to the





clarification of the legal dimension of cases of arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, exceptional courts and their working mechanisms. They are also introduced to the mechanisms for reporting missing persons, this aspect provides special attention to empowering and enabling women legally in terms of targeting, because they form the largest segment of the families of detainees and forcibly disappeared persons.

#### **b• Psychosocial and social support:**

NoPhotoZone seeks to create an internal unit for psychological and social support, including economic support. Because it is of utmost importance to help women to move from being marginalized victims to becoming actors in their small communities, and able to act responsibly and with awareness of their rights. This will enable them to overcome the psychological, social and even economic consequences of their situation resulting from the arrest or disappearance of members of their families. We often pay attention to this aspect in the mechanism of providing legal training, where a training manual has been devised for the families of the victims, which considers the psychological state and deals with it, but it is not a substitute for a special unit for psychological and social support.





### **C• Capacity-building and training:**

NoPhotoZone provides training and skill development for women with distinct personality, in order to be inspirational inspirers and leaders in their small communities. That is by providing them with the knowledge and skills that they need to present their issues in an objective way, whether within the networks of women they may establish in Lebanon or through the use of various social media platforms.

### **2• Providing legal aid and advice in Lebanon:**

**a• Legal Awareness:** NoPhotoZone conducts training activities to raise the beneficiaries' awareness of the legal framework, mechanisms and procedures for solving legal problems related to civil and personal status resulting from the presence of a missing person in the family (who is often the husband); The most common problems are related to guardianship of children, determination of heirs, divorce, establishment of title, marriage and parentage.

### **b• Direct legal aid:**

Most refugees suffer from legal problems, often, related to the loss of documents and identity papers, or the need for direct legal aid with the authorities of the country of asylum. NoPhotoZone, through its legal assistants, provides legal aid and follows up on related matters.





### 3. Building networks:

NoPhotoZone encourages and enables the beneficiaries of the families of detainees and forcibly disappeared persons to create their own networks, and link these networks with each other under the supervision of the organization. That is in order to obtain greater community support for their just causes raised through these networks. In grounding for this process, NoPhotoZone has succeeded in bringing together loyal and opponent families who share the disappearance of one of their family members by one of the parties. That is in an effort to break the lines of conflict, and bring these families closer and make them meet together. NoPhotoZone has done something similar, by bringing together Lebanese families with Syrian families who lived or are still living in a state of losing a loved one, in an effort to focus on the humanity of the file, and its different victims.



#### **4• Support for youth and adolescents:**

NoPhotoZone supports, trains and enables young people from families of detainees and forcibly disappeared persons, to express their problems, and raise their issues. That is through interactive theater and various arts, such as music and various visual arts. The organization has worked on preparing lists of the younger category of families, and trained them to share stories, create media content, and theatrical performing arts, as one of the ways of using drama for emotional decompression. In fact, this has had a real impact on individuals' personalities and behaviors.

#### **5• Advocacy campaigns:**

NoPhotoZone, through its comprehensive projects of a number of the aforementioned activities and events, implements advocacy campaigns on various digital platforms, using its own website and its various accounts on other social media, in order to spread awareness of legal concepts related to arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, exceptional courts, fair trials, the right to know, human rights in general, and raise the issues of detainees and the forcibly disappeared and their families. Additionally, it produces a number of short films for these campaigns.

We also work on creating networks among the families themselves, to produce coalitions capable of advocating their causes. As well as, we work continuously to join local and international campaigns, and to coordinate, through the advocacy team, with organizations of common interest in order to coordinate efforts.

## 6● Networking:

In implementing its projects, NoPhotoZone is networking with many local, regional and international organizations, as well as, with many actors in the Syrian file at the international level. In addition to raising the issue of detainees and forcibly disappeared persons in international platforms.





## International human rights organizations and associations that we have been networked with:

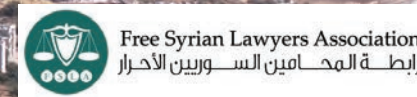
- 1- International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC);
- 2- Amnesty International;
- 3- Human Rights Watch;
- 4- MENA Rights Group;
- 5- Diakonia organization;
- 6- Crisis Action organization;
- 7- United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)





## Local human rights organizations and associations that we have been networked with:

- 1- Damma organization;
- 2- Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression (SCM);
- 3- The Committee of the Parents of the Missing and Disappeared in Lebanon;
- 4- Baladi Organization;
- 5- Syrian Free Lawyers Association;
- 6- Families for Freedom Movement;
- 7- Dawlaty foundation.





# Who are NoPhotoZone targeting, and who are the beneficiaries?

In general, NoPhotoZone targets families of the arbitrary detainees and forcibly disappeared persons of all categories, women, youth and adolescents in Lebanon, and focuses its work on the regions of North Lebanon and the Bekaa.





# Feedback from participants

## Israa:

Thanks to NoPhotoZone, which pleased my heart through my participation in its courses. It opened the path to success for me. We learned from you, that success has secrets, that the impossible can be achieved, and that inspiring ideas need to be instilled in the minds.

## Abeer Hamish:

The sessions that we attended have given us a strong motivation to attend them permanently, and we were always waiting for new things out of them. We watched all the videos that you presented. These sessions gave us a strong impetus to defend our views, and to remain confident that, with cooperation and determination, we communicate our voices and our demands. We are confident now that tomorrow will be more beautiful, with God's help.

## Nour Zaqrif:

The sessions were so beneficial to us, because there were a lot of things that we never knew about before. We have benefited from these informa-

tion, and we were able to benefit the people we know as well. Thank you very much.

## Amna Al-Kahil:

The sessions included useful information. Ms. Nora was very credible, and the group was wonderful and cooperating with us. The important thing is that it is a sincere organization, and it presented a wonderful work.





### **Ahlam Al Qabji:**

The session was very good, we poured out our hearts through it, where, usually, we do not dare to tell anyone what happened to us ..

### **Wafa Al-Haw:**

Through NoPhotoZone, I got to know many people like us, who suffer from the same problems we suffer. There was a window of hope, we comforted each other, and we consoled each other through sessions that we were attending with NoPhotoZon. We felt that there was someone heard our voices when we talked, we felt that there was support, and that there was someone standing with us. Through its goals and sessions, we were able to express ourselves, and to participate. They made us feel that we exist, and

that we matter. There were a lot of things we have learned about through NoPhotoZone.

### **Tahani:**

NoPhotoZone did something we were looking for, but we were lost . It was a supportive environment for us, it provided us with sessions, to enable us of taking steps about how to document and ask about our missing loved ones. It created confidence among the participants.

Dealing with the director of the organization was amazing. She was always with us, and gave us her time to be trainers.

### **Daad Raad:**

NoPhotoZone was a window of hope, through which I knew many things that were unknown to me. Through the organization, I was able to know how to demand the release of detainees, and I was able to transfer this knowledge to many people who did not know as well. I became able to determine the relevant entities that I should addressed to. I have great hope now that one day the perpetrators of violations and crimes who have arrested and tortured people will be held accountable in various courts.

# Our Partners

Donor partners have been a major factor that has contributed to the spread and expansion of NoPhotoZone's work in the Syrian refugee community in Lebanon, in particular. As well as, in keeping the file of detainees and forcibly disappeared persons in circulation on a reasonable scale.

The administration of NoPhotoZone and its team extend their sincere thanks for the appreciated contributions and support for its efforts in the cause of the detainees and forcibly disappeared persons to the following authorities:

- 1- Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs;
- 2- Canadian Ministry of Global Affairs;
- 3- International Commission on Missing Persons (ICMP);
- 4- Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for Support of Human Rights Defenders (Euro-Med);
- 5- French Ministry of Foreign Affairs / French Embassy in Lebanon;
- 6- Impunity Watch Organization.

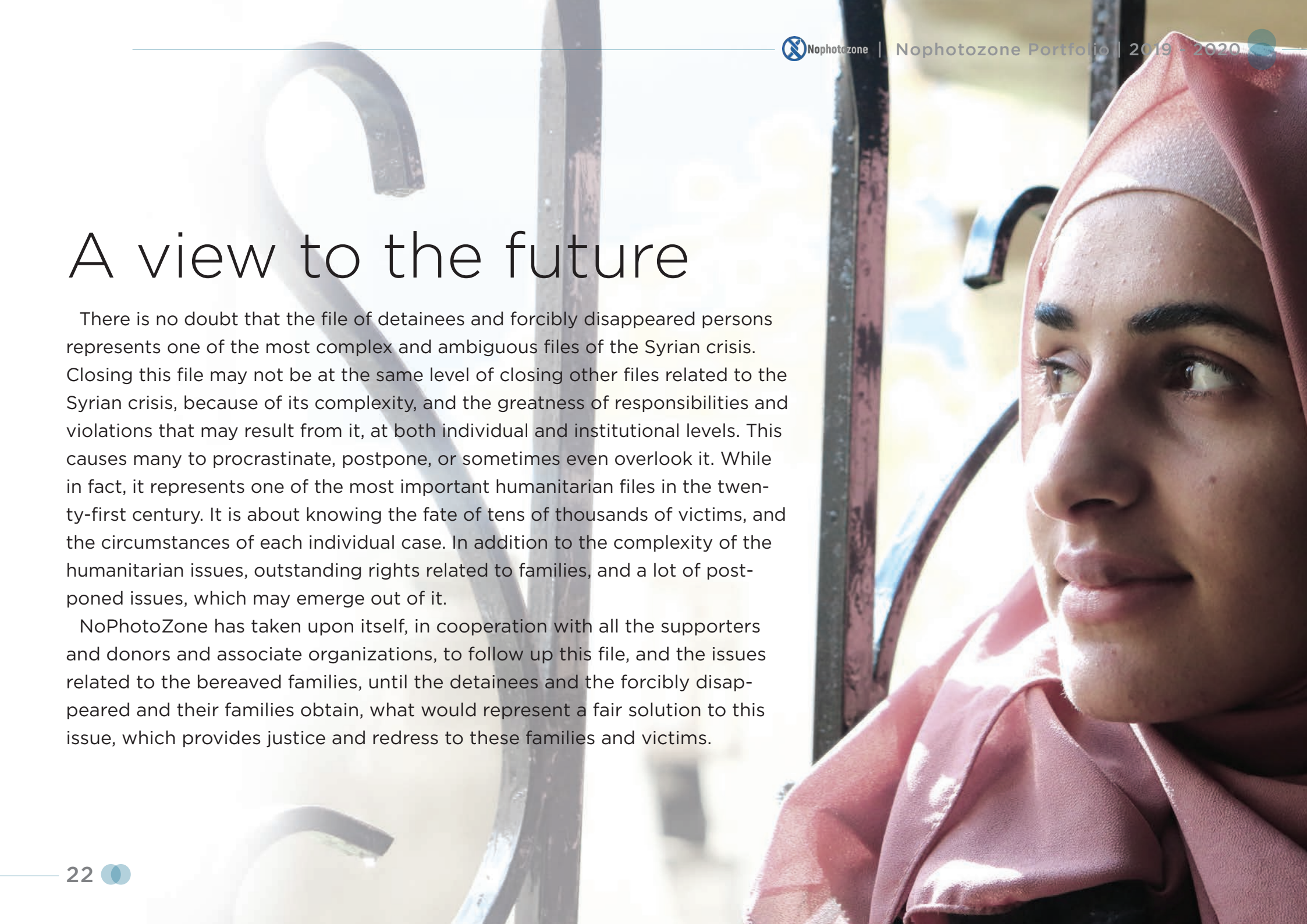




# A view to the future

There is no doubt that the file of detainees and forcibly disappeared persons represents one of the most complex and ambiguous files of the Syrian crisis. Closing this file may not be at the same level of closing other files related to the Syrian crisis, because of its complexity, and the greatness of responsibilities and violations that may result from it, at both individual and institutional levels. This causes many to procrastinate, postpone, or sometimes even overlook it. While in fact, it represents one of the most important humanitarian files in the twenty-first century. It is about knowing the fate of tens of thousands of victims, and the circumstances of each individual case. In addition to the complexity of the humanitarian issues, outstanding rights related to families, and a lot of postponed issues, which may emerge out of it.

NoPhotoZone has taken upon itself, in cooperation with all the supporters and donors and associate organizations, to follow up this file, and the issues related to the bereaved families, until the detainees and the forcibly disappeared and their families obtain, what would represent a fair solution to this issue, which provides justice and redress to these families and victims.



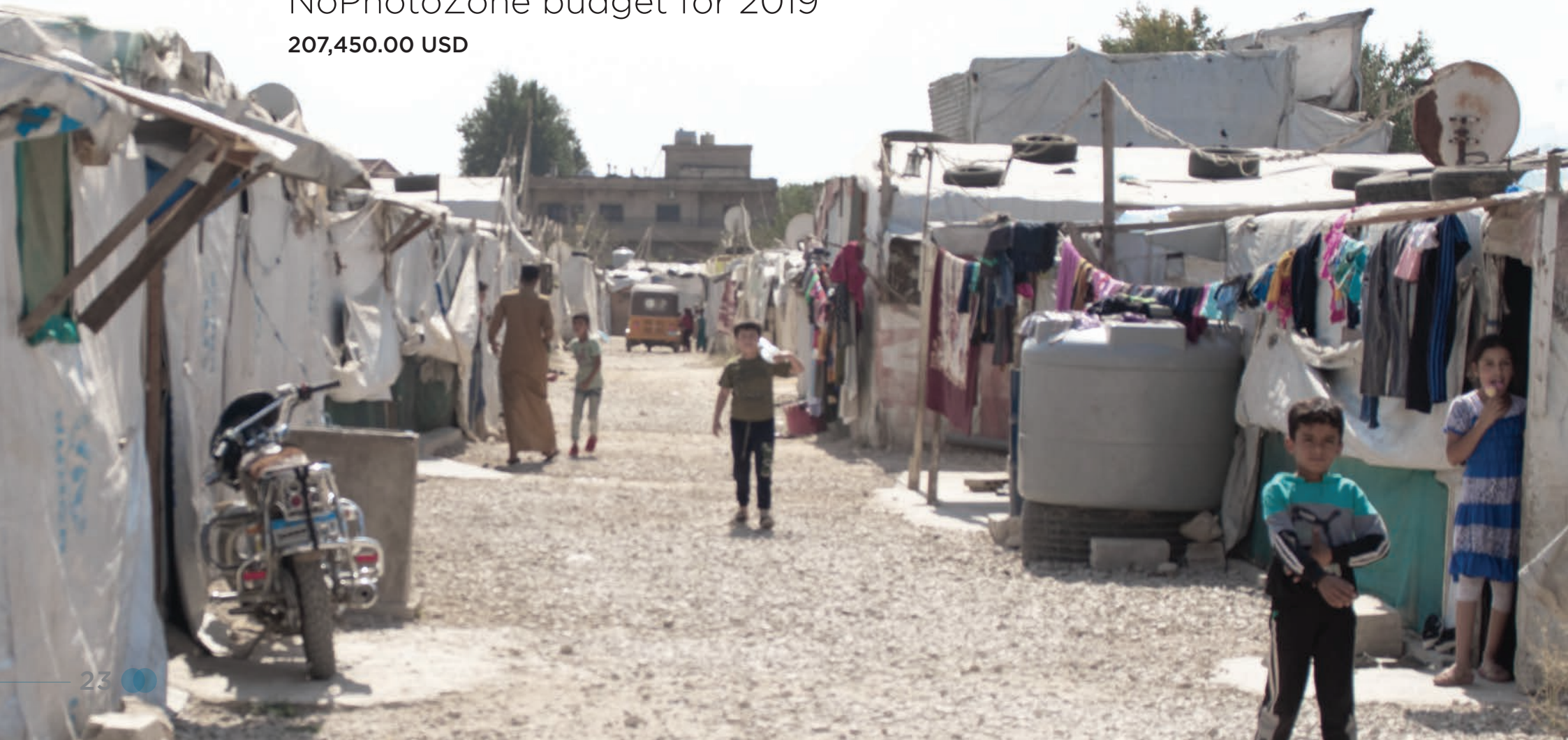




NoPhotoZone believes that the issues of compensation and reparation for families cannot wait until the full justice to be achieved, rather, they constitute a kind of short-term justice that makes the families of the victims feel that they are of concern, and that they are not left for the risk of international balances, and the lack of concern for their file till the states agree. These families need someone to provide them with reparation now, regardless of what comes in the future, but without giving up the dream of achieving full justice.

NoPhotoZone budget for 2019

**207,450.00 USD**







# Nophotozone

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