

SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS: IMPACTS ON LEBANON

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ABSTRACT

SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS: IMPACTS ON LEBANON, by Ali A. Mohamad, 134 pages.

The Syrian refugee crisis, being a byproduct of the war in Syria, has turned out to be one of the most significant humanitarian catastrophes since World War II. How can we assess the impacts that these refugees had on Lebanon? Is the international community fulfilling his responsibilities, at least financially, towards Lebanon? A dominant narrative assumes that refugees levy excessive costs on hosting nations. Lebanon, with an already degraded economy, welcomed the most substantial amount of Syrian refugees compared to the size of the country. Throughout this paper, I find that although the Syrian refugees had negative impacts on some economic aspects, the criticisms are exaggerated. The Palestinian refugee presence, the civil war, the 2006 Israeli war, besides Lebanon's ongoing fragile and corrupt political system imposed massive burdens on the Lebanese economy and infrastructure, even before the initiation of the Syrian crisis. Furthermore, I discuss that some of the policies that Lebanon implemented to alleviate the impacts of refugees were counterproductive and politically biased, paying no attention to potentially positive impacts that Lebanon could have learned from previous Palestinian experience. Recently, the international community tied donations to necessary fiscal reforms in order to restore trust with the Lebanese officials.

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ACRONYMS

EU	European Union
GoL	Government of Lebanon
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
LCRP	Lebanese Crisis Response Plan
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
VASyR	Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Geographical Location and Overview

Located on the East shore of the Mediterranean Sea, Lebanon shares its borders from the North and East with Syria, from the South with the occupied territories of Palestine, and from the West is the Mediterranean Sea. Lebanon is considered as one of the world's smallest sovereign countries with an area of 10,452 km². After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in World War One (WWI), Lebanon, in 1943, gained its independence from France, and later started to struggle with several internal and external problems.¹ These problems began with economic and social instabilities, then followed by the tense relations with the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, in addition to the Palestinian refugee crisis stemming from conflicts in the Middle East region during different periods.

Lebanon's population is estimated to be 6,100,075 as of July 2018, with a population density of 596 per km².² The complex composition of the Lebanese society, regarding ethnic and religious aspects, will have a significant impact on the future alignment of the population during the civil war (1975-1989) in which the previous Palestinian displacements were blamed of being the trigger for its escalation. This

¹ Central Intelligence Agency, "The World Factbook: Middle East: Lebanon," accessed December 21, 2018, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/print_le.html.

² Ibid.

growing Palestinian presence in Lebanon was viewed as a state within a state from a wide variety of Lebanese political parties that opposed their presence.

Refugees: A Spur for Disputes

Consequences of armed conflict are not limited to the loss of human lives. Destruction of infrastructure, displaced people from their homes, in addition to long-term refugee problems are products of war all over the globe. Refugees are not merely the unfortunate byproducts of war but may serve as catalysts for conflict, including the conflict between states.³ Refugees are also recognized as the best-known sufferers of displacement. Refugee issues are of great importance because they seem to have purely human effects, but on the contrary, tend to have devastating adverse outcomes on the host nation. Since ancient times, people were forced to leave their homes seeking a safer place in neighboring lands as a result of different internal disputes. Also, human rights violations have been committed in many countries around the world, whether directed at ethnic, religious, or against a particular regime of ideological orientation.

Currently, the probability of conflicts extending and expanding across national borders is very high. Recent civil wars in Iraq, Syria, and Myanmar, to name a few examples, reflect the massive number of refugees being forced to flee ceding their fundamental civil rights in trade for safety. This flow of refugees can be substantial to the extent of having significant political, security and economic spillover effects on the host nation. Some have suggested that refugee migration can provoke international hostilities

³ Idean Salehyan, "The externalities of civil strife: Refugees as a source of international conflict," *American Journal of Political Science* 52, no. 4 (October 2008): 787-801, accessed December 14, 2018, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25193850>.

between states, including military action, although this claim is still not rigorously tested.⁴

Sociologists argue on how refugees can be a trigger to initiate conflicts within the neighboring states leading to tensions, violence and resulting in regional instability. Politics, one of these triggers, can be the result of refugees sharing the same vision who reassemble outside of their homeland trying to impose their views to achieve their goals, provoking citizens to react.⁵ Economists, on the other hand, claim that refugees seek to compete with the local population by accepting lower wage jobs resulting in increased levels of unemployment. Lacking jobs and resources contribute to escalating the tensions between local citizens and refugees, who have minimal incomes, which lead to violence as the primary consequence. Humanitarian aid to the states helps in mitigating many effects related to these causes.

In recent decades, asylum has been given a more emphasized definition by focusing on the human rights of refugees. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), “an asylum-seeker is someone whose request for sanctuary has yet to be processed.” Lately, issues dealing with refugees have been of great concern to the United Nations (UN) and the World Health Organization (WHO), in addition to other Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO’s) orbiting within the same framework.

⁴ Salehyan, “The externalities of civil strife,” 787.

⁵ Sarah Lischer, *Dangerous Sanctuaries: Refugee Camps, Civil War, and the Dilemmas of Humanitarian Aid* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005).

To lower the possible levels of tension that can arise, nations have sometimes worked on separating refugees from the local environment. Establishing refugee camps near international borders have been considered one of the solutions, although it has proven challenging to accomplish on long terms. Host nation policies focus on short-term solutions while hoping for the rapid end of the neighboring conflict resulting in the refugees return to their home country. Such policies turn out to be inefficient and inappropriate sometimes such as the Palestinian refugee situation in Lebanon, which will be discussed later in this paper. The policy of refugee camps proved that had the establishment of refugee camps been approached from a different perspective; it could have avoided devastating economic, social, and even security results for Lebanon in the long-term. The UNHCR, considered as the world's leading refugee agency, suggests rehabilitation as a primary objective. This view is generally unrealistic. The result was refugees settling in host nation states for prolonged periods that extended more than ten years.⁶

Integration Policies and Strategies

Different states have alternative perspectives on handling refugee issues. Many countries consider that the easiest way to deal with refugees is by placing them in camps located in remote areas. On the contrary, other states have implemented local integration

⁶ Karen Jacobsen, "The Forgotten Solution: Local Integration for Refugees in Developing Countries," (Working Paper No. 45. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Geneva, Switzerland, July 2001), accessed September 21, 2018, <http://www.unhcr.org/3b7d24059.html>.

policies which allowed refugees to settle within local communities.⁷ Systems permitting refugees to settle in local societies can evolve later to include their right to employment, own private properties, in addition to educational privileges. Still, the main concern for the host states on long-term refugee issues is their willingness to acquire the host nations' nationality which then entails having their protection provided legally by the host states.

Placing refugees in remote camps can help in preventing a more devastating economic consequence on the local environments' infrastructure. On the other hand, this process will facilitate the reassembling of opposing political personnel and leveraging the possibilities of using these camps as bases for conducting military instability actions against either the host states or across the borders touching their home regime. By dispersing refugees within local communities, risks, primarily military, are less influential and can be mitigated.

So, what interpretations do host nations have when preferring one solution to another? Can there be any internal flaws regarding refugee crisis policies? According to the 1951 Geneva Convention related to refugee laws, integration policies and strategies are considered enduring and are highly encouraged by the UNHCR. Without precisely declaring local integration in the Geneva Convention, article 34 states that “the Contracting States shall as far as possible facilitate the assimilation and naturalization of refugees. They shall, in particular, make every effort to expedite naturalization

⁷ Alexandra Fielden, “Local Integration: An Under-reported Solution to Protracted Refugee Situations,” (Research Paper No. 158, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Geneva, Switzerland, June 2008), accessed September 25, 2018, <http://www.unhcr.org/486cc99f2.html>.

proceedings and to reduce as far as possible the charges and costs of such proceedings”.⁸ Analyzing this quote can reflect the desired end state by having the refugees merge with local communities, a solution that Lebanon rejects due to its contradictions with the law of the Right of Return for Palestinians formulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), 1948, in addition to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966).

The wide-ranging certainty among the international community is that refugees cause devastating economic, social, and security impacts on the host nations. Very clearly, as an example, the Government of Tanzania (GOT) commented on refugees from Burundi after tensions in 2015 elections. The Government of Tanzania (GOT) stated that “the refugee problem seems to have no end, it is a threat to host governments, a reality which needs the appreciation of the world community.”⁹ Another example is the Turkish Governments’ request for assistance due to the overwhelming Syrian refugee influx by addressing that “the international community should not only provide assistance to foot the bill, but they need to step up and open their countries to these refugees.”¹⁰

⁸ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), *Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees* (Geneva, Switzerland, UNHCR, 2010), accessed September 26, 2018, <http://www.unhcr.org/3b66c2aa10.html>.

⁹ Melissa Phillips, “The Role and Impact of Humanitarian Assets in Refugee hosting Countries,” Working Paper No. 84, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Geneva, Switzerland, March 2003), accessed October 2, 2018, <http://www.unhcr.org/3e71f7fc4.html>.

¹⁰ Kevin Sullivan, “Turkey looks for international aid, and countries to host refugees, in Syrian crisis,” *Washington Post*, May 15, 2013, accessed October 4, 2018, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/turkey-looks-for-international-aid-and-countries-to-host-refugees-in-syrian-crisis/2013/05/15/02c92392-bcb5-11e2-97d4-a479289a31f9_story.html.

However, on the other hand, the Conclusion on Local Integration distributed in 2005 distinguishes the “positive contributions, including economic benefits, which refugees who integrate locally or who are allowed to become self-reliant could make to host countries and communities.”¹¹ For instance, the Palestinian cause that placed a significant burden on the Lebanese state and upset the social structure of the Lebanese society also had encouraging impacts. Although their presence has resulted in the consumption of the necessary infrastructure of water, electricity, and roads, moreover, camps have taken an essential part of the Lebanese geographical area. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), intended for Palestine Refugees, was established in 1949. The UNRWA projects provide health care and educational services to Palestinians who were expelled out of their land. Indirectly, these projects aided Lebanon financially, moreover, by benefiting from the cheap Palestinian labor and expertise. In addition to that, the significant funds deposited into Lebanese banks, which were directed to the Palestinians during the days of Yasser Arafat, the former Palestinian President, were invested in many projects and employed many workers.

Chronology to Introducing International Laws on Refugees

Despite refugee laws and means of protection were established since ancient times, yet, like all laws, they often clash with the reality of their application on the ground. Although asylum is a legitimate right, some difficulties hinder its

¹¹ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Executive Committee of the High Commissioner’s Programme, “Conclusion on Local Integration,” No. 104 (LVI), October 2005, accessed September 30, 2018, <http://www.unhcr.org/4357a91b2.html>.

implementations thus making it truly unstable. Attempts are made by host nations to circumvent the law of asylum preferring not to apply them in many cases. The development of the right of asylum passed several stages before it became a legal right for refugees.

Although considering the right of asylum as an old concept, it was not until the twentieth century that these concepts became international law. Displacement of enormous numbers of people from one place to another was the main factor that helped in accelerating these concepts. The massacres in the world have contributed to crystallize these concepts and push them towards the legal right. Nowadays, this is known as the right of asylum. Citizens, and as a result of the inability of their nations to protect them, were oppressed and sought protection in other countries where they resorted.¹²

It was not until the period following the World War One (WWI) that refugee issues started to be addressed as an international concern, more precisely within the foundation period of the League of Nations in 1920 as an outcome of the World War One (WWI) through the Treaty of Versailles. Since then, the problem of asylum progressed slowly and sporadically. Establishment of the UNHCR, in 1945, was in parallel with the foundation of the UN aiming at finding durable solutions to refugee problems. However, the UN adopted a set of standards and conventions, the most important being the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), Geneva Conventions of 1949, International Humanitarian Law and other conferences concerned with the rights and needs of refugees. Governments have allowed the UNHCR to assist those on its territory

¹² الامم المتحدة، الاعلان العالمي لحقوق الانسان الصادر في 10 كانون الاو
[Universal Declaration of Human Rights, United Nations, 10 December 1948].

through direct international support or exceptional support via the host nation.

Humanitarian aid led some host countries to offer refugees the possibility of residing permanently in addition to granting citizenship and job opportunities in their territories.¹³

When the international community realized the need to create a network of legal institutions and systems to provide solutions for refugee problems, the turning point occurred in 1951 with the establishment of the UNHCR and the adoption of the UN Convention on the Status of Refugees. The 1951 UN Convention defines refugees as persons:

Owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.¹⁴

The convention, for the first time, initiated a legal framework for the protection of refugees within international standards. The Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, established in 1967, came to supplement the Geneva Convention which has already granted refugee rights in multiple domains. The process was composed of two phases: first, to identify the refugee status and determination, and second, determine the type of protection a refugee must have. These two phases requested efforts from the host nation, in addition to efforts from the UNHCR thus forming part of the 1951 Geneva

¹³ [Geneva Convention of Refugees, United Nations, 28 July 1951], Article 1. المادة الاولى 13

¹⁴ Nasser Yassin, "101 Facts and Figures on the Syrian Refugee Crisis," Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs, American University of Beirut, January 2018, accessed November 4, 2018, https://website.aub.edu.lb/ifi/publications/Documents/books/20180601_101_facts_and_figures_on_syrian_refugee_crisis.pdf.

Convention. These phases are also closely related and linked to the principles of non-refoulement,¹⁵ moreover, giving refugees fundamental rights in the host nation-state once recognized as a refugee. In 1967, the non-refoulement principle was adopted by the General Assembly in the UN.¹⁶ This declaration on Territorial Asylum specifies that “No person shall be subjected to measures such as rejection at the frontier or if s/he has already entered the territory in which s/he seeks asylum, expulsion or compulsory return to any State where s/he may be subjected to persecution.”

Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon

The twentieth century was filled with many displacement movements caused by permanently armed conflicts around the world and the persecution inflicted on people. We recognize that the Second World War (WWII), with all its tragedies and brutalities, led to an unprecedented mass exodus, which has made the issue of refugees a top priority at the international level. Another example in the Middle East region is the Palestinian refugee issue. Several global and regional circumstances observed, led to the forced emigration of Palestinians from their historical land.

For more than 60 years, displaced Palestinian refugees due to the Arab-Israeli wars fled to several countries seeking safe havens. When expelled from their homes in 1948 during the “Nakba” or the Palestinian “catastrophe,” the Palestinians did not envision remaining refugees all those years after being promised to return to their

¹⁵ Non-refoulement represents the commitment of the international community to assure that refugees are not returned to danger areas or are subject to persecution.

¹⁶ Yassin, “101 Facts and Figures on the Syrian Refugee Crisis.”

homeland on the hands of the Mujahideen and the Arab armies. However, the results were contrary to their expectations, and they had to resort to neighboring Arab countries such as Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Egypt, in addition to the non-occupied part of Palestine in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. This migration was followed in subsequent years by other movements, the 1967 war as an example, that augmented the sufferings of Palestinian refugees and upraised the pressure on the host countries.

In July 2014, the number of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon was estimated to be 450,000 roughly, which is around 10% of the Lebanese population. These refugees were distributed within the country's 12 refugee camps. These camps suffer from severe problems to include poor housing conditions, unemployment, overcrowding, and poverty.¹⁷ On the other hand, these camps allowed the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) and the government to have improved control over the refugees settling in this area. Palestinians, considered as foreigners in Lebanon, have no legal identity in the Lebanese social and economic system, which results in being deprived of several prominent civil rights. By considering them as foreigners, Lebanon releases itself from essential duties and tasks regarding refugee conventions. It is significant to annotate that, among all Arab countries, Lebanon is the only country that treats Palestinian refugees as foreigners concerning working rights and owning properties.¹⁸ According to the UNHCR,

¹⁷ United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), "Where We Work," July 1, 2014, accessed October 18, 2018, <https://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/lebanon>.

¹⁸ Jad Chaaban, Hala Ghattas, Rima R. Habib, Sari Hanafi, Nadine Sahyoun, Nisreen Salti, Karin Seyfert, Nadia Naamani. "Socio-Economic Survey of Palestinian Refugees," (Report, American University of Beirut and United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, December 2010), accessed November 8,

“Palestinian refugees in Lebanon continue to face acute socioeconomic deprivation and legal barriers to their full enjoyment of a broad range of human rights.” In Lebanon, Palestinian refugees, as well as their Lebanese-born children, are banned from obtaining the Lebanese citizenship.¹⁹ Furthermore, Palestinians cannot access public and social services nor can the Palestinian children attend Lebanese public schools.²⁰ Most important is the Palestinians prohibition for purchasing or even inheriting properties in Lebanon.

In 1990, Fares Boueiz, the Lebanese minister of Defense, was the first to communicate situations that intended at determining the Palestinian status quo in post-war Lebanon. In an interview, he stated that “absorption of 400,000 to 500,000 Palestinians would have serious consequences” and concluded that “Lebanon cannot assimilate Palestinians and blend them into the Lebanese identity.”²¹ Later, Emile Lahoud, the former Lebanese president, in his address to the Beirut community leaders in November 1999 underlines that “We cannot accept a settlement without the sacred right of return of Palestinian refugees to their land.” Well along, Prime Minister Rafic Al-

2018, http://www.ceplb.org/public/uploads/files/3108_AUB_UNRWA_report_final_draft.pdf.

¹⁹ Citizenship in Lebanon is derived exclusively from the father. A Palestinian refugee father transmits his stateless status to his children, even if the mother is a Lebanese citizen.

²⁰ U.S. Department of State, “Lebanon 2015 Human Rights Report,” 2015, accessed November 19, 2018, <https://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2015humanrightsreport/#wrapper>.

²¹ Daniel Meier, “Al-Tawteen: The Implantation Problem Asan Idiom of the Palestinian Presence in Post-Civil War Lebanon (1989-2005),” *Arab Studies Quarterly* 32, no. 3 (Summer 2010): 145-162.

Hariri stated “Lebanon will never, ever integrate Palestinians. They will not receive civil or economic rights or even work permits. The integration will take the Palestinians off the shoulders of the International agency which has supported them since 1948.”²²

However, despite all these restrictions, and according to a poll in October 1999, 96% of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon said that the only country they will head to if they are going to leave Lebanon is Palestine.²³

Palestinian presence in Lebanon has contributed to significant sources of instability. Palestinians played a substantial role in the outbreak of the Lebanese civil war in 1975. The Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), with its militant groups, moved their resistance movement to Lebanon after the 1970 Black September conflict fought in Jordan between the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and the Jordanian Armed Forces (JAF).²⁴ Since then, they settled in refugee camps which remained outside the Lebanese authority, in which Lebanon only had control on the camp’s perimeter using checkpoints, concrete barriers, and concertina wire.

Moreover, new waves of Palestinian refugees in Syria were forced to displace again to Lebanon after being affected by the armed conflict that took place in 2011 and led to the aggravation of this migration. In 2017, and to provide the required assistance

²² Simon Haddad, “The Origins of Popular Opposition to Palestinian Resettlement in Lebanon,” *The International Migration Review* 38, no. 2 (Summer 2004): 470-492, accessed November 29, 2018, www.jstor.org/stable/27645386.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Sara Jones, “The PLO in Lebanon,” Palestine Facts, accessed October 19, 2018, http://www.palestinefacts.org/pf_1967to1991_lebanon_plo/.

for the additional Palestinian refugees, the UNRWA requested US \$ 411 million for humanitarian support.²⁵

All this occurred within an era that Lebanon had never witnessed such a sharp internal, regional and international dissection in his recent history. Moreover, failure to provide sufficient financial aid by international organizations contributed to worsening issues dealing with refugees in Lebanon. Since that time Lebanon did not change or even improve the policies of dealing with refugees. This long-standing experience with Palestinian refugees composed the political framework for shaping the way Lebanon approached the influx of Syrian refugees.²⁶ Thus, Syrians can have clear expectations for what is anticipating for them in the future regarding having stateless children, limited job opportunities, and also nationality limitations. All this, as seen by observers, can be the trigger for having poor communities that are vulnerable to terrorist organizations investment or even having refugees exposed to sexual abuse in the countries where they fled. These possible situations that refugees can face turn out to be contrary to what they expected once they crossed the international border seeking a place of safety.²⁷

²⁵ United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), “PRS in Lebanon,” accessed October 18, 2018, <https://www.unrwa.org/prs-lebanon>.

²⁶ Al-Azza, Nidal, Manar Makhoul, and Amaya El-Orzza, eds., “Palestinian Refugees from Syria: Ongoing Nakba, Ongoing Discrimination,” *al-Majdal*, no. 56 (Autumn 2014), accessed November 11, 2018, <https://www.badil.org/phocadownload/badil-new/publications/periodicals/al-majdal/al-majdal-56.pdf>.

²⁷ Gaim Kibreab, “Displacement, host governments’ policies, and constraints on the construction of sustainable livelihoods,” *International Social Science Journal* 55, no. 175 (July 2004): 57-67, accessed November 6, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2451.5501006>.

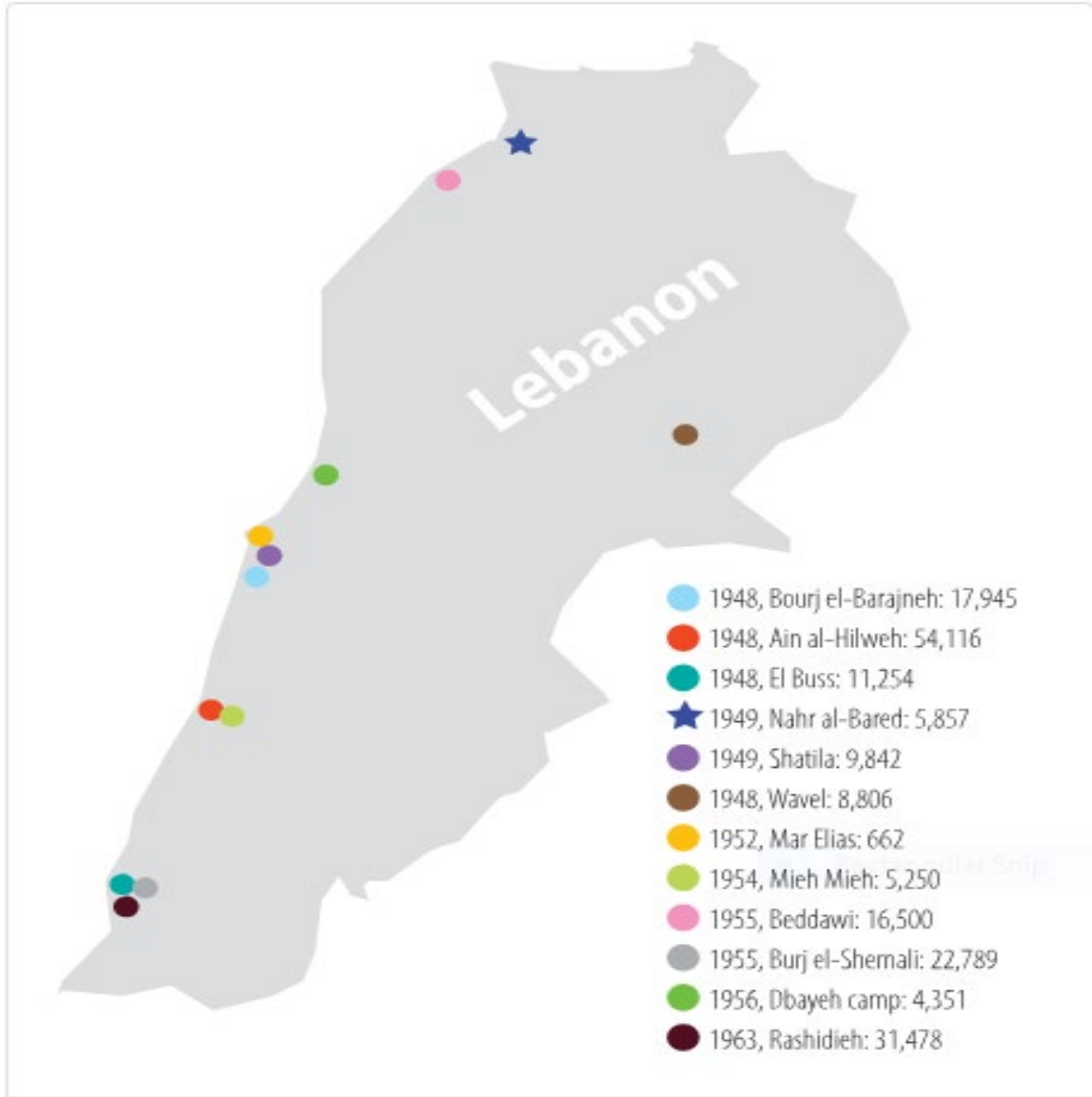


Figure 1. The 12 Palestinian Refugee Camps in Lebanon

Source: Jean Dagher, "Lebanese Armed Forces Implementing Instruments of National Power as Lines of Effort to Engage a Palestinian Refugee Camp," *Military Review* (July-August 2018): 96-109, <https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Journals/Military-Review/English-Edition-Archives/July-August-2018/Dagher-Lebanese/>.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

For decades, researchers have analyzed the consequences of displaced personnel on host nations. Eras of civil conflict and persecution frequently generate population displacements and massive refugee migrations across international borders. Civil wars in Afghanistan, the Balkans, Sudan, and Liberia, to name a small number of examples, have significant ramifications for countries in the area as individuals leave their households seeking safety somewhere else.

However, bulk refugee movements; wars in Afghanistan, Rwanda, and Mozambique have produced more than one million refugees respectively.²⁸ Therefore, internal political turmoil can have substantial spillover effects for countries in the international system and may provoke robust reactions when external expenses are high. Still, unlike having several effects or outcomes for refugees, the majority of developing countries have a consensus that there are no possibilities for their naturalization regardless of the exile time. Refugee host-nation countries have their policies designed in a way to deny rather than endorse the integration of refugees when it comes to responding to public concerns on the costs that refugees impose.²⁹

²⁸ Salehyan, “The externalities of civil strife,” 787.

²⁹ Michaela Hynie, “Refugee Integration: Research and Policy,” *Journal of Peace Psychology* 24, no. 3 (2018): 265-276, accessed December 10, 2018, <https://psycnet.apa.org/fulltext/2018-39059-002.pdf>.

Refugees: A Trigger for Global Conflict

During the Cold War, numbers of refugees increased steadily and were getting close to an estimate of 18 million in 1990. Refugee numbers, at its ultimate, surpassed the residents of the Netherlands, as an example, and had the refugees settled in a single country, would then be the 59th most populous country worldwide. However, emigrants are not uniformly spread across states. Countries such as Pakistan and Jordan held more than 1 million refugees each, from Afghanistan in the 1970s and Palestinians by 1967 respectively. It is also noted that refugees are mostly concentrated in some of the least urbanized countries such as Tanzania, Zaire, and Malawi in Africa that were hosts to unusually large refugee populations.³⁰

In 2016, according to the UNHCR, 65.6 million people were displaced throughout the world within which 22.5 million fled from internal clashes, persecution, or even natural catastrophes. Statistics done by the UNHCR in 2016 showed that 84% of refugees, no matter what the reason is, consider neighboring nations as a first choice for their heading. Still, two main controversial questions arise and reflect the nation's plausible concerns regarding refugees. Are host communities' security and job vacancies threatened by the refugee influx? Do the refugees generate new ideas, provide expert workers, and improve local markets?³¹

³⁰ Salehyan, "The externalities of civil strife," 789.

³¹ Jennifer Alix-Garcia, Sarah Walker, and Anne Bartlett, "How Refugee Camps Benefit Host Communities," *VoxDev*, November 16, 2017, accessed September 30, 2018, <https://voxdev.org/topic/labour-markets-migration/how-refugee-camps-benefit-host-communities>.

Security Studies for Refugee Impact on Host Nations

There is a wide range of studies on the implications of refugee migration including social issues, economic competitions, and security challenges. Refugees are not only the unfortunate by-products of confrontations but may also function as catalysts for conflict, including tensions between countries. As for security issues, studies found that refugee migration can spark off international aggressions between countries, including military action. Refugee-sending countries might as well launch military strikes on neighboring territories seeking refugees and rebels settling among them. In 1982, the Israeli invasion of Lebanon was mainly driven by the aspiration to clear refugee camps of Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) forces. This military invasion resulted in having large areas of South Lebanon occupied for two decades. Another study analyzes that despite having the majority of refugees never participating directly in conflict, still, some refugees seek shelter in refugee camps that often serve as a double-purpose for militant groups who may launch attacks from there. This depends on the host state refugee policy which can either facilitate or hinder such actions, the Rwandan Hutu refugees in Zaire and Tanzania as an example.³² The Rwandan invasion of Zaire in 1996 was driven by the aspiration of attacking refugee camps, accused of hiding militants, to flush out rebel groups among the people, while Rwandan refugees fleeing to Tanzania did not spread conflicts.³³

³² Scott Straus, "Dangerous Sanctuaries: Refugee Camps, Civil War, and the Dilemmas of Humanitarian Aid," *Political Science Quarterly* 121, no. 3 (Fall 2006): 527-529, accessed October 1, 2018, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20202748>.

³³ Salehyan, "The externalities of civil strife," 788.

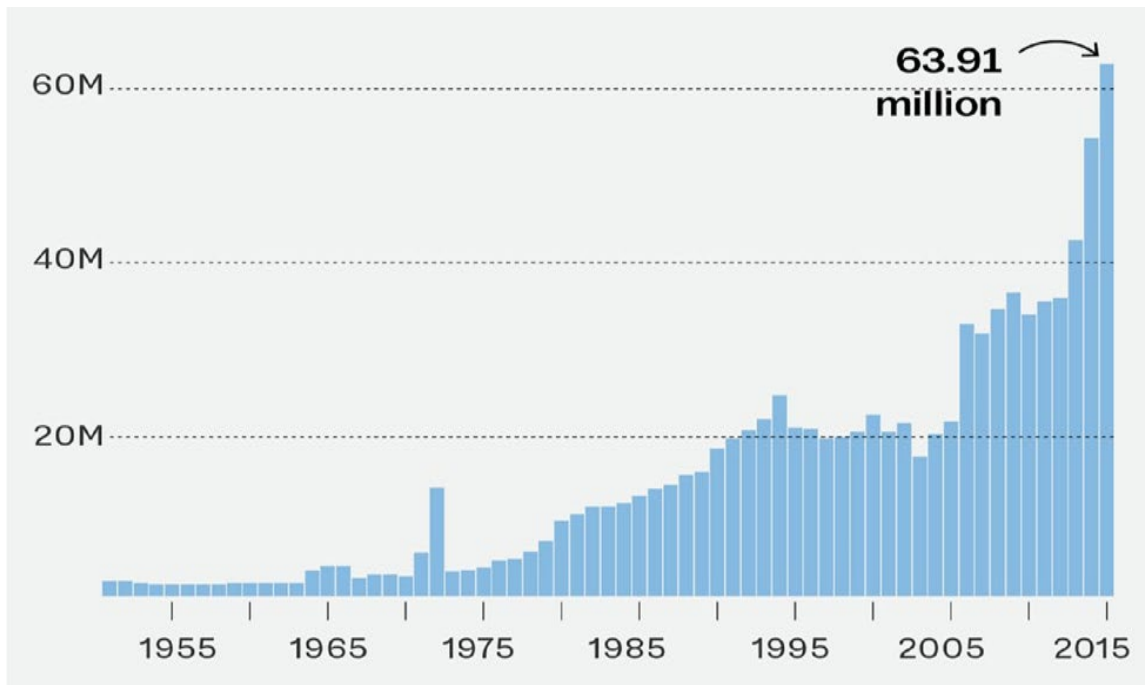


Figure 2. Historical Global Refugee Crisis Proportions

Source: Zack Beauchamp, “9 maps and charts that explain the global refugee crisis,” *Vox*, January 30, 2017, <https://www.vox.com/world/2017/1/30/14432500/refugee-crisis-trump-muslim-ban-maps-charts>.

Economic Studies for Refugee Impact on Host Nations

Africa predominantly was the heading of many researchers who seek to study different types of refugee impacts on host nations. Several African countries have experienced short and long-term refugee crisis due to recurring conflicts. As an example, Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya, established in 1992, hosted asylum-seekers from South Sudan. At the end of January 2018, the population in Kakuma surpassed 185,000.³⁴ After

³⁴ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), “Kakuma Refugee Camp and Kalobeyei Integrated Settlement,” accessed October 2, 2018, <http://www.unhcr.org/ke/kakuma-refugee-camp>.

being accused of stealing the host nations' livestock and polluting the water, the South Sudan refugees started competing for making coal out of wood and trading it for food threatening resources for the host population. This triggered tensions between refugees and the Kenyans to rise as refugees are now considered harmful.³⁵

Furthermore, refugees may cause undesirable health consequences for host countries. Since refugee encampments are frequently congested and lack hygiene standards, this results in generating circumstances ripe for infectious syndromes. A variety of empirical researches focused on African countries, observe that civil wars considerably escalate the rate of illness and mortality within the country undergoing war in addition to its neighboring states. Also, refugees contribute to the spread of sicknesses such as HIV/AIDS, cholera, and malaria besides several other transmittable diseases.³⁶

Refugee movements can impose profound economic problems to host countries. While international support might help mitigate these concerns, refugee-receiving countries, which most probably represent the world's most deprived nations, often tolerate a considerable amount of the costs to sustain this influx. The analysis shows that lower income countries receive 84% of the world's refugees, although recently, refugee

³⁵ Dr. John Mwaruvie and Peter Kirui, "The Dilemma of Hosting Refugees: A Focus on the Insecurity in North-Eastern Kenya," *International Journal of Business and Social Science* 3, no. 8 (April 2012), accessed December 12, 2018, http://www.ijbssnet.com/journals/Vol_3_No_8_Special_Issue_April_2012/18.pdf.

³⁶ Zaryab Iqbal and Christopher Zorn, "Violent Conflict and the Spread of HIV/AIDS in Africa," *The Journal of Politics* 72, no.1 (January 2010): 149-162, accessed December 16, 2018, https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1017/s0022381609990533?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents.

numbers are increasing in high-income countries.³⁷ A relevant study illustrates that civil wars have destructive impacts on trade, investments, and the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth in bordering states.³⁸ The analysis also shows that refugees require not only humanitarian aid provided by host countries but also demand public services and threaten natural resources, which leads to competing for employment and consequently initiates a conflict with local citizens.³⁹

Refugees are mostly viewed as unwelcomed guests from a host nation's perspective. Studies argued that refugee presence could have a cultural and social threat to the host country, hence triggering internal ethnic conflicts. States where ethnic partitions are deeply embedded, massive unpredictable migrant arrivals may alter the fragile ethnic composition. One study shows that the ethnic linkages between citizens of Lebanon and Syria are robust in such that any activity engaged against a specific group in Syria can directly impact its similar sect in Lebanon. Although Lebanon had struggled to stay neutral regarding the Syrian crisis, such ethnic ties prevent this strategy from being executed properly.⁴⁰

³⁷ "Refugee Integration: Research and Policy," 265.

³⁸ James C. Murdoch and Todd Sandler, "Civil Wars and Economic Growth: Spatial Dispersion," *American Journal of Political Science*, 48, no. 1 (January 2004): 138, accessed December 16, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0092-5853.2004.00061.x>.

³⁹ Adrian Martin, "Environmental Conflict Between Refugee and Host Communities," *Journal of Peace Research* 42, no. 3 (May 2005): 329-346, accessed December 14, 2018, <https://www.projectgaia.com/files/EnvironmentalConflictRefugeesHostCommunities.pdf>.

⁴⁰ William Young, David Stebbins, Bryan Frederick, and Omar Al-Shahery, *Spillover from the Conflict in Syria: An Assessment of the Factors that Aid and Impede*

However, refugees can also have positive impacts on host populations in some domains. Economically, refugees can provide local communities with skills and knowledge from which they can benefit. A study shows that introducing agricultural skills in making use of vacant land by converting it into rice swamps was done by refugees from Liberia and Sierra Leone who fled into Guinea in massive numbers exceeding 500,000 refugees in 1999.⁴¹ Another study that reflects the positive economic impact on host nations is the Bhutan refugees in Nepal. In 1991, over 100,000 refugees from Bhutan escaped to Nepal seeking asylum. They contributed positively in the local environment by familiarizing new techniques for the cultivation of cardamom, a plant with aromatic seeds used in producing spices. This crop contributed strongly to the local economy, 29.2% of household incomes, which made Nepal the largest producer of cardamom in the world with more than 53% of the world's production.⁴² Researches point out that Syrian refugees had an overall negative influence on Turkey's unemployment rate and caused an increase in the prices of basic survival needs. Still, they were able to boost the economy through businesses and deposits in the Turkish

the Spread of Violence (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2014), accessed December 18, 2018, https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR609.html.

⁴¹ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, Standing Committee, "Social and economic impact of large refugee populations on host developing countries," EC/47/SC/CRP.7, January 6, 1997, accessed October 2, 2018, <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/excom/standcom/3ae68d0e10/social-economic-impact-large-refugee-populations-host-developing-countries.html>.

⁴² Ghanashyam Sharma, Uma Partap, D.R. Dahal, and Eklabya Sharma. Urga P. Sharma, "Declining Large-Cardamom Production Systems in the Sikkim Himalayas," *Mountain Research and Development* 36, no. 3 (August 2016): 286-298, accessed January 12, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/mounresedeve.36.3.286>.

banks that surpassed US \$408 million in 2016. Guven Sak, the Managing Director of the Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey (TEPAV), stated “now there is enough evidence that they are now doing something positive and contributing to the Turkish economy. It is not just people on the street; many people came with some funding, and figured out ways to invest it.”⁴³

Another domain where refugees contribute positively is observed in the host nation’s development in infrastructure and educational sectors. A study on Tanzania reflects how countries can benefit ultimately to a huge influx of refugees even if an “open door policy” is implemented. In 1959, two years before gaining its independence, Tanzania received an enormous influx of refugees from South Africa. Tanzania received refugees from Burundi in 1972 and lately from Rwanda in 1993. In addition to giving refugees access to land and providing naturalization, Rwanda took advantage of international humanitarian agencies, the European Union (EU) and World Food Program (WFP) and UNHCR as examples, to invest heavily in road networks, airstrips, telecommunications, and trades. The Government of Tanzania (GOT) invested in educational facilities and improved teaching environments.⁴⁴ Another study conducted on the refugee presence in Turkana county, northwest Tanzania, reflects the positive effects that refugee camps had on the host communities’ health and nutritional status, in

⁴³ İhsan Kuyumcu, and Hülya Kösematoğlu, “The Impacts of the Syrian Refugees on Turkey’s Economy,” *Journal of Turkish Social Sciences Research* 2, no. 1 (April 2017): 79-80, accessed December 13, 2018, <http://dergipark.gov.tr/download/article-file/307136>.

⁴⁴ Jennifer Alix-Garcia, and David Saah, “The Effect of Refugee Inflows on Host Communities: Evidence from Tanzania,” *The World Bank Economic Review* 24, no. 1 (2010): 148-170, accessed December 15, 2018, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40647424>.

addition to other economic benefits. The research finds that Turkana people in Kakuma Town had improved nutrition and fewer concerns about economic welfare than the Turkana people living in rural locations. Also, results show that many Turkana people find employment in the Kakuma refugee camp, such as motorbike taxis, water carrying, besides dish and clothes washing.⁴⁵

In a closer view at the Middle East region, the Palestinian and recently the Syrian refugee issues reflect examples on how refugees can affect host nations addressed by several studies. In addition to having Syrian refugees spread throughout Europe and North America, Jordan, Syria's neighbor, became economically vulnerable due to a sudden increase in public services demand after receiving a huge influx of refugees. After receiving the Palestinian refugees in 1948 and Iraqi refugees in 1990 and 2003, Syrian refugees increased burdens on the Government of Jordan by increasing expenditures, raising Jordan's public debt from US \$18.5 Billion in 2011 to US \$35.2 Billion in 2016.⁴⁶

Immigration Impacts on the Host Nation

Similarly, studies have investigated the impact of immigration on the local population. Results concluded that large-scale immigration could influence economic

⁴⁵ Rieti G. Gengo, Rahul C Oka, Varalakshmi Vemuru, Mark Golitko, and Lee T. Gettler, "Positive effects of refugee presence on host community nutritional status in Turkana County, Kenya," *American Journal of Human Biology* (August 28, 2017), accessed January 6, 2019, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1002/ajhb.23060>.

⁴⁶ Wa'ed Alshoubaki, and Michael Harris, "The impact of Syrian refugees on Jordan: A framework for analysis," *Journal of International Studies* 11, no. 2 (April 2018): 154-179, accessed December 17, 2018, https://www.jois.eu/files/11_454_Alshoubaki%20et%20al.pdf.

conditions similar to a massive inflow of refugees. However, there are major differences in that immigrants have the freedom to choose where to settle, in addition to the voluntary act of leaving their home country to reside in their desired destination. Immigrants, unlike refugees, initiate this movement only if they anticipate better living conditions in the nation to where they head. Studies summarize that immigrants, as well as refugees, compete for employment and consequently local resources, but with no clear evidence on the relationship between unemployment rates and immigrants.⁴⁷ A large number of studies recognized that immigration, in the short term, has negative consequences regarding unemployment, while on the medium and long-term, the inflow of new labor contributes to economic progress. Many publications argue that the influx of labor from central and eastern Europe, a lower paid labor force, to western Europe countries will decrease wages. The United Kingdom, Ireland, and Sweden who did not undertake immigration restrictive policies in 2004 experienced a positive economic growth which motivated other western European countries to follow similar regulations.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ George J. Borjas, "Economic Theory and International Migration," *The International Migration Review* 23, no. 3 (Autumn 1989): 457-485, accessed December 14, 2018, https://www.jstor.org/stable/2546424?read-now=1&seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents.

⁴⁸ Rossitsa Rangelova, "Labor Migration from East to West in the Context of European Union Integration," *Journal for Labor and Social Affairs in Eastern Europe* 12, no. 1 (2009): 33-56, accessed December 17, 2018, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43293299>.

Conclusion

It is obvious from the literature review presented that there is no clear agreement as to how displacement movements can impact refugee-receiving states. Although having several studies and analysis for refugee situations from all over the world, it is still difficult to assess refugee influences on host nations, especially the economic sector. The lack of relevant data is due to different refugee policies adopted by the receiving countries. Although refugees and immigration influxes have shared consequences, which helps to understand the problems better, still this is limited due to the differences in the incentives that lead to displacement. This research paper will focus on the impacts that refugees can have on host nations, taking into consideration the “open-border” policy adopted by Lebanon, in addition to viewing Syrians as guests. This policy frees Lebanon from the responsibility of treating Syrians according to refugee regulations required, especially being a non-signature for the 1951 Refugee Convention.⁴⁹

The UNRWA is responsible for providing health care, education, and other social services for Palestinians in the counties of Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, in addition to the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Aid for Palestinians settling outside of these countries is the responsibility of the UNHCR. The UNRWA receives funding voluntarily from the UN member states in addition to having budgets regularly from the UN.⁵⁰ The Scandinavian

⁴⁹ Marwa Boustani, Estella Carpi, Hayat Gebara, and Yara Mourad, “Responding to the Syrian crisis in Lebanon,” (Working Paper, International Institute for Environment and Development, London, UK, September 2016), accessed November 30, 2018, <http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/10799IIED.pdf>.

⁵⁰ United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), “Who We Are,” accessed October 4, 2018, <https://www.unrwa.org/who-we-are>.

countries are the most generous countries in providing financial aid to the UNRWA and are considered as the highest concerning a country's GDP. However, the United States, after being also one of the world's largest donors for the UN health services and schools for Palestinians with an annual contribution of US \$368 million, has cut the funds for UNRWA. After having the international community condemn President Trump's decision on recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, the U.S State Department noted that they will provide US \$60 million while withholding the other US \$65 million for now.⁵¹ This decision, taken by President Trump's administration in August 2018, will increase the suffering of Palestinian refugees in addition to the local communities that are within the UNRWA region.⁵²

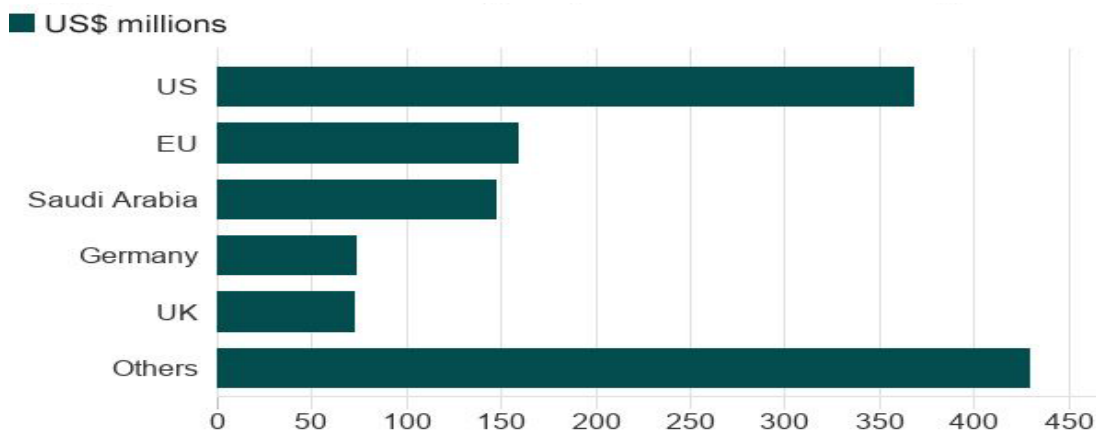


Figure 3. Biggest Donors to the UN agency for Palestinian Refugees

⁵¹ Synergia Foundation, "US aid to UNRWA stopped," accessed January 9, 2019, <https://www.synergiafoundation.in/news-analysis/us-withholds-aid-palestine>.

⁵² Daniel Estrin, "Trump Administration Cuts Funds for Palestinian Refugee Aid Program," *NPR*, September 2, 2018, accessed October 5, 2018, <https://www.npr.org/2018/09/02/644085172/trump-administration-cuts-funds-for-palestinian-refugee-aid-program>.

Source: Created by author using data from United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), “Who We Are,” accessed October 4, 2018, <https://www.unrwa.org/who-we-are>; Synergia Foundation, “US aid to UNRWA stopped,” accessed January 9, 2019, <https://www.synergiafoundation.in/news-analysis/us-withholds-aid-palestine>.



Figure 4. UNRWA’s Area of Operations

Source: Bassem Aly, “Following ‘unprecedented’ U.S. funding cuts to UNRWA, Palestinians suffer the implications,” *Ahram Online*, July 11, 2018, <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/2/8/306706/World/Region/Following-unprecedented-US-funding-cuts-to-UNRWA,-.aspx>.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Forced displacements have tended commonly to increase in the last couple of decades, influenced by the improved military technology, complex environments, in addition to other overlapping external factors. Academics, specialists, and policy-makers have more and more acknowledged the significance of understanding the complex effects and financial burdens on the citizens of refugee-receiving countries. Despite having a large number of discussions regarding refugee impacts, still, there is a shortage in the quantitative economic data available.⁵³ The reason behind this lack of information is mainly related to having the bulk of refugee movements take place in the less developed and conflict-ridden countries, where statistic agencies that compile data do not exist. This chapter outlines the methodology in which this research study is presented. Specifically, this chapter presents the research question in addition to the guiding sub-questions, the sources used, as well as the procedures tracked for data collection. The framework for this study was conducted to collect trustworthy, reliable, and authentic data that helps support the analysis done. This descriptive study seeks to demonstrate what effect the massive Syrian refugee influx had on the Lebanese economic sector, furthermore

⁵³ Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, Isabel Ruiz, Carlos Vargas-Silva and Roger Zetter, *Assessing the Impacts and Costs of Forced Displacement*, vol. 1, *A Mixed Methods Approach* (Washington, DC: World Bank, May 1, 2012), accessed December 18, 2018, <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/0486/be4862795c77f0835215f2e5cc3374f037b2.pdf>.

investigate the Lebanese integration policies and examine the adequacy of support from the international community.

Research Questions

As identified in the first chapter and regarding the relevant historical examples presented in the literature review, this study attempts to answer the following primary research question: Is the international community contributing effectively in mitigating negative implications on Lebanon due to the Syrian refugee crisis? Then correspondingly seeks to answer the sub-guiding questions: Did Lebanon's implementation of new refugee policies help in alleviating negative consequences? Has Lebanon adequately applied the lessons learned from the previous Palestinian refugee presence in benefiting from this crisis?

To be able to answer these questions, a wide selection of relevant and dependable sources was chosen for this study. Seeking evidence from other perspectives supports to avoid being biased throughout the process of tackling the research questions and sub-guiding questions. The analyzing time-frame used for the Syrian crisis will be limited to the period extending from March 2011, resembling the initiation of the Syrian crisis, and bounded by the Spring of 2019, since the crisis is ongoing. During this study, statistics and other pertinent information used before the year of 2011 will help in the comparison done for analyzing the economic impact regardless of other influencing conditions that might have happened coincidentally within the same time-frame analyzed.

Data Collection Procedures

The study combines a mixed method approach comprised of both documented and statistical investigations. Documents include reports, dissertations, scholarly articles, statistical figures set up in research reports, in addition to supplementary information offered from multiple Lebanese related ministries and other Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's). These references provide detailed facts regarding the Lebanese economic status as well as the Syrian and Palestinian refugee conditions in Lebanon. The Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees (VASyR) is a cooperative work between the UNHCR, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), and the World Food Program (WFP) on multi-sectorial household reviews conducted with the registered Syrian refugees, in addition to that awaiting-registration in Lebanon.⁵⁴ The statistics collected through the survey created by the VASyR in Lebanon in 2017 represent the primary data source that will be referred to during the study. The variables used as of this survey take account of Syrian refugee households, gender, age, health, education, and employment. Details regarding these variables will be presented later throughout the study, besides being depicted in figures and tables. A secondary source of data will be derived from the Lebanese Central Administration of Statistics (CAS) that serves as a public administration within the Council of Ministers. It provides relevant economic and social statistics at the national level in compliance with international recommendations and standards. It was the absence of a clear refugee-dealing policy

⁵⁴ Humanitarian Data Exchange, "Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees (VASyR) in Lebanon," January 6, 2016, accessed December 20, 2018, <https://data.humdata.org/showcase/vulnerability-assessment-of-syrian-refugees-vasyr-in-lebanon>.

regarding early Syrian influxes in 2011 that led to having the Government of Lebanon (GoL) lack essential and precise statistical information. Since the GoL is limited and short on related sources, additional supportive data used will be the studies and scholarly articles executed by subject matter experts that will help to fill the identified gaps. It is this important purpose that makes the Lebanese refugee-related ministries and municipalities heavily reliant on information provided by the UNHCR and the World Bank (WB) reports. Studies and analysis from the already stated sources will also serve as an essential reference for computing financial aid required by contributing countries in order to relieve burdens on the Lebanese economy.

Data Analysis Procedures

In order to estimate the effect of Syrian refugees on Lebanon's economy, a straightforward approach will be by comparing Lebanon's economical rates before the first arrival of Syrian inflows in 2011 with the present time. However, this type of comparison will not lead to reliable results and will be biased because there are undoubtedly other factors that might have happened concurrently leading to economic corruption. It is imperative to remind that Lebanon has already experienced a previous Palestinian refugee influx during several intervals earlier, which justifies that a comparison limited to an era before and after Syrian arrivals will not be precise. A better approach to determine the accurate assessment of the influence of Syrian refugees will be by taking the impact of Palestinian refugees that happened in the previous decades into account. By accumulating these consequences with other critical causes that altered the Lebanese economy previously, in addition to internal and external historical factors, the results concluded might be more appropriate. The stated assessment method can reflect

on how well or bad the Syrian presence was for the local community and economy regardless of any other factor, along with better anticipation regarding international fiscal contributions needed. This process helps in diminishing or even eliminating other conditions that might have affected Lebanon within the same period and provides actual effects of the Syrian refugees on Lebanon's economy.

Since the VASyR survey, first conducted in 2013, is considered as a critical tool for determining planning decisions and program design, the GoL considers it as the cornerstone for support in Lebanon.⁵⁵ In order to be more specific in this methodology, the analysis referred to will try to keep the focus on the 2014-2015 period in which refugee numbers became more stable related to the first crisis inflow numbers. In the early years following the crisis initiation, figures were characterized by a rapid increase which makes it difficult for organizations to keep updated on accurate statistics. Another reason for concentrating the study statistics to this era is related to the decision taken by the GoL in starting to implement new restrictive border policies in January 2015 regarding the Syrian refugee's entrance. Furthermore, by seeking UNHCR reports, Lebanon was on track urging the international community to step up and provide humanitarian and financial aid. For the above-stated reasons laid the importance of the UNHCR reports within this study since they are considered as the reliable sources

⁵⁵ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and World Food Program (WFP), *VASyR 2017: Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon*, ReliefWeb, December 15, 2017, accessed December 17, 2018, <https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/vasyr-2017-vulnerability-assessment-syrian-refugees-lebanon>.

adopted by the GoL in order to have a better estimation on the annual situation of Syrian refugees in Lebanon.

A significant amount of information, mainly quantitative data linked to refugee camp impacts on local communities remains anonymous. The preceding analysis illustrates the crucial relationship between refugees and the host population regarding quantitative impacts, although it cannot be precisely valued. Generally, the bulk of the earlier researches concentrate on qualitative impacts.⁵⁶ It is due to the refugees' dispersion within the local societies, outside refugee camps, which makes it challenging to manage these numbers and assess the needs regarding measurable data. This is the case in Lebanon, a country that assumed an "open-door" policy since 2011, which added to a torn political split on establishing refugee camps. The result was by having the government force entrance constraints in 2015 after realizing that situations were getting out of hand.

Conclusion

Knowing that there is no ideal technique to examine the economic effects of refugees on host population, still, this methodology strives to achieve a close approximation to the current situation. By inspecting factors that influenced the changes in Lebanon's economic conditions throughout the previous decades, I seek to clear out as much as possible the vague information that leads to confusion and consequently a misunderstanding in analyzing the current situation. Providing robust quantitative

⁵⁶ Alix-Garcia, Walker, and Bartlett, "How Refugee Camps Benefit Host Communities."

analysis of Syrian refugees provides a better understanding of the Lebanese government's refugee altering policies. When combining these policies with the previous Palestinian refugee experience that Lebanon encountered, the GoL's behavior and concerns will be more comprehensible. In the next chapter, characterizations, and implications of Palestinian as well as Syrian refugees will be described, before estimating the effects on the Lebanese economy and society, to conclude with the anticipated contributions required by international partners.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

Introduction

This chapter presents a more detailed analysis of the Syrian refugee's impact on Lebanon. After starting with a general overview regarding the Syrian catastrophe causes; information on land border demarcation issue will be presented before summarizing the critical turning points in Lebanon's economy. Later, significant economic impacts of Palestinian refugees will be provided, being considered as the main foundations for the Lebanese economic decline in addition to the civil unrest and political turmoil. The primary policies that Lebanon tracked while dealing with the upcoming Syrian influx will also be outlined.

Moreover, analysis of the effects of Syrian refugees on the environment will focus principally on the domains of unemployment, infrastructure, in addition to health and educational anxieties. These exemplify the precarious points in which Syrian refugees were condemned for having worsened their situations. The positive impacts that refugees can generate to the Lebanese society and the techniques to benefit from this significant influx will also be offered. Furthermore, the contributions of the international community and the voluntary repatriation of Syrian refugees will be summarized at the end of this chapter.

Syrian Crisis Overview

Syria, with its geographic proximity, language similarities, and historical relations with Lebanon, resulted in having its neighbor as the first choice for Syrians trying to

escape the conflict. The Syrian crisis that started in the form of isolated antigovernment protests against the Syrian regime in 2011 escalated severely to a massive scale war. What began with anti-Assad graffiti writings in the remote city of Dara'a, southwest Syria, by groups of youth proved that Syrian president Bashar Al-Assad was mistaken in his belief that Syria's stability originates from the alignments between the country and the people's foreign policy.⁵⁷ However, the Syrian president was one of the few Arab leaders to talk about reform necessities after the Arab Spring commenced in Tunisia. Still, transitioning protests into violence spreading led people to question "What are they fighting about?"⁵⁸

With a population of around 21 million, Sunnis are the predominant sect constituting around 74% of the Syrian population, with the Shia and Alawite constituting another 13%, the Christians 10%, and Druze 3%.⁵⁹ The Assad family have been in power since 1971 when Hafiz Al-Assad, Bashar's father, became president supported by the Ba'ath political party.⁶⁰ Coming from an Alawite minority sect, in a country with a Sunni

⁵⁷ Ufuk Ulutaş, "The Syrian Opposition in the Making: Capabilities and Limits," *Insight Turkey* 13, no. 3 (Summer 2011): 87-105, accessed January 5, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26331707>.

⁵⁸ Kathy Gilsinan, "The Confused Person's Guide to the Syrian Civil War," *The Atlantic*, October 29, 2015, accessed October 31, 2018, <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/10/syrian-civil-war-guide-isis/410746/>.

⁵⁹ U.S. Department of State, "Syria," September 13, 2011, accessed November 2, 2018, https://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2010_5/168276.htm.

⁶⁰ Council on Foreign Relations, "Civil War in Syria," updated October 29, 2018, accessed October 29, 2018, <https://www.cfr.org/interactives/global-conflict-tracker#!/conflict/civil-war-in-syria>.

majority, the family long considered the Army, the Alawite minority, and the Ba'ath party as the three pillars for the Syrian regime.⁶¹

The demonstrations that happened in Syria were considered by observers as a continuation of protests that had led to the fall of dictator presidents in Tunisia and Egypt, in 2011, respectively. James D. Fearon, Professor of Political Science at Stanford University, states that “civil wars often start due to shocks to the relative power of political groups that have strong, pre-existing policy disagreements. War then follows as an effort to lock in or forestall the other side’s temporary advantage.”⁶² However, this is contradicting to what happened in Syria. Although President Bashar Al-Assad reacted by releasing political prisoners, this did not stop the citizens’ complaints and protests which raises the question of the actual cause for such clashes.⁶³ The disputes developed to become violent insurgencies threatening not only the Syrian regime but also the neighboring countries.

General Economic Impacts on Lebanon

With the Syrian crisis being the most massive populace displacement in the world since World War II, Lebanon, in July 2015, had the highest refugee percentage per capita

⁶¹ Kirill Semenov, “Who Controls Syria? The Al-Assad family, the Inner Circle, and the Tycoons,” *Modern Diplomacy*, February 14, 2018, accessed November 3, 2018, <https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2018/02/14/controls-syria-al-assad-family-inner-circle-tycoons/>.

⁶² James Fearon, “Syria’s Civil War,” Project on Middle East Political Science, 2016, accessed December 21, 2018, <https://pomeps.org/2013/12/18/syrias-civil-war-2/>.

⁶³ Gilsinan, “The Confused Person’s Guide to the Syrian Civil War.”

with a ratio of one Syrian refugee to every four Lebanese people.⁶⁴ Before the Syrian crisis, Lebanon hosted Iraqi refugees due to the civil unrest in Iraq at the beginning of the 21st century, in addition to the Palestinian refugees stated earlier. Iraqi refugees were estimated to be 10,000 in total. This number increased to 400,000 in 2013 when the Syrian refugee numbers increased in Lebanon. In early 2014, figures became close to around a million refugees. This makes up around 25% of the Lebanese population.⁶⁵ These massive numbers of refugees strained the already deteriorated public services in Lebanon caused by the civil war, Palestinian refugees, and the Israeli war on Lebanon in 2006 that degraded infrastructure.

Since 1860, Standard and Poor (S&P) has served as an American financial services company that provides credit ratings on sovereign countries and publishes financial researches. In November 2013, Standard and Poor (S&P) cut Lebanon's credit rating from a "B" grade to "B-," meaning that Lebanon faces major economic uncertainties. The rating "AAA" is considered as the strongest and most stable while the worst and riskiest is a "D." The higher the rating, the stronger is the countries abilities to repay its debts compared to a "D" rating which means that a country is suffering from

⁶⁴ Boustani et al., "Responding to the Syrian crisis in Lebanon," 7.

⁶⁵ Samantha Monk, Justin Davis, Talley Lattimore, Taylor Budak, Susan Calhoun, John Miller, Ibrahim Nasr, Laura Pintar, Mike Waalkes, and Jennifer Rimer, "Factors of Instability in Lebanon," (SIS-793 Intelligence Analysis, School of International Service, American University, Washington, DC, May 1, 2016), accessed December 1, 2018, <http://www.databank.com.lb/docs/Factors%20of%20Instability-American%20University-DIA-2016.pdf>.

worsening economic conditions.⁶⁶ Standard and Poor state that “The Syrian civil war has led to a steady deterioration of Lebanon’s macroeconomic fundamentals, including its fiscal balances and growth prospects.”⁶⁷ Nowadays, the 1/3 of Lebanon’s GDP is spent on Syrian refugees. This will necessitate the Lebanese government in having an increase in public spending and consequently public debts most specifically in electricity expenditures.⁶⁸ Moody’s, founded in 1909, is another American financial services and business company that provides financial analysis and credit ratings.⁶⁹ On 13 December 2018, Moody’s changed Lebanon’s financial stability from stable to negative due to the GoL’s weak fiscal metrics that hinders the release of international loans.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ Kimberly Amadeo, “Standard and Poor’s: The Company and its Ratings,” *The Balance*, September 10, 2018, accessed November 30, 2018, <https://www.thebalance.com/what-are-sandp-credit-ratings-and-scales-3305886>.

⁶⁷ Standard and Poor, “S&P cuts Lebanon’s credit rating by one notch to B-, outlook negative,” *Al Arabiya*, November 2013, accessed November 15, 2018, <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/business/economy/2013/11/01/S-P-cuts-Lebanon-s-credit-rating-by-one-notch-to-B-outlook-negative.html>.

⁶⁸ Monk et al., “Factors of Instability in Lebanon,” 18.

⁶⁹ Moody’s Analytics, “Essential insight serving global financial markets,” accessed December 18, 2018, <https://www.moodyanalytics.com/>.

⁷⁰ Trading Economics, “Lebanon-Credit Rating, 2018,” accessed December 18, 2018, <https://tradingeconomics.com/lebanon/rating>.

Table 1. Bond Rating

Moody's	S&P	Meaning
Investment Grade Bonds		
Aaa	AAA	Bonds of the highest quality that offer the lowest degree of investment risk. Issuers are considered extremely stable and dependable.
Aa1, Aa2, Aa3	AA+, AA, AA-	Bonds are of high-quality by all standards, but carry a slightly greater degree of long-term investment risk.
A1, A2, A3	A+, A, A-	Bonds with many positive investment qualities.
Baa1, Baa2, Baa3	BBB+, BBB, BBB-	Bonds of medium-grade quality. Security currently appears sufficient, but may be unreliable over the long term.
Non Investment Grade Bonds (Junk Bonds)		
Ba1, Ba2, Ba3	BB+, BB, BB-	Bonds with speculative fundamentals. The security of future payments is only moderate.
B1, B2, B3	B+, B, B-	Bonds that are not attractive investments. Little assurance of long-term payments.
Caa1, Caa2, Caa3	CCC+, CCC, CCC-	Bonds of poor quality. Issuers may be in default or are at risk of being in default.
Ca	CC	Bonds of highly speculative features. Often in default.
C	C	Lowest rated class of bonds.
-	D	In default.

Source: Paul Tracy, "Bond Rating," Investing Answers, <https://investinganswers.com/financial-dictionary/bonds/bond-rating-5008>.

Land Border Demarcation Issue

Lebanon shares a border of 403 km with Syria from the North and East of Lebanon.⁷¹ Due to the Sykes-Picot agreement in 1916 between France and Britain, the Middle East Arab States were mandates of either one of the two countries.⁷² After

⁷¹ CIA, "The World Factbook: Middle East: Lebanon."

⁷² The Avalon Project, "The Sykes-Picot Agreement: 1916," Lillian Goldman Law Library, Yale Law School, 2008, accessed October 27, 2018, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/sykes.asp.

Lebanon gained its independence in 1943, France did not resolve the border issue between Lebanon and Syria to be a clear demarcation, especially on the Eastern Lebanese border. No formal boundary was drawn, but the separation between Lebanon and Syria was limited to administrative divisions due to the mutual influences between the two populations across the border who were observed as establishing a single country.⁷³

In Lebanon, the community is composed of 57.7% Muslims (of which 28.7% are Sunni, and 28.4% are Shia) in addition to other minorities, 36.2% Christians (with the Maronite being the largest group), and 5.2% Druze.⁷⁴ This delicate balance between all ethnicities in Lebanon is what gives the country its distinction from other countries in the region. Throughout decades, several conflicts happened within different religious groups due to issues related to power or land disputes, the civil war as an example. Such conflicts started during the Ottoman Empire (1516-1920), before the French colonization, and lasted until the civil war that ended in 1989 with the Ta'if agreement⁷⁵ negotiated in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. These conflicts led to the repositioning and resettlement of the 18 various Lebanese religious sects to become dominant in places depending on religion.

⁷³ Carla Humud, *Lebanon*, Congressional Research Service Report for Congress (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, updated October 5, 2018), accessed October 28, 2018, <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/R44759.pdf>.

⁷⁴ CIA, "The World Factbook: Middle East: Lebanon."

⁷⁵ The Taif Agreement ended the civil war in Lebanon and included several political reforms, ensuring the sovereignty of Lebanon over all Lebanese territories, liberating Lebanon from the Israeli occupation, and framing the Lebanese-Syrian relations.

In 2005, upon the Syrian military withdrawal from Lebanon, the United Nations Security Resolution 1680 aimed at resolving this delineation issue, which will later have a significant impact on facilitating the influx of Syrian refugees across undefined borders.⁷⁶ However, no progress has been made since then.⁷⁷ This vague boundary definition enabled the substantial influx of refugees across the border from Syria, especially the eastern edge of Lebanon. However, on the other hand, Syrian refugees also crossed the Northern Lebanese border in massive figures due to sharing the same religious beliefs with the population there, meaning a Sunni majority that mainly supported a Syrian regime change. Some of the well-known and influential Lebanese Sunni Leaders supported the Syrian Sunni rebels.⁷⁸ By this, Syrian refugees found a similar environment to where they lived and thus established safe heavens. Syrian rebels in addition to other terrorist cells benefited from this backyard available to regroup and launch attacks against the Syrian regime forces.

All these cross-border actions escalated the tensions near the international border between Syrian regime forces and the Syrian rebels who fled to Lebanon and by this brought the conflict in its early periods to the Lebanese doorsteps. This destabilization to the Lebanese society and consequently its economy led to having the refugees strengthen the Sunni majority in the North, who mainly oppose the Syrian regime as stated earlier.

⁷⁶ Young et al., *Spillover from the Conflict in Syria*, 27.

⁷⁷ Having a large portion of the Lebanese officials, as well as the population, consider that they share with the Syrians strong ethnic ties, resulted in Lebanon lacking incentives to seek border delineation with Syria.

⁷⁸ Humud, *Lebanon*, 3.

In 2013, the UN announced to have 800,000 Syrian refugees in Lebanon which are considered to be approximately fifth of the country's population.⁷⁹ The Syrian war reflected multiple social and economic impacts on Lebanon.

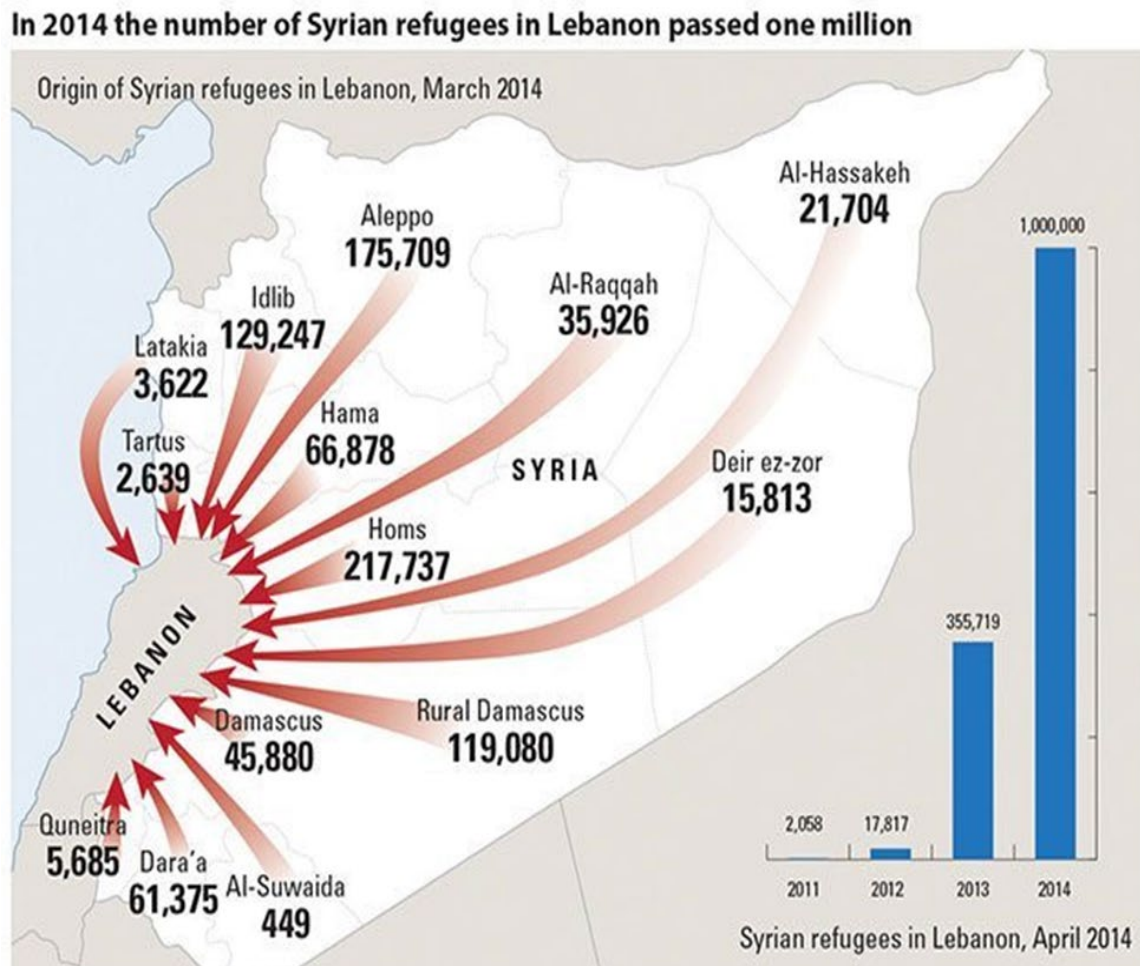


Figure 5. Crossing into Lebanon

Source: Chris Solomon, “Three Hard Lessons for Syria from Lebanon’s Civil War,” *Global Insights*, November 27, 2015, <https://globalriskinsights.com/2015/11/three-hard-lessons-for-syria-from-lebanons-civil-war/>.

⁷⁹ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), “Syria Regional Refugee Response,” accessed October 30, 2018, <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>.

Critical Turning Points in the Lebanese Economy

Since 1943, Lebanon profited from its multilingual talent, its new financial sector, besides its encouraging geographic location. The Lebanese private sector was characterized by having freedom of initiative due to the liberal economic system available.⁸⁰ This freedom gave Lebanon an advantage over other Arab countries in the region mainly by not having any restrictions on transferring money in addition to external trade. Lebanon benefitted from these privileges to attract revenues of Arab deposits from oil trade and became a financial center for the Gulf states. This prospering and advanced economy continued until the late 1960s in which the service sector, especially banking services, in Lebanon expanded rapidly to cover two-thirds of the overall GDP. As an example, the operating banks reached the number of 93 in 1966 rising from 23 banks in 1950. Due to these improvements, Lebanon became the connection between Gulf countries on the one hand and industrial companies on the other.⁸¹

Several factors contributed to the decline of the Lebanese economy or at least the slow progress rates. The main events were the Arab-Israeli war in 1967, the outbreak of the Lebanese civil war (1975-1989) including within its timeframe two Israeli invasions, the Gulf war in 1990 after the Iraqi invasion to Kuwait, in addition to the 33-day Israeli

⁸⁰ Gabriella Gonzalez, Lynn A. Karoly, Louay Constant, Hanine Salem, and Charles A. Goldman, "Lebanon," in *Facing Human Capital Challenges of the 21st Century: Education and Labor Market Initiatives in Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2008), 199-244, accessed January 14, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/mg786rc.14>.

⁸¹ United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Lebanon, "Economic Development and Reconstruction," in *A Profile of Sustainable Human Development in Lebanon* (Beirut, Lebanon: UNDP in Lebanon), 1-3, accessed November 4, 2018, <http://www.undp.org.lb/programme/governance/advocacy/nhdr/nhdr97/chpt2.pdf>.

war on Lebanon in July 2006. The civil war brutally damaged Lebanon's infrastructure in which the UN estimated the loss at US \$25 Billion. Additionally, after having the GDP growth being 6% yearly from 1965 to 1975, it declined to 40% in 1980, five years after the civil war started.⁸² The Lebanese civil war also resulted in a decline of the Lebanese per capita income from US \$1800 in 1974 to less than US \$500 in 1989, consequently increasing unemployment rates.⁸³

The Gulf war, an external factor, affected the Lebanese export markets, moreover, resulted in a massive number of Lebanese businesses working in Kuwait to close their companies depriving the Lebanese economy of additional money sent from the diaspora to relatives back home. After the civil war, the GoL made considerable efforts in its economic recovery by rebuilding its infrastructure and restoring essential services, which put additional burdens due to the high price tags. Lebanon until that time had no foreign debt, but now the government was obliged to lean on borrowing from international markets to replenish its economy. In 1992, the net public debt was nearly 46% of the GDP and later accumulated to 158% in 2005, despite several warnings from international organizations. Moreover, after having financial services improving rapidly in the previous decades, the Lebanese banking sector growth started to slow down before the Syrian crisis. Recently, the deteriorating security situations in Syria, besides the sharp uncertainty in the region, caused considerable losses to Lebanese banks operating in

⁸² Gonzalez et al., "Lebanon," 206.

⁸³ Atif A. Kubursi, "Reconstructing the Economy of Lebanon," *Arab Studies Quarterly* 21, no. 1 (Winter 1999): 69-95, accessed February 28, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41858277>.

Syria estimated at US \$205.3 million, which led to the declination in loan providing rates to the private sector.⁸⁴

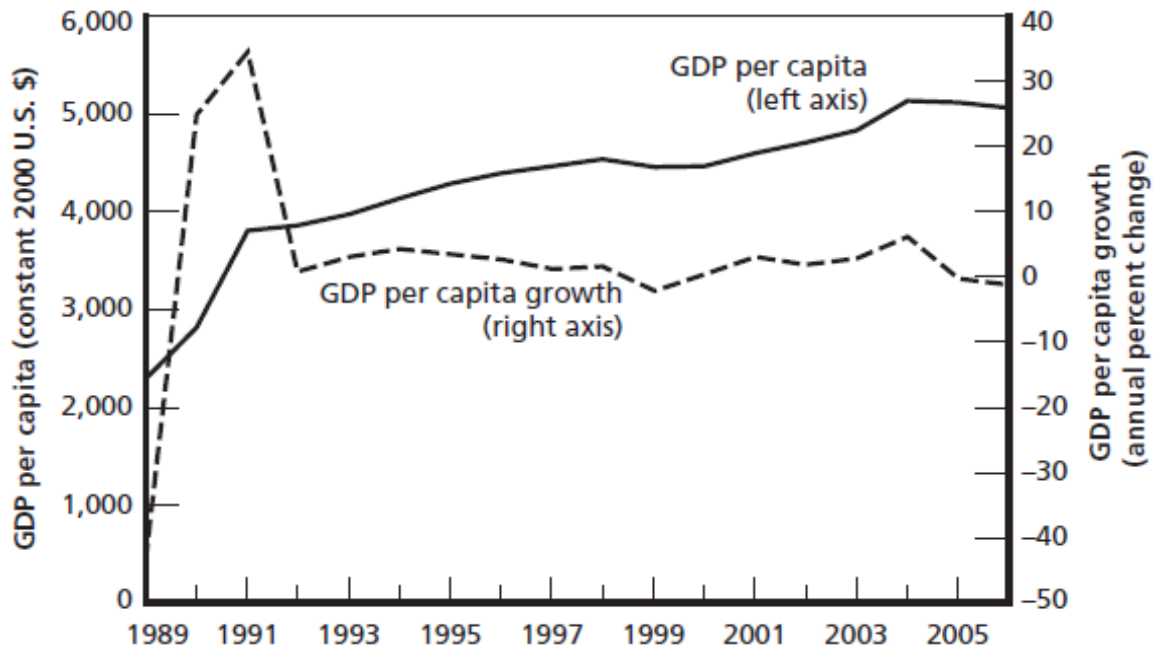


Figure 6. Trends in GDP per Capita and GDP per Capita Growth in Lebanon

Source: The World Bank, “Trends in GDP per Capita and GDP per Capita Growth in Lebanon,” 2007, www.worldbank.org.

Lebanon’s Policy Toward Syrian Refugees

Syrians who started to stream into Lebanon, after the crisis in Syria started, were considered as “guests” of Lebanon who maintained an “open-border” policy permitting Syrians to enter without restrictions. Because of the previous Palestinian experience, the

⁸⁴ The World Bank, “Lebanon Economic Monitor: The Brunt of the Syrian Conflict,” Open Knowledge, Fall 2013, accessed January 18, 2019, <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/21971>.

GoL was unwilling to take actions that might lead to having Syrian refugee presence become permanent, which meant the abolishing of formal refugee camps.⁸⁵ Since the Lebanese leaders could not agree on an integrated national response, the initial reaction in Lebanon was an unwillingness from political elites, besides being characterized as a flawed, disorganized, and short-term focused. This reluctance from the Lebanese government made it possible for international organizations to operate in autonomy. One of the justifications that led to having a short-term approach to the Syrian crisis was linked to the phenomenon at that time which anticipated the looming fall of Bashar Al-Assad's regime.

Moreover, the paralysis of the political system contributed to such actions.⁸⁶ The GoL denied the construction of camps as was done in Jordan or Turkey for Syrian refugees. This resulted in having Syrian refugees settle within local communities in urban areas which is described by the UNHCR as "sub-standard shelters" while only 20% lived in informal camp gatherings.⁸⁷ This policy was considered to be a reasonable response due to the traditions of Arab generosity and brotherhood, especially after having Syrians receive large numbers of Lebanese families who fled the 33-day war in 2006 with Israel.

⁸⁵ Elizabeth Ferris, and Kemal Kirişci, "The Consequences of Chaos: Syria's Humanitarian Crisis and the Failure to Protect," in *The Consequences of Chaos: Syria's Humanitarian Crisis and the Failure to Protect* 9 Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2016, 33-70, accessed January 10, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7864/j.ctt1c2cqws.7>.

⁸⁶ Nils Hägerdal, "Lebanon's Hostility to Syrian Refugees," (Middle East Brief 136, Crown Center for Middle East Studies, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA, March 2018), accessed January 19, 2019, <https://www.brandeis.edu/crown/publications/meb/MEB116.pdf>.

⁸⁷ Humud, *Lebanon*, 20.

However, later, concerns started to rise among Lebanese people that accepting this massive influx for an undefined time, when added to the Palestinian presence, would put additional burdens on the country's economy.

In 2012, the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP), a humanitarian aid project was launched by the UN to support neighboring countries hosting Syrian refugees. The overall budget was estimated to be US \$100 million then increased to US \$1 Billion in 2103 before it reached US \$1.7 Billion in 2014.⁸⁸ Lebanon, in 2014, adopted new entry restrictions particularly after having Lebanon become the highest host refugee population per capita in the world. In March 2014, the new Lebanese Prime Minister Tammam Salam delivered a policy speech to the Lebanese parliament. Salam confirmed his intentions in tackling the Syrian refugee crisis by stating:

The government will work on taking the necessary measures to address the issue of Syrian refugees whose numbers exceed the country's capacity to deal with, in order to contain the security, political, social and economic repercussion of their temporary presence in Lebanon. The government will call upon the international community and the Arab World to assume their responsibilities in helping Lebanon fulfill its ethical and humanitarian obligation and at the same time facilitate their return to their homes.⁸⁹

The GoL denied access to Palestinian refugees from Syria in 2014, moreover, implemented additional documentation entry requirements for Syrians crossing to

⁸⁸ Annual UNHCR reports show that 90% of the funding was provided in 2012, 72% in 2013, and only 46% in 2014. At the end of 2014, the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP), represented a new plan with a more comprehensive approach in addressing multiple aspects of the Syrian conflict affecting hosting nations. Lebanon's portion in this plan has a requested budget of US \$2.14 Billion, equivalent to nearly 5% of Lebanon's GDP in 2013.

⁸⁹ البيان الوزاري لحكومة المصلحة الوطنية. [Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Republic of Lebanon, "Ministerial Statement of the Government of National Interest"], 2014, <http://www.pcm.gov.lb/arabic/subpg.aspx?pageid=4896>.

Lebanon in January 2015. Until then, Syrians were capable of crossing the border with Lebanon by only showing an identification card (ID) based on an agreement referred to the Treaty of Brotherhood, Cooperation and Coordination between Lebanon and Syria.⁹⁰ According to this new policy, Syrian refugees had to fit into any of a seven approved category list including tourism, business, transit, and study while not taking into account fleeing the violence.⁹¹ Although an entry category for displaced personnel is within this list, yet it applies specifically to persons with severe medical necessities, persons who will relocate to a third country, persons with disabilities, or separated children having a parent previously registered in Lebanon.⁹²

Lebanon's policy towards Syrian refugees evolved as the Syrian crisis progressed and new visa requirements were implemented which effectively slowed the stream of refugees. By this, Lebanon shifted from an "open door" policy to controlling access or more into closing borders for Syrian refugees.⁹³ Moreover, Syrian refugees were required

⁹⁰ The Syrian Arab Republic and the Lebanese Republic, "Treaty of Brotherhood, Cooperation and Coordination Between the Syrian Arab Republic and the Lebanese Republic," in *United Nations Treaty Series* (Brussels, Belgium, United Nations, 1992), 154-157, accessed January 18, 2019, https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/LB-SY_910522_TreatyBrotherhoodCooperationCoordination.pdf.

⁹¹ Amnesty International (AI), *Pushed to the Edge: Syrian Refugees Face Increased Restrictions in Lebanon* (London, UK: AI, June 2015), accessed December 28, 2018, <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/MDE2417852015ENGLISH.pdf>.

⁹² Humud, *Lebanon*, 21.

⁹³ Filippo Dionigi, "The Syrian Refugee Crisis in Lebanon State Fragility and Social Resilience," (London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) Middle East Centre, February 2016), accessed January 13, 2019, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/296702476_The_Syrian_Refugee_Crisis_in_Lebanon_State_Fragility_and_Social_Resilience.

to be responsible for a notarized pledge that restricts work in addition to proof of having a Lebanese sponsor as a condition to renew their residency permits. In 2015, the cost to renew residency permits, even for refugees registered with UNHCR, increased to a yearly fee of US \$200 per person over the age of 15 years, which led to having a lot of Syrian refugees lose their legal status. Although this fee was lifted later in 2017 for those registered with UNHCR, it still did not apply to the 500,000 refugees who crossed to Lebanon after the GoL informed the UNHCR to halt registering refugees in May 2015 until a government-led process to deal with those who strive for registration was recognized.⁹⁴

In the situation of weak governance, the lack of public service vision, and the absence of a national response strategy, the international organizations stepped up and took the lead to address the Syrian refugee crisis. In addition to the poor understanding of present conditions, coordinating the Syrian refugee crisis was even more complicated by the fact that Lebanon has neither signed the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees nor the 1967 Protocol, forcing the UNHCR to seek informal agreements in order to provide aid.⁹⁵ The humanitarian response became lower in efficiency besides unequal distribution for social aid. Local authorities and unions of municipalities also accepted the challenge each within its resource limitations to respond to the Syrian crisis and help relieve the pressure of the refugees. By coordinating directly with

⁹⁴ Paul Tabar, “Regulations and Policies on Syrian Refugees in Lebanon,” *Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung (Bpb)* [Federal Agency for Political Education], August 31, 2016, accessed December 29, 2018, <https://www.bpb.de/gesellschaft/migration/laenderprofile/233351/regulations-and-policies>.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

municipalities, international organizations built stable relations with these local authorities and considered them as their links to regions where they function.

By the end of 2014, and after having the crisis take a prolonged form, the GoL initiated a long-term effort with UN agencies to have further sustainable methods of intervention by setting up the inter-ministerial Crisis Cell. After having the Lebanese Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) in 2012 being responsible to the Council of Ministers for managing refugee response, the GoL augmented its contribution in 2015 by generating the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP), nested into the broader 3RP. The LRCRP was designed to ensure providing protection and humanitarian aid for the vulnerable personnel displaced from Syria, strengthen and expand the capabilities of public service systems, as well as seeking reinforcement for Lebanon's social, economic, and environmental stability. However, despite the efforts of the Lebanese Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA), the mechanisms established soon crumbled due to the lack of agreement between the different members.

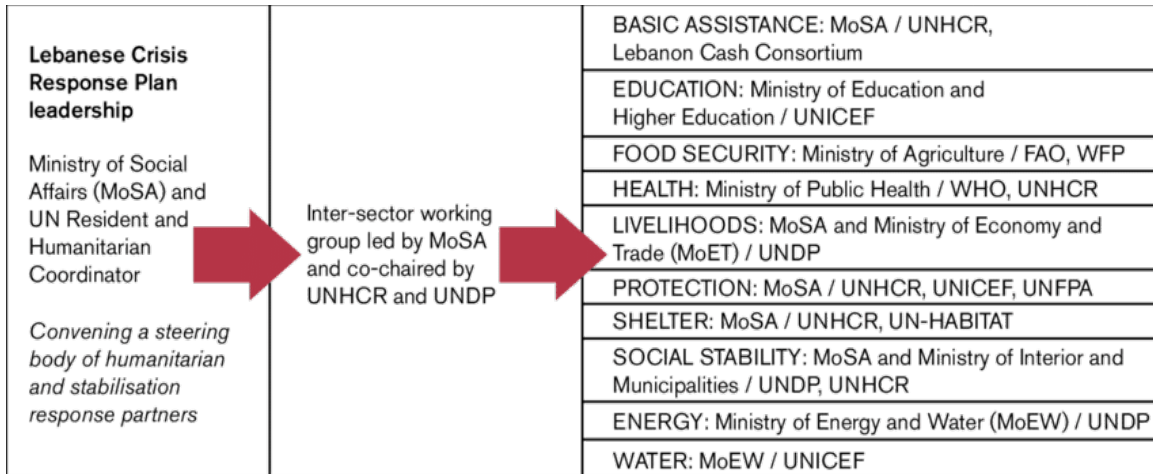


Figure 7. Current Management of LCRP Sectors

Source: Anna Walnycki, “Making Lebanon’s Water Flow: Delivering Better Basic Urban Services,” (Briefing, International Institute for Environment and Development, London, UK, November 2017), https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Current-structure-and-management-of-Lebanese-Crisis-Response-Plan-sectors_fig1_322138413, 3.

As stated earlier, the decision for Lebanon to open its borders was mainly based on a humanitarian plight that responded to the Syrian open-door policy in 2006. This decision was informal and lacked any clear framework with international agencies leading to massive numbers of refugees seeking safety, work, and other vital requirements of living. The UNHCR, due to the deficiency of a context of international law, was forced to work through bilateral agreements with the GoL. By having the latter fail to communicate a clear policy, the decisions made mainly focused on blocking undesirable options based on dissociating issues that they face. As an example, one of the most noteworthy decisions done by the GoL was blocking the setting up of formal refugee camps despite the calls from UN agencies on their importance as the only viable shelter.

Consequently, the international organization's authorities and relations were developed on a trial and error basis. In 2016, an international Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) staff member in Lebanon described the situation as “the mandate of each sector is unclear. It is hard to set out policies once and for all and hold certain actors more accountable than others. Our mandate is itself informal in a country which is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention of Geneva.”⁹⁶ The lack of consensus caused by different political agendas among the multiple Lebanese participants such as agencies and local actors further complicated cooperation between local authorities and donor agencies. All these above reasons required the UNHCR to take the lead in articulating and synchronizing the response for the Syrian crisis.

The presence of a large number of UN agencies in Lebanon before the Syrian crisis improved the procedures of developing the humanitarian coordination framework. The LCRP plan, which was first published in 2015 through the coordination between the GoL and UN agencies, aimed at shifting from emergency response solutions to having a longer-term approach by planning for necessary funding that addresses future support. However, due to apparent charges of corruption in addition to political instability in Lebanon at that time, the GoL did not receive direct budget support from donor agencies.⁹⁷ In sum, the challenges that faced the international agencies in addition to the complications in coordination through different levels within local and national authorities weakened the responses that can support both host populations and refugees.

⁹⁶ Boustani et al., “Responding to the Syrian crisis in Lebanon,” 14.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 15.

Accordingly, the mutual process of responsibility was embedded among UN agencies, local and national authorities, and other Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's).

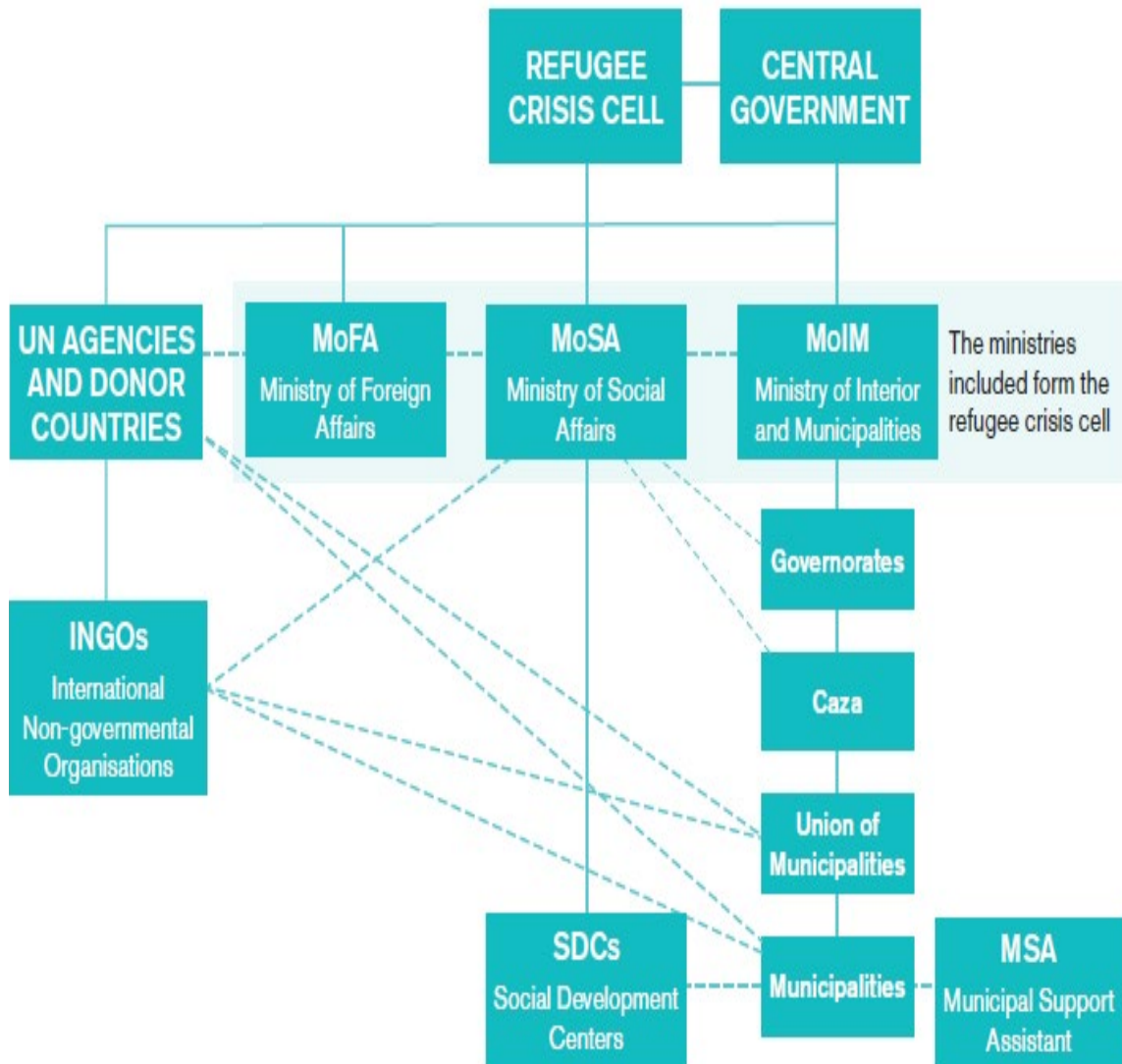


Figure 8. LCRP Structure in Response to the Syrian Crisis

Source: Marawa Boustani, Estella Carpi, Hayat Gebara, and Yara Mourad, “Responding to the Syrian crisis in Lebanon” (Working Paper, International Institute for Environment and Development, London, UK, September 2016), accessed November 30, 2018, <http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/10799IIED.pdf><https://unhabitat.org/books/responding-to-the-syrian-crisis-in-lebanon-collaboration-between-aid-agencies-and-local-governance-structures/>.

A General Overview of the Impact of Palestinian Refugees

Since the first Palestinian refugee influx in 1948, the relations between Palestinians and Lebanon have wavered.⁹⁸ As stated earlier in the paper, Palestinians reside mainly in 12 refugee camps with poor infrastructure within the country, in addition to Palestinians scattered within the Lebanese society. Although Palestinians were denied the right to work and restrictions were made on their social, cultural, and even political activities, yet, implications on the Lebanese society can be recognized during the past six decades approximately.

Demographics

The presence of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon affected and changed the religious as well as the demographic structure of the Lebanese population. Lebanon's government, not having a census taken since the 1930s, has a habit of inflating Palestinian refugee numbers to justify expulsion actions based on the fear of upsetting the Lebanese sectarian balance.⁹⁹ Palestinians, fleeing to safe havens in Lebanon, were composed of 85% Sunni Muslims while the other 15% were Christians.¹⁰⁰ The Maronite

⁹⁸ Dalal Yassine, "Unwelcome guests: Palestinian refugees in Lebanon," *The Electronic Intifada*, July 13, 2010, accessed November 4, 2018, <https://electronicintifada.net/content/unwelcome-guests-palestinian-refugees-lebanon/8917>.

⁹⁹ Elia Zureik, "Constructing Palestine through Surveillance Practices," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 28, no. 2 (November 2001): 205-227, accessed February 23, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/826125>.

¹⁰⁰ Tianshe Chen, "Palestinian Refugees in Arab Countries and Their Impacts," *Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (in Asia)* 3, no. 3 (2009): 42-56, accessed October 14, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.1080/19370679.2009.12023136>.

population in Lebanon was threatened by this unbalance that happened and resulted in favor of the Muslims after having established a critical balance in the Lebanese society. A Maronite citizen said, “we have no desire to throw these people into the sea, or to annihilate them, all we ask of them is to start to look for another land to settle on, outside the Lebanese territory.”¹⁰¹ The GoL anticipated that this religious balance between the different sects would be destroyed if the Palestinians are integrated within the population, in addition to the loss of the right of return for Palestinians, which Israel insists on denying despite the UN-mandated right of return. Shia Muslims in Lebanon also have concerns regarding the demographic unbalance in which a villager said, “we gave Palestinians everything and they gave us back insults, corpses, and lessons in corruption.”¹⁰²

Even after having lived in Lebanon for more than six decades, Palestinians are not only viewed as temporary guests but also expected to leave the country as soon as it becomes possible for them to either return to their homeland or relocate to a different place.¹⁰³ Several Lebanese officials, and on multiple occasions, have expressed an intention to expel all Palestinians, who are predominantly Sunni Moslems, at the earliest possible occasion, claiming that their integration in the country would upset the country’s

¹⁰¹ Haddad, “The Origins of Popular Opposition to Palestinian Resettlement in Lebanon,” 475.

¹⁰² Chen, “Palestinian Refugees in Arab Countries and Their Impacts,” 55.

¹⁰³ Kibreab, “Displacement, host governments’ policies, and constraints on the construction of sustainable livelihoods,” 59.

‘delicate sectarian balance,’ in which Shi’ite Moslems have a slight majority over a dwindling number of Maronite Christians.

Employment and Wages

It has long been believed that Palestinians increased the pressure on the Lebanese economy which is already fragile and struggling. Lebanese blamed the Palestinian refugees of denying them job opportunities that were already scarce. Palestinian refugees, settling within camps or among the Lebanese society, are living in severely poor conditions. According to a poverty index, 35% of refugees living in camps earn two US dollars or less per day, furthermore, 60% of the Palestinian refugees who are registered within the UNRWA live below the poverty line.¹⁰⁴ In Lebanon, unlike other Arab countries that received Palestinian refugees, regulation bans them from owning real estate or leaving them to relatives.¹⁰⁵ British journalist Robert Fisk described this law by stating:

Grieving Palestinian widows in Lebanon can now look forward to eviction from their family homes, which must by law, be sold to Lebanese. For the Lebanese, it is another stage in the eviction of Palestinians from their country, a further turn of the social screw to ensure that any Palestinian with the opportunity of living in another country of exile will choose to head for Beirut airport.¹⁰⁶

Palestinian refugee workers are poorly paid. Their monthly income is around 80% of the monthly payment for the Lebanese workers. Mainly, 80% of the Palestinian workers earn

¹⁰⁴ Chen, “Palestinian Refugees in Arab Countries and Their Impacts,” 45.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Kibreab, “Displacement, host governments’ policies, and constraints on the construction of sustainable livelihoods,” 64.

a total of about 537,000 Lebanese Pound (LBP) monthly, about US \$355, in which is collected based on daily working hours or as a monthly income. This income is still below the official minimum wage in Lebanon which is 675,000 Lebanese Pound (LBP) according to the 2007 official numbers. A tiny portion of the Palestinian refugees, estimated to be 3%, earn 1.5 million Lebanese Pound (LBP) or higher. Palestinian refugees occupy jobs mostly in trade-related and building careers in which they compose nearly the fifth of the overall workers. The majority of Palestinians work outside camps with a very few working within these camps. It has to be stated that most of the workers do not have any legal work permit authorized from the GoL due to restrictions applied which deprives the workers of health care coverage, which only 5% of workers have. Eighty percent of the Palestinian employees work by just having an oral agreement which makes them vulnerable to discharge without any rights.¹⁰⁷

Characteristics and Implications of Syrian Refugees

To have a more precise and closer look at the implications of Syrian refugees on the Lebanese society, it is of great importance and relevance to understanding the different demographics of these refugees. Had these refugees resided in camps, it would have been easier to collect the data needed on their characterization. However, since Lebanon used an open border policy with the Syrian refugees who settled separately within the local population, this created a big dilemma for the GoL in addition to other

¹⁰⁷ International Labour Organization (ILO), *Palestinian Employment in Lebanon Facts and Challenges Labor Force Survey Among Palestinian Refugees Living in Camps and Gatherings in Lebanon* (Geneva, Switzerland: ILO, 2012), accessed November 10, 2018, https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@arabstates/@ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms_236502.pdf.

international organizations in having a reliable estimate as means of statistics. It has to be known that the United States, with its efforts to defend Lebanon's borders from penetration by terrorist groups, called for Lebanon to retain its border open to Syrian refugees escaping the crisis.¹⁰⁸

The lack of a precise number of refugees contributes by one way or another to an undermining of calculations to the required humanitarian assistance to support this crisis, either by the Lebanese related ministries or international foreign aid. The annual survey of the VASyR in Lebanon is conducted jointly by the UNHCR, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), and the UN World Food Program (WFP).¹⁰⁹ A survey, conducted in December 2017, assesses the Syrian refugee households settling in Lebanon as a result of the Syrian crisis. Throughout this section, the effects observed by this survey will assist in a better understanding of the characterization of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon, moreover, provide some comparisons that influenced Lebanese society.

Gender and Age

The general distribution of gender in the Syrian refugee populace demonstrates that women numbers equaled to a great extent the number of males. Syrian females in comparison to Syrian men scored a ratio of 1.06 female to the male which is considered similar to previous statistics as if compared to a rate of 1.05 in the year 2016. Syrian

¹⁰⁸ Humud, *Lebanon*, 4.

¹⁰⁹ Reliefweb, "Gender in the 2017: Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon," March 21, 2018, accessed November 27, 2018, <https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/gender-2017-vulnerability-assessment-syrian-refugees-lebanon>.

households are comprised of 4.9 members as an average. Out of these 4.9 members, 2.2 members were adults between the age of 18 and 65 years, while 1.6 children were between the age of 6 and 17 years, and 1.1 children were under the age of 5 years.¹¹⁰

The number of households headed by Syrian females increased in the survey of 2017 to become 19% when compared to 17% in the study of 2016 with an overall average of 37 years. These numbers reflect the reason behind having children not attending school for the sake of being able to manage with the lack of income or humanitarian assistance provided. By not attending school, children will not be able to catch up later with their friends of the same age who still have the financial abilities to attend school. This results in having children vulnerable to mistreatments and in a worst-case scenario heading towards illegal ways to gain money for living.

¹¹⁰ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), “Vulnerability Assessment for Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASyR-2017),” December 2017, accessed November 28, 2018, <https://data2.unhcr.org/fr/documents/download/61312>.

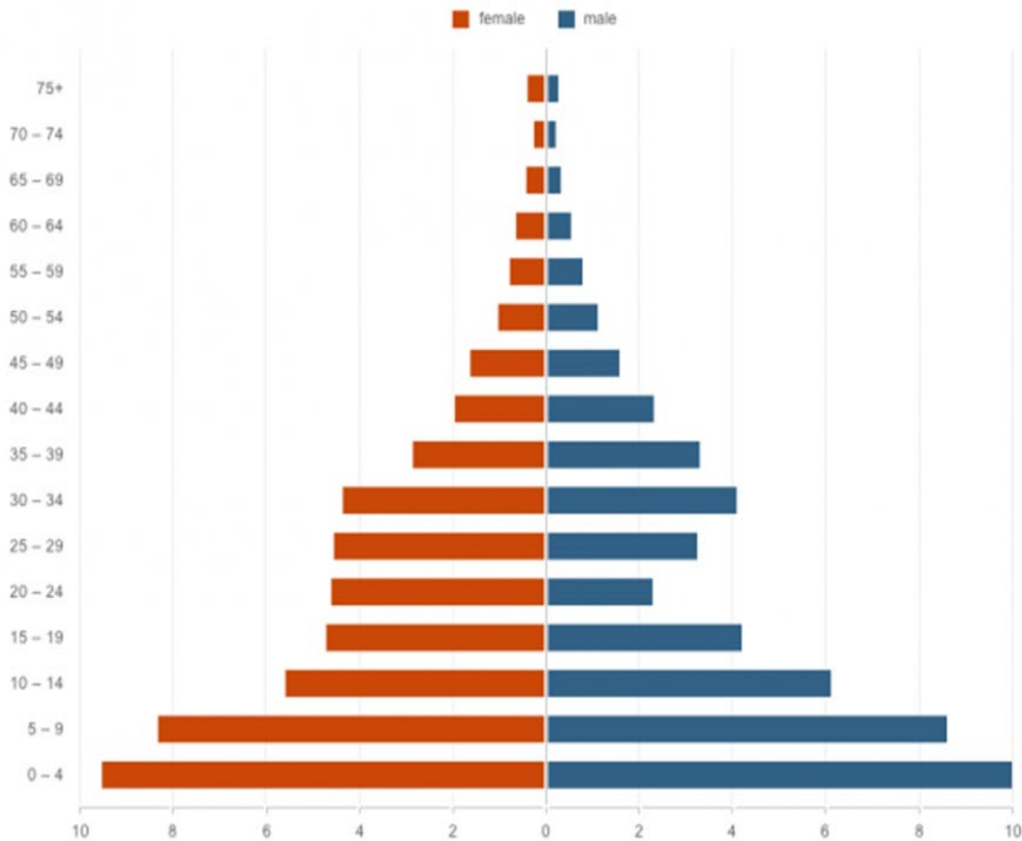


Figure 9. Population Pyramid of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon

Source: Marc Petzoldt, “Refugee Crisis in Lebanon 2013-2016 and the Role of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR),” *Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung (Bpb)* [Federal Agency for Political Education], August 31, 2016, <http://www.bpb.de/gesellschaft/migration/laenderprofile/233345/refugee-crisis-and-unhcr>.

Health

Health care services are the level of curative health including childhood vaccination and reproductive health care, in addition to other common illnesses and diseases. Numerous influence interactions affected the health of Syrian refugee children significantly. In the VASyR survey of 2017, 53% of the Syrian households who settled in

shelters, free camps, and gatherings suffered to meet the minimum standards regarding hygienic practices and sanitary living conditions. All this deterioration in living conditions augments the risk of infectious diseases. There is a shortage of providing health requirements since 46% of Syrian households said that they require primary health care services.

Education

As described by the UNICEF, 2016 was the “worst year for Syria’s children.” In that year, 87 attacks targeted schools, and 225 children were either injured or killed. Some of the schools, one in every three, were either destroyed, sheltering displaced populace, or used for military purposes. These deliberate attacks at schools are not only a violation of international law, but also a violation of human rights since schools should be considered as safe places, at least for children. The Syrian conflict degraded massive educational infrastructure by having more than 4,000 attacks on schools since 2011 which will, on the long-term, have severe consequences on the Syrian national education.¹¹¹

Intelligence, social behavior, and personality are the outcomes of a strong foundation that starts in the years of early childhood. Only 11% of Syrian refugee children, aged between three and five, attended educational programs. More efforts and significant strides, done at the ages of six to 14, led to having 70% of children enrolled in schools. In total, 1.75 million Syrian children, in Syria and other host countries, are not

¹¹¹ Yassin, “101 Facts and Figures on the Syrian Refugee Crisis,” 78.

attending school in addition to another 1.35 million children who are at risk of dropping school due to financial demands.

The international community faces a challenging issue by ensuring access to schools to avoid having a whole Syrian generation lacking education. By having families not able to support paying for all their children to enroll in school, boys head towards working to sustain their parent's income and improve living conditions.

The massive influx of Syrian refugees severely overburdened the Lebanese school's capabilities. Although Lebanon and Syria share the same language and have many cultural similarities, yet this did not mitigate the challenges and barriers that the Lebanese schools faced regarding differences in the curriculum, which later caused Syrian children to drop out of school. A decision was taken by the Lebanese Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) to mitigate curriculum challenges by having public schools conduct second-shift classes to help absorb this enormous influx. This effort resulted in increasing second-shift school numbers from 90 in 2013 to 330 in 2017, and by this, nearly 45% of the Syrian children registered within UNHCR were enrolled in Lebanese public schools.¹¹²

¹¹² Noah Yarrow, "Addressing the education emergency in Lebanon," *Arab Voices* (blog) The World Bank, March 24, 2016, accessed December 28, 2018, <http://blogs.worldbank.org/arabvoices/education-emergency-lebanon>.

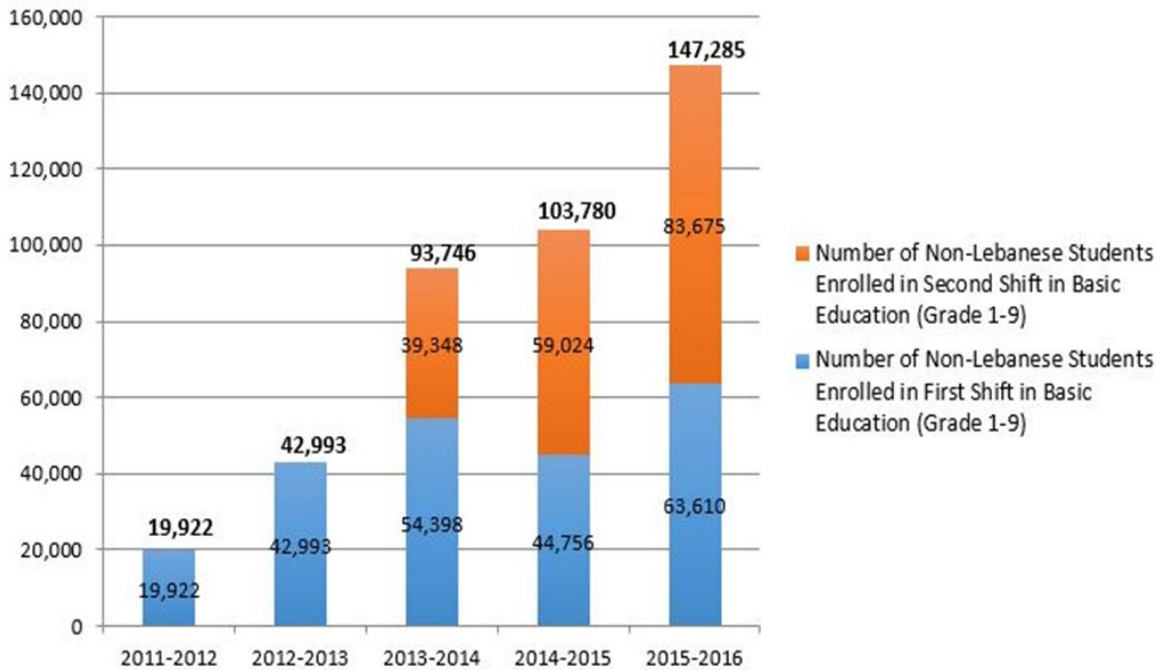


Figure 10. Number of Non-Lebanese Students in Public Schools, Grades 1-9

Source: Noah Yarrow, “Addressing the education emergency in Lebanon,” *Arab Voices* (blog) The World Bank, March 24, 2016, accessed December 28, 2018, <http://blogs.worldbank.org/arabvoices/education-emergency-lebanon>.

Employment

Not only does employment fight poverty, but it also plays a critical role in confronting the frustration that often leads children to violence. According to the VASyR survey of 2017, the Syrian refugees in Lebanon have a labor force represented by 68% working men and 10% working women. Refugees inability to receive income through authorized employment complicated their struggles to fund themselves and their families.

Syrian refugees are officially authorized to only work in the domains of construction, sanitation services, and agriculture sectors. It is in these sectors in which 500,000 Syrian labors were usually involved (mainly in construction) before the crisis

started.¹¹³ This Syrian labor force did not have a significant impact on unemployment rates since the Lebanese labor force was not heavily engaged in these sectors. The conditions that certified Syrian refugees the right to work in Lebanon were limiting. Even if a refugee initiated an employment request in a ratified sector, the administrative processes required to acquire the proper documentation were often prohibitive. These work restrictions resulted from the concerns raised on the possible burdens on the Lebanese economy. Such restrictive policies may have denied Lebanon financial resources that wealthy Syrian people in business might have brought into the Lebanese market, hence, providing positive economic benefits.

Formal working restrictions on Syrian refugees urged many of them to seek employment in the informal market. Men, as well as children, were selling items on the streets such as chewing gum or toys, working in garages, or even having women work in cleaning houses. It has to be also noted that although half of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon are employed, only 32% reported working regularly. On average, Syrian adult employees received a monthly payment of US \$206, while women earned an amount of US \$158 although having an equal number of working days.¹¹⁴

Social Implications of the Syrian Crisis on Lebanon

It is difficult to assess the economic and social impact of the Syrian conflict on Lebanon, without limiting this assessment to a specific period, since the battles' end date

¹¹³ Mario Einaudi, "The Macro- and Socioeconomic Impact of the Syrian Crisis on Lebanon," Center for International Studies, April 2018, accessed March 12, 2019, https://einaudi.cornell.edu/sites/default/files/2018_WP1_Charafeddine.pdf.

¹¹⁴ Yassin, "101 Facts and Figures on the Syrian Refugee Crisis," 90.

or the end of its impact on Lebanon remains unknown. The Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon has raised the challenges facing this semi-collapsed country. Although Lebanon had the minimum to offer regarding stability, security, and isolation from the Syrian civil war, it was the country with the most recognized migrant figures historically regarding Syrians.¹¹⁵ In a comprehensive report requested by the GoL from the World Bank (WB), the information does not only demonstrate the pressure on the services and infrastructure sectors, but also warns, in the social zone, from the risk of having about 170 thousand people dropping below the level of poverty and double unemployment rates in the labor market.¹¹⁶

The Syrian refugee flow increased steadily starting from May 2011 when they fled the fighting in Homs, Hama, Idlib, Aleppo, and Damascus. Before the end of 2012, the UNHCR had already assisted more than 120,000 registered refugees, but these figures have overlooked tens of thousands who crossed the border to live with their friends, relatives, or rent temporary homes in Lebanon. The lack of a clear approach from the government to cope with the influx stressed not only social services but also increased tension amongst populace groups, moreover, generated pockets of vulnerability all over Lebanon. The augmented risks of poverty increase concerns of child labor or child

¹¹⁵ It is important to note that many of the Syrian present in Lebanon before the crisis began registered themselves as refugees within the UNHCR as soon as the conflict erupted. Although they were not considered as migrants, yet they contributed to the total number of UNHCR registrations.

¹¹⁶ The World Bank, “Lebanon: Economic and Social Impact Assessment of the Syrian Conflict,” September 2013, accessed January 28, 2019, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/925271468089385165/Lebanon-Economic-and-social-impact-assessment-of-the-Syrian-conflict>.

marriage in a worst-case scenario as assessed by the International Labor Organization (ILO).¹¹⁷

Anxieties, triggered by official estimates obtained by the Lebanese Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOET) from the UNHCR, stated that by the end of 2013 the number of Syrian refugees in Lebanon would reach 1.1 million. It was at this time when the GoL, quietly and patiently, launched an international appeal with the UNHCR to address this issue internationally and request financial assistance to meet the needs of refugees.¹¹⁸

Economic Implications of the Syrian Crisis on Lebanon

The GoL has a history of enormous debt and GDP rates that make it more dependent on international support such as the Paris conferences, Brussels conference, besides lately the Cedar conference in order to mitigate the economic crises. Still, Lebanon had these conferences tied to financial reform requirements in addition to the control of expenditures which the government is incapable of doing. However, Lebanon's debt is not merely the product of the previously stated causes such as civil war, infrastructure reconstruction, and the 2006 conflict, but is largely affected by public sector corruption. According to a UN corruption assessment in 2001, Lebanon squanders an annual estimate of over US \$1.5 Billion as a result of persistent corruption, which

¹¹⁷ Monk et al., "Factors of Instability in Lebanon," 12.

¹¹⁸ حسن شقراني. "الشيخ الاقتصادي للحرب السورية." جريدة الأخبار اللبنانية [Hasan Chakrani, "The Economic Ghost of the Syrian War," *Al-Akhbar*], July 5, 2013, accessed February 5, 2019, <https://al-akhbar.com/Community/53657>.

represents roughly 10% of Lebanon's yearly GDP.¹¹⁹ This reflects the fact that corruption in Lebanon has turned out to be a social norm and so frequent.¹²⁰ Moreover, the corruption perceptions index of 2018 scored Lebanon as 28 over 100 for the past four years, where 100 is extremely clean, and zero resembles a highly corrupt public sector.¹²¹ This corruption perceptions index will force the international community to be reluctant in providing excessive financial support to a country that wastes nearly similar numbers to what could be leveraged to its internal fiscal refugee demand.

The continuous increase in electric demands that consumes yearly an estimate of US \$ 2 Billion, the declination of growth indicators, along with the stagnated revenue inflow due to reduced tourism, trade, and industry sectors affected by the Syrian conflict made the economic prospect of Lebanon, not a bright future.¹²² Since the beginning of the Syrian crisis, the Lebanese economy incurred losses at an estimate of US \$13.1

¹¹⁹ Moe Farida and Fredoun Z. Ahmadi-Esfahani, "Corruption and economic growth in Lebanon," Australian Agricultural and Resource Economics Society 52nd Annual Conference, 2008, accessed February 8, 2019, <https://econpapers.repec.org/paper/agsaare08/6043.htm>.

¹²⁰ Sarah Hariri Haykal, "Social Norms and Conditional Corruption: The Case of Lebanon," *European Scientific Journal*, Special Edition (August 2017): 220-231, accessed January 26, 2019, <https://eujournal.org/index.php/esj/article/viewFile/9733/9247>.

¹²¹ Transparency International, "Corruption Perceptions Index 2018," accessed February 2, 2019, <https://www.transparency.org/cpi2018>.

¹²² The World Bank, "World Development Indicators," 2016, accessed January 11, 2019, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/805371467990952829/World-development-indicators-2016>.

Billion, including US \$5.6 Billion in 2015 only.¹²³ These numbers result in an annual average of US \$1.6 Billion, which matches the damage costs resulting from the Israeli aggression on Lebanon in July of 2006. The Lebanese economy suffers from recession not only because of the Syrian crisis but also for other intrinsic reasons related to the political instability in Lebanon. The Syrian crisis did not result in a total collapse, but in an economic slowdown by which the GDP growth fell to approximately 1-1.5 percent after being around five percent in the past couple of years before the Syrian crisis.¹²⁴ Tourism numbers, after a steady increase after the 2006 war, started to drop on the onset of the Syrian war reaching nearly 23% in 2013 when compared to 2011.¹²⁵ In 2017, Lebanon's Balance of Payments (BoP) recorded a shortfall of US \$156 million, which is less than the yearly average deficit of US \$1.88 Billion noted during the period between 2011 and 2015. The Lebanese trade balance deficit increased by 29% to reach US \$20.3 Billion by the end of 2017. While the Lebanese imports raised from US \$18.7 Billion in 2016 to US \$23.1 Billion in 2017, exports decreased from US \$2.9 million in 2016 to US \$2.8 million in 2017. The overall trade to and from Lebanon has been impacted by the

¹²³ Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East, "Boon, Not Burden: How Successful Refugee Integration Might Contribute to Host Nation Economies," November 1, 2017, accessed January 15, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep16780.4>.

¹²⁴ Carnegie Middle East Center, and Paul Salem, "Can Lebanon Survive the Syrian Crisis?" December 1, 2012, accessed January 6, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep12901>.

¹²⁵ Republic of Lebanon, Lebanese Ministry of Tourism, Research and Studies Department - Statistics Division, "2013 Visitor Arrival Statistics," accessed February 3, 2019, <http://www.mot.gov.lb/Content/uploads/Publication/140218123716471~Statistics%20-%202013.pdf>.

regional conflict and the closing of the border areas with Syria.¹²⁶ The complexities stemming from the Syrian conflict increased the uncertainties in the Lebanese economy caused by the massive refugee influx. Refugees influenced the Lebanese labor market which led to a reduction in wages and consequently increased unemployment rates. All these discouraged foreigners from investing in the real estate, industry, and tourism, the main drivers of the Lebanese economy.



Figure 11. Visitor Exports and International Tourist Arrivals

Source: World Trade and Tourism Council, “Economic Impact 2018 Lebanon,” March 2018, accessed February 15, 2019, <http://www.wttc.org/-/media/files/reports/economic-impact-research/countries-2018/lebanon2018.pdf>.

¹²⁶ Lebanese Republic Customs Department, “Trade Performance,” 2018, accessed February 6, 2019, http://www.customs.gov.lb/Statistics_Analysis/Statistics_Analysis_Details.aspx?Item_Id=5.



Figure 12. Lebanon's Trade Balance (USD Billion, 2010-2017)

Source: Invest in Lebanon, "Lebanon's Trade Balance (USD billion, 2010-2017), Republic of Lebanon, https://investinlebanon.gov.lb/en/lebanon_at_a_glance/lebanon_in_figures/trade_performance.

Inflation

The rise in prices was one of the chief economic concerns among the Lebanese people as a result of the presence of the Syrian refugees. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) reflects the social and economic indicators in a country, and its rate of change is expressed as inflation. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) provides a general image related to the evolution of the costs of merchandises and services consumed by families. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) results provide estimates of the effect of price development on the living standards of personnel and households in addition to other social and economic indicators. The Lebanese Central Administration of Statistics (CAS) had issued

an annual and a monthly Consumer Price Index (CPI) ever since 1999 with the technical support of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).¹²⁷

Inflation in Lebanon has never been stable, reaching high levels during specific periods.¹²⁸ This fluctuation is due to the different periods of political and security unrest that Lebanon witnessed over the past decades according to previous Central Administration of Statistics (CAS) reports. Other external factors, such as world prices that affect the expenses of food, fuel, and oil, also influence charges of production in Lebanon where demand increases despite rate growths.

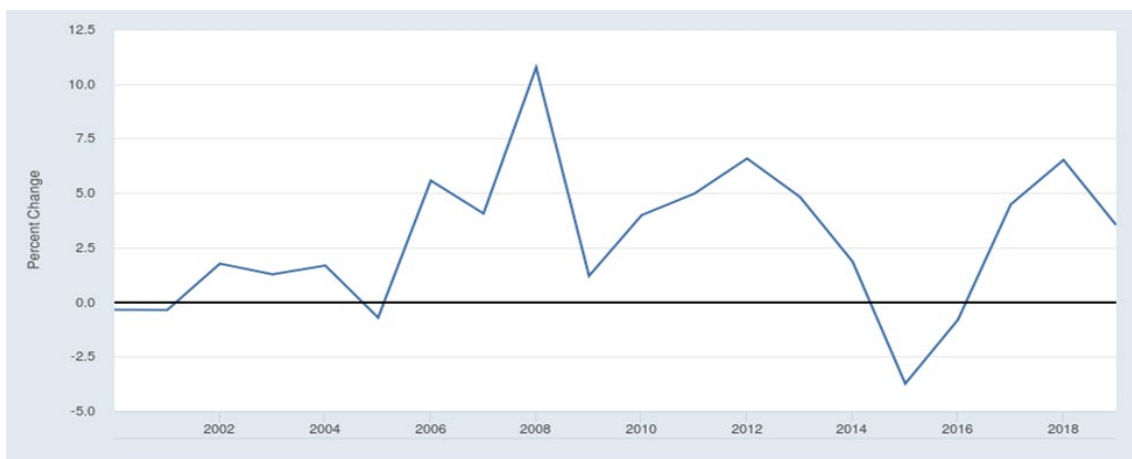


Figure 13. Consumer Price Inflation for Lebanon

Source: International Monetary Fund, “Consumer Price Inflation for Lebanon,” Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/LBNPCPIPCHPT>.

¹²⁷ Central Administration of Statistics, “Consumer Price Index,” January 2, 2019, accessed January 2, 2018, <http://www.cas.gov.lb/index.php/economic-statistics-en?layout=edit&id=185#cpireresults>.

¹²⁸ Mohammad Khanssa, Wafaa Nasser, and Abbas Mourad, “An Econometric Analysis of Inflation and Unemployment in Lebanon: A Vector Error Correction Model (VECM),” *International Journal of Economics and Finance* 10, no. 2 (January 20, 2018), accessed February 4, 2019, <http://ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/ijef/article/view/72286>.

Due to the increased consumption of essential goods and services by Syrian refugees, Lebanese producers realized the high demand for their products and thus raised prices in order to make more profit. Lebanese citizens started to find that the same amount of money is now capable of purchasing fewer amounts of goods. An example of price variations of different items can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the development of the inflation in Lebanon. The Central Administration of Statistics (CAS) relies on an expenditure division distributed into 12 categories to compute the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

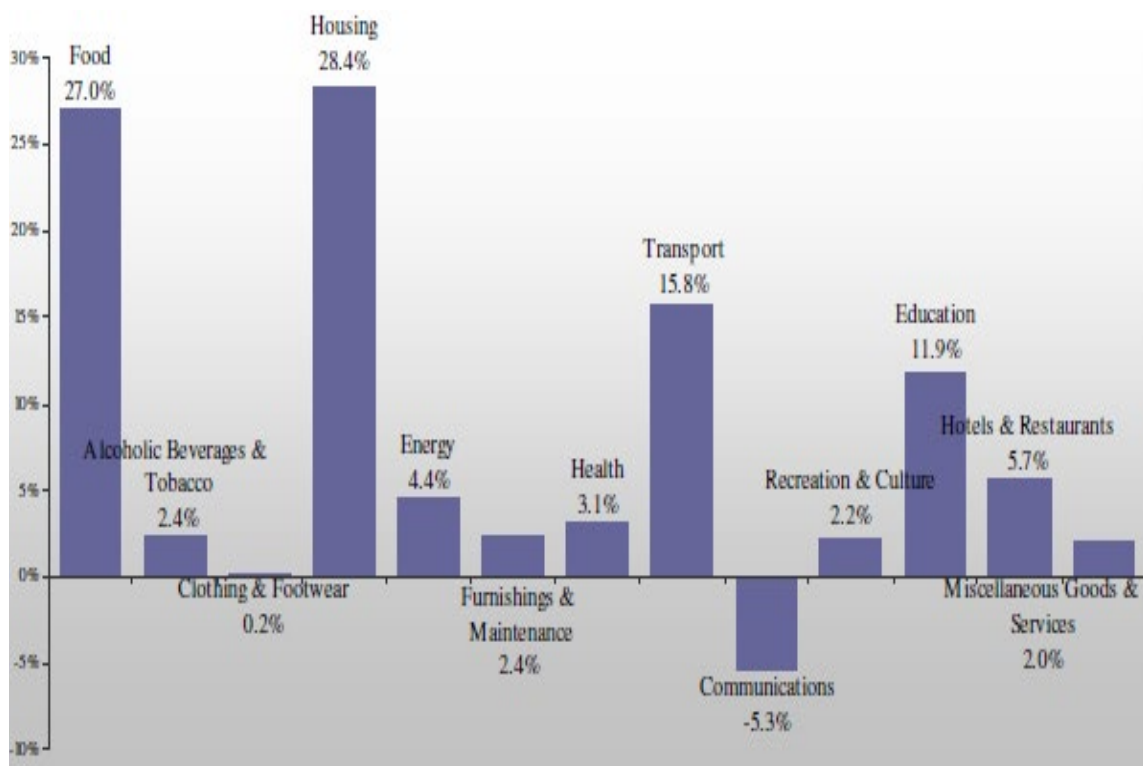


Figure 14. Inflation by Item and the Average Contribution in % (2008-2012)

Source: Created and calculated by author using data from Central Administration of Statistics, “Consumer Price Index,” January 2, 2019, accessed January 2, 2018, <http://www.cas.gov.lb/index.php/economic-statistics-en?layout=edit&id=185#cpireresults>.

From the information depicted in the above chart, it is evident that food, housing, transportation, and education were the leading categories experiencing inflation. The 2006 war played a significant role in the evolution of housing prices due to the massive demand for homes resulting from substantial destruction that resulted; they continued to rise after the massive Syrian influx. It is crucial to note that housing was the critical element that triggered inflation in the course of the preceding five years. On the other hand, global food prices and consequently energy prices fluctuated influencing Lebanon in 2012 by remaining high due to additional demands from Syrian refugees. Similarly, education and transportation services were burdened by an excessive request that added to the already weak sectors and poor road network.

Health

On the eve of the Syrian crisis, Lebanon was on the road to improving its health indicators, but the influx of Syrian refugees overwhelmed the sector. The demand for medical services in Lebanon increased. The inflow of refugees is straining the health care organizations, which is evident in the augmented unpaid obligations of the Lebanese Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) to contracted hospitals. Moreover, deficiencies of health care employees, the appearance of previously unseen diseases such as leishmaniasis, and higher frequency of epidemics such as water-borne diseases, tuberculosis, and measles strained these services.¹²⁹ Human overcrowding, water

¹²⁹ The World Bank, “Promoting Poverty Reduction and Share Prosperity: A Systematic Country Diagnostic,” 2015, accessed December 8, 2018, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/698161468179049613/Lebanon-Promoting-poverty-reduction-and-shared-prosperity-a-systematic-country-diagnostic>.

shortages, poor health infrastructure, and deprived environmental factors increase the risk of disease transmission, as evidenced by the spread of lice and scabies among Syrian refugees.

In December of 2012, 40% of the registered health issues in the Lebanese hospitals and medical centers were registered by Syrian refugees. The impact of the Syrian refugees is reflected in the increase of the Lebanese Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) budget by US \$39 million in 2013 and, between US \$48 million and US \$69 million in 2014. The cost of maintaining the health system at the pre-crisis level is estimated to be US \$177 million in 2013 and between US \$216 and US 306 million dollars in 2014. The GoL expenditures on the health sector were declining before the crisis. In 2011, the government expenditures on this sector were US \$2.6 Billion, but, these expenditures fell from 45.6% in 2005 to 25.5% in 2011, while today, the budget of the Lebanese Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) is 5.8 percent of the general budget compared to 11.9% in 2005.¹³⁰ The increase in demand for medical treatment leads to having overcrowded hospitals, and a deterioration in the quality of medical services. With that, the result will be increasing the financial burdens on hospitals, high costs of health, and a shortage of medications. In the upcoming medium and long terms, delays in the health service sector will lead to more diseases.

¹³⁰ The World Bank, “Lebanon: Economic and Social Impact Assessment of the Syrian Conflict,” 67.

Education

Even though public schools in Lebanon were usually not overloaded, they have become overcrowded and under-resourced ever since 2011.¹³¹ Despite that, roughly 70% of Lebanese children join private schools, considered higher in quality, and 66% of Syrian refugee children do not go to school.¹³² The demand for services in the education sector has increased as a result of the increasing number of Syrian refugee children, leading to an increase in financial costs and affecting the educational level. The rate of elementary enrollment in education in Lebanese schools during the past decade has been stable, touching 41%. Although the capacity of public schools to accommodate students is limited to only 31% of the total number of students, yet, schools were able to meet the needs of students belonging to low-income social groups. With the commencement of the Syrian crisis and the flow of refugees into the country, the Lebanese Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) provided refugees the access to its public education system during the year 2012.¹³³

Significant barriers prevent Syrian refugees from accessing formal education. Blockades include the absence of public schools in proximity to refugees, an inadequate amount of seats in schools, and language or curriculum complications. In addition to that,

¹³¹ Esperance Ghanem, “Lebanon’s schools do double duty to educate both Syrian, Lebanese students,” *Al-monitor*, October 30, 2015, accessed December 8, 2018, <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/10/lebanon-education-ministry-syrian-refugees-children-school.html>.

¹³² Monk et al., “Factors of Instability in Lebanon”, 12.

¹³³ The World Bank, “Lebanon: Economic and Social Impact Assessment of the Syrian Conflict,” 64.

the lack of ability to pay for educational fees and transportation expenses, child labor, cultural reasons, and early marriage also limit the admission of refugees to public schools. In Lebanon, 78% of Syrian refugee teenagers between the age of 15 to 17 years are not enrolled in school.¹³⁴

The Lebanese Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) incurred US \$29 million in 2012 in addition to other expenses totaling to a US \$24 million to enroll approximately 40,000 Syrian refugee students in public schools. However, these costs and burdens on public schools escalated rapidly in the 2013 academic year by having more than 90 thousand Syrian refugee students. In 2014, numbers increased to between 140 thousand and 170 thousand, which resembles about 13% of the total number of Lebanese students enrolled in public schools in Lebanon. The cost for such burdens while guaranteeing and maintaining the quality of services at the level of pre-crisis was estimated to be US \$183 million in 2013 and about US \$348 million in 2014.¹³⁵ So, after having thousands of Syrian refugee children in Lebanon not enrolled in schools, how can the Lebanese administration further improve the registration of these refugees in its public school network, and how can school capabilities be reinforced to accommodate growing numbers of students better?

¹³⁴ Yassin, “101 Facts and Figures on the Syrian Refugee Crisis,” 82.

¹³⁵ The World Bank, “Lebanon: Economic and Social Impact Assessment of the Syrian Conflict,” 3.

Infrastructure

Even before 2011, Lebanon was suffering from a sluggish infrastructure development that was no longer keeping pace with urbanization and population growth. This resulted in crises within electric, water, and sanitation sectors. This situation was expected to worsen with the anticipation that the number of refugees will exceed one million refugees. These services, or the majority of them, are limited in quantity and quality to meet the needs of citizens. Infrastructure services, except for the communications sector, are subsidized by the state treasury. The increase in demand for public services due to refugee burdens has led to the rise in government spending on these facilities. In the absence of exact figures regarding the number of Syrian refugees, the officials find it challenging to determine the effects of refugees on the infrastructure domains. The massive influx of Syrian refugees contributed to worsening Lebanon's infrastructure. The increased expenditures in the sectors of water, sanitation, municipal services, electricity, and transportation between 2012 and 2014 are estimated at US 589 million dollars. Population density, overcrowding, and competition for jobs are among the leading causes of the deterioration of social relations between host citizens and refugees resulting in increased expressions of violence that threaten social cohesion.

The electricity sector in Lebanon, even from before the outbreak of the Syrian crisis, suffers from a marked weakness in its infrastructure. The additional demand for electricity due to the influx of Syrian refugees was estimated to be between 280 and 290 Megawatt (MW) by the end of 2013, then 822 Megawatt (MW) by the end of 2014. This flaw resulted in significant weaknesses in the services of electric power regarding low

and irregular supplies, in addition to terrible financial losses. According to a study done by the GoL and the UN, Syrian households made illegal electrical connections to the national grid estimated at more than 45%.¹³⁶ The fiscal spending on providing electricity to refugees was estimated at US \$131 million for 2013 and between US \$314 million and US \$343 million for 2014. After the Syrian crisis in 2011, the supply of electricity in Lebanon dropped two hours daily requesting additional power production at the cost of US \$310 million.¹³⁷ The figure below reflects the increased gap between electric demand and generation, mainly starting in 2011 after maintaining a steady deficit rate previously. The closure shown in 2014 was due to the connection of two floating electric plants to the national grid, a solution by the GoL to alleviate additional burdens caused by the Syrian refugees.¹³⁸

¹³⁶ Reem Khamis, “Analysis: Electricity in Lebanon, Understanding the Real Problem,” *Annahar*, August 29, 2018, accessed February 11, 2019, <https://en.annahar.com/article/850746-analysis-electricity-in-lebanon-understanding-the-real-problem>.

¹³⁷ The World Bank, “Lebanon: Economic and Social Impact Assessment of the Syrian Conflict,” 31.

¹³⁸ Elie Bouri and Joseph El Assad, “The Lebanese Electricity Woes: An Estimation of the Economical Costs of Power Interruptions,” *Energies* 9, no. 8 (2016): 353-364, accessed January 31, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.3390/en9080583>.

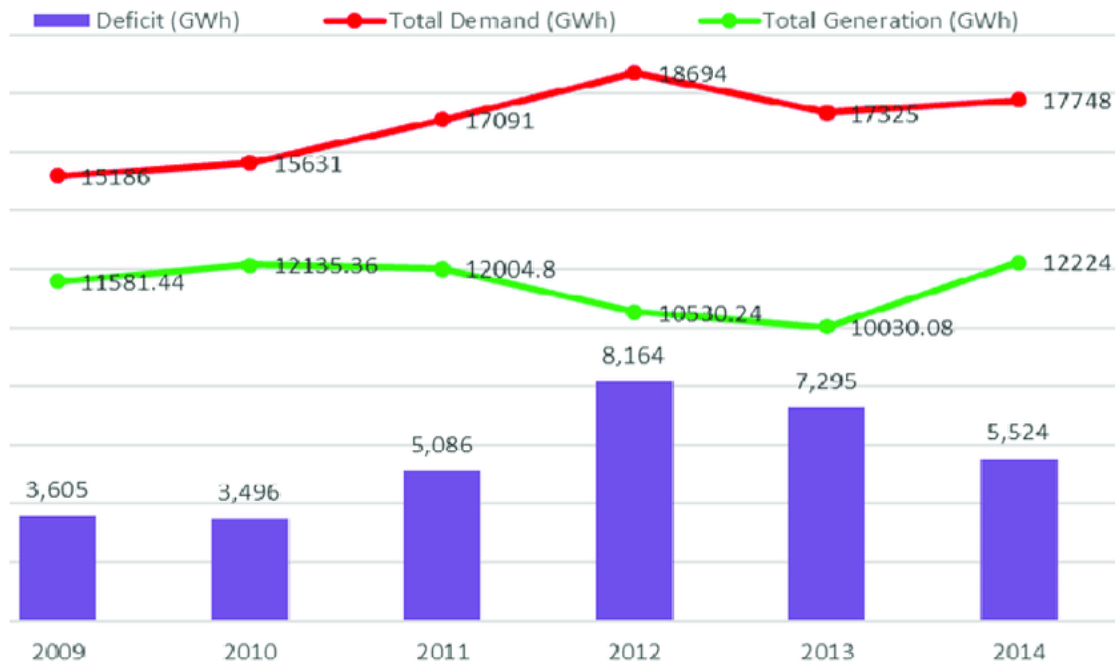


Figure 15. Demand, Generation, and Deficit of Electrical Energy in Lebanon

Source: Elie Bouri and Joseph El Assad, “The Lebanese Electricity Woes: An Estimation of the Economical Costs of Power Interruptions,” *Energies* 9, no. 8 (2016): 353-364, accessed January 31, 2019, https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Demand-generation-and-deficit-of-electrical-energy-including-the-power-ships-Source_fig1_305694683.

As for water supplies, less than 50% of the Lebanese population is connected to the proper water infrastructure. One in every three Lebanese citizens is required to seek alternate drinkable water sources as a result of the additional demand, estimated at 7 percent when matched to the pre-crisis mandate.¹³⁹ The GoL lacking the ability to provide acceptable water services, obligates those who cannot manage costs to depend on poor-quality water resulting in several diseases.

¹³⁹ The World Bank, “Promoting Poverty Reduction and Share Prosperity,” 12.

The solid waste management issue is one of the most severe problems the GoL has been facing recently. The government's inability to find a solution for collecting trash from the streets is an indicator of the absence of a vision that deals with the strain on the public services domain. This initial failure to address one of the critical citizens' needs, led to a sequence of demonstrations from campaigns such as "You Stink" and "We Want Accountability" calling the government to step down.¹⁴⁰ It was the Syrian crisis that increased the solid waste build-up making municipalities confront a 30 to 40% rise in total solid waste, in addition to straining municipal budgets and lacking the staff necessary to collect and transport garbage. Regarding Syrian refugee households, the VASyR survey of 2017 shows that 96% dispose of their trash in dumpsters which raises the question of the remaining houses and the environmental consequences of such actions.¹⁴¹

So, infrastructure in Lebanon, to include sewage, solid waste management, municipal services, and electricity were already under substantial pressure before the Syrian crisis erupted. This stress certainly makes these facilities unprepared to cope with the growing use by large numbers of refugees. As an example, the cumulative financial impact in the 2012-2014 period is approximately US \$18 million. During the same period, an estimated US \$331 to US \$341 million was required to restore water and sanitation services to their situation before the crisis. These figures include humanitarian

¹⁴⁰ Hwaida Saad, "Clashes Break Out During Protests Over Trash Crisis in Lebanon," *The New York Times*, August 23, 2015, accessed December 9, 2018, https://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/24/world/middleeast/lebanese-protest-as-trash-piles-up-in-beirut.html?_r=1.

¹⁴¹ UNHCR, "Vulnerability Assessment for Syrian Refugees in Lebanon," 31.

aid such as the distribution of bottled water, chlorination, and storage tanks. Lebanese communities and municipalities rely on cash transfers from the central government. It is estimated that the needs of the municipal sector for initiatives to maintain relative stability in these services were between US \$143 million and US \$211 million in 2014.

Poverty and Unemployment

Lebanon is a fragile state, economically, politically, and socially. Previously, Lebanon's civil war overwhelmed an already aging infrastructure, which would nowadays cost roughly US \$20 Billion to renovate to meet present-day population request. Recently, the flood of Syrian refugees had exacerbated a weak structure and generated competition for low-wage employment. However, the most significant root of fragility, nonetheless, is the GoL itself. In advance of the outbreak of the Syrian civil war, the Failed States Index of 2010 positioned Lebanon at the rank of 34 out of 60, while in 2013 the same index placed Lebanon at the rank of 46. In 2013, the UN Development Program's Human Development Report demonstrated that Lebanon's development had been undersized since the outbreak of the Syrian conflict.¹⁴²

The influx of Syrian refugees is also reflected in the difficult conditions within the labor market and is expected to lead to more unemployment and informal employment. The status of the Lebanese labor market was challenging, long before the Syrian crisis. The high unemployment rate was negatively affected by the imbalance in the labor market between skills available and jobs of low quality and productivity. The influx of Syrian refugees is expected to further increase supply in the labor market between 30 and

¹⁴² Young et al., *Spillover from the Conflict in Syria*, 29.

50%..¹⁴³ By having the Syrian refugees willing to work for 25-50% lower wages, job opportunities have declined at a 60% rate due to cheap labor..¹⁴⁴ In 2014, a study directed by the American University of Beirut (AUB) illustrate that 90% of the Lebanese observers viewed Syrian refugees as a risk to economic security..¹⁴⁵ In a survey conducted by the UNHCR in June and July 2014, 61% of 446 host societies perceived refugee-related incidents of violence within a six-month time frame preceding the survey..¹⁴⁶ Since refugees are focused in the most economically distressed and impoverished governorates in Lebanon, these areas have become gradually more disposed to tension which is anticipated to increase and lead Lebanon toward greater instability due to the increase of refugee numbers in vulnerable areas.

The Lebanese economy suffers primarily from the problem of meeting local employment needs. The Lebanese economy has the responsibilities of providing 25,000 additional jobs in the labor market every year, in which only 3,000 job opportunities are being offered. According to a survey conducted by the Lebanese Ministry of Education

¹⁴³ The World Bank, “Lebanon: Economic and Social Impact Assessment of the Syrian Conflict,” 4.

¹⁴⁴ Monk et al., “Factors of Instability in Lebanon,” 13.

¹⁴⁵ Charles Harb and Rim Saab, “Social Cohesion and Intergroup Relations: Syrian Refugees and Lebanese Nationals in the Bekaa and Akkar,” Save the Children Report, American University of Beirut, May 27, 2014), accessed December 10, 2018, <https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/social-cohesion-and-intergroup-relations-syrian-refugees-and-lebanese-nationals-bekaa>.

¹⁴⁶ Lina Khatib, “Repercussions of the Syrian Refugee Crisis for Lebanon,” Carnegie Middle East Center, December 10, 2014, accessed December 12, 2018, <http://carnegie-mec.org/2014/12/10/repercussions-of-syrian-refugee-crisis-for-lebanon-pub-57442>.

and Higher Education (MOET), Syrian businesses established in Lebanon generated social tension and friction with Lebanese stakeholders. Conditions in the labor market were primarily poor before the Syrian crisis, with high unemployment rates of 11%. Syrian refugees are expected to increase the labor force by 40%. As a result, the unemployment rate may rise with the anticipation that between 220,000 and 324,000 Lebanese workers will lose their current jobs, in addition to the pressure generated by Syrian refugees on essential services that are barely adequate for residents.¹⁴⁷ Having the overall unemployment reach 20% in 2011, poor and unskilled workers are being more vulnerable to child labor.¹⁴⁸ According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in July 2015, 32% of people residing in Lebanon live in poverty.¹⁴⁹ These poverty indicators increased from 27% in 2011, after maintaining stable figures when compared to 28.5% poverty in 2008. However, this does not negate the fact that Lebanon has long retained an average of 28% poverty rate over the past 25 years, or, since the end of the Lebanese civil war.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ The World Bank, “Lebanon: Economic and Social Impact Assessment of the Syrian Conflict,” 2.

¹⁴⁸ Monk et al., “Factors of Instability in Lebanon,” 14.

¹⁴⁹ International Monetary Fund (IMF), *The Impact of the Syrian Conflict on Lebanon: Selected Issues* (IMF Country Report No. 14/238. Washington, DC: IMF, June 12, 2014), accessed December 14, 2018, <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2014/cr14238.pdf>.

¹⁵⁰ Monk et al., “Factors of Instability in Lebanon,” 14.

The Positive Effects of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon

Generally, and although some scholars have acknowledged the negative impacts of refugee camps on indigenous communities, empirical data are consistent with the idea that the presence of refugees can have a positive effect on host nations' economy and social domains. In Lebanon, and despite having the Syrian refugees exercising excessive burdens on several essential services that were already in poor condition, they still had a positive contribution, especially from the economic aspect. Just as the Palestinian presence injected considerable amounts of money into the Lebanese economy estimated at US \$4 Billion annually, most of the money transferred from Syria, especially from the industrial region of Aleppo, after the outbreak of the events in Tunisia at the end of 2010 was transferred to the Lebanese banks.¹⁵¹ These funds, recently using the Euro currency instead of the dollar, represented significant leverage for the resilience of the Lebanese economy while managing the displacement issue. So far, Lebanese banks have deposited an estimate of US \$11 Billion in addition to another US \$1 Billion pushed into the economy through Syrian consumer spending.¹⁵² Also, the Syrian refugees contribute to more than US \$1 million in Lebanon daily paying housing rentals.¹⁵³ In addition to that, and according to the World Food Program (WFP), Syrian refugees spend more than US \$22 million monthly on food supplies.

¹⁵¹ Kubursi, "Reconstructing the Economy of Lebanon," 71.

¹⁵² Chakrani, "The Economic Ghost of the Syrian War."

¹⁵³ Cali Massimiliano, "The Impact of the Syrian Conflict on Lebanese Trade," The World Bank, April 2015, accessed February 5, 2019, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/lebanon/publication/the-impact-of-the-syrian-conflict-on-lebanese-trade>.

Furthermore, the end of the conflict in Syria should ensure new export opportunities for Lebanon, which indeed would benefit several social and economic sectors. Despite the gloomy reality, some of the fiscal tourism losses, as an example, were offset by Syrian consumer spending in Lebanon. Also, the increase in Lebanese exports to Syria along with the decrease of imports from Syria and the increased imports to the port of Beirut by 30% because of the paralysis of the Syrian ports were positive outcomes from the Syrian crisis. The repercussions of the crisis in Lebanon is no longer hidden, but what is more important is how to reinforce the positive results so that Lebanon can endure the increasing waves of refugees. This shifts the focus towards the donors in the international community who withheld support on Lebanon while burdens were increasing as a result of the continuing conflict.

The Role and Contribution of the International Community

Since the announcement of the International Support Group for Lebanon, whose conference was held in New York in late September 2013, Lebanese officials put considerable efforts to pursue the conclusions and recommendations of that conference, especially with the increasing burdens of displaced people across the border. According to the Geneva Conference in September 2013, four principles were adopted for dealing with Syrian displaced personnel summarized by the financial burden sharing, refugee number sharing, providing shelter for internally displaced Syrians, and facilitating a political solution to enable a safe return. The Paris meeting in March 2014 had a positive impact by ensuring the importance of the Lebanese issue internationally, moreover, the renewal of the EU and other international donors commitment to sustain the Lebanese constitutional institutions. Despite this renewed commitment to continue providing

financial assistance, disappointment resulted by not having any implementation for all these promises as required even with the difficult and dangerous situations affecting Lebanon. In May 2015, the UN's humanitarian request for Syria was only 20% funded which led to severely distressing measures including denying entrance to their countries as well as forcing people back into conflict zones in Syria.¹⁵⁴ Also in 2015, UNHCR High Commissioner António Guterres stated:

After years in exile, refugees' resources are long depleted, and their living conditions are drastically deteriorating. I have met middle-class families with children who are barely surviving on the streets and praying to make it through the winter. Well over half of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon are living in insecure dwellings, up from a third last year. With humanitarian appeals systematically underfunded, there is not enough assistance to provide for Syrian refugees.¹⁵⁵

It is clear that there is a missing link that prevents completing such actions.

However, no matter what the results were, Lebanon had to continue the efforts by always raising its voice seeking humanitarian aid. Lebanon has the absolute right to seek support, and capable countries must help relieve the burdens of refugees without any slowdown or complications. The alternative of resettling Syrian refugees in European countries is a solution that EU countries will not encourage. Recently, and by knowing that they would not be rejected, Syrians have been jeopardizing their lives to get across the Mediterranean

¹⁵⁴ World Trade and Tourism Council, "Syria: Left Out in the Cold: Syrian Refugees Abandoned by the International Community," December 5, 2014, accessed January 11, 2019, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/MDE24/047/2014/en/>.

¹⁵⁵ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), "UN High Commissioner for Refugees: Antonio Guterres - Written text of speech to the UN Security Council," February 26, 2015, accessed January 12, 2019, <https://www.unhcr.org/54ef66796.html>.

Sea in broken boats to reach Europe's borders or through openings in barbed-wire fences.¹⁵⁶

In 2016, capabilities of the GoL had been improved to handle the refugee crisis. Supplementary staff members were added to the Lebanese ministries to reinforce its institutional capacities at the national level. The employment of additional staff personnel was only possible through the funding received from multiple international contributors besides the US \$157.5 million that was directed to public organizations.¹⁵⁷ Substantial support provided to the Lebanese Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) in addition to the network of public schools. Another strong emphasis was made by supporting the Lebanese Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) and the network of social development centers that lay within its scope due to their leading role in responding to the crisis according to the LCRP. Municipalities in Lebanon were also strengthened since they represent the leading suppliers of essential services, moreover, they are the frontline in rapidly reacting to the necessities of vulnerable Lebanese citizens and refugee groups.

Municipalities in Lebanon, especially in congested refugee areas, have limited resources and hence 70% lack the capability in providing the necessary services needed for their citizens. The LCRP has prioritized funding to public institutions, and in 2016, US \$73 million was directed to 240 Lebanese municipalities to improve their services. This aid was oriented to improvements in infrastructure and recovery of hospitals,

¹⁵⁶ Danielle Ellison, "FPI Bulletin: Mideast Refugee Crisis Continues to Overwhelm Europe," October 30, 2015, accessed January 21, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep07264>.

¹⁵⁷ Yassin, "101 Facts and Figures on the Syrian Refugee Crisis," 110.

housing, and public schools. Since refugees have settled in host communities that are historically neglected, it was essential to improve water and energy services in these areas which helps to relieve pressure consequently on other services. In 2016, the LCRP invested US \$105 million to improve delivery of water and energy services in these refugee communities. The LCRP partners still face some challenges due to funding deficiencies where additional investments are needed for water and energy supply in host communities, especially during the upcoming years. In 2017, the World Bank's Global Concessional Financing Facility (GCOFF) guaranteed fiscal support for public health services development plans in Lebanon which makes the over-all amount of concessional financing delivered to US \$150 million.

Moreover, the United States, while seeking to protect the Lebanese borders from the infiltration by terrorist groups, called Lebanon for an open border policy toward the Syrian refugees. The United States provided more than US \$1.5 Billion in the form of humanitarian aid since 2012, which was mainly designed for mitigating excessive burdens on host communities.¹⁵⁸ Also, the EU has designated more than €1.1 Billion to Lebanon since the start of the Syrian crisis in the form of humanitarian aid for protecting the most susceptible, encouraging economic growth and employment opportunities, in addition to strengthening the capacities of Lebanese institutions in charge for responding

¹⁵⁸ U.S. Department of State, "U.S. Humanitarian Assistance in Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis in Lebanon," Fact Sheet, July 25, 2017, accessed December 3, 2018, <https://www.state.gov/j/prm/releases/releases/2017/272861.htm>.

to the crisis.¹⁵⁹ Another agreement announced in 2016 was the EU-Lebanon compact that outlines mutual commitments in seeking for better living conditions for both Lebanese citizens and Syrian refugees. At both Brussels conferences in 2017 and 2018, the EU renewed support to the critical efforts that both the GoL along with the Lebanese residents are undertaking in response to the Syrian refugee crisis.

Although these numbers may seem massive for a small country like Lebanon, it remains questionable as to whether they fulfill the needs and demands of refugees, especially as Lebanon has the highest number of refugees per capita in the world. At the end of 2017, 53% of the required funding to sustain the circumstances in Syria and its bordering countries has been received. It is worth noting that there was a significant drop in donor support when compared to the previous year where 63% of the demanded funds were received. In Lebanon, the LCRP required US \$2.75 Billion in 2017 to respond to the Syrian crisis in which only US \$729.32 million were received marking a significant decline when compared to the US \$980 million that was received by LCRP partners in 2016. This declining trend in providing funds raises the question on the real causes behind such actions from the international community. Is it a lack of interest? Is it due to political agendas within donor countries? Alternatively, is it based on the fiscal and political corruption within the Lebanese institutions and systems?

¹⁵⁹ European Commission, “European Neighborhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations,” *Europa*, 2018, accessed January 7, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/neighbourhood/countries/lebanon_en.

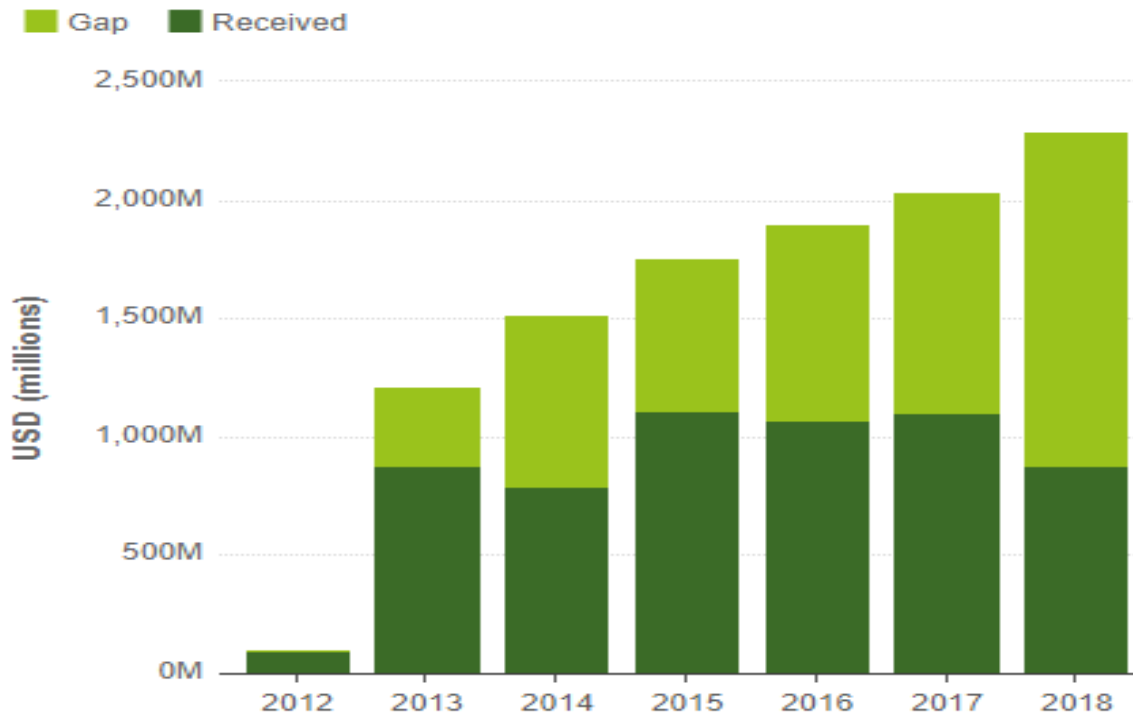


Figure 16. Funding Requirements

Source: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, “Funding Requirements,” December 31, 2018, <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria/location/71>.

In addition to the Syrian crisis, Lebanon is still responsible for Palestinian refugee presence were attention has moved away from since the initiation of the Syrian crisis. UNRWA, the leading supplier of essential services to registered Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, had their funds severely reduced. The United States funded 24% of UNRWA’s budget in 2014 but this is threatened after President Trump’s administration called for an end to UNRWA funding which would lead to a severe crisis.¹⁶⁰ Such action by the US

¹⁶⁰ Lars Ersley Andersen, “The Neglected Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon and the Syrian Refugee Crisis,” (Research Project, Danish Institute for International Studies, Copenhagen, Denmark, January 1, 2016), accessed January 24, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep17376.7>.

administration will put excessive burdens on the Lebanese economy as well as the Palestinian refugees who are seeking refuge again with the Syrians by heading this time towards the European Union.¹⁶¹ A number of Syrian refugees interviewed hoped to resettle in Europe by stating that “I would love to move to Europe. I heard from my cousin in Germany that a friend fell sick, and he was taken by a helicopter to get urgent surgery in the hospital. Here in Lebanon, they would leave us to die even on the doorstep of the hospital.”¹⁶² In 2017, UNRWA demanded US \$328,952,593 to be responsible for humanitarian support to 438,000 Palestinian refugees settling in Syria, besides thousands who escaped to adjacent countries such as Lebanon and Jordan, but in June 2017, only 19.66% of these funds have been secured.¹⁶³

Recently, the UN announced the preparation of a plan worth US \$5.5 Billion to support the Syrian refugees and their five host countries: Jordan, Turkey, Lebanon, Egypt, and Iraq, during the years of 2019 and 2020 which helps in relieving burdens due to the continuing impact of the Syrian crisis. This support was interpreted in the Brussels third conference, held in March 2019, during which support funds to the region increased from US \$5.5 to US \$7 Billion for the year of 2019, but repatriation of Syrian refugees

¹⁶¹ Carnegie Middle East Center, and Mohanad Hage Ali, “A New Migrant Crisis for Europe?” November 23, 2018, accessed January 9, 2019, <https://carnegie-mec.org/diwan/77771>.

¹⁶² CARE International in Lebanon, *Syrian Refugees in Lebanon Eight Years on: What Works and Why that Matters for the Future* (Beirut, Lebanon: CARE International in Lebanon), accessed February 27, 2019, https://www.care-international.org/files/files/CAREInternationalLebanon_RefugeesinLebanon_Whatworksandwhythatmattersforthefuture.pdf.

¹⁶³ Yassin, “101 Facts and Figures on the Syrian Refugee Crisis,” 116.

was again tied to a whole political solution that ends the conflict in Syria.¹⁶⁴ In April 2018, Achim Steiner, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) administrator said:

Host countries have demonstrated outstanding generosity to Syrian refugees for many years despite the huge pressure on national services and infrastructure, and the international community must enhance their support for longer-term development efforts to these countries on the front line who have been providing a global public good.¹⁶⁵

It is worth mentioning that comparing figures between what Lebanon assessed as needs with what the UN, EU, and other international donors are providing reflects the fact of an increasing gap that needs additional efforts to minimize. As a recent example, only US \$2.3 Billion out of the US \$9.1 Billion requested for humanitarian support to host communities has been received.¹⁶⁶ This can be considered as a continuation of the shortage in international funding as the following figure reflects the steady increase in demands for humanitarian aid.

¹⁶⁴ Council of the European Union, “Brussels III Conference on ‘Supporting the future of Syria and the region’: co-chairs declaration,” March 14, 2019, accessed March 17, 2019, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/03/14/brussels-iii-conference-on-supporting-the-future-of-syria-and-the-region-co-chairs-declaration/>.

¹⁶⁵ Europe and Central Asia, “UN calls for increased support for vulnerable Syrians and host populations,” United Nations Development Program, April 24, 2018, accessed February 20, 2018, <http://www.eurasia.undp.org/content/rbec/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2018/un-calls-for-increased-support-for-vulnerable-syrians-and-host-p.html>.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

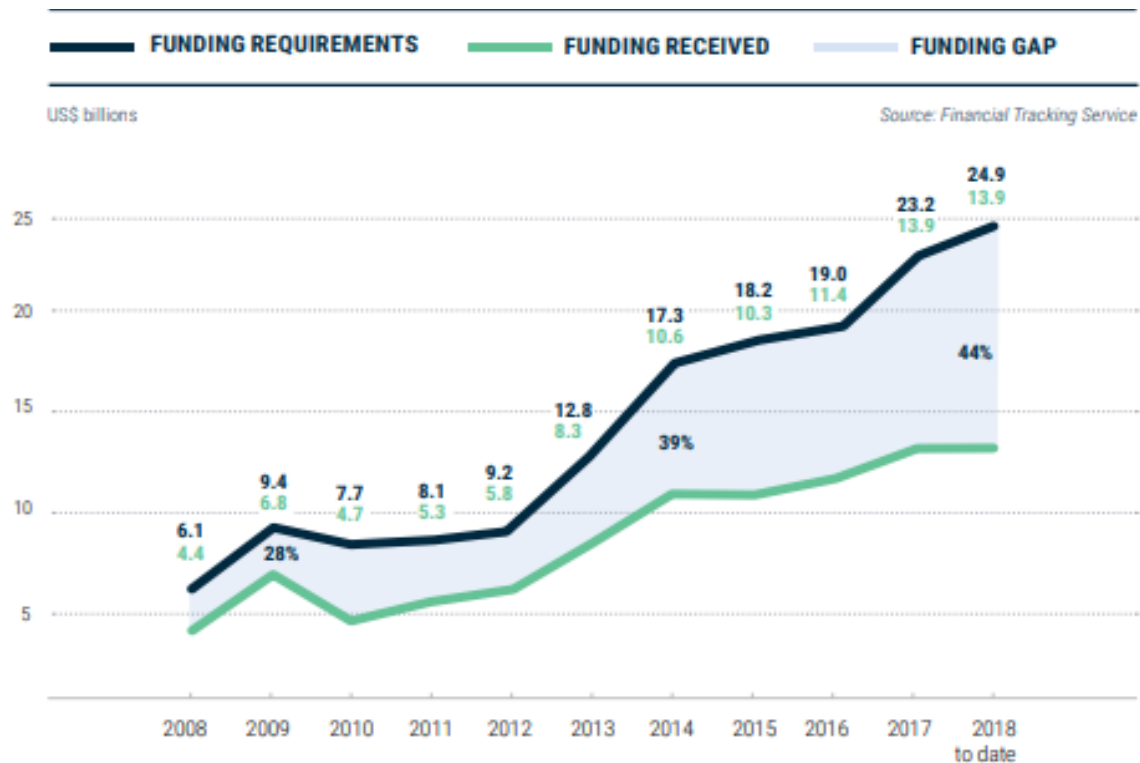


Figure 17. Appeal Funding Gap (2008-2018)

Source: United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Appeal Funding Gap (2008-2018),” <https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/GHO2019.pdf>.

The EU credit fund presented another example of support programs by trying to enter the Lebanese arena and setting up a project to support vulnerable groups of refugees and host communities, based on direct payment of funds to Syrian refugees for 30 months, thus bypassing the Lebanese state.¹⁶⁷ Risks for such projects include social, economic, and political extents, by constituting a violation of Lebanese sovereignty besides encouraging refugees to remain in Lebanon. Representatives of the United

¹⁶⁷ “ليا القزي.” [Lea Al-Kazzi, “International Financial Incentives for Internally Displaced Personnel (IDP) to Stay in Lebanon”] *Tayyar*, October 6, 2018, accessed January 10, 2019, <https://www.tayyar.org/News/Lebanon/243001/>.

Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Lebanon complained about such projects, stating that “previous experiences of direct cash transfers in the world did not lead to positive results, but on the contrary, led to having refugees more reliant than ever before.” By trying to streamline the EU credit fund project, some Lebanese officials, from a political perspective, encourage this and say that it is merely an aid program that solves a social and economic crisis as well as bringing money into the country. However, previous experience with how international organizations work in Lebanon shows that the threat behind similar projects is sovereignty. The implementing agency goes beyond the existence of a state and institutions that must supervise and inspect every penny spent. This leads to questioning the intentions of the EU along with Lebanese officials by trying to benefit politically from the refugees in the future.

What is more critical and lies behind the scenes, is the marketing for local integration or “*tawteen*” for displaced Syrians by providing them with the necessary resources to stay in the host country for an additional 30 months that can be renewed. Along with these previous concerns comes the report published by RAND that points to the importance of benefiting from the Syrian labor force in Lebanon, Turkey, and Jordan. The report sheds light on one idea that displaced personnel in Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon need more than ongoing humanitarian assistance. Indeed they need employment.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁸ Krishna B. Kumar, Shelly Culbertson, Louay Constant, and Shanthi Nataraj, *Opportunities for All: Mutually Beneficial Opportunities for Syrians and Host Countries in Middle Eastern Labor Markets* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2018).

The confrontation between Lebanon and the international community is raging around the issue of the displaced Syrians, after efforts to integrate them in host countries or another third country as a sort of pressure practiced by EU countries and the United States in the face of the Syrian state. The United States and its allies in the UN act as if the search for the fate of the displaced Syrians and their return to their country, voluntarily and safely, has ended. By this, they present integration as an alternative through grasping arms of these host nations with the economic factor by providing funds to host communities as well as to the displaced personnel, as the previous example on EU efforts. From another political perspective in Lebanon, some politicians believe that the international community does not want the return of Syrian refugees to their country but on the contrary, imposes their integration in the host countries. They view the EU and the U.S as countries that do not carry out this mission alone but instead employ research centers and intellectual organizations to carry out related studies that support and encourage integration. In December 2018, the Lebanese Minister of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants Gebran Bassil affirmed Lebanon's position to the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres by stating:

Lebanon rejects resettlement or the integration of refugees or displaced persons on its territory. The only solution that Lebanon sees fit to the crisis of refugees is by having a safe and dignified return to the country of origin. Lebanon highlights the importance of not politicizing the refugee crisis ... and not using it as a tool against a political side or in the interest of one side in a conflict. The sovereignty of countries is above all other interests.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁹ The Daily Star, "Bassil rejects 'politicization' of refugee crisis after migration agreement," accessed December 28, 2018, <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon/News/2018/Dec-18/472124-bassil-rejects-politicization-of-refugee-crisis-after-migration-agreement.ashx>.

The Controversial Repatriation of Syrian Refugees

“Voluntary repatriation is more than just return to the country of origin; it is the return to a home and a community.”¹⁷⁰ After having the Syrian refugee crisis become the world’s most massive personnel displacement, the UNHCR Filippo Grandi said: “a quarter of the world’s refugees are Syrians, and a quarter of all Syrians are refugees.”¹⁷¹ In 1984, former UNHCR Poul Hartling stated that in order for the UNHCR to be involved in any voluntary repatriation of refugees, the criteria for refugees must be “allowed to be returned to their places of origin, ideally to their former homes, their villages, their land.”¹⁷² The UNHCR’s roadmap towards the Syrian refugees is anchored to a protection strategy which is aligned with the other four pillars of the refugee’s response framework composed of support to host country resilience, allowing refugee self-reliance, developing access to resettlement in a third country, along with planning for a voluntary repatriation in security and dignity. The UN is working with the Government of Syria on issues that ensure housing and essential services for Syrian refugees in addition to the internally displaced personnel is available.¹⁷³

¹⁷⁰ Gaim Kibreab, “Citizenship Rights and Repatriation of Refugees,” *The International Migration Review* 37, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 24-73, accessed February 28, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/30037818>.

¹⁷¹ Europe and Central Asia, “UN calls for increased support for vulnerable Syrians and host populations.”

¹⁷² Kibreab, “Citizenship Rights and Repatriation of Refugees,” 26.

¹⁷³ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), “Durable Solutions for Syrian Refugees,” June-July 2018, accessed January 21, 2019, <https://data2.unhcr.org/ar/documents/download/64999>.

In June 2017, the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) in coordination with the Lebanese General Security Directorate, assisted in the return of several hundred Syrian refugee families from the Lebanese town of Aarsal, on the eastern border with Syria, to the town of Asal al-Ward across the border.¹⁷⁴ Although this was a minor step in comparison to the massive numbers of refugees, there was an optimistic view that it can then lead to encouraging other refugee families to head back to safe zones in Syria. One month later, and as anticipated, few thousands of Syrian refugees began their return to their homeland. According to the UNHCR, approximately 13,000 and another 250,000 Syrians left Lebanon and Turkey respectively heading home within the first six months of 2018. This was part of the plan that Russia had presented to the United States for coordinating the Syrian Repatriation with the aim of returning around 890,000 Syrian refugees from Lebanon.¹⁷⁵ However, the UNHCR stated that they are not involved in any local agreements. Moreover, they do not encourage large-scale repatriation that does not ensure safety. This discouragement from an international agency raised concerns among Lebanese politicians about whether Lebanon should coordinate directly with the Syrian government, or whether it will lead international donors to minimize financial aid for such an act. In August 2017, the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) underlined that they have no role in such agreements, moreover, have recurrently expressed anxieties due to the ongoing use of these local agreements, that do

¹⁷⁴ Humud, *Lebanon*, 22.

¹⁷⁵ The New Arab, "More Syrian refugees return 'voluntarily' home from Lebanon," *Alaraby*, September 4, 2018, accessed January 22, 2019, <https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2018/9/4/more-syrian-refugees-return-voluntarily-home-from-lebanon>.

not meet the international legal standards. These actions must be voluntary and within an encouraging protection situation.¹⁷⁶ Along with that, human rights organizations cautioned that Syrians returning home should do so willingly, and with full awareness of the dangers that they might encounter.

On the other hand, the Lebanese General Security Directorate Major General Abbas Ibrahim stated that “We are insisting that no Syrian refugee returns home and then is detained,” after skepticism from Syrian refugees who believed that they would be arrested or prosecuted by Bashar Al-Assad’s regime upon their arrival home.¹⁷⁷ Furthermore, on concerns of having the Russian initiative not receiving international funding for its implementation, MG Ibrahim announced:

Whatever the case, work is being carried out in Lebanon on the voluntary return of the displaced Syrians. We have opened 17 centers in various Lebanese regions to receive the requests of refugees who wish to return. We will continue this work, especially as the number of Syrians wishing to return began to rise significantly.¹⁷⁸

Additionally, the Lebanese Minister of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants Gebran Bassil visited the Vatican City in November 2018 regarding the confusion that arose from the Vatican’s Secretary of State Cardinal Paul Richard Gallagher statement about Syrian

¹⁷⁶ Reliefweb, “Response to the Evacuation from Aarsal/Flita Mountains to North-western Syria,” August 2017, accessed March 2, 2019, <https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/turkey-syria-response-evacuation-aarsalflita-mountains-north-western>.

¹⁷⁷ The New Arab, “More Syrian refugees return ‘voluntarily’ home from Lebanon.”

¹⁷⁸ آخر الأخبار, “إبراهيم: اللاجئين السوريين في لبنان نحو 1,3 مليون شخص فيما العائدين الى سوريا نحو 50 ألفا” [Ekherelakhbar, “Ibrahim: Syrian refugees in Lebanon are about 1.3 million people while refugees returning to Syria are about 50 thousand,”] October 10, 2018, accessed January 28, 2019, <http://www.ekherelakhbar.com/mobile/news/58864/lebanon-news>.

refugees. Gallagher said that “the Syrian refugees’ issue in Lebanon is a burden on the country, but unfortunately their return will not happen. No one in the world is willing to aid Lebanon” advising Lebanon to discuss this issue with the United States, maybe they can help.¹⁷⁹ Within all these different perspectives regarding the return of Syrian refugees to their homeland lies multiple interrelated political, financial, and security issues that have to be resolved between international players before any large-scale repatriation can happen. Until then, Lebanon hopes that local agreements are taking place, although minor, and might at least relieve some of the social, economic, as well as security burdens, grasping it as a last straw of hope.

Conclusion

The dominant description that defines the effect of Syrian refugees in Lebanon claimed that their presence led to extensive inflation, increased unemployment, besides other social and security conflicts with Lebanese citizens. As shown throughout this chapter, although Syrian refugees did negatively impact the Lebanese economy and increased the burdens, yet, several internal and external factors, as well as government policy failures in addressing the issue, had to be taken into account. However, since the main focus was on the excessive costs that refugees had, the Syrian refugee benefits for the Lebanese economy remained unnoticed. This study helps to deliver a better

¹⁷⁹ Joseph Haboush, “Bassil Visits Vatican after Holy See urges talks on refugees,” *The Daily Star*, 2018, accessed December 26, 2018, <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2018/Dec-01/470600-bassil-visits-vatican-after-holy-see-urges-talks-on-refugees.ashx>.

understanding of how the Lebanese economy progressed during the Syrian refugee crisis, especially when related to other influencing factors.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Assessing the actual impacts that refugees have on host nations requires a strenuous effort. What makes such studies easier, or on the contrary more complex, are the different policies that host nations adopt while addressing a refugee influx. Establishing camps that help isolate refugees in remote areas instead of integrating them with the local community facilitates the local government's work, in addition to gaining the international community's trust by providing an effective way to coordinate with donors and other Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's). Refugees disseminated between local societies are hard to account for, while those living in camps are more recognizable by the international community and much easier to control. By having refugees settle in camps, demands for financial support are easier to justify than when having them integrated into society. This is the case in Lebanon as I have shown throughout this paper where Lebanon's policies did not take into consideration the previous Palestinian experience, thus did not distinguish between the two cases.

Comparing the Palestinian and Syrian refugee presence in Lebanon, despite the difference in causes and refugee numbers, shows that Lebanon, financially, better managed the Palestinian situation. The UNRWA, through its support, has done a great job in providing funds to the Palestinian refugees which helps in alleviating burdens on public services due to their presence in camps, while Lebanon still bears the bulk of the burden of Syrian refugees caused by the lack of precise refugee data. However, the presence of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon also had a significant adverse impact on the

emergence of security and political complexities which led to civil war. Lebanon is currently bearing the consequences of the Syrian crisis because of the geographical linkage and historical relations between the two countries.

When the Syrian refugees began pouring into Lebanon starting in 2011, the social, economic, and even political challenges that had already existed in Lebanon before the Syrian war were aggravated. These challenges led to waning living conditions for both citizens and refugees. As shown, prices that were already high continued to increase due to a Lebanese desire to make more profit upon the increased demand for items. Also, unemployment rates surged even more although Lebanon suffered lately from high percentages of unemployment, as well as additional straining to public services and infrastructure. External factors represented by a global increase in food and energy affected this rise in prices. Such results were attributed to the massive Syrian population that crossed to Lebanon and were viewed as a threat to the Lebanese society and economy. Throughout this paper, the evidence provided has shown that this observation was not entirely correct in Lebanon. Several factors such as the civil war, the 2006 war, in addition to fluctuating political situations were considered as basics that contributed to the declination of the Lebanese economy.

Lebanon deserves acknowledgment for welcoming the Syrian refugees fleeing the conflict, especially from a hospitality perspective despite that Lebanon's economy had not fully recovered from the 2006 war. The GoL, besides many of the Syrians, anticipated a short-term stay, compared to the cases in Tunisia and Egypt, and thus handled the crisis as a temporary issue in which refugees will return to Syria as soon as safety conditions were possible. This, along with the absence of consensus due to

political unrest, justifies the Lebanese governments' lack of response in the first years after the crisis. As the refugee figures grew and economic conditions in Lebanon began to waver, generosity towards the Syrians altered, and Lebanese citizens were no longer as welcoming as they had once been. Residency restrictions were implemented in an attempt to reduce the perceived harm that the Syrians were adding on to Lebanon's economy. Given the belief that the Syrian refugees had become destructive to Lebanon's economy, the Lebanese policy changes established a reasonable response to these supposed threats with the government willing to protect its citizens. Had the Syrian refugees been merely responsible for rising prices, high unemployment rates, and straining public services, then facilitating voluntary repatriation relieves burdens on the economy. This study has shown that in the case of Syrian refugees in Lebanon they could contribute to the host nation economy in methods that would have been beneficial. Money transferred to the Lebanese banks, estimated at US \$11 Billion, brought considerable amounts of wealth that may have exceeded the total economic loss that the World Bank (WB) had assessed (US \$7.5 Billion) due to the Syrian crisis, but again Lebanon did not consider any positive takeaways from the Palestinian experience. However, probably shortly, Lebanon can benefit from the reconstruction projects that will take place in Syria at the end of the crisis by playing the role of a support area in the region that will facilitate the flow of resources through the Lebanese ports, mainly in north Lebanon.

Moreover, reopening the ground trade routes that connect Lebanon to Iraq, Jordan, and the Arab Gulf region will revive the economic and industrial sector. There is a fallacy among the Lebanese citizens that Syrian refugees destroyed the economy, whereas, in reality, it is the Syrian conflict itself that badly affected tourism, trade, and

banking sectors in Lebanon, not the refugee population. As an example, in 2017, and according to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), the total contribution of travel and tourism to the GDP in Lebanon was US \$9.345 million and is forecast to increase by 5.2 percent in 2018, all due to positive indicators on getting closer to ending the Syrian conflict.¹⁸⁰

Additionally, the USA and the EU contributed by US \$1.5 Billion and 1.1 Billion euro respectively since the beginning of the crisis, other than donations from international organizations in the form of projects. This funding reflects the will to help relief burdens on Lebanon, but, as shown through this paper, are still far from meeting the requests of the GoL represented by the LCRP. Such resources, in the absence of a clear vision and national planning, have no chance to succeed in confronting the economic demands of refugees. Cutting funds lately from international donors and tying it to necessary fiscal reforms was done to restore trust with the GoL after concerns regarding managing funds in Lebanon, which is continuously affected by political biases in dealing with the Syrian crisis.

Although the Lebanese society along with the refugee population has shown resilience, still, the complexities of the conflict present unique challenges for the country and its society which deserves responsiveness from Lebanon's political authorities and international partners. The status quo can only be handled if the delicacy of the Lebanese political and social institutions, in addition to the exposure of the Syrian refugees

¹⁸⁰ World Trade and Tourism Council, "Economic Impact 2018 Lebanon," March 2018, accessed February 15, 2019, <http://www.wttc.org/-/media/files/reports/economic-impact-research/countries-2018/lebanon2018.pdf>.

themselves are considered. Recently there is evidence on the lessening of this humanitarian catastrophe, despite minor conflicts in the province of Idlib in northwest Syria. Still, long-term policies must be developed. Importantly, the Lebanese institutions must be reinforced, particularly in their ability to afford welfare to both Lebanese citizens and refugees. Any failure in escalating the urgency of this issue will undoubtedly expose the Lebanese authorities to additional strains and increases the instability of the Syrian refugee presence in Lebanon. All this will result in prolonging the current humanitarian crisis which potentially leads to more regional instability.

2017 TARGET & REQUIREMENT BY SECTOR

PEOPLE TARGETED		SECTORS	REQUIREMENTS (US\$)
2,236,299		SOCIAL STABILITY	123.8m
1,959,428		WATER	280m
1,887,502		PROTECTION	163.8m
1,535,297		HEALTH	308m
1,276,000		BASIC ASSISTANCE	571.5m
1,119,171		ENERGY	99.2m
961,388		FOOD SECURITY	507.2m
543,616		EDUCATION	372.6m
536,002		SHELTER	128.7m
65,557		LIVELIHOODS	195.7m

Figure 18. The Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (2017-2020)

Source: Government of Lebanon and United Nations, *The Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (2017-2020)*, January 2017, Mario Einaudi Center for Cultural Studies, Cornell University, accessed February 28, 2019, https://einaudi.cornell.edu/sites/default/files/2018_WP1_Charafeddine.pdf.

Since independence, Lebanon has had difficulty in establishing a fully responsible state. Portions of the population are loyal to external influences as a result of religious backgrounds. The successive Lebanese governments could not cope with emerging crises and manage the country's economic policies in the absence of planning, moreover, within a sectarian system affected by regional and international changes. By having the world's global forces, USA and Russia, each trying to pull Lebanon to their realm, Lebanon is forced to walk fine lines in order to maintain good relations with both sides for the benefit of the country. The Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon is undoubtedly linked to the Syrian conflict. However, there is a significant role for the GoL and citizens to confront the repercussions that have occurred. Lebanese should strengthen their internal immunity and prioritize the country's national interests by benefitting from external factors that underline the unwillingness to blow up the security situation in Lebanon.

In February 2019, Lebanon succeeded in the formation of its new government nine months after disputes between the two political rivals that put Lebanon on the brink of financial ruins. Current Prime Minister Saad Al-Hariri said that the government's policy goals would affirm the fiscal reforms required to restore trust with international donors.¹⁸¹ These reforms will allow the unlocking of Billions of dollars that are vital for Lebanon in infrastructure investment. Foreign donors will provide Lebanon with low-interest loans to help boost the economy, but also urged Lebanon to emphasize on reforms, mainly in the power sector which consumes substantial figures annually.

¹⁸¹ James Haines-Young, "Lebanese leaders break nine-month deadlock to form government," *The National*, January 31, 2019, accessed February 3, 2019, <https://www.thenational.ae/world/mena/lebanese-leaders-break-nine-month-deadlock-to-form-government-1.820452>.

The recurrence of the Palestinian refugee's experience in Lebanon with the Syrian refugees remains possible when the differences between the two catastrophes are eliminated. However, throughout the paper, it is evident that the causes differed between the Palestinian refugee crisis which was a result of Israel taking over their land, and the Syrians refugees who still have an existing homeland, but left it temporarily until the conflict reaches an end. While the causes for the Syrian displacement seem more likely to disappear in the medium term, the Palestinian issue has been linked to the Arab-Israeli conflict for more than 70 years. Consequently, excessive security, political, and economic repercussions are mostly eliminated with the disappearance of the causes of displacement and the return of Syrian refugees to their homeland.

Recommendations

To the International Community

1. Force the implementation of relevant international resolutions regarding the Palestinian refugee issue which minimizes risks on Lebanon and alleviates the burdens that these refugees impose.
2. Consider the debate of the voluntary repatriation of Syrian refugees to secure places as key in relevant summits, thus relieving some negative ramifications on Lebanon instead of insisting on a whole repatriation approach linked to a political solution in Syria, as Brussels third conference in March 2019 concluded.
3. Provide the required generous funding to Syrian refugees while they are in safe zones in their homeland instead of offering cash payments for them in

Lebanon, cutting concerns within Lebanese political parties on the international community's intent to push towards "*tawteen*."

4. Enable the GoL to meet the essential needs in order to restore essential public services that were deteriorated by Syrian refugees through increasing financial contributions within the UN 3RP.
5. Abide by the principle of burden and responsibility sharing of refugees, preserved in the refugee convention, by offering additional resettlement places as a durable solution for the Syrian refugees hosted in Lebanon, instead of having European countries limit the number of refugee admissions to minimal compared to their abilities.
6. Countries should fulfill their funding and support pledges as proclaimed in international conferences, moreover consider that burden-sharing instead of buck-passing is a critical policy to deal with the crisis successfully.
7. Facilitate long-term economic sustainability regarding the Syrian crisis, since the humanitarian aid provided, although vital, remains focused on short to medium-term solutions.
8. Assist effectively in the reconstruction process of the Syrian infrastructure, after establishing a political solution in Syria, which allows for quick repatriation towards safe zones in Syria.

To the Government of Lebanon

1. Ensure the continuation of UNRWA's work in Lebanon in order to assist the Palestine refugees due to the importance of these allowances in alleviating adverse economic effects on the Lebanese economy.

2. Conduct fiscal reforms which are considered a key to gain the international community's confidence and funds, also preventing a government's default.
3. Push towards international conferences to assist Lebanon, the Paris and Brussels conferences as an example, which insists on forcing the international community to assume the responsibility of sharing burdens and figures.
4. Lebanese politicians should address the Syrian refugee presence as a purely humanitarian matter and avoid the lobbying of refugee identity, and by this, Lebanese political parties should prioritize Lebanon's interest and accept going to direct negotiations with the current Syrian regime to enable refugee repatriation.
5. Develop a clear framework that defines the Syrian presence in Lebanon, provide them with access to essential services, register newborn Syrians after May 2015 to prevent the loss of a Syrian generation, moreover offer them the right to work within a legal background to benefit from their skills and avoid being vulnerable to terrorism or illegal acts.
6. Benefit from the oil and gas exploitation in the territorial waters to confront anticipated worsening of the refugee crisis in Lebanon, besides motivating the service sector, mainly tourism and banking, considered as the backbone for the Lebanese economy with their ability to attract foreign deposits.

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