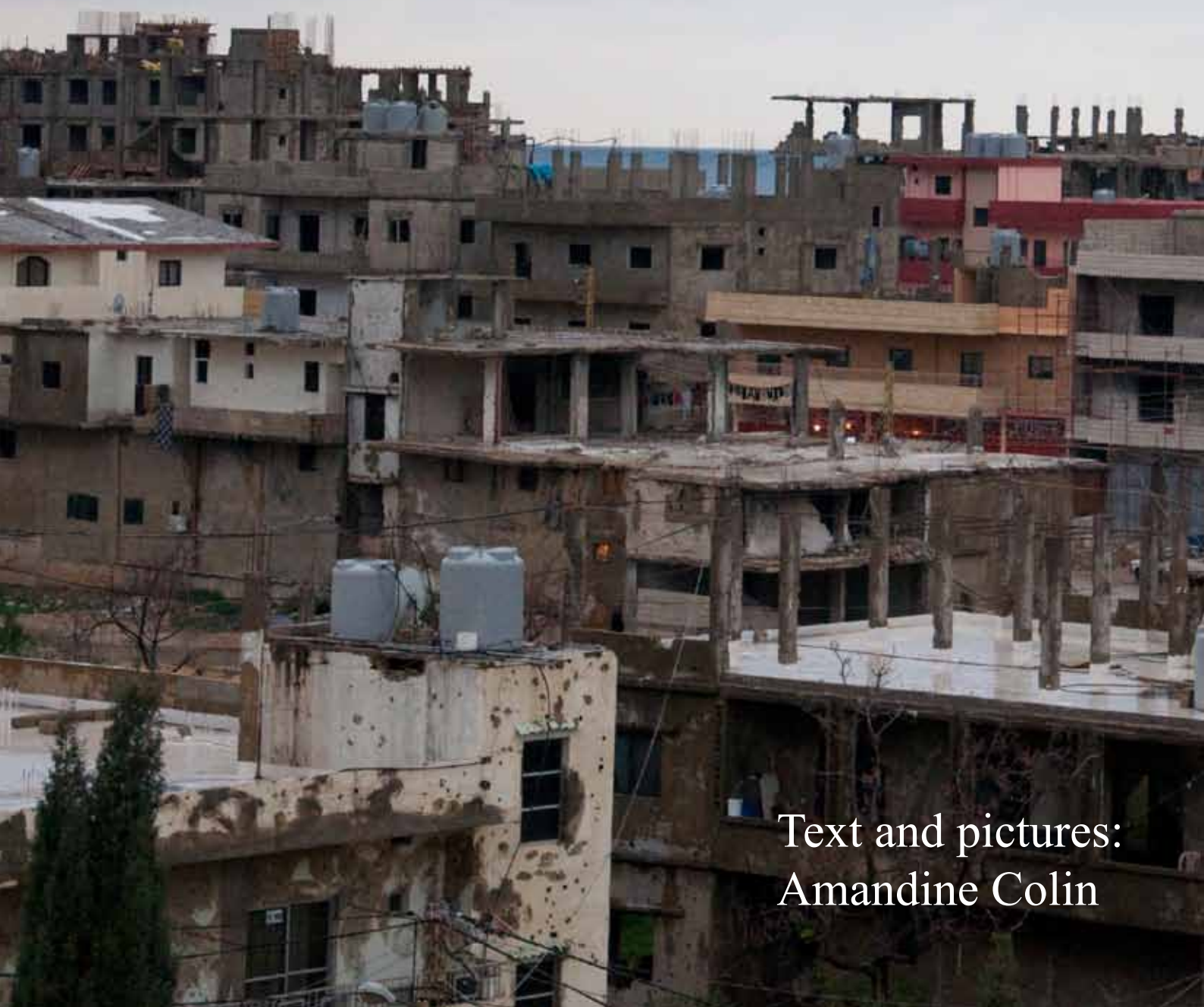


Nahr-el-Bared, inshallah!



Text and pictures:
Amandine Colin



In 2007, the Lebanese army shelled Nahr el-Bared Palestinian refugee camp for three months in order to dislodge the armed group Fatah al Islam. The camp was almost completely destroyed, and most of its inhabitants took refuge in the nearby Beddawi camp. Four years later, some of those refugees have returned to Nahr el-Bared, now completely under the control of the Lebanese army. They are living in rented apartments or in shelters lent to them by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, while they wait for the UN agency to rebuild their dwellings. This is one more appalling situation to add to the many that the Palestinians of Lebanon have lived with for over 60 years. It's not easy for young people to dream dreams when everything around them speaks of war and destruction.





Marwah – 19 – social science student and teacher

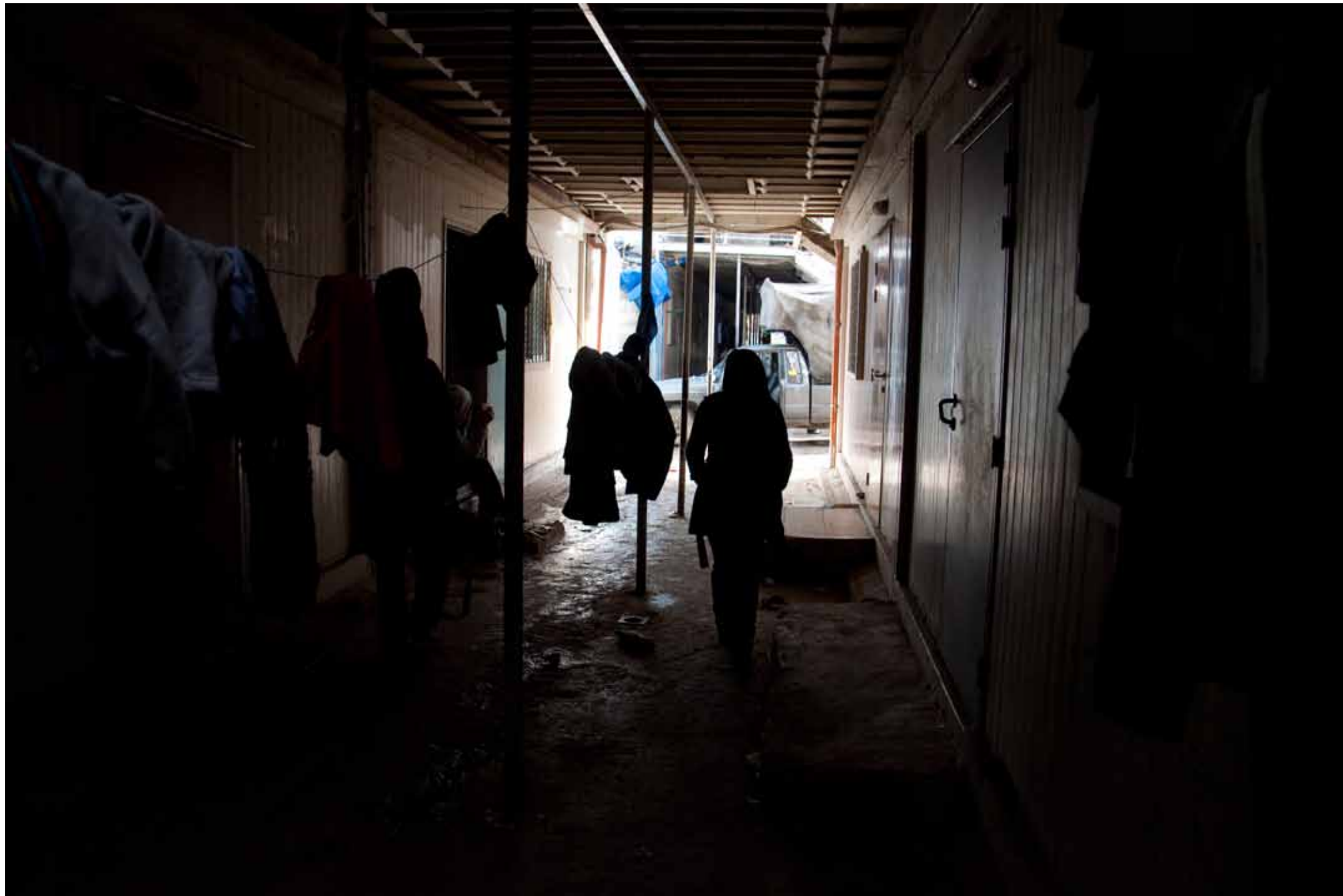
Officially, Marwah is in her first year at a Lebanese university studying social sciences. In fact, she studies at home alone, and works during the day at the Palestinian Children and Youth Institute, where she gives remedial classes to children living in the camp. This enables her to support her family. Marwah is one of the fortunate returnees whose house has already been rebuilt, so she is once again living in her own home.





Hibah - 16 - unemployed





Hibah dropped out of school at the age of 12, and can hardly read or write. She helps her mother at home all day, making meals, doing household chores, baby-sitting, etc. Hibah is the last unmarried daughter of the family. She spends a lot of time with her nieces and nephews.





Hoda - 14 - schoolgirl

Hoda lives with her parents and her two sisters. Her dream is to be a fashion designer. She's learning English, urged on by her mother, who hopes that the international language will help her find work when she finishes her studies. Hoda first went to the Institute a year ago. She works hard there, helping Marwah with the younger children.





Yousef is angry. He's 22 years old and graduated two years ago from a hotel-management school. But he can't find any work. At each job interview the obstacle is his Palestinian nationality. He feels he's going round in circles, looking for a job that he'll never be able to get in Lebanon. His dream is to leave for Europe, to join his brother in the Netherlands, or to marry a European girl and find work abroad. "There's no future in Lebanon for us," he says.

Yousef - 22 - unemployed



Yousef loves football, and has supported Inter Milan since he was a small child. He's a keen player, and trains girls as well as boys at the Institute. For the moment he has to rest because has an injury affecting both legs. The treatment he first received at the camp only made his condition worse. Thanks to a sports physiotherapist he met at the camp in nearby Beddawi, however, Yousef's condition is now improving and he should be able to make a complete recovery.





**Tagrid – 17 –
salesgirl**



Tagrid was one of the young people traumatized most by the 2007 conflict. When she returned to the camp in 2009, she failed her final exams and decided to give up school, despite encouragement from Melad, a tutor at the Institute. Tagrid feels despondent and confused. While awaiting marriage she is working in her parents' clothing shop, thus relieving the workload for her mother, who has many children to look after.



