THE INFLUX OF SYRIAN REFUGEES IN LEBANON: ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS, 2011-2016

Thesis submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University

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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

POONAM KHATANA

Centre for West Asian Studies

School of International Studies

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY

New Delhi 10067

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Centre for West Asian Studies
School of International Studies
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
New Delhi -110 067, India

Tel. : +91-11-2670 4372
Email : jnucwas@gmail.com

Date: 15 .07.2019

DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled "**The Influx of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon: Economic and Political Implications, 2011-2016**" submitted by me for the award of the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The thesis has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other university.

Poonam Khatana

CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this thesis be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

Prof. Aswini K. Mohapatra
Chairperson, CWAS

CHAIRPERSON
Centre for West Asian Studies
School of International Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi - 110067 (India)

Prof. A.K. Pasha
Supervisor

SUPERVISOR
CWAS/SIS/JNU
New Delhi-67

Date: 10.07.2019

DECLARATION

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Jawaharlal Nehru University

New Delhi

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ALP	Accelerated Learning Programme
AUB	American University of Beirut
BoP	Balance of Payments
BRIC	Beirut Research and Innovation Center
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFID	Department of International Development
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSO	General Security Office
HRC	Human Rights Council
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IFRC	Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
ILO	International Labor Organization
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
INGOs	International Non-Government Organisations
IMO	International Organization for Migration
ISF	Internal Security Forces
LAF	Lebanese Armed Forces
LAS	League of Arab States
LBP	Lebanese Pound
LCRP	Lebanon Crisis Response Plan
MoU	Memorandum of Understating
MoSA	Ministry of Social Affairs
NGOs	International Non-Government Organisations
NSSF	National Social Security Fund
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

OIC	Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organisation
PRS	Palestinians from Syria
RACE	Reach All Children With Education
STL	Special Tribunal for Lebanon
UAR	United Arab Republic
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	UN Population Fund
UNFAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN
UN-Habitat	UN Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOCHA	UN Office of the Coordinator for Humanitarian Affairs
UNOPS	UN Office for Project Services
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East
U.S.A.I.D	U.S. Agency for International Development
UNSCOL	UN Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USD	United States Dollar
VASyR	Vulnerability Assessment on Syrian Refugees
WHO	World Health Organisation
WFP	World Food Programme

Chapter- One

Introduction

The Syrian uprising that began in 2011 with peaceful protests demanding political and economic reforms came to be supported by external powers for regime change. It transformed into a violent civil war between the regime of Bashar al-Assad and the opposition. The horror of the civil war resulted in the tragic loss of lives and massive physical destruction churning out the massive displacement of the civilian population, both within and outside Syria. In 2011, the population of Syria consisted of around 23 million, including Palestinian and Iraqi refugees. During the 2011-16, the Syrian civil war became the site of unparalleled destruction in modern history with almost 0.4 million people losing their lives, and approximately 6.6 million Syrians witnessing internal displacement,. This civil war also made about 4.8 million Syrians flee to the neighbouring countries of Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, Iraq, Egypt, and some countries of Europe. The Syrian civil war became the biggest humanitarian catastrophe of recent history. The present study focuses on the political and economic ramifications of the impact of the influx of Syrian refugees to Lebanon. Further, it seeks to uncover the challenges faced by Syrian refugees in the host country and Lebanon's own challenges in dealing with the refugee crisis.

The 1951 Refugee Convention defines refugees to be those people who have been forced to leave their country and live outside because of fear, threat, violence or persecution due to their affiliation to a particular race, religion, ethnicity, nationality, social group and political opinion. The neighbouring countries exhibited the spillover of Syrian civil war; however, Lebanon witnessed serious repercussions due to the massive influx of Syrian refugees, largest in proportion to its size and hence became the country with the highest per capita concentration of refugees worldwide. Witnessing the small size of the country, out of more than four million people who fled Syria, more than one million registered as refugees took shelter in Lebanon, surpassing 25 percent of Lebanon's population at 4.4 million. Women and children consisted of more than fifty percent of the Syrian refugees.

Syria and Lebanon share close economic, political, and geostrategic relations that historically linked the two countries. The fall of the Ottoman Empire after the First

World War placed Mount Lebanon under the French Mandate that subsequently created ‘Greater Lebanon' in 1920, perceived by Syria as a part of ‘Greater Syria'. Syria refused to recognise this new state and considered that Lebanon has been separated from its Arab identity and became a territory of France. In 1943, Lebanon got independence from the French mandate and became an independent entity along with recognised and acknowledged sovereign country internationally. Even Syria acquired independence in 1946; however, its continuous exertion and influence on Lebanese politics, both implicitly and explicitly confirmed its ambition of ‘Greater Syria'. This relationship shared by both the countries made Lebanon a preferable destination for the Syrian refugees. Even before the commencement of the Syrian civil war, thousands of Syrians were already present in Lebanon for their employment and due to the presence of their family relatives and friends. Moreover, long years of the Syrian presence in Lebanon enabled many Syrians to buy properties there.

Despite not being a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol, Lebanon has played a significant role in hosting Syrian refugees. However, Lebanon’s past experiences with the Palestinian refugees resulting in a major civil war (1975-1990) affected its practices and policies towards Syrians refugees. Lebanon opted ‘no-camp’ policy for the Syrian refugees, resulting in no formal refugee camps, and therefore finding a shelter became challenging for them. This policy forced the Syrian refugees to reside in the informal settlements such as substandard houses, informal tented settlements, garages or unfinished buildings lacking minimal humanitarian standards. Even the absence of formal camps makes it difficult for the international humanitarian agencies, including UNHCR, to provide protection and aid relief to these refugees.

Majority of the Syrian refugees live in some of the most impoverished areas of the country such as North Lebanon and Bekaa (Bekaa Valley) marred by relatively higher unemployment, underdevelopment and poverty. The trauma of this civil war has fallen on Syrian refugee children. Nearly half of them have no access to any form of formal education. Besides the inaccessibility to education, they have been facing physical and psychological trauma. These children have been forced to indulge in child labour. They have also been facing the challenge of early marriage and recruitment by armed groups. Young refugees have been resorting to negative coping

strategies such as drugs, alcohol and joining radical groups. Furthermore, gender-based violence (GBV) made the condition of Syrian women refugees more miserable. Human trafficking and prostitution became one of the backlashes of this crisis, emerging as a serious concern for refugees.

In January 2015, Lebanese government introduced new complex and costly regulations making it difficult for the Syrian refugees to renew their residency permits, resulting in the fact that around 61 percent of Syrian refugee households lacked valid residency permits in July 2015. This invalid residency has brought numerous challenges of harassments from undue detention, fear of expulsion from their place of stay without any sort of redressal. Further, restrictions on movement, inability to register births and marriages and difficulties in accessing essential services, including health and education became severe issues faced by them.

By 2011, the population of Lebanon comprised about more than 40 percent Christians (*mostly Maronites),* 54 percent Muslims (27 % each for Shia and Sunni) and around 5.6 percent belong to Druze sect along with other minorities. Since three-quarter of the Syrian refugees belong to the Sunni sect and thereby represented the largest sect in Lebanon changing the demographic reality of the country. The change in demography empowered the Lebanese Sunnis against the Shia dominance. Further, this demographic imbalance recalling the memory about the influx of the Palestinian refugees made confessional balance more fragile that led to the outbreak of the Lebanese civil war (1975-1990). The announcement of 'Taif Agreement' ended the civil war. This agreement was negotiated in 1989 not only ended the civil war but also changed the power-sharing arrangements by increasing the Parliament seats from 99 to 128 to divided equally between Christians and Muslims. In this fragile situation, the Syrian refugee issue led to political instability and the internal divisions in Lebanon.

Further, their presence caused an enormous burden on already critical social and economic infrastructure. Therefore, driven by economic concerns and political destabilization, the Lebanese government adopted a coherent policy dealing with the Syrian refugee in the form of introduction of the 'Refugee Policy Paper' in October 2014 witnessing stringent regulations. In addition to this, the introduction of excessive visa fee and new complex and costly regulations in January 2015 to renew their

residency permits were also considered measures to control their growing numbers. Moreover, as per the Lebanese government provided the instructions, UNHCR (Lebanon) temporarily suspended new registration of Syrian refugees since 6 May 2015, resulting in a decline in numbers.

The growing internal and external complexities in the form of increased sectarian violence, political and economic insecurity along with the erosion of social cohesion intensified the fragility in Lebanon. The involvement of Hezbollah in the Syrian civil war by supporting Assad regime complicated the dynamics in Lebanese politics leading to political instability. Hezbollah exhibited a welcoming attitude towards the Syrian refugees considering it as a humanitarian responsibility despite understanding the repercussions of the long-term presence. However, it opposed the establishment of formal refugee camps for the Syrian refugees citing security reasons and shelter for radical groups. The increasing competition for livelihood and access to public services stressed the capacity of the Lebanese government to fulfil the basic needs of a growing population escalating its difficulties.

Having emerged from the civil war, stability in Lebanon remains fragile. Lebanon was already a vulnerable state due to its fragile confessional polity. As a result of the Syrian civil war and the massive influx of Syrian refugees, it became more delicate and weaker with increasing economic instability and sectarian violence. The presence of Syrian refugees witnessed adverse effects on political and economic system beginning with the decline of GDP growth, shrinking of the tourism sector, increase in public debts, increasing poverty and unemployment, increasing job competition and diminishing wages, straining the delivery of public services to increasing social fragmentation and political tensions.

During this period (2011-2016), Lebanon received help from different regional, national, international agencies, INGOs, NGOs including Nordic and European NGOs, Islamic charities etc.; however, seeing the numbers, financial assistance did not fulfil the needs of all the refugees. Undoubtedly, they played a significant role in providing help in the form of humanitarian and financial aid to the Syrian refugees. Role of the Arab League and GCC countries also remained critical in providing financial assistance to Lebanon to deal with the issues about the Syria refugees. However, none of the GCC states have officially accepted a single Syrian refugee,

justifying it on the grounds of non-signatory to refugee conventions and other international agreements along with a threat to their demographic balances.

From 2011 till early 2017, around US$1.25 billion in the form of humanitarian assistance was provided to Lebanon (LCRP 2017-2020) that injected approximately US$2 billion into the Lebanese economy due to the multiplier effect. It has also produced a corresponding rise in demand complemented by an increase in supply. Although the spillover effects of the Syrian civil war have put constraints on local resources and infrastructures; humanitarian aid packages have helped in mitigating some of its negative consequences by infusing financial support into the budget of governments. Various conferences including Kuwait conference (2011, 2012, and 2013) and London Conference (2016) held both in the Arab region and European countries to raise the financial assistance for meeting the needs of Syrian refugees and lessen the burden on the hosting governments. The failure of the state in providing basic public goods and social services makes the role of private social welfare organisations significant. In this direction, the role of the Islamic charities in Lebanon to deal with the Syrian refugee issue remained significant.

Before going into the analysis of the review of the literature, it becomes vital to understand the framework of international laws and treaties dealing with refugees and issues associated with them. Although the problem of refugees is as old as human history, only post First World War, the international community recognised the importance and relevance of the issue. Today, the problem has become a matter of acute global concern. Traditional international law deals with refugees only by way of facilitating territorial or diplomatic asylum. But modern international law is trying to cope with this critical issue from two approaches, firstly emphasis on the human rights of refugees and secondly, by establishing protective institutions like the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and through multilateral treaties and conferences.

The United Nations on December 14, 1950, established United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the principal organisation dealing with the issues related to refugees. The protection of refugees and to find resilient solutions for them is the primary mandate for the UNHCR. The framework of international law and other treaties, particularly the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the

four Geneva Conventions (1949) on international humanitarian law, determine its activities. The people who seek asylum from persecution and those who have been recognised as refugees come under the protection of international refugee law and other legal instruments including the 1951 Refugee Convention, 1967 Protocol besides other customary law. The entire governance related to the rights of refugees and providing minimum standards for the treatment of the people who are qualified as refugees accomplishes by the primary international treaty, i.e. 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. Under this convention, the country has to follow the principle of "non-refoulment". This principle forbids a country receiving refugees (or asylum seekers) from returning them to a country in which they feel threatened. This binding lies on all states under international law. The late 1950s and early 1960s witnessed the emergence of new refugee crises and need to broaden both the temporal and geographical scope of the Refugee Convention, resulted in the adoption of the 1967 Protocol.

Underlining the status of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and League of Arab States (or Arab League) about refugees becomes essential since most massive refugee movements take place in the West Asian region. In this situation, the position of important regional organisations regarding the rights and protection of refugees is of utmost importance. OIC and the Arab League are parties to many declarations and other instruments dealing with their rights and protection. It is important to underline that thirty-six out of the fifty-seven OIC member states have agreed to the provisions mentioned in 1951 Geneva Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol. In 1994, the Arab League adopted the Arab Convention on Regulating the Status of Refugees. Similarly, Article 28 of the Arab Charter on Human Rights (2004) accords the right to every citizen to seek political asylum in other countries if they face persecution. Besides the resolution at the Arab League, the OIC summit in October 2003 held in Malaysia offers Resolution on the 'Problem of Refugees in the Muslim World'. Moreover, OIC and the Arab League signed the cooperation agreements with UNHCR concerning the protection of refugees in 1988 and 2000, respectively showing the concern of these organisations towards this critical issue.

The experiences with Palestinian refugees and opposition to their resettlement in Lebanon prevented latter from becoming a party both to 1951 Refugee Convention

and 1967 Protocol considering the legal obligations and its implications after becoming a signatory to the convention. Since Lebanon is not a signatory to both the agreements, the policies adopted by the Lebanese authorities remained ad-hoc in nature and considered refugees and asylum seekers as 'illegal immigrants'. In this situation, refugee policies adopted by the Lebanese authorities are considered to be as a charity based. No doubt, Lebanon lacked any formal provisions and legal framework for dealing with the rights of the Syrian refugees; however, MoU signed between GSO and UNHCR in 2003 provided some scope for the protection of Syrian refugees albeit for the stipulated time only since it states that Lebanon should not be considered as a country of permanent settlement. In addition to this, obligations exist under other international and human rights treaties for the safety and the protection of refugees to which Lebanon is a party binds latter to their principles and commitments. Even some of the provisions mentioned in the 1951 refugee convention can be seen in these human rights treaties.

Review of Literature

The existing literature available for this study has been divided into three sub-themes: The Syrian civil war and the influx of Syrian refugees to Lebanon; challenges for the Syrian refugees, and economic and the political impact of the Syrian refugees

The Syrian Civil War and the Influx of Syrian Refugees to Lebanon

The civil war is considered as an internal conflict that causes more than 1000 deaths in a single year. More comprehensively, civil war is defined as "any armed conflict that involves (a) military action internal to the metropole, (b) the active participation of the national government, and (c) effective resistance by both sides."[1] The civil war is considered as an internal conflict that causes more than 1000 deaths in a single year. More comprehensively, civil war is defined as "any armed conflict that involves (a) military action internal to the metropole, (b) the active participation of the national government, and (c) effective resistance by both sides." The internality of the war to the territory of a sovereign state and involvement of the government as a combatant creates an important distinction between civil (internal or intrastate) war and interstate

[1] Small, Melvin and J. David Singer (1982), *Resort to Arms: International and Civil Wars, 1816-1980*, California: Sage, p.210.

war. The civil war is the most widespread form of organized armed violence, affecting millions of people within and outside the country worldwide every year. During 1946-2011, about 102 countries that comprise half of the entire world's states experienced civil wars. A violent civil war constitutes a negative externality not because it disrupts the political and economic situation in its own country but also upset the balance for the same in the host and other neighbouring countries. Fifteen years (1975-1990) long Lebanese civil war is one of the important examples witnessed by the West Asian region. The recent Syrian civil war and civil war in Yemen are the latest additions to the literature of civil war and its negative externalities. The histories of civil wars from Africa to Latin America exhibited that a civil war in one country considerably increases the probability of the neighbouring countries to experience the civil war.[2]

The prevalence of many phases of political instability has been a part of Syrian history since it acquired independence from France in 1946. Many military coups occurred in Syria as a result of increasing Arab nationalism until the establishment of the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party that brought Hafez al-Assad to power in 1970. Al-Assad as the president completely controlled the public institutions and the economy. It showed that though Syria became politically stable, however, witnessed the authoritarian regime during his period. With Hafez Al Assad's death in 2000, his son Bashar al-Assad became the President. There were high hopes that he would transform Syria into a vibrant liberal democracy; however, civil rights and individual freedom continued to be suppressed.[3]

Syria experienced many economic problems such as massive corruption, lack of adequate infrastructure, widespread unemployment, and feminine etc. All these factors contributed to some minor protests in January 2011 to establish political and economic reforms in the country, which was strongly repressed by the security forces to eliminate any sign of resistance. Later on, a cycle of growing protests was instigated as a result of the arrest of a group of twenty teenagers for spraying anti-regime graffiti in the southern city of Dar'a, followed by the violent repression by the

[2] Gleditsch, N. P et al. (2002), "Armed Conflict: A New Dataset", *Journal of Peace Research*, 39 (5): 615-637, p. 624.

[3]Berzins, Janis (2013), *Civil War in Syria: Origins, Dynamics, and Possible Solutions*, Latvia: National Defence Academy of Latvia and Center for Defence and Strategic Research, pp.1-2.

security services.[4] The Syrian government responded to these protests with violent repression. A few months in, the protests turned violent as armed clashes erupted between regime forces and various rebel groups, with the conflict eventually escalating into a full-fledged civil war, with regional and global ramifications.[5]

Based on the solid loyalty of Alawites (an offshoot of Shia branch) in a loose coalition with Christians and Druze was considered as a pillar for Assad family's power seizure for more than four decades. An important feature of this Uprising, considered by scholars, especially Ted Galen Carpenter was the attempt pursued by Sunni Arabs to overthrow this coalition of minorities' regime. The regional context for the Syrian conflict can be explicitly witnessed in a triangular geopolitical contest for the dominance among Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Turkey along with the inimical rivalry between the Sunni and Shia factions of Islam.[6] Apart from all this, Hezbollah's involvement in the Syrian civil war also complicated the situation, especially in Lebanon, where growing sectarian tensions have undermined security and stability.[7]

It is important to note that in this entire game of power politics, over a quarter of a million Syrians have been killed and over one million have been injured since March 2011. Majority of the Syrian refugees have taken shelter in the neighbouring countries comprising Lebanon (more than one million), Jordan (more than 0.6 million) and Turkey (more than 2.5 million), placed tremendous pressure on the critical infrastructure of the host countries.[8]

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[4]Phillips, Christopher (2016), *The Battle for Syria: International Rivalry in the New Middle East*, New Haven: Yale University Press, pp.49-50.

[5]Wimmen, Heiko (2016), *Syria's path from Civic Uprising to Civil War,* Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International peace, p.14; Slackman, Michael (2011), "Syrian Troops Open Fire on Protesters in Several Cities" [Online: web] Accessed 15 April 2016, URL:http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/26/world/middleeast/26syria.html; Ipsos MENA (2016), "A Life Suspended: The State of Syrian Refugees in Jordan and Lebanon" [Online: web] Accessed 2 Jan. 2016 URL:https://www.ipsosmori.com/Assets/Docs/Publications/ipsos-mena-a-life-suspended-syrian-refugees.pdf

[6]Carpenter, Ted Galen (2013), "Tangled Web: The Syrian Civil War and Its Implications", *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 24 (1), p.3; Demir, Sertif and Carmen Rijnoveanu (2013), "The impact of the Syria crisis on the global and regional political dynamics", *Journal of Turkish World Studies,* 13(1): 55-77, p.61.

[7] Cited in Ranstrop, Magnus (2016), "The role of Hezbullah in the Syrian conflict" in Maximilian Felsch and Martin Wählisch (eds.) *Lebanon and the Arab Uprisings: In the Eye of the Hurricane,* London: Routledge, pp.39-40.

[8] UNHCR (2015), "Syria Regional Refugee Response: Inter-agency Information Sharing Portal", [Online: web] Accessed 15 March 2016, URL: http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php

Lebanon was preferred as a country for shelter by more than one million Syrian refugees. Though the geographic proximity and the conflict's ferocity contributed to this movement, however, it has other broader causes. Syria has had a major impact on Lebanon, primarily because of economic, political, and geostrategic relations that historically linked the two countries.[9] Lebanon is considered to be carved out the unified 'Greater Syria'. Moreover, some of the most evident incidents for the manifestation of the uncertain nature of the border include the 1958 civil war, the 1975-1990 Lebanese civil war, and the military presence in Lebanon from 1976 to 2005.[10] Even social ties and proximity to the borders contributed to the higher settlements of refugees in border areas rather than in more distant areas.[11] The shared history of domination both by the Ottoman Empire and the French Mandate shaped Lebanon's relationship with Syria. On the popular level, factors such as geographical proximity, inter-Arab migration and family relations have brought them together. Syria did not recognise Lebanon's sovereignty since 1943. However, the bilateral Treaty of Brotherhood and Cooperation (1991) between both the countries, allowed Syrians and Lebanese to cross the border without a passport or any visa, that effectively brought them closer.[12] It was only in 2008 when Syria established official diplomatic ties with Lebanon leading to the "path of rapprochement" following many years of anti-Syria sentiments in Lebanon.[13]

The Syrian refugee crisis has changed significantly over time. Earlier, those who had their names on the blacklist, since they were actively involved in the uprising were escaping torture or imprisonment. By the end of 2012, fighting had escalated, and many Syrians were left without shelter, food, and water, making their condition worse

[9]Berti, Benedetta (2012), *Tensions in Tripoli: The Syrian Crisis and its Impact on Lebanon*, Tel Aviv: The Institute for National Security Studies, Tel Aviv University, p.1

[10]Dionigi, Filippo (2016), *The Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon: State fragility and Social resilience*, London: London School of Economics and Political Science, p.30.

[11]Olwan, Mohamed and Ahmed Shiyab (2012), *Forced Migration of Syrians to Jordan: An Exploratory Study*, San Domenico di Fiesole (FI): Migration Policy Centre, European University Institute, pp.1-2; Guzansky, Yoel and Erez Striem (2013), *The Arab Spring and Refugees in the Middle East*, Tel Aviv: The Institute for National Security Studies, Tel Aviv University, p.3.

[12] Vliet, Sam van (2016), "Syrian refugees in Lebanon: coping with unpreceded challenges", in Felsch, Maximilian, Martin Wählisch (eds.) *Lebanon and the Arab Uprisings: In the Eye of the Hurricane*, London: Routledge, p.92; Dionigi, Filippo (2016), *The Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon: state fragility and social resilience*, London: London School of Economics and Political Science, p.11.

[13] Yacoubian, Mona (2010), *Lebanon's Evolving Relationship with Syria: Back to the Future or Turning a New Page*, Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, p.2.

compared to those who arrived earlier.[14] Initially, in May 2011, mostly women and children escaped to Lebanon from the town of Talkalakh in northwestern Syria to Bekaa valley. Later in March 2012, many Syrian refugees came from Homs, Quseir, Zabadani and Hama to Bekaa valley, making it the primary destination.[15]

Although Syria withdrew its military presence in Lebanon in 2005 following the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik al- Hariri, it continues to exert significant influence in Lebanese politics.[16] It was only in 2008, Syria legitimised the sovereignty of Lebanon by giving up its aim of 'Greater Syria' as an ideological premise of Syrian nationalism and established diplomatic relations.[17]Although in terms of security and stability, Lebanon has nothing much to offer at the same time, acknowledging the fact that Lebanon has most established migratory record historically about Syrians becomes important. Therefore, to take shelter, Lebanon was considered as one of the most suitable destinations by the Syrian refugees.[18]

Challenges for the Syrian Refugees

By December 2016, more than 1 million Syrian refugees (registered) have taken shelter in Lebanon, and many more are waiting to get registered despite the Lebanese government's move to curb the registrations. More than 1 million population of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon comprises of 47.9 percent males and 52.1 percent females.[19] Furthermore, more than half of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon are children aged eighteen and under.[20] The Syrian refugees in Lebanon also include the

[14]Lust, Ellen (2015), *Syrian Spillover: National Tensions, Domestic Responses, & International Options*, Washington, DC: Project on Middle East Democracy (POMED), pp.3-4.

[15]Naufal, Hala (2012), *Syrian Refugees in Lebanon: the Humanitarian Approach under Political Divisions,* San Domenico di Fiesole (FI): Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute, p.2.

[16]Heydemann, Steven (2013) *Syria's Uprising: sectarianism, regionalisation, and state order in the Levant*, California: Fride and Hivos, p.9.

[17]Wieland, Carsten (2016), "Syrian- Lebanese Relations: the impossible dissociation" in Felsch, Maximilian, Martin Wählisch (eds.) *Lebanon and the Arab Uprisings: In the Eye of the Hurricane*, London: Routledge, p.167.

[18]Dionigi, Filippo (2016), *The Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon: state fragility and social resilience*, London: London School of Economics and Political Science, p.32.

[19] UNHCR (2016), "Syria Regional Refugee Response Plan –Lebanon", [Online: web] Accessed 2 Jan. 2017, URL: http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria/location/71

[20] Culbertson, Shelly and Louay Constant (2014), *Education of Syrian refugee children: Managing the crisis in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan*, California: RAND Corporation, pp.8-10.

Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) who comprise over 53,070 in numbers as in April 2014. By December 2016, there were 1,011,366 registered Syrian refugees and 235,024 Syrian households in Lebanon.[21] It is important to note the trend in the Syrian refugee movement that by May 2011 about 5000 Syrian refugees fled to Lebanon from the town of Talkalakh. Their numbers increased to 1, 28,314 by December 2012. By January 2015, their numbers reached to 1,159,396. However, it declined to 1,069,111 by 31 December 2015 and eventually declined to 1,011,366 by December 2016.[22] Some reasons were given for their decreased numbers from precarious legal status[23] to an inescapable cycle of poverty and debt which made their survival miserable.[24]

Lebanon, neither a state party to the 1951 Refugee Convention nor its 1967 Protocol has played a significant role in guaranteeing protection to the de facto refugees from Syria. However, past experiences with the Palestinian refugees resulting in a major civil war (1975-1990) have affected its practices and policies toward Syrian refugees.[25] The sceptical attitude also terms the setting up of tents as illegal, resulting in no formal refugee camps for the Syrians.[26] As a result of this policy, finding a shelter has become challenging for them. More than 80 percent of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon, dwelling around 1,700 locations countrywide, rent their accommodations and pay around US$200 month.[27] According to the international humanitarian community, the absence of official camps makes it far harder to ensure refugee

[21] UNHCR (2017), "Syria Regional Refugee Response, Lebanon", [Online: web] Accessed 10 January 2017, URL: data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria/location/71

[22] UNHCR (2015), "Syria Regional Refugee Response: Inter-agency Information Sharing Portal", [Online: web] Accessed 15 March 2016, URL: http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php.

[23]Janmyr, Maja (2016), "Precarity in Exile: The Legal Status of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon", *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 35 (4): 58-78, pp. 58-59

[24] Wood, Josh (2016), Faced with mounting debts, Syrian refugees have no way of leaving Lebanon, [Online: web] Accessed 10 April 2016, URL: http://www.thenational.ae/world/middle-east/faced-with-mounting-debts-syrian-refugees-have-no-way-of-leaving-lebanon

[25]Thorleifsson, Cathrine (2016), "The limits of hospitality: Coping strategies among displaced Syrians in Lebanon", *Third World Quarterly*, 37 (6): 1071-1082, p.1074.

[26]UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (2014), "Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2015-2016", [Online: web] Accessed 20 Jan. 2016, URL:https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/lebanon-crisis-response-plan-2015-2016

[27]UNHCR (2015), "Humanity, hope and thoughts of home: Syrian refugees in southern Lebanon", Online: web] Accessed 2 Feb. 2016, URL http://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2015/2/54ede4b16/humanity-hope-thoughts-home-syrian-refugees-southern-lebanon.html

protection and coordinate aid relief to refugees across the country since UNHCR only gives aid and food supplies to refugees who register themselves.[28]

Eighty-six percent of refugees are concentrated in impoverished neighbourhoods including Bekaa and North Lebanon that already home of the majority of marginalised Lebanese. For host communities, refugees have become economic competitors and represent a strain on health and social services. Moreover, security incidents in the North and Bekaa have caused refugee camps to be regarded as shelters for the terrorists. With this shift in perception, refugees are no longer seen as victims, but as terrorists.[29] Furthermore, Lebanon shows significant regional inequalities in terms of access to public services, employment and infrastructure. North Lebanon and Bekaa, the primary destinations for Syrian refugees in Lebanon (reason being many of the Syrian families live in these areas), is characterised by unemployment, poverty and underdevelopment.[30]

Furthermore, in January 2015, the Lebanese government has introduced a new complex and costly regulations, making it difficult for refugees to renew their residency visas.[31] Apart from this, since 6 May 2015, as per instructions given by the Lebanese government, UNHCR (Lebanon) has temporarily suspended new registration of Syrian refugees. As a result, more individuals waiting to be get registered and therefore, are not included in the given data of registered refugees.[32] Due to this, an estimated 70 percent of Syrian refugees in Lebanon do not have a valid legal stay in the country. Without valid legal documents, refugees live with the fear of arrest, detention and deportation, thereby resulting in minimum movement, further leading to the limited access of basic services, necessary aid and paid work to support

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[28]Thorleifsson, Cathrine (2016), "The limits of hospitality: Coping strategies among displaced Syrians in Lebanon", *Third World Quarterly*, 37(6): 1071-1082, p.1074.

[29] Khatib, Lina (2014), *Regional Spillover: Lebanon and the Syrian Conflict*, Riad El Solh, Beirut : Carnegie Middle East Centre, p.2

[30]Orhan, Oytun (2014), *The Situation of Syrian Refugees in the Neighbouring Countries: Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations*, ORSAM Report No-189, Ankara: Centre for Middle Eastern Strategic Studies, p.33

[31] International Rescue Committee (2013), "Reaching the breaking point: An IRC briefing note on Syrian refugees in Lebanon" [Online: web] Accessed 20 May 2016, URL: http://docplayer.net/18881200-Reaching-the-breaking-point-an-irc-briefing-note-on-syrian-refugees-in-lebanon.html

[32]Dionigi, Filippo (2016), *The Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon: state fragility and social resilience*, London: London School of Economics and Political Science, pp.16-17

them. UNHCR has estimated that there are 240 informal settlements in Bekaa alone, ranging from less than ten tents to more than 100. The limited access to sanitation, water, electricity and other services added to the problems faced by the Syrian refugees. Health problems and epidemic outspreads are inevitable in these unsanitary settlements that receive petty aid, especially in the summer witnessing temperature with more than 40 °C. Moreover, harsh winters in the Bekaa valley make their lives more miserable.[33]

The children, youth and adolescents are the most affected groups due to economic hardships and limited access to essential services. There are rising concerns about young people falling prey to negative coping strategies such as drugs, alcohol and radical groups. It is estimated that less than 40 percent of the Syrian refugee children are enrolled in the formal education.[34] Additionally, the Syrian children who have been schooled primarily in Arabic face additional obstacles due to the curriculum, which is in English and French. Lebanon's Ministry of Education has taken several positive steps in this direction but unable to fulfil the desired expectations; the reason being the already strained public education system.[35]

Refugees from Syria are required to sign a pledge not to work to renew a residency visa based on their UNHCR registration document. Due to their precarious legal position in the country, the vast majority of Syrians works with no legal rights, leads to exploitation and exacerbates tensions with the host community.[36] Increased levels of poverty, loss of livelihood, growing unemployment and limited access to food, water, sanitation, housing, health care and education, have all had a devastating impact on the population putting them at further risk of exploitation. According to a report published by the International Labour Organisation, almost all of the Syrian

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[33]Jawahiry, Warda Al (2016), "As winter blows in across Lebanon, refugee struggles", [Online: web] Accessed 10Jan 2017, URL: http://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2016/12/585cddcf4/winter-blows-across-lebanon-refugees-struggle.html

[34]Culbertson, Shelly and Louay Constant (2014), *Education of Syrian refugee children: Managing the crisis in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan*, California: RAND Corporation, pp.8-10.

[35]Thibos, Cameron (2014a), *One million Syrians in Lebanon: A milestone quickly passed*, San Domenico di Fiesole: Robert Schuman Center for Advanced Studies, European University Institute, pp.4-5; Cited in Rourke, Joseph O (2015), "Education for Syrian refugees: The failure of second generation human rights during extraordinary crises", *Albany Law Review*, 78 (2): 711-738, pp.721-723.

[36]International Labor Organization (2014), *Assessment of the Impact of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon and their Employment Profile 2013*, Beirut: ILO, p.8

workers are employed in vulnerable and potentially exploitative conditions in the informal economy or as informal workers in formal enterprises in Lebanon.[37]

Women and girls consist of the majority of Syrian refugees in Lebanon. It is important to note that women are the head of the one-fifth of Syrian refugee households. Gender-based violence (GBV) has become a major problem in Lebanon. Both inside and outside the home, they have been suffering from physical and mental distress. Though emotional violence is common; however the majority of them reported the cases of sexual violence.[38] Over the past few years, more Syrians have occupied the space in the largest psychiatric hospital in Lebanon with more severe psychopathology and suicidality.[39] No doubt unavailability of the resources to support Syrian refugees due to their growing numbers has dwindled, resulting in the rise of human trafficking, prostitution, and other types of crimes, further straining their relationship with the Lebanese population.[40]

Beirut Research and Innovation Centre (BRIC) in its countrywide survey of Syrian refugees in Lebanon reported the safety issues among Syrian refugees and highlighted that approximately 32 percent do not feel safe and secure in their new settlements, largely due to crime and prejudice against them.[41] Similarly, the World Food Program in 2013 conducted a country-wide survey of registered Syrian refugees regarding difficulties being faced. In the opinion of some Lebanese nationals, confessional balance faced a threat due to the presence of Syrian refugees in huge numbers, affecting the security situation as well. On the other hand, Syrian refugees cited incidents of discrimination and humiliation by their neighbours and blamed Lebanese employers for exploiting their distressing conditions to earn more profits.[42]

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[37]Ibid.22-24.

[38] Spencer, R. A et al. (2015), *Gender Based Violence Against Women and Girls Displaced by the Syrian Conflict in South Lebanon and North Jordan: Scope of Violence and Health Correlates*, Madrid: Alianzapor la Solidaridad, p.7.

[39]Hijazi, Zeinab and Inka Weissbecker (2015), *Syria Crisis: Addressing Regional Mental Health needs and Gaps in the Context of the Syria Crisis*, Washington, DC: International Medical Corps, pp.4-5.

[40]Zeid, Mario Abou (2014), *A Time Bomb in Lebanon: The Syrian Refugee Crisis*, Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International peace, pp.7-8.

[41] Beirut Research and Innovation Center (2013), *Survey on the livelihoods of Syrian refugees in Lebanon*, Oxford: Oxfam International, 1- 46, pp.5-6.

[42] Mercy Corps (2013), "Things fall apart: political, economic and social instability in Lebanon", [Online: web] Accessed 25 June 2016 URL: https://www.mercycorps.org/sites/default/files/MC%20Lebanon%20LivelihoodConflict_Assesment_%20Full%20Report%200913.pdf

The response of the Lebanese government to the influx of Syrian refugees has been in line with previous refugee flow, described as a policy of "hiding its head in the sand."[43] Initially, Syrian refugees were considered as IDPs, and illegal entry to Lebanon was not fined due to lack of accountability of the Lebanese state towards the influx of Syrian refugees. The Lebanese government still considered Syrians refugees as 'displaced' and use the terms "persons with UNHCR registered as refugees or "de facto refugees". In response to growing sentiments against Syrian refugees, a 'Refugee Policy Paper' was presented by the Lebanese government in October 2014 to deal with the negative implications of Syrian refugees on economy and security which can be considered as the beginning of more restrictive policy.[44]

Economic and the Political Impact of the Syrian Refugees

Witnessing the small size of Lebanon, by 2016 more than 1 million registered refugees have taken shelter in Lebanon, thereby surpassing 25 percent of Lebanon's population (approximately 4.4 million before the influx of Syrian refugees). It is being estimated that about one in every five people living in Lebanon is a refugee from the Syrian civil war. It is important to underline that after accommodating the Syrian refugees, Lebanon has become a country with the highest per capita concentration of refugees in the world. It has also become one of the most affected neighbouring countries due to the massive influx of Syrian refugees.[45]

The population of Lebanon comprises about more than 40 percent Christians (mostly Maronites*)*, and 54 percent Muslims (27 percent each for Shia and Sunni) and around 5.6 percent are Druze along with other minorities.[46] Lebanon's political arrangement is based on a sectarian power-sharing system (National Pact of 1943) in which

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[43]Vilet, Sam Van (2016), "Syrian refugees in Lebanon: coping with unpreceded challenges" in Maximilian Felsch and Martin Wählisch (eds.) *Lebanon and the Arab Uprisings: In the Eye of the Hurricane*, London: Routledge, p.92.

[44]Ibid.

[45]Felsch, Maximilian, Martin Wählisch (2016), *Lebanon and the Arab Uprisings: In the Eye of the Hurricane*, London: Routledge, pp.1-2; Rabil, Robert G. (2016), *The Syrian Refugee Crisis in Lebanon: The Double Tragedy of Refugees and Impacted Host Communities*, Maryland: Lexington Books, pp.5-6.

[46] United States Department of State (2012), *Report on International Religious Freedom - Lebanon 2012*, Washington DC: Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, United States Department of State, pp.1-2.

sectarian competition for socio-economic and political power is managed.[47] Considering the religious division, it becomes essential to highlight that the majority of the Syrian refugees being Sunni, characterises the largest sect in Lebanon.[48] This demographic change resembles the Palestinian refugee scenario resulted in a major civil war (1975-90) and therefore, concerns about exacerbated confessional tensions are there.[49] Similarly, the demand for an updated redistribution of political power has begun by the Lebanese Muslims with the emergence of this demographic imbalance in a fixed political, sectarian power-sharing division.[50]

The negative consequences of Hezbollah's military involvement witnessed its presence beyond Syria. It had direct repercussions on Lebanon and its politics. The support of Hizbollah to the Syrian regime has not only aggravated the political and sectarian tensions in Lebanon but resulted in major violence against the Shia community in general and Hezbollah in particular. Incidents like suicide bombings against Shia people, rocket attacks against the al-Dahiye- the Hezbollah's stronghold in southern Beirut and bombing the Iranian Embassy in Beirut by al-Qaeda affiliated Abdullah Azzam Brigades in November 2013 were some of the examples to witness the impact of Hezbollah's involvement. Moreover, a violent suicide bombing in the Alawite dominated Jabal Mohsen neighbourhood in Tripoli in January 2015, and tragic suicide attack in south Beirut in November 2015 added more complexity posing a threat to Lebanon's security and stability.[51]

Further the polarization of the Lebanese political sphere can also be attributed to Hezbollah's support of Assad's regime. The involvement of Hezbollah in the Syrian civil war despite signing the disassociation policy of Lebanon in the form of 'Baabda Declaration' resulted into postponement of 2013 parliamentary elections and the presidential vacuum led to an institutional deadlock. With a blocked government, the

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[47]Salamey, Imad (2014), *The Government and Politics of Lebanon*, London: Routledge, p.10.

[48] Khatib, Lina (2014), *Regional Spillover: Lebanon and the Syrian Conflict*, Riad El Solh: Carnegie Middle East Centre, p.2.

[49] Dettmer, Jamie (2013), *Demographic Change and Violence in Lebanon*, Washington, DC: Middle East Institute; Mercy Corps and UNDP (2015), *Stabilization and Resilience in Protracted, Politically Induced Emergencies: A Case Study Exploration of Lebanon*, Oregon: UNDP/Mercy corps, pp.3-5.

[50]Salamey, Imad (2014), *The Government and Politics of Lebanon*, London: Routledge, pp. 31-35.

[51] Cited in Ranstrop, Magnus (2016), "The role of Hezbullah in the Syrian conflict" in Maximilian Felsch and Martin Wählisch (eds.)*Lebanon and the Arab Uprisings: In the Eye of the Hurricane*, London: Routledge, pp.39-40.

Lebanese political regime faced a lack of effective and legitimate administration.[52] In other words, the emergence of religious tensions among religious minorities due to political and social divisions witnessed violence in northern Lebanon. Two neighbourhoods of Tripoli in north Lebanon Bab al-Tabbaneh and Jabal Mohsen dominated by the Sunni and the Alawite community respectively seen clashes as a result of social and political tensions.[53] The presence of Syrian refugees in large numbers did not create tensions between Sunni and Shia Muslims; the Christian and the Druze communities equally shared the concerns. The civil order showed the risk of collapse of the system due to increasing numbers of Syrian refugees that polarised the Lebanese political parties and occurrence of clashes between Sunni and Shia communities.

The settlement of the Syrian refugees in the marginalised areas such as Bekaa and North Lebanon that has already been constrained with limited resources and overcrowding has made the situation more difficult and caused more strained relations between the Syrian refugees and the Lebanese population. In the initial years of the Syrian civil war, Syrian refugees welcomed in Lebanon; however, later their massive inflow became a considerable burden both for Lebanon as well as its local communities. Their large numbers and competition for resources and employment opportunities fuelled tensions between Syrian refugees and the local population. Since Lebanon was already suffering from economic and political vulnerability, in that situation providing services to these Syrian refugees in large numbers in itself became a significant burden on the Lebanese government.[54] Similarly, there is an argument that hardships not only restricted to the Syrian refugees; however impacted the livelihood of an existing vulnerable Lebanese population.[55] The massive influx of

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[52] Assi, Abbas and James Worrall (2015) "Stable instability: the Syrian conflict and the postponement of the 2013 Lebanese parliamentary elections", *Third World Quarterly*, 36 (10): 1944- 1967, pp.1956-58.

[53] Abdo, Geneive (2013), *The New Sectarianism: The Arab Uprisings and the Rebirth of the Shi'a-Sunni Divide***,** Washington, DC: The Saban Centre for Middle East Policy, pp.2-3; Stiftung, Heinrich Boll (2013), "How the Syrian Crisis is Putting Lebanon at Risk", Global Policy forum, [Online: web] Accessed 4 May 2016, URL: https://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/121-policy-papers-articles-and-statements/52459-how-the-syrian-crisis-is-putting-lebanon-at-risk.html.

[54]Itani, Faysal (2013), *Syria's War Threatens Lebanon Fragile Economy*, Washington DC: Atlantic Council, 1-8, p.4; Rabil, Robert G. (2016), *The Syrian Refugee Crisis in Lebanon: The Double Tragedy of Refugees and Impacted Host Communities*, Maryland: Lexington Books, pp.5-6.

[55]Bidinger, Sarah et al. (2015), *Protecting Syrian Refugees: Laws, Policies, and Global Responsibility Sharing*, Boston: Boston University, p.44.

Syrian and Palestinian refugees from Syria has affected not only the demography but also the geographical and public space in Lebanon.

The already severe living conditions of hosting communities were exacerbated by increasing job competition, reducing wages, inflating prices, straining the public delivery services along with the social and economic infrastructure due to the massive influx of refugees, resulted in intensifying tensions between the Lebanese host communities and the Syrian refugee communities. The distribution of high amounts of international aid disproportionately to the Syrian refugees while neglecting the needs of the vulnerable and poverty-stricken Lebanese citizens became one of the reasons for the increasing resentment among host communities. The host community, mainly belonging to the lower income groups perceived this behaviour as discriminatory since both local, and international organisations have been providing assistance to the Syrian refugees and overlooking the needs of the locals.[56] As highlighted by Save the Children Report[57], over 90 percent of the Lebanese population perceived Syrian refugees as both symbolic and economic threats (i.e. a threat to their economic livelihood and their value system). Further, considering refugees as an existential threat consists of the opinion given by over two-third Lebanese population. On the other hand, Lebanese nationals are regarded as symbolic and economic threats (especially in Akkar) but not as an existential threat by the majority of the Syrian refugees.[58]

As per the World Bank report, Lebanon could not create adequate jobs for its population even during the time of economic prosperity.[59] Lebanon witnessed one of its worst unemployment crises in history, compounded by domestic and regional

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[56]Lust, Ellen (2015), Syrian *Spillover: National Tensions, Domestic Responses, & International Options*, Washington DC: Project on Middle East Democracy (POMED); Thorleifsson, Cathrine (2016), "The limits of hospitality: Coping strategies among displaced Syrians in Lebanon", *Third World Quarterly*, 37 (6): 1071-1082, p.1079; Christophersen, M et al. (2013), *Lebanese attitudes towards Syrian refugees and the Syrian crisis: Results from a national opinion poll*, Oslo: Fafo, p.8.

[57] This survey was conducted by Save the Children and American University of Beirut, with a systematic random sampling survey of 600 Syrian refugees and 600 Lebanese nationals from 16 locations in the Bekaa, Sahel Akkar and Wadi Khaled. Therefore, the percentage is given accordingly.

[58]Harb, Charles and Rim Saab (2014), *Social Cohesion and Intergroup Relations: Syrian Refugees and Lebanese Nationals in the Bekaa and Akkar*, Save the Children Report, Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1-45, p.5.

[59] World Bank (2013b), *Lebanon Bears the Brunt of the Economic and Social Spillovers of the Syrian Conflict*, Washington, DC: World Bank, pp.8-10

political instability and a massive influx of refugees as a result of the Syrian civil war posed a severe threat. One in every five Lebanese are suffering from unemployment. Unemployment increased to an estimated 18-20 percent in Lebanon, which was around 11 percent before the crisis. The most affected section of the Lebanese society belong to this category are the youth population, particularly the age group of 15-24. Two significant factors, including limited work opportunities along with weak economic growth and competition for jobs between the Syrian refugees and the host community, were responsible for this situation.[60] The situation was already dire and the Lebanese labour market faced high debt to GDP ratio, weak public finance high unemployment rate along with many low skilled jobs even before the Syrian civil war.[61] The UN Development Program's 2013 Human Development Report stated that over the past two years, Lebanon witnessed stunted growth. In addition to all this, the threat of economic retaliation by Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries against Lebanon for its ties to Iran can pose a significant deterioration in the Lebanese economy due to its reliance on the Gulf funding across many sectors, especially in the economic sphere.[62]

However, Islamic charities have become a significant assistance provider for Syrian refugees in Lebanon where UNHCR due to its limited access to certain areas and Lebanese High Relief Commission (HRC)'s financial constraints and political sensitivity making them ineffective to assist. Islamic charities, a coalition of thirty groups, coordinated the assistance to Syrian refugees. Some of the Islamic charities such as Lebanese Zakat Fund of Dar el Fatwa (the Sunni Higher Islamic Council), Azhar mosque in Majdel-Anjar played a crucial role in providing financial and humanitarian assistance to the Syrian refugees. The Gulf countries, particularly Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Qatar, provided financial support to these Islamic charities.[63]

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[60] International Monetary Fund (2014), *Lebanon: 2014 Article IV Consultation – Press Release, Staff Report, and Statement by the Executive Director for Lebanon*, Washington, D.C: International Monetary Fund, p.12

[61] World Bank (2013), *Lebanon: Economic and Social Impact Assessment of the Syrian Conflict*, Washington DC: World Bank, pp.2-3; Itani, Faysal (2013), *Syria's War Threatens Lebanon Fragile Economy*, Washington, DC: Atlantic Council, 1-8, pp.4-5.

[62] Monk et al. (2016), *Factors of Instability in Lebanon: Warnings and Indicators*, Washington, DC: School of International Service, American University.

[63]Vliet, Sam van (2016), "Syrian refugees in Lebanon: coping with unpreceded challenges", in Felsch, Maximilian, Martin Wählisch (eds.)*Lebanon and the Arab Uprisings: In the Eye of the Hurricane*, London: Routledge, p.93.

Even, President of the Islamic Development Bank Group signed five financing agreements (totalling US$373 million) with the Lebanese government for development projects concerning to Syrian refugees.[64]

World Bank, in its report highlighted that before the crisis, 25 percent of the Lebanese population lived below the upper poverty line of US$4 per day. The influx of Syrian refugees deteriorated it substantially. It was estimated that since 2011, around 170,000 Lebanese citizens were (about 4%of the population)[65] pushed into poverty, which reached 2.1 million. About 1.5 million Lebanese nationals are considered to be in a situation of vulnerability due to the Syrian refugee crisis.[66] Out of this, about 336,000 are surviving with less than US$2.4 per day, which is under Lebanon's lowest poverty line.[67] Even support to the vulnerable host communities, mainly affected by the vast influx of Syrian refugees became an important issue and got recognition to assist Syrian refugees effectively.

Since 2014, themes including 'resilience', 'social stability', 'social cohesion' and 'relations with host communities' has been influencing the new programs and assessments. Due to the instability of Lebanese politics, UNHCR and other NGOs have been playing an important role to assist refugees, highlighting the importance of the well-functioning relationship between the government and NGOs. World Bank in its report provided the fiscal cost of the refugees during 2012–14 at US$ 1.1 billion; however this estimation is not just restricted to the refugee aspect, but also includes the impact of the Syrian civil war in the form of second-round effect generally. As per the statistics revealed by the World Bank in its report, Lebanon witnessed the average growth rate of less than 2 percent of GDP in 2011-2015 that was more than 8 percent on average during 2007-2010 cost Lebanese economy primarily. Even the tourism

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[64] World Bank (2016), "World Bank Group, United Nations, and Islamic Development Bank Pledge Support for Stability in Middle East and North Africa", [Online: web] Accessed 17 June 2016, URL: http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2016/03/24/world-bank-global-support stability-middle-east-north-africa

[65]Chronicle (2015) "Lebanon: Syrian Refugees Costthe Economy US$4.5 Billion Every Year" [Online: web] Accessed 2 Oct. 2016, URL:https://chronicle.fanack.com/lebanon/economy/lebanon-syrian-refugees-cost-the-economy-4-5-billion-every-year/

[66]Government of Lebanon and the United Nations (2017), *Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2017-2020*, Beirut: Government of Lebanon and the United Nations; pp.1-3.

[67] United Nations (2014), "Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2015-2016", [Online: web] Accessed 15 September 2016, URL: http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/ resources/2015-2016_Lebanon_CRP_EN.pdf. Accessed December 1, 2015

sector, one of the significant determinants of the Lebanese economy was severely hit by the Syrian civil war, including the presence of Syrian refugees, resulted in a 17 percent decline over the period. Around 50 percent decline was observed in the tourists' arrival from the Gulf countries in 2012.[68]

Undoubtedly Lebanon is burdened with the massive influx of Syrian refugees but benefiting the Lebanese economy at the same time by contributing towards the real estate and rental economy. Barely 17 percent of Syrian refugees live in refugee camps, while the majority of them are dependent on the rental market, which in turn creates pressure on rental prices. Around US$36 million was contributed to the Lebanese economy every month in the form of rent payment by Syrian refugees to the Lebanese property owners in 2015.[69] During June 2012- 2013, the increase in rent reached 44 percent making the lives of marginalised Lebanese more miserable who were not able to cope with these high rent prices.[70] Further, in April 2014, it was estimated that apartment rents in Beirut increased by 400 to 700 US dollars. Therefore, the 'no-camp' policy adopted by the Lebanese authorities benefited the local economy in the form of boosting the demand for housing and increased rental prices.[71] However, this impacted not only the Syrian refugees but equally lives of Lebanese citizens belonging to the low-income groups were affected by this pressure on rent prices.[72] The arrival of Syrian refugees proved to be a boon to Lebanon's stagnant real estate market.[73]

As underlined by the World Bank in its report, the massive influx of Syrian refugees deteriorated the already strained social and economic infrastructure including health,

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[68] International Labour Organisation (2014), *Assessment of the Impact of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon and their Employment Profile 2013*, Beirut: ILO, pp.9-10.

[69] Cornish, Chloe (2015), "Rent to Tent and Back again",*Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN News)*, [Online: web] Accessed 22 December 2017, URL: http://www.irinnews.org/analysis/2015/10/12,

[70]Zetter, R, et al. (2014), *The Syrian Displacement Crisis and a Regional Development and Protection Programme: Mapping and Meta-Analysis of Existing Studies of Costs, Impacts and Protection*, Oxford: Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford, pp.5-6.

[71] Cited in Knudsen, Are John (2017), "Syria's Refugees in Lebanon: Brothers, Burden, and Bone of Contention" in Rosita di Peri and Daniel Meier (eds.) *Lebanon Facing The Arab Uprisings: Constraints and Adaptation*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, p.146

[72]World Bank (2013b), *Lebanon: Economic and Social Impact Assessment of the Syrian Conflict*, Washington, DC: World Bank, pp.13-14.

[73]Schenker, David (2013), *Lebanon and the Spillover from Syria*, Washington, DC: The Washington Institute, pp.1-2.

education, water, electricity, sanitation and transport. The Syrian civil war's financial cost about the infrastructure estimated to be around US$89 million during 2012-14. Additional estimated water demand of 26.1 million m3/year, equivalent to 7 percent of the pre-crisis demand burden the already water supply and sanitation system. In 2012, 40 percent of primary health care visits done solely by the Syrian refugees. The issue of electricity has been a primary concern even before the Syrian civil war; however, the sudden arrival of the Syrian refugees in massive numbers made the situation more complicated and burdened.

The demand for electricity witnessed the dramatic increase and estimated to be at 213 megawatts (MW) by 2013 that can be increased between 251 to 362 MW by 2014. The fiscal impact of health expenditure cost estimated to be around US$38 million in 2013 and US$48-69 million in 2014.[74] The health indicators, including life expectancy, witnessed some improvement before the Syrian civil war; however, the vast influx of Syrian refugees posed a challenge to the health sector. The overcrowded institutions, the emergence of new diseases, medication pressure, and absence of required numbers of health care staff together made the health services more miserable.[75]

Former Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati in the World Economic Summit in Davos (January 2013) discussed the impact of Syrian refugees on Lebanon by stating that the situation has reached dangerous levels that Lebanon cannot handle alone and need urgent aid for managing the accumulating burden.[76] Similarly, in April 2013, Ex-President Michel Suleiman stated that Lebanon reached the saturation level to take Syrian displaced persons in and therefore need the support of the international community.[77]

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[74] World Bank (2013), *Lebanon: Economic and Social Impact Assessment of the Syrian Conflict*, Washington DC: World Bank, pp.3-4.

[75] World Bank (2013a), *Lebanon Bears the Brunt of the Economic and Social Spillovers of the Syrian Conflict*, Washington, DC: World Bank, pp.18-22.

[76]Schenker, David (2013), *Lebanon and the Spillover from Syria*, Washington, DC: The Washington Institute, p.2.

[77] Meier, Daniel (2013), *The Effects of Arab Spring and Syrian Uprising on Lebanon*, Beirut: Centre for Lebanese Studies, pp.3-4.

Definition, Rationale and Scope

Migration and refugee movements in the West Asian and North African region are not a new phenomenon, but in recent years, it has gained unprecedented momentum about Syrian refugees. Refugees as those people who have been forced to leave their country of nationality and live outside because of fear, threat, violence or persecution due to their affiliation to a particular race, religion, ethnicity and social group and their home country is unable to provide them protection. Syrian uprising that began as peaceful protests for political and economic reforms transformed into the violent civil war resulted in the tragic loss of lives and physical destruction. Additionally, millions of people were displaced both internally and externally. The effects of the turmoil impacted the neighbouring countries such as Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Egypt, Iraq and other regions of Europe. The massive influx of Syrian refugees in these neighbouring countries posed a significant challenge, especially to Lebanon and Jordan since both are already burdened with the existing refugees. UNHCR, the United Nations and other international organisations considered the Syrian refugee crisis as the biggest humanitarian crisis in recent history. This research also becomes important and relevant since Syrian refugees became one of the largest populations under the care of UNHCR.

This study attempts to examine the economic challenges and vulnerabilities emerged due to the massive influx of Syrian refugees along with political fragility and instability posed by their presence in Lebanon. It also focuses on the challenges faced by the Syrian refugees in Lebanon. Since the issue of the Syrian refugees is contemporary, limited work has been done. This study tries to comprehensively study the implications of Syrian refugees in the host country. Lebanon is a small country, and due to the massive presence of Syrian refugees, the largest in proportion to its size became the country with the highest per capita concentration of refugees worldwide Apart from the fact that Lebanon has become one of the most affected neighbouring countries as a result of Syrian presence, it has been chosen as a case study because of its unique political system based on the power-sharing arrangement by the representation of different religious communities (Confessionalism). This power structure came into existence for establishing peace and harmony among diverse religious and ethnic communities; however, it contributed to Lebanon's fragility. The

scope of the study is also restricted to a time frame starting from 2011to 2016 because of the availability of data until December 2016 and the continuity of the developments. Also terms like Syrian refugees and refugees from Syria were used interchangeably in the available literature despite implies the different meanings. Therefore, the study is restricted to the impact of the 'Syrian refugees' only since 'Refugees from Syria' include Syrian refugees and Palestinian refugees both; however, 'Syrian refugees' are exclusively meant for them only.

Research Questions

1. How has the Syrian refugee crisis become an economic burden for Lebanon?
2. How is the influx of Syrian refugees undermining the confessional political system?
3. How is the Syrian refugee crisis contributing to the state of insecurity and the political instability in Lebanon?
4. What role the Arab League, GCC, Islamic charities groups, regional organisations along with the international community are playing to help Lebanon to deal with the refugee crisis?
5. How regional proxy conflict between Iran, Hezbollah, Saudi Arabia and other players are posing challenges to Lebanon's security and political stability?
6. How shelter and security have become a challenge for the Syrian refugees in Lebanon?

Hypothesis

The influx of Syrian refugees, apart from being a huge economic burden, has also undermined Lebanon's fragile confessional polity.

Research Methodology

The research methodology for the present work is descriptive and analytical in nature. It examines the available literature on refugees in the context of spillover effects. It further studies their implications on the host country from political and economic perspectives. It relies upon both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources includes government reports, UN documents, UNDP reports, UNHCR reports,

ministerial speeches; interviews and the use of archival material. The study also relies on the available secondary sources such as books, articles from journals, various national and international NGOs reports, online materials, newspaper reports, and magazines, etc. A field study to Lebanon proved to be very helpful for understanding the economic and political implications of the Syrian refugees on the host country along with the challenges faced by them in a comprehensive manner. The discussion, interviews and interaction with professors, UNHCR officials, Syrian refugees, Syrian workers, Lebanese nationals from different sects provided different narratives to understand this study in holistic manner.

Chapterisation

This chapter sets up the trajectory of the refugee influx on the host country. It focuses on the political and economic dimensions and challenges faced by them. It subsequently introduces the structures of the entire thesis which has been divided into five chapters

Chapter Two: Nature of the Lebanese State and Society

This chapter analyses the uniqueness of Lebanon as a state by focusing on its power-sharing arrangement under the confessional polity. It also examines the nature of Lebanese society in terms of its religion and ethnicity. In addition to this, the civil unrest of 1958, Lebanese civil war of 1975-1990, Syrian military presence in Lebanon from 1976-2005 and other major occurrences that all transformed Lebanon into a fragile state are also be discussed.

Chapter Three: The Syrian Civil War and the Influx of Syrian Refugees to Lebanon

This chapter focuses on the roots of the Syrian civil war, which resulted in massive scale displacement of Syrians within and outside Syria. It profoundly examines Syria-Lebanon relations leading to the movement of the Syrian refugees to Lebanon.

Chapter Four: The Challenges for Syrian Refugees in Lebanon

This chapter discusses the problems of Syrian refugees that they are facing in Lebanon ranging from shelter, education, employment, health, security to

sustainability etc. The attitude of both Syrian refugees and the Lebanese population towards each other is also get discussed in this chapter.

Chapter Five: Economic and Political Implications of the Syrian Refugee Crisis

This chapter examines the economic and political impact of the Syrian refugees for Lebanon, ranging from the fragile confessional polity to the frail economy. The steps taken by the Lebanese government to deal with this issue, along with the assistance provided by regional and international NGOs, are also be analysed.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

This last chapter summarises the findings of the research and test the hypothesis and conclude.

Chapter- Two

Nature of the Lebanese State and Society

Introduction

This chapter attempts to understand the nature of the Lebanese state and society by analysing the keystone principles that provided the foundation for Lebanon as a state entity. A brief historical background becomes essential for the comprehensive understanding of present Lebanon. The fall of Ottoman Empire after the First World War placed Mount Lebanon under French Mandate that subsequently created 'Greater Lebanon' in 1920 and established the Lebanese Constitution in 1926. The 1932 census and National Pact (1943) played a significant role in shaping the modern politics of Lebanon. The 1932 census established the foundation for political and administrative positions and arrangements that were divided in the form of a 6:5 ratio between Christians and Muslims. This ratio became a bedrock in deciding seats in the unicameral parliament, positions in the cabinet as well as in the civil services in the form of 'National Pact' (*al-Mithaq al-Watni*). Further, this chapter focuses on the nature of the Lebanese society in general, and its plurality with peculiarity, in particular. 'Consociational democracy' prevailing in Lebanon in the form of 'confessional polity' presents a unique example in the West Asian region is discussed in an elaborated manner for understanding the political implications of Syrian refugees in general and for the confessional polity in particular. Further, it examines the important incidents shaped Lebanese politics, including the 1958 civil war, Lebanese civil war (1975-1990) and Syrian intervention in Lebanon. The occurrence of these incidents made Lebanon a fragile country both politically and economically. The end of the Syrian presence in Lebanon and post-war Lebanon situation are also discussed in brief. The last section attempts to review the Lebanese policy towards refugees (Palestinians and Iraqis) for getting a comprehensive understanding of their policy towards Syrian refugees in the further chapters.

1. Historical Background

The roots of the word Lebanon can be derived from the name of the coastal mountains, Jabal Lubnan or Mount Lebanon, known initially as the heights north of Beirut. It is a slight adaptation of an old Semitic word for 'whiteness'. The word

laban in Arabic, meaning 'sour milk' and *lavan* in Hebrew, meaning 'white' shows some traces of the word. As noted in Jeremiah 18: 14, Lebanon could reflect either the whiteness of the mountain's limestone cliffs or the 'snow of Lebanon'.[78]

The origin of 'Modern Lebanon' can be traced to the Roman Empire in 380 that made Christianity as their official religion. A new historical era began for Lebanon in the tenth century with the migration of the Maronite monks to the northern Lebanese highlands, Shuf district, southeast of Beirut came under the influence of the Druze, and South Lebanon and the Bekaa Valley populated by the Shi'a.[79] The evolution of the Druze, Maronite Christians, and Twelver Shia of Mount Lebanon through Frankish, Mamluk, and Ottoman rule, leads from the origins of the mountain communities to the politicisation of communal identity and the roots of modern Lebanon after 1800. Nevertheless, the role played by the Shia and Sunni Muslim chiefs, and the Druze lords under the Mamluk and Ottoman regimes remained significant. From about 1750, the emergence of estrangement between Maronite and Druze took place due to some reasons including the increasingly fraught interplay of Druze lords, rising Maronite chiefs, Sunni Shihab "princes," and a dynamic Christian population. The first sectarian war between Druze and Maronite in 1840-41 forced Ottomans to introduce the first sectarian representation in the administration of Mount Lebanon in 1845 that brought European intervention in 1860. The establishment of a new province of Mount Lebanon after the agreement between Ottomans and Europeans, with Christian governor and elected sectarian administrative council in 1861, can be considered the origin of confessional polity that formed the modern politics of Lebanon.[80]

Fall of the Ottoman Empire after World War I brought Mount Lebanon and Greater Syria under the control of the French Mandate. On September 1, 1920, France formed Greater Lebanon (*Grand Liban)* by annexing the Muslim dominated coastal regions of Tripoli, Beirut, Sidon, and Tyre along with the Bekaa plain to Mount Lebanon (See figure 2.1). This decision of the French government was considered a strategy to strengthen the political and economic position of pro-French Maronite Christian

[78] Harris, William (2012), *Lebanon : A History, 600-2011*, New York: Oxford University Press, p.7

[79] Fawaz, Eli (2009), "What Makes Lebanon a Distinctive Country?" in Barry M. Rubin (eds.) *Lebanon: Liberation, Conflict, and Crisis*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, p.25.

[80] Ibid. 3-5.

community and hence faced severe criticisms.[81] Some factors determined the inclination of the French government to take side with the Maronite Christians. The ideals of the French Revolution, such as liberty and equality influenced the Maronite peasantry. There was an up-gradation of an exclusive association with the Maronites and their church by France under the restored monarchy that articulated in Louis XIV's declaration of protection in 1649.[82] Role of the Church remained crucial in the creation of modern Lebanon. With the most substantial foreign investment in the local infrastructure in Mount Lebanon, France considered itself as the patron of Mount Lebanon's Catholics. Maronite Patriarch Elias al-Huwayyik played an instrumental role in the formation of modern Lebanon.[83] Even he presided over delegations to France following World War I and called for the re-establishment of the entity for Principality of Lebanon (1515AD-1840AD). Even for fulfilling this objective, he participated in the Versailles Peace Conference in 1919. By appointing Georges-Picot as the high commissioner for the northern Levant in May 1917, the French government revealed its intentions. Comité Central Syrien was established in Paris in June 1917 by the Lebanese Christian emigrants to coordinate with French church, commercial, and colonial interests.[84]

This decision towards the formation of "Greater Lebanon" further witnessed the dominant presence of Shia Muslims along with substantial Greek Orthodox and Greek Catholic communities in the appended districts of the Bekaa in the east and the Jabal Amil in the south.[85] The old Mount Lebanon had been an overwhelming Christian majority, but the newly formed 'Greater Lebanon' comprised the closer balance between Christians and Muslims. The religious composition of 'Greater Lebanon' created a resentful and hostile attitude among Muslims both towards French authorities and Lebanese Christians. As a result, Greater Lebanon, since its formation, was plagued by the tensions developed between Muslim and Christian

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[81]Chamie, Joseph (1976), "The Lebanese Civil War: An Investigation into the Causes", *World Affairs*, 139 (3): 171-188, pp.171-172.

[82] Harris, William (2012), *Lebanon : A History, 600-2011*, New York: Oxford University Press, p.106

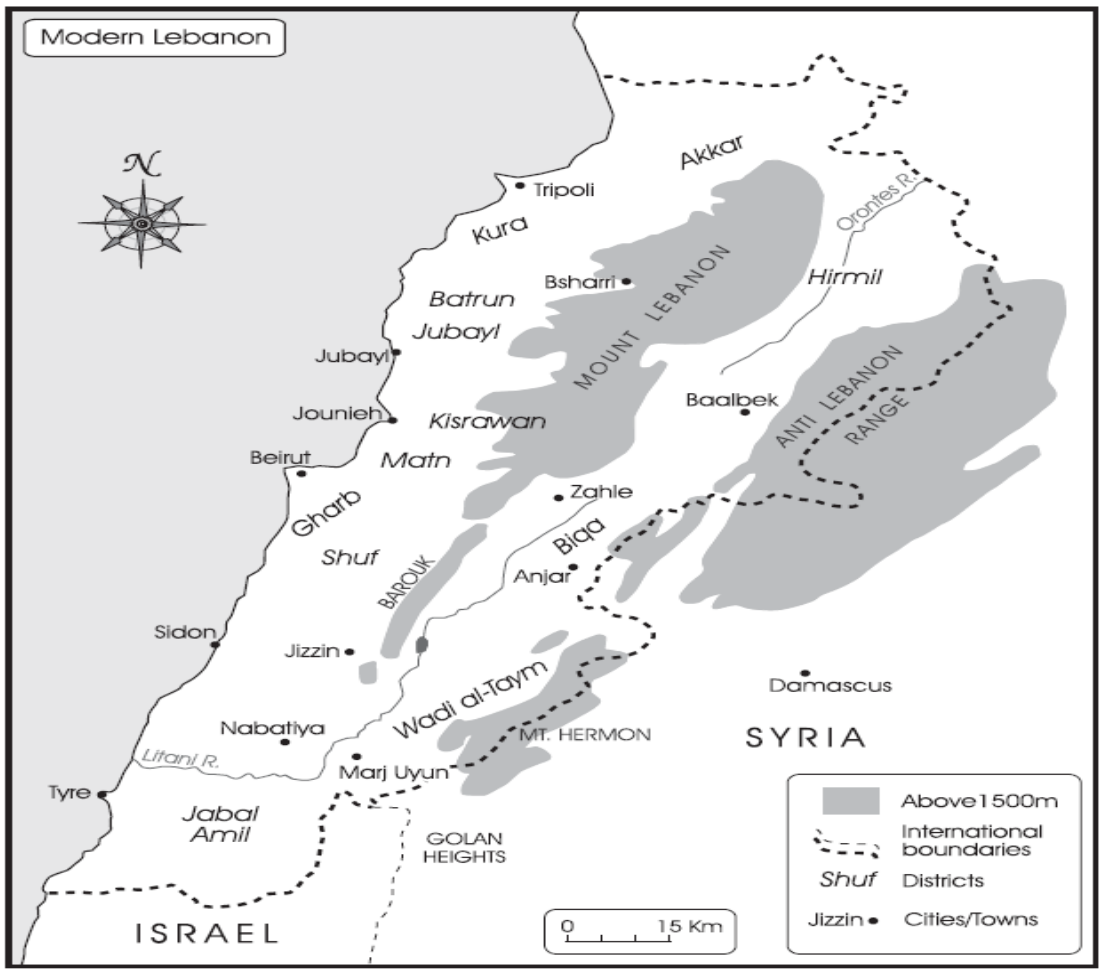
[83] Chamie, Joseph (1976), "The Lebanese Civil War: An Investigation into the Causes", *World Affairs*, 139 (3): 171-188, pp.149-150.

[84] Harris, William (2012), *Lebanon: A History, 600-2011*, New York: Oxford University Press, p.174.

[85]Hourani, Albert (1946), *Syria and Lebanon: A Political Essay*, London: Oxford University Press, p. 137.

communities.[86] In short, pronounced discrepancies existed between the social composition of Mount Lebanon and the rest of the country.

Figure-2.1: Map of Modern Lebanon



Source: Harris, William (2012), *Lebanon: A History, 600-2011*, New York: Oxford University Press, p.8.

The Maronites of Mount Lebanon have always been considered at the core of the "Lebanist" historiography that accompanied the emergence of a Maronite-dominated Lebanese polity in the early twentieth century. For "Lebanists," the Druze and Maronite elite hierarchy and the rise of the Maronite church and peasants were the central dynamics of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.[87] Kamal Salibi, a

[86]Chamie, Joseph (1976), "The Lebanese Civil War: An Investigation into the Causes", *World Affairs*, 139 (3): 171-188, p.172.

[87] Cited in Harris, William (2012), *Lebanon: A History, 600-2011*, New York: Oxford University Press, pp.280-281.

famous Lebanese historian, stated: "An evolving form of political authority has continued without interruption from the early seventeenth century to our time, giving Lebanon a separate and distinct identity."[88] Figure 2.2 presents the division of entire Lebanon into governorates, districts and administrative zones. There were six governorates including Beirut, Bekaa, Mount Lebanon, Nabatieh, North Lebanon and South Lebanon. But in 2003, it increased to eight by including Akkar and Baalbek-Hermel.[89]

Figure-2.2: Governorates, Districts, and Administrative Zones in Lebanon.

Source: Cammett, Melani (2014), *Compassionate Communalism: Welfare and Sectarianism in Lebanon,* Ithaca: Cornell University, p.93.

The Census of 1932: The annexation of Mount Lebanon to Muslim dominated cities established the foundation for the heterogeneous nature of Lebanese society. Christians and Muslims consisted of two main religious communities in Mount

[88]Salibi, Kamal (1965), *The Modern History of Lebanon,* New York: Caravan Books, p. 15.

[89] UNOCHR (2018), *Beirut & Mount Lebanon Governorates Profile*, Beirut: United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, p.1.

Lebanon. Christians consisted of different denominations, such as Maronite, Greek Orthodox, and, Greek Catholic while Sunni, Shia and Druze belonged to the Muslim community.[90] Thus Christian and Muslim formed the two broad religious sects, but subdivision within these grouping are several and significant.[91] According to the 1932 census, Lebanese government officially recognised seventeen different sects[92]; however, no one sect constituted more than thirty percent of Lebanon's total population.[93]

Table- 2.1: Population of Different Sects According to the 1932 Census

Sects	Percentage of Population
Maronite Christians	29%
Greek Orthodox	9%
Greek Catholic	6%
Sunni Muslims	22%
Shia Muslims	19.5
Druze	7%

Source: Weinberger, Naomi Joy (1986), *Syrian Intervention in Lebanon*, New York: Oxford University Press, p.84.

Table 2.1 shows that the 1932 census transformed Lebanese state into a membership organisation, functions on the legal and political objectives. Its contribution has been playing a crucial role in the state-building process of the Lebanese state. Lebanon can be considered a good example of the representative political organisation by constituting the political sensitivity of demographic statistics with fixed proportional

[90]Salibi, Kamal S. (1988), *A House of Many Mansions: The History of Lebanon Reconsidered.* London: I.B Tauris, p.4

[91] Smock, David R. and Audrey C. Smock (1975), *The Politics of Pluralism: A Comparative Study of Lebanon and Ghana*, New York: Elsevier Scientific Publishing Company, pp. 75-76.

[92]According to census of 1932, list of the sectarian composition of Lebanon comprises : (1) Sunnis, (2) Shiites, (3) Druzes,(4) Alawis, (5) Ismailis, (6) Maronites, (7) Roman Catholics of the Latin rite, (8) Greek Orthodox, (9) Greek Catholics, (10) Syrian Orthodox (Jacobites), (11) Syrian Catholics, (12) Armenian Orthodox (Gregorians), (13) Armenian Catholics, (14) Assyrians and Chaldaean Catholics, (15) Protestants, (16) Jews, (17) Miscellaneous.

[93] Hourani, Albert Habib (1946), *Syria and Lebanon: A Political Essay*, London: Oxford University Press, p.121.

representation.[94] No official census occurred since 1932. The Lebanese government refused to administer a new census considering the complex nature of Lebanese politics and society. However, Muslims have been demanding for the new census due to the changing population dynamics that would play a critical factor in the redistribution of the power-sharing arrangements. The lower birth rates and higher rates of emigration have been deteriorating the numbers of Christians; considering the population of the Muslim community, their high birth rate and declining numbers of Christians contributing towards their growing numbers. However, Maronite-dominated elites refused to acknowledge this. By the early 1970s, the total population of Lebanon comprised over two million, and Muslims surpassed Christians and that among Muslims; Shias outnumbered the Sunnis.[95]

The National Pact (*al-Mithaq al-Watani*): As a result of negotiations between Bishara al-Khuri (a Maronite Christian) and Riyad al-Sulh (a Sunni Muslim) [96], the unwritten agreement known as the National Pact or National Covenant came into existence in October 1943. It established the foundation of the new Lebanese state in 1943 that distributed political representation and power by the proportional size of confessional sect given in 1932 census. Therefore, the 1932 census can be considered as a critical force in shaping the Lebanese politics. Later this agreement was approved and supported by the followers of both signatories.[97] Although for many, it was perceived as a legitimized principle of power-sharing under Christian dominance.

The four principles given below were laid down under the National Pact:

> Lebanon was to be a completely an independent state. Their Christians communities were to cease identifying with the West; in return, Muslim communities were to protect the independence of Lebanon and prevent its merger with any Arab state. Although Lebanon is an Arab country with Arabic as its official Language, it could not cut off its spiritual and intellectual ties with the West, had helped it attain such a notable degree of progress. Lebanon, as a member of the family of Arab states, should cooperate with the other Arab states, and in case of conflict among them, it

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[94]Maktabi, Rania (1999), "The Lebanese Census of 1932 Revisited. Who Are the Lebanese?", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 26 (2): 219-241, p. 219.

[95] Smock, David R. and Audrey C. Smock (1975), *The Politics of Pluralism: A Comparative Study of Lebanon and Ghana*, New York: Elsevier, p. 76

[96] Bishara al-Khuri (a Maronite Christian) was Lebanon's first President and Riyad al-Sulh (a Sunni Muslim) was the first Prime Minister after independence.

[97] Azar, Edward E. (1984), *The Emergence of A New Lebanon: Fantasy or Reality?*, New York: Praeger Publishers, p.45.

> should not side with one state against another. Public offices should be distributed proportionally among the recognised religious groups, but in technical positions, preference should be given to competence without regard to confessional considerations.[98]

This pact provides three significant positions in the Lebanese political system namely President, Prime Minister and Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies (Parliament) to a Maronite Christian, a Sunni Muslim and a Shia Muslim respectively. In addition to this, other positions such as the Deputy Speaker, Defence Minister, and the Commander of the Military assigned to Greek Orthodox, Druze, and Maronite Christian respectively.[99] (See table-2.2).

Tabel-2.2: The Allotment of Key Positions in the Lebanese Political System as per the National Pact (1943)

Key Positions	Sects
President	Maronite Christian
Prime Minister	Sunni
Speaker of the Parliament	Shia
Commander of the military	Maronite Christian
Defence Minister	Druze
Deputy Speaker of the Parliament	Greek Orthodox
Deputy Prime Minister	Greek Orthodox

Source: Hudson, Michael C. (1968), *The Precarious Republic: Political Modernization in Lebanon*, New York: West View Press, p.23.

[98]Delury, George E. (1983), *World Encyclopedia of Political System*, Essex: Longman Group Limited, p.611; Rolland, John C (2003), *Lebanon: Current Issues and Background*, New York: Nova Publishers, p.47.

[99]Salamey, Imad (2009), "Failing Consociationalism in Lebanon and Integrative Options", *International Journal of Peace Studies*, 14 (2): 83-105, p.84; Hudson, Michael C. (1968), *The Precarious Republic: Political Modernization in Lebanon*, New York: West View Press, p.23.

Seats in the legislative and executive branches were distributed according to a ratio of six Christians for every five Muslims (6:5)", providing fixed proportional representation. "Posts in the civil service, judiciary, military, and seats in the parliament itself were allocated according to the sectarian distributions reported in the 1932 census. On that basis, the 99 member-body, the Chamber of Deputies of 1960 and 1964, assigned 54 seats to Christians and 45 to non-Christians (Muslim and Druze) (See table-2.3). The persistence of a fixed ratio of benefits despite the changing demography as well as the needs of Lebanon's population showed negative implications for the Lebanese society.

Table-2.3: Allocation of seats in the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies According to the Religious Sects in 1943

Christians (54)	**Non-Christians (45)**
Maronites(30)	Sunni Muslims (20)
Greek Orthodox (11)	Shiite Muslims (19)
Greek Catholic (6)	Druze (6)
Armenian Orthodox (4)	------
Minorities (3)	------
Armenian Catholic (1)	------
Protestants (1)	------
Other Christian Minorities (1)	------

Source: Hudson, Michael C. (1968), *The Precarious Republic: Political Modernization in Lebanon,* New York: Random House, p.23.

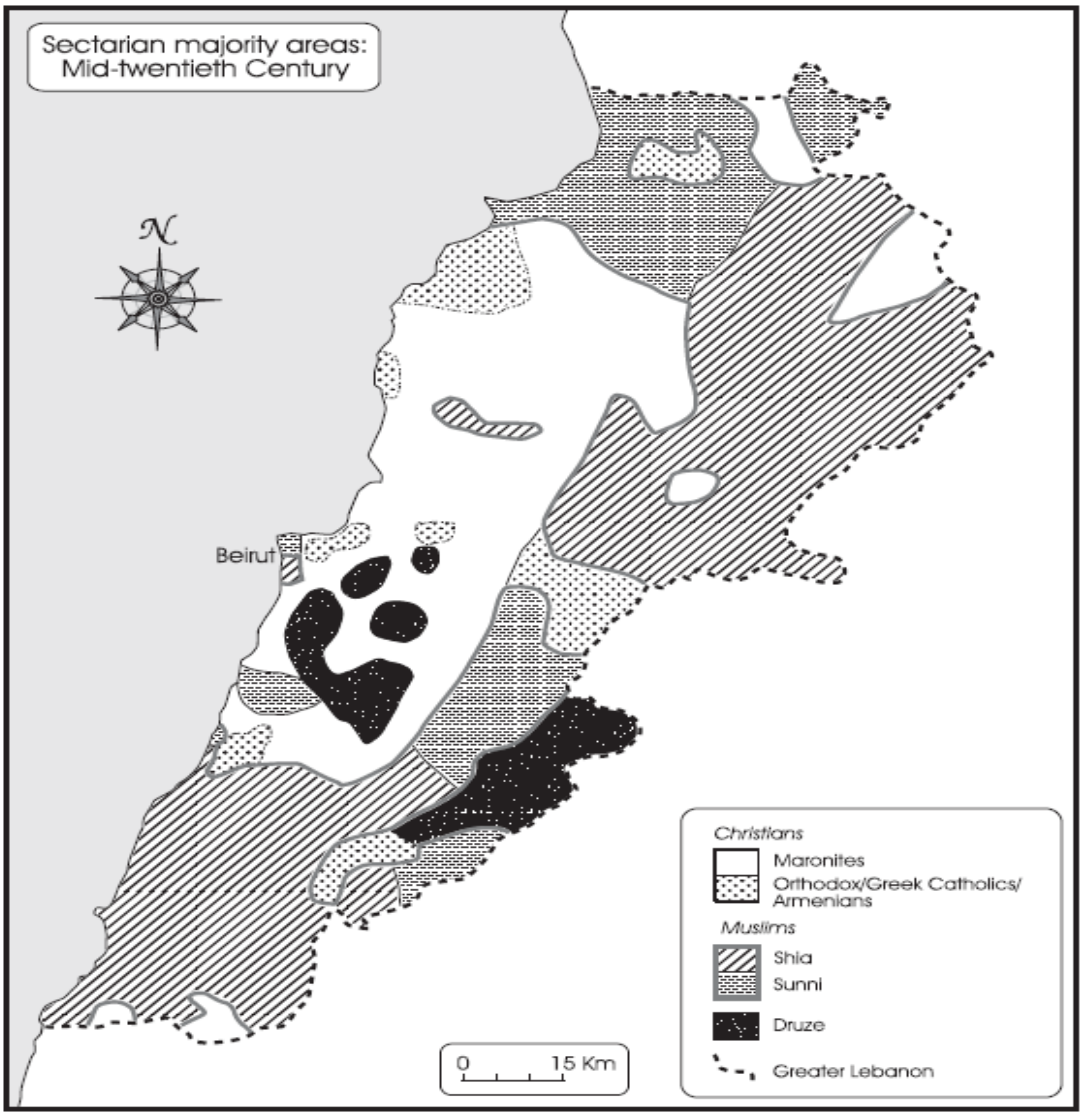
Farid el-Khazen has written about remarking on the historical legacy of National Pact:

> Despite its shortcomings and 'reactionary' confessional character, the National Pact, based on the very concept of dissent, was liberal in substance and was the last remnant of the liberal age in Arab politics that came to an end at the hands of military dictators and self- styled revolutionaries. Nonetheless, with Lebanon's disintegration and the

> emergence of a variety of post-war pacts, ranging from federation formulas to 'Islamic solutions,' the 1943 National Pact was, and is, an indispensable preliminary working paper without which the reshaping of Lebanon's future is impossible.[100]

Figure 2.3 exhibits more clarity about the social composition by presenting the sectarian majority areas as of the mid-twentieth century.[101]

Figure-2.3: Sectarian Majority Areas – Mid 20th Century



Source: Cited in Harris, William (2012), *Lebanon: A history, 600-2011*, New York: Oxford University Press, p.15

[100]Khazen, Farid el (1991), *The Communal Pact of National Identities: The Making and Politics of the 1943 National Pact*, Oxford: Centre for Lebanese Studies, p. 68.

[101]Harris, William (2012), *Lebanon: A history, 600-2011*, New York: Oxford University Press, pp.14-15.

Undoubtedly, Maronite-Sunni cooperation helped actualise independence. However, the role of the Shia community despite its demographic importance remained microscopic in the formation of the National Pact. As a result of the Pact, the communal reconciliation, and unity to some extent were brought out under particular circumstances, nonetheless "it neither fostered nor forged a national identity."[102] Furthermore, the National Pact was considered as a compromise that steered by the deceptive norms that "Muslims would 'Arabize' the Christians while Christians would 'Lebanonize' Muslims."[103] Michel Chiha[104], "one of the founding fathers of modern Lebanon" defined the Republic of Lebanon of 1926, as a"[c]ountry of associated (confessional) minorities",[105] has been administered through sectarian allotments based on power-sharing arrangements for the executive and legislative power.

Lebanon became a member of the League of Arab States (Arab League) on March 22, 1945, and later acquired the membership of the United Nations in the same year. As a result of the Franco-Lebanese Treaty of 1936, complete withdrawal of the French troops from the country took place on December 31, 1946.[106]

2. Nature of the Lebanese State and Society

The Lebanese society comprises "a mosaic of cultures and ethnic groups" that despite showing a glimpse of assimilation over the centuries still uphold some discrete divisions.[107] It evolved from a feudal order to a system in which religious sects (or

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[102] Rabil, Robert G. (2011), R*eligion, National Identity, and Confessional Politics in Lebanon*: *The Challenge of Islamism*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, p.15.

[103]Ibid.15.

[104]Michel Chiha is considered one of the chief architects of the Lebanese Constitution. His ideas and actions have had a significant influence on the shaping of modern Lebanon. In 1925, Chiha was elected as the representative of Beirut in the Lebanese parliament. During his mandate that ended in 1929, he was very instrumental in the establishment of the Lebanese Constitution and the Monetary and fiscal systems (Source: Kobaissi, Riad (2012), *From Michel Chiha to Rafik Hariri: Continuity and Discontinuity in the Process of "Lebanoniztion"*, Ph.D Thesis, Beirut: Lebanese American University, pp.12-13)

[105] Cited in Farah, Mark (2009), "Demographic Dilemmas"in Barry M. Rubin (eds.) *Lebanon: liberation, conflict, and crisis*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, p.83.

[106]Ansari, Mohammad Iqbal (1968), *Arab League 1945-1955***,** Aligarh, U.P: Institute of Islamic Studies Publications, pp.47-50.

[107] Gonzalez, Gabriella C. et al. (2008), *Facing Human Capital Challenges of the 21st Century: Education and Labor Market Initiatives in Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates*, California: RAND Corporation, pp.201-202

confessions) have been the major social cleavages. Diverse mechanisms for containing conflict between different factions, ranging from partition to proportional representation, furnished significant precedents.[108]

A unique country in the Arab world: The geographical location, social composition, presence of different sects and, other miniscule religious minorities distinguishes Lebanon from other Arab countries in the region. Lebanon is considered "a melting pot of different cultures and civilisations due to its history, demographic composition, different Western and missionary interests, along with the Lebanese mercantile capacities."[109] With passing time, many factors including the freedom, co-existence of various sects, diversity, better education, and the approach to the West emerged as the integral parts of the Lebanese identity.[110]

It is the "freedom" or "openness" that makes Lebanon different from other Arab countries.[111] From the 1940s to the early 1970s, the Arab world that sloped into demagogy and dictatorship, Lebanon was considered a beacon of freedom and tolerance in the region.[112] Lebanon cannot be compared with other Arab countries either in terms of diversity both in the cultural and religious sense or freedom with so much social diversity. The openness in public domain with inclusive political representation of all religious groups, freedom of speech along with protection of association and artistic expression is more evident in Lebanon than in other Arab countries. However, in the opinion of many scholars, this freedom and open society became the reason for the emergence of civil war in Lebanon. For critics, the absence of a strong state based on national unity makes Lebanon more vulnerable to get involved in the power politics of its neighbours and other global powers. Tahar Ben Jelloun, a famous Moroccan novelist, called Lebanon, "an Arab experiment in

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[108] Weinberger, Naomi Joy (1986), *Syrian Intervention in Lebanon*, New York: Oxford University Press, p.31.

[109] Rubin, Barry M. (2009), *Lebanon: Liberation, Conflict, and Crisis*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.30- 31.

[110] Fawaz, Eli (2009), "What Makes Lebanon a Distinctive Country?" in Barry M. Rubin (eds.) *Lebanon: Liberation, Conflict, and Crisis*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, p.28.

[111] Johnson, Michael (2001), *All Honorable Men: The Social Origins of War in Lebanon*. London: I. B. Tauris, pp. 218- 226

[112] Harris, William (2012), *Lebanon: A History, 600-2011*, New York: Oxford University Press, p.193.

freedom that was defeated."[113] Similarly, Lebanon's identity would be characterised by an 'Arab face' and manifested by the slogan 'No East, No West'.[114]

The importance of Lebanon is not restricted to its national issues rather beyond that by comprising cultural aspects. The role of Beirut, famously known "as the cultural capital of the Arab world provided its cultural life with a sense of importance beyond national issues along with substantial input from Iraqi, Syrian, Palestinian and Egyptian writers and artists who came to perceive themselves as Beirutis."[115] Michael Hudson in his famous book *The Precarious Republic: Modernization in Lebanon*, called Lebanon a precarious republic where the grand modern illusion of uniform nationalism has always been undercut by Lebanon's position between Arab and Western spheres of influence and the many religious communities that inhabit its limited territory.[116]

Lebanon's representative, Ambassador Charles Malik narrated the self-image and unique nature of Lebanon during one of the earliest sessions of the United Nations in December 1948:

> The history of my country for centuries is precisely that of a small country struggling against all the odds for the maintenance and strengthening of real freedom of thought and conscience. Innumerable persecuted minorities have found, throughout the ages, a most understanding haven in my country, so that the very basis of our existence is complete respect of differences of opinion and belief.[117]

Lebanon has been playing a role of the host country for many minorities seeking refuge; many political and intellectual non-conformists try to find a ray of hope in the country along with the platform for the regional and international conflicts makes the identity of Lebanon a distinct one. Thus Phillip Hitti wrote:

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[113]Khairallah, As'ad E. (2001), "Besieged Beirut" in A. Neuwirth and A. Pflitsch (eds.) *Crisis and Memory in Islamic Societies*, Beirut: Ergon, p.515.

[114]Cited in Rabil, Robert G. (2016), *The Syrian Refugee Crisis in Lebanon: The Double Tragedy of Refugees and Impacted Host Communities*, Maryland: Lexington Books, p.2.

[115]Cite in Haugbolle, Sune (2010), *War and Memory in Lebanon*, New York: Cambridge University Press, p.44

[116]Haugbolle, Sune (2010), *War and Memory in Lebanon*, New York: Cambridge University Press, p.32.

[117]Malik, Charles (2000), *The Challenge of Human Rights*, Oxford: Charles Malik Foundation, p. 16.

> The mountainous character of the land, its close proximity to the sea, its central location in the cradle of civilization and at the crossroads of the world, astride the great international highway that linked the three historic continents—these are the determining factors in its historic career.[118]

In short, freedom with in diversity makes Lebanon different from other countries in the region. The present reality of Arab world witnesses "lack of freedom in its many forms and diversity in its many manifestations"[119] In such a situation, Lebanese experience might be considered as the only ray of hope that must be reinforced.

Lebanon as a deeply divided society: The existence of power-sharing arrangements, in the plural societies can be considered a shield both for achieving the popular majority, and preserving the cultural autonomy of diverse groups.[120] Michel Chiha refused to see unity and diversity as contradicting terms. He envisioned Lebanon as a plurality of sects, whose very syncretism makes up its unique national character. This was considered distinctly an urban ideology that reflected Beirut's "plural society in which communities, still different on the level of inherited religious loyalties and intimate family ties, co-existed within a common framework."[121] However, it applied to Lebanon before 1975. Lebanon often described as the "Switzerland of West Asia" while Beirut was once known as "Paris of West Asia".

Arend Lijphart, a famous Dutch political scientist, analysed the nature of the Lebanese political system in the light of the National Pact. He stated that as a result of the National Pact of 1943, prevailing liberal democracy is a consociational democracy, not majoritarian democracy of the Westminster genre.[122] The impact of the communal identities in the formation of modern Lebanon has been significant. Therefore understanding the presence and numbers of these communal identities becomes essential to comprehend the knowledge regarding Lebanese politics and

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[118] Cited in Hitti, Philip K. (1957), *Lebanon in History,* London: Macmillan, p. 5.

[119] Fawaz, Eli (2009), "What Makes Lebanon a Distinctive Country?" in Barry M. Rubin (eds.), *Lebanon: liberation, conflict, and crisis,* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, p.33.

[120] Cited in Salamey, Imad (2009), "Failing Consociationalism in Lebanon and Integrative Options", *International Journal of Peace Studies,* 14 (2): 83-105, p.85.

[121] Hourani, Albert (1976), "Ideologies of the Mountain and the City", in Roger Owen (eds.) *Essays on the Crisis in Lebanon,* London: Ithaca Press, p. 38.

[122] Cited in Deeb, Marius (2003), *Syria's Terrorist War on Lebanon and the Peace Process*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, p.1.

society. By comprising of different religious communities including Christian, Muslim, Druze and Alawites and other Christian minorities, eighteen officially sects have been recognised in Lebanon by 2011 (See table 2.4). During this period the population of Lebanon comprised about more than 40 percent Christians (mostly Maronites), 54 percent Muslims (27 % each for Shia and Sunni) and around 5.6 percent belong to Druze sect along with other minorities including Armenian Catholics, Protestants.[123]

In addition to this, thousands of Kurds come under the category of the minority community. The presence of Kurds in Lebanon has always been in minority groups. Since no official census took place after 1932, stating the exact figure of their numbers is difficult, and even identity cards carrying by this community do not reveal their ethnic background. However, many sources estimated their numbers and underlined the population of Kurds was around between 60,000 and 90,000 before 1985. Though many of them left the country during the Lebanese civil war, their numbers are still in this range today, and the majority of them live in Beirut.[124]

Table-2.4 presents around 60 percent of Lebanese Christians dominated by the Maronites while five Muslim and Islamic-derived communities consisted of Lebanon's non-Christian population in which Sunni and Twelver Shia Muslims cover about 90 percent, signifies the importance of these three communities in the politics of Lebanon.

[123] United States Department of State (2012), *Report on International Religious Freedom - Lebanon 2012*, Washington DC: Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, United States Department of State, pp.1-2.

[124] Meho, Lokman I. and Farah W. Kawtharani (2005), "The Kurdish Community in Lebanon and their Future Prospects" in Mohammed M.A. Ahmed and Michael M. Gunter (eds.) *The Kurdish Question and 2003 Iraqi war,* California: Mazda Publishers, pp. 249-251.

Table-2.4: Officially Recognised Lebanese Sects, 2011

Officially recognized Lebanese sects, 2011				
Non-Christians	**Conjectured Population**	**%**	**Parliamentary Seats**	**%**
Twelver Shia Muslims	1,160,00	29	27	21
Sunni Muslims	1,120,000	28	27	21
Druze	200,000	5	8	6
Alawites	80,000	2	2	1.5
Isma'ili Shia Muslims	negligible	-	-	
Jews	negligible	-	-	
Total	2,560,000	64	64	
Christians				
Maronite Catholics	880,000	22	34	26.5
Orthodox	240,000	6	14	11
Greek Catholics	120,000	3	8	6
Armenian Orthodox* Armenian Catholics	120,000	3	5 1	5
Syrian Orthodox (Jacobites)* Syrian Catholics Assyrians Chaldeans (Assyrian Catholics) Latin Catholics Evangelical Protestants Copts*	80,000	2	2 (1 for Protestants, 1 for "minorities")	1.5
Total	1,440,000	36	64	

Total resident population	
Lebanese citizens	4,000,000
Palestinians (about 90% Sunni Muslims)	c.300,000

* Monophysite Christian sects

Source: Harris, William (2012), *Lebanon: A History, 600-2011*, New York: Oxford University Press, p.14.

There is a continuation of religious laws since the Ottoman period, considered to be the law of the land for matters involving marriage, divorce, and inheritance. Every community in Lebanon operate and follow their courts for personal statuses issues such as Christian sects pursue their various versions of canon law, Twelver Shia, Druze, Alawites, and even the few Isma'ilis have escaped their late Ottoman subjection to Hanafi Sunni Islamic law into their jurisdictions.

Consociational democracy: Confessionalism in Lebanon

Consociationalism means power sharing for maintaining stability in the country, especially from the political perspective. When it is organised along religious lines, known as "Confessionalism". The political system of Lebanon is based on confessionalism, referring to the allocation of political positions by 'confessions' or religious sects. The institutionalised distribution on a sectarian basis in the parliament, cabinet, and administration has been defined as "Confessionalism"[125] This principle was first formally embodied in the "National Pact *(al-mithaq al-watani)* of 1943".

In the opinion of Arend Lijphart and others, the nature of Lebanese polity after its independence in 1943 can be considered as 'consociational democracy'. The early 1970s, first, witnessed the paralysis of the Lebanese state, in contrast to its relative stability before 1970, and thus Lebanon's consociational democracy became gradually dysfunctional.[126] Furthermore, after the end of the Syrian presence (1989–2005), the Lebanese political system could not completely be considered a consociational democracy, albeit had some consociational features. The power-sharing arrangements provided stability to an ethnically and culturally fragmented nation; however, blaming the same for impairing the full development of democracy would not be wrong.[127] In the late 1960s, Lijphart provided the feasible alternative arrangement for plural societies in the form of ethnicity-based consociational democracy. In his opinion, "consociational democracy means government by elite cartel designed to turn a democracy with a fragmented political culture into a stable democracy."[128] He compared Lebanon's model of consociational democracy to Austria and Switzerland. It is a system best suited to a country with deep cultural cleavages, which strives for stability through cooperation among leaders of rival sub-cultures. He stated:

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[125] Hudson, Michael (1969), "Democracy and Social Mobilization in Lebanese Politics", *Comparative Politics*, 1 (2): 245-263, p.251

[126]Cied in Osoegawa, Taku (2013), *Syria and Lebanon: International Relations and Diplomacy in the Middle East*, New York: I.B. Tauris, p.23.

[127] Husseini, Rola el (2012), *Pax Syriana: Elite Politics in Postwar Lebanon*, New York: Syracuse University Press, pp. 1-2.

[128]Lijphart, Arend (1969), "Consociational Democracy", *World Politics*, 2 (2): 207-275; pp. 215-216; Lijphart, Arend (2002), "The Wave of Power-Sharing Democracy" in Andrew Reynolds (eds.) *The Architecture of Democracy: Constitutional Design, Conflict Management, and Democracy*, New York: Oxford University Press, p.37.

> A plural society as being characterized by deep religious, ideological, linguistic, regional, cultural, racial or ethnic segmental cleavages, having public loyalty fragmented according to representative groups rather than being embedded in a single national authority.[129]

Furthermore, "a grand coalition, a mutual veto, proportional representation, and segmental autonomy" [130] considered as four significant features of consociational democracy. Education and culture are at least two spheres guaranteeing the just power-sharing and group autonomy in plural societies based on the arrangements in the form of 'Consociationalism'.[131] Nonetheless, in many countries, consociational democracy acquired the new shape based on the corporate forms of power sharing in the form of "Corporate Consociationalism" such as in Lebanon and Iraq.[132] The foundation of 'Corporate Consociationalism included the predetermination of the power positions among ethnic and sectarian national groups. The Presidency to a Maronite Christian in Lebanon or Kurd in Post Saddam Iraq are some examples of 'Corporate Consociationalism'.[133] This predetermination determined not only the Presidency but also other representative and administrative positions.[134]

However, state power among many sects determined by the confessional predetermination, each holding veto power destabilised the robust government system resulting in the establishment of a weak and divided state. It led to as an immediate repercussion including the emergence of insecurity among its citizens both from social and political perspectives, sectarian groups relying on their own social and security networks that provided support beyond Lebanon's borders.[135] Various

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[129]Lijphart, Arend (1984), *Democracies: Patterns of Majoritarian and Consensus Government in Twenty-One Countries*, New Haven: Yale University Press, p.22.

[130]Lijphart, Arend (1977), *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration*, New Haven: Yale University Press, p.25.

[131]Lipjhart, Arend (2004), "Constitutional Design for Divided Societies", *Journal of Democracy*, 15 (2): 96-109, p.97.

[132]Lijphart, Arend (2006), "Self-Determination versus Pre-Determination of Ethnic Minorities in Power-Sharing Systems" in Will Kymlika (eds.) *The Rights of Minority Cultures*, New York: Oxford University Press, pp.283-285.

[133] Ibid.85.

[134]Salamey, Imad (2009), "Failing Consociationalism in Lebanon and Integrative Options", *International Journal of Peace Studies*, 14 (2): 83-105, p.85.

[135]Hudson, Michael C. (1985), *The Precarious Republic: Political Modernization in Lebanon*, New York: West View Press, p.34.

measures have been taken for stabilising the governing system in Lebanon; however, "neither helped accommodate nor moderated political sectarianism in the country."[136]

Lijphart identified the first Lebanese republic as a clear example of "Consociational democracy" and argued that it was a successful system. For more than thirty years, consociational democracy in Lebanon performed satisfactorily; but inflexible institutionalisation of consociational principles became its major weakness. Despite these weaknesses, the Lebanese consociational regime held its democratic stability while other countries of the region have been facing the political upheavals as a result of Arab Uprisings.[137]

The presence of sectarianism cannot be overlooked in Lebanon. Those who want to transform Beirut into a world city again, trying to turn it aside and emphasise other orientations in their work and social affairs. While on the other hand, many still look to the sect as a group reference point, a focus of collective pride and patronage networks, and a protective umbrella in times of insecurity. In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, a new sectarian saga unfolded as the Shia resurfaced and emphasis shifted from Christian/Muslim to Shia/Sunni sensitivity. By this stage, 'Confessional democracy' and sectarian status had been organising principles of the modern state for almost eight decades of its existence. While many Lebanese favoured for a non-sectarian political system; others look for advantages linked to this particular system. A June 2006 draft law for partial proportional voting, proposed by the middle class and intellectual proponents of democracy and electoral reform caused a flurry of debate terminated by 2006 Israel- Hezbollah war.[138]

The existence of Lebanon with its confessional polity, is appreciated in the following words:

> If Lebanon is the only example in the world of a power-sharing formula between different religious sects, and if the Lebanese political trajectory is different from that of other Arab

[136]Salamey, Imad (2009), "Failing Consociationalism in Lebanon and Integrative Options", *International Journal of Peace Studies,* 14 (2): 83-105, p.84.

[137] Husseini, Rola el (2012), *Pax Syriana: Elite Politics in Postwar Lebanon,* New York: Syracuse University Press, p.3.

[138]Harris, William (2012), *Lebanon: A History, 600-2011,* New York: Oxford University Press, p.14

> states, this is not the work of chance but the accumulation and sum of historical experiences in a particular geographical space inhabited by a diverse group of people.[139]

Observing the sectarian division, the majority of the Syrian refugees being Sunni characterises the largest sect in Lebanon. This demographic change resembles the Palestinian refugee scenario resulted in a major civil war (1975-90) and therefore concerns about exacerbated confessional tensions exists. Similarly, the demand for an updated redistribution of political power has begun by the Lebanese Muslims with the emergence of this demographic imbalance in a fixed political, sectarian power-sharing division.[140]

3. Important Phases in the History and Politics of Lebanon

1958 Civil War: The altered demographic balance after the independence led to severe challenges including external ideological issues and internal political grievances, posed difficulty to this power-sharing system. Discontentment among Muslim community emerged towards President Camille Nimr Chamoun (1952-1958) about economic and political opportunities. In the 1950s, the wave of nationalism in the Arab countries became evident. Furthermore, by mid-1950s, Beirut emerged as an epicentre for the proliferation of communist ideas and propaganda in West Asia. Additionally, Lebanon's continued relations with Britain and France despite their attack on Egypt, in alliance with Israel after the nationalisation of the Suez Canal in 1956 by Gamal Abdel Nasser made the situation more complicated. Due to his charismatic role in the Arab nationalism, Nasser emerged as the popular leader throughout the Arab world. Due to his 'Nasserist' Arab unity movement, Beirut witnessed more energy and strength in dormant pan- Arab union and its sentiments than any other Arab capital in the region. In order to contain increasing sentiments of Arab nationalism and pro-Soviet attitude, a pro-West military alliance famously known as 'Baghdad Pact'[141] was brokered by the United States in 1955. Camille Chamoun initially showed reserved attitude about joining the pact and therefore,

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[139]Fawaz, Eli (2009), "What Makes Lebanon a Distinctive Country?" in Barry M. Rubin (eds.), *Lebanon: Liberation, Conflict, and Crisis*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, p.33.

[140]Salamey, Imad (2014), *The Government and Politics of Lebanon*, London: Routledge, pp. 31-35.

[141] For promoting shared political, military and economic goals, The 'Baghdad Pact' was established by Turkey, Iraq, Great Britain, Pakistan and Iran in 1955. Containing the spread of communist propaganda and establishing peace in West Asia were two main objectives behind formation of this defensive organisation. In 1959, the name of Baghdad Pact was renamed as the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO). It was formally dissolved in 1979.

opted for the mediating role between the pro-Western and pro- Nasser groups. But, soon he joined the pro-Western axis considering Arab Nationalism as an immediate threat to his rule.[142] The U.S. and its allies in the region faced serious concerns due to the formation of the United Arab Republic (UAR) in 1958 between Egypt and Syria. The Nasserist vision of Arab unity for his followers in Lebanon was facilitated by the Union who started agitating to integrate Lebanon in pan- Arab system as envisioned by Nasser. In this context, Kamal Salibi wrote:

> When Syria relinquished her independent existence and united with Egypt in February 1958, the Lebanese Moslem enthusiasm for the union broke all bounds. The last traces of Moslem unity to Lebanon seemed suddenly to disappear, and it was soon clear that the Lebanese Republic stood in danger.[143]

Furthermore, an amendment in the constitution to allow Chamoun to serve a second term became another reason for more resentment. Considering policies adopted by the Christian President as an infringement of the 1943 National Pact, Lebanese Sunni Muslims opted for an armed insurrection in Beirut in May 1958.[144] The crisis of 1958 (May-October 1958) transformed into civil war trembled Lebanon and made it more vulnerable. In the beginning, the government of Camille Chamoun became the reason for turning this crisis into an insurrection among Muslims, Druze and some Christians. President Chamoun and President Nasser of Egypt did not share good relations ever since November 1956. The fall of pro- British Hashemite monarchy in Iraq in July 1958 by the Arab nationalists changed the entire political situation in Lebanon. Chamoun invoked the Eisenhower doctrine (1957) in anticipation of spillover in the form of a free flow of arms and Arab volunteers via Syria, resulted in the deployment of U.S. Marines in Beirut. The stepping down by Chamoun was the condition given for the U.S. deployment and, he agreed to do it.

Further, the United States brokered a deal that elected General Fouad Shihab, Chief of Staff, Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) as the President. Since Camille Chamoun insisted on serving out his full term, so Faud Shihab did not take charge of the office until September 23, 1958. It was considered to be the end of the civil war. However,

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[142]Rabil, Robert G. (2011), *Religion, National Identity, and Confessional Politics in Lebanon*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, p.18.

[143]Salibi, Kamal (1996), "Lebanon under Fuad Chehab, 1958–1964," *Middle Eastern Studies,* 2(3): 211-226, p. 215.

[144] Rubin, Barry M. (2009), *Lebanon: Liberation, Conflict, and Crisis*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.215-216

the "counter-revolution" of 1958 by Pierre Gemayel, leader of the Phalangist group, witnessed the continuation of the crisis since he refused to support the formation of the government. On October 14, 1958, establishment of the four-man cabinet, divided equally took place. The leader of the revolt in Tripoli, Rashid Karāmi became Prime Minister and got in-charge of five ministries. Hussein Uwayni and Raymond Eddé became the foreign minister (got the charge of other three ministries) and interior minister (two additional portfolios) respectively. Pierre Gemayel, as a result of counter-revolution, took charge of four ministries, including public works. The Chamber approved the newly formed government with a unanimous vote on October 17, 1958.[145] U.S. troops returned on 25 October 1958 as the conflict was resolved. The slogan "no victor, no vanquished" earlier chosen to end the crisis, became the formula for peace in Lebanon.[146] Fahim Qubain expressed the end of civil war in a real sense in the following words: "The crisis ended on October 14, the day when the "super" cabinet was formed, and Gemayel's counter-revolution ended."[147]

Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990): Palestinian question came in the forefront in Lebanon as a result of event occurred during 1967-1975. The defeat of Arab forces in the 1967 war pushed the establishment of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) for the cause of national liberation. Palestinian leadership after leaving Jordan forcefully due to the occurrence of Black September in 1970, joined other Palestinian militias, Palestinian guerrilla squads in south Lebanon, that had already started launching attacks on Israel, resulted in the Israeli retaliation.[148] The "state within a state" build by the Palestinians and their control of Palestinian refugee camps emerged due to the weak nature of Lebanese state along with support provided by the different Lebanese factions and Arab countries. The Palestinian attacks and Israeli retaliation became the permanent reality. However, not only Palestinians but Lebanese nationals became equally victim of Israeli retaliation particularly the Shias living in southern Lebanon. As a result, the massive migration of Shias from southern

[145]Winslow, Charles (1996), *Lebanon: War and Politics in a Fragmented Society*, London: Routledge, p.125.

[146]Sorby, Karol R. (2000), "Lebanon: The Crisis of 1958", *Asian and African Studies*, 9 (1): 76-109, p. 109.

[147]Qubain, Fahim Issa (1961), *Crisis in Lebanon*, Washington, DC: Middle East Institute, p. 161.

[148]Haugbolle, Sune (2010), *War and Memory in Lebanon*, New York: Cambridge University Press, p.39.

Lebanon to the crowded suburbs of south Beirut occurred. It created strong resentment among Shias towards the Lebanese government for its failure to protect them either from Palestinians or the Israelis attacks. Eventually, clashes occurred between Lebanese armed forces and the Palestinian armed groups.

By 1975, as a result of grave socio-economic differences, the deep confessional discontentment emerged between the rich Maronites and poor Shia of eastern suburbs of Beirut and adjacent southern suburbs respectively, made the situation more complicated. Therefore, stretched between these neighbourhoods as the first forepart of the 1975 civil war would not be a coincidence. By 1980s Shayah (Shia dominated) versus Ayn Al-Rummanah (Christian dominated) eventually divided Beirut between East Beirut (mostly Christian) and West Beirut (Muslim dominated mainly Shia).[149]

The features of Lebanon's civil war included as "one of the most complex, multifaceted wars of modern times due to its hybrid nature, multiple participants (both state and non-state actors), and its impact on regional and global balances of power."[150] Lebanese state was jeopardised by various degrees of internal conflict significantly assisted by external forces for a coherent period from April 1975 to November 1990. Lebanese civil war could be perceived as a "war of and for the others" by considering the direct involvement of a relatively small percentage of the Lebanese. It was a war in which Lebanese fought other Lebanese purely motivated by local power struggles. Lebanese civil war considered to be a complicated and prolonged civil war with regional and international ramifications that compelled external powers to support Lebanese actors and intervene directly. The Lebanese civil war can be described as a "war of the others" in two important ways. First, foreign powers fought in Lebanon and funded Lebanese militias. Palestinian, Israeli and Syrian troops were directly involved. Therefore, during 1982-1985 Lebanon became a hot spot for Soviet–American rivalry. "Inter-Arab rivalries among Syria, Egypt, Iraq, Libya and, Saudi Arabia were played out by proxy between small Lebanese groups

[149]Collelo, Thomas (1987), *Lebanon: A Country Study*. Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, pp.2-3

[150] Rubin, Barry M. (2009), *Lebanon: Liberation, Conflict, and Crisis*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, p.35

with limited political vision."[151] There are many interpretations about the emergence of Lebanese civil war; however, one prominent argument underlined that the war was not just the unintended consequence of foreign intervention but also a part of an international conspiracy to destabilise Lebanon. The conspiracy focused on two aspects one is in the form of an American plan to serve Israeli interests and second a plan designed by conservative Arab leaders seeing the political and cultural freedom in Lebanon a threat to other Arab countries.[152]

Considering external interests and regional factors as the only rationale behind the breakdown of the Lebanese civil war would not be appropriate. Internal disagreements over national identity, fragile political system, rapid urbanisation, and vast structural social disparities were equally responsible for this. Moreover, Intra Bank failure of 1966 and the June War of 1967 created economic pressure in Lebanon.[153] The Muslim- Christian clashes in 1975 and 1976, the inter-communitarian war of the Mountain between Christians and Druze in 1983 and the intra- communitarian battles between the Shia and Maronite communities in the late 1980s were some of the critical internal clashes occurred in Lebanon.

There are different interpretations of the assessment of these internal Lebanese dimensions of the war. For some, the Lebanese political system proved to be incapable of preventing and stopping the conflict.[154] While for others, the war system and the involvement of people became the reason for perpetuating the war and thriving on it. Furthermore, sectarianism in the state and society also became an important cause for others' interpretations about the war.[155] However, the majority of the scholars agreed that the inter-sectarian system in Lebanon was destabilised due to the presence of PLO and regaining the earlier political symmetry proved to be

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[151] Haugbolle, Sune (2010), *War and Memory in Lebanon*, New York: Cambridge University Press, p.16.

[152]Haugbolle, Sune (2010), *War and Memory in Lebanon*, New York: Cambridge University Press, pp.15-16.

[153] Hudson Michael C. (1978), "The Palestinian Factor in the Lebanese Civil War", *Middle East Journal*, 32 (3): 261-278, p. 262.

[154] Hudson, Michael C (1988), "The Problem of Authoritative Power in Lebanese Politics – Why Consociationalism Failed" in N. Shahade (eds.), *Lebanon: A History of Conflict and Consensus*, London: I. B. Tauris, pp.224–226.

[155] Johnson, Michael (2001), *All Honorable Men: The Social Origins of War in Lebanon*. London: I. B. Tauris, p.225.

complicated.[156] Taking these inside-outside dialectics further, most left-leaning academicians argue that the Palestinian issue merely exposed a fundamental flaw in the Lebanese system, and that even without the Palestinians, its failure to cope with the challenge of social upheaval, particularly the transformation of the Shia community in the pre-war years, would eventually have triggered a confrontation along the class lines.[157] Furthermore, social mobilisation on the non-elite level and the introduction of ideology in Lebanese politics before the war weakened the system of elite rule that had been a key to stability since independence.[158] However, exponents of the confessional system stressed "its historically proven ability to contain and resolve conflict."[159] Even Samir Khalaf, famous Lebanese Sociologist argued that power-sharing arrangements did not cause the civil war.[160] Ghassan Tueni, then editor of *An-Nahar,* famous Lebanese newspaper, called Lebanese civil war as the "war of the others." Even the term "peace of the others" further he coined for describing the 1989 Ta'if Accord that ended the civil war.[161]

In a placatory tone amid the civil war, President Amin Gemayel highlighted the religious affiliation, national identity along with the confessional system:

> We are all Lebanese . . . There is no majority in modern Lebanon: we are a country of minorities. There is neither a political majority nor an economic majority, still less a social majority. Religious affiliation has been the primary factor of individual identity, and most Lebanese today agree that the political system we developed was too rigid, drawing confessional lines around many problems that otherwise had no sectarian significance. Despite the importance of religion in Lebanese . . . society, we know, and always have known that our identity is with Lebanon. There is no Christian Lebanon, no Muslim Lebanon . . . There is but one Lebanon.[162]

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[156] Ibid.226.

[157] Cited in Haugbolle, Sune (2010), *War and Memory in Lebanon,* New York: Cambridge University Press, p.21.

[158] Al-Khazen, Farid (2000) *The Breakdown of the State in Lebanon, 1967–1976*, London: I. B. Tauris, p.32; Khalidi, Walid (1979), *Conflict and Violence in Lebanon: Confrontation in the Middle East*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, p.3

[159] Weiss, Max (2009), "The Historiography of Sectarianism in Lebanon", *History Compass,* 7 (1): 141–54, pp.143-144.

[160]Khalaf, Samir (2003), "On Roots and Routes: The Reassertion of Primordial Loyalties", in T. Hanf and N. Salam (eds.) *Lebanon in Limbo*, Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, p.138.

[161]Cited in Farah, Mark (2009), "Demographic Dilemmas"in Barry M. Rubin (eds.) *Lebanon: Liberation, Conflict, and Crisis*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 84-85.

[162]Gemayel, Amine (1985), "Lebanon: The Prospects: The Price and the Promise", *Foreign Affairs,* 63 (4): 759-777, p. 760.

The 15 year long Lebanese civil war ended with Taif Agreement, negotiated and concluded in the town of Taif, Saudi Arabia, in September 1989 that ratified on 4 November 1989 by the Lebanese Parliament.[163] It is also known as the 'National Reconciliation Accord' or 'Document of National Accord'**.** The repercussions of civil war transformed Lebanon into a weak and fragile nation both politically and economically.

Addressing restoration and progress post-civil war along with rekindling the public trust in the system became a challenging task for the Lebanese government. The UN report estimated that 15 year-long civil war cost Lebanon around US$25 billion in terms of damage to physical infrastructure.[164] The quality of services and the state of public institutions deteriorated throughout the war period. Taking into consideration the real GDP growth, it witnessed the growth of 6 percent per annum during 1965-1975 and, GDP per capita reached US$2,250 in 1975. But as consequences of the civil war, this situation changed soon. In comparison of 1974 GDP, it declined 40 percent (2.4 %) within five years of civil war in 1980.

Table- 2.5 Net Public Debt (% of GDP)

Year	Public Debt (%)
1992	46
1997	92
2000	141
2005	158

Source: Martelino, Jose et al. (1995), *Economic Dislocation and Recovery in Lebanon*, Washington DC: International Monetary Fund, pp.6-7.

[163] United Nations Peace Maker (2019), "Taif Accords", [Online: web] Accessed 20 Feb. 2019, URL: https://peacemaker.un.org/lebanon-taifaccords89

[164]Martelino, Jose et al. (1995), *Economic Dislocation and Recovery in Lebanon*, Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund, pp.3-4.

Table 2.5 shows the status of public debt post-civil war. By the end of 1992, it reached around 46 percent of GDP and continued to accumulate. The situation became worse after reaching net public debt 92 percent of GDP by 1997, 141 percent by 2000 and rose to 158 percent of GDP by 2005.

As a result of focused efforts, Lebanon witnessed a strong recovery post-civil war. The restoration and rehabilitation work concerning public services and infrastructure started taking place. The per capita and real GDP reached double in numbers from its level in 1989. As a tourist and commercial hub, Lebanon began to retrieve its role in the region. The civil peace and onset of significant reconstruction projects played vital role to consider Lebanon again a preferred destination both for the tourists and investors.

Lebanese economy started witnessing the signals for revival with the decline in inflation to 20 percent in 1991 that was 100 percent inflation in 1990. This restoration in the economic, political, and social situation provided confidence to Lebanese expatriates for their return.[165] Lebanese economy achieved 5 percent real GDP growth with 3 percent inflation in 2004[166] Even the impact on the employment situation was explicit due to the involvement of the non-Lebanese population in the large numbers both in skilled and unskilled categories. Three sectors, including construction, agriculture, and municipal and sanitation work dominated by these workers. Conflicts and competition emerged between low-skilled Lebanese workers and mainly Syrian and Egyptian workers due to the acceptability of jobs for lower wages by the latter. In estimation, the foreign worker population comprised of 1.4 million post-civil war in which 80 percent comes from Syria, exceeded the size of the official workforce.[167]

About political impact, 'Taif Agreement' changed the power-sharing arrangements dominated by the Christians earlier now divided equally between Christians and Muslims, considered to be "as a compromise among the Lebanese deputies, political

[165]Ali, Mayssam (1995), "The Road to Recovery: Emigration and the Lebanese Civil War", *Harvard International Review*, 17 (4): 70-71, 94-95, p.95.

[166] Cited in Gonzalez Gabriella C. et al. (2008), *Facing Human Capital Challenges of the 21st Century: Education and Labor Market Initiatives in Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates*, California: RAND Corporation, pp.206-207

[167] Ibid. 230.

groups and parties, and militias and leaders."[168] This agreement laid the foundation for many political and administrative reforms to establish peace in Lebanon. In the year 1990, some constitutional amendments in the Lebanese constitution were the result of this agreement. It enhanced the powers of the Sunni Prime Minister by making him responsible to the legislature than Christian President. As a consequence of Taif agreement, one crucial amendment added in the Lebanese constitution by increasing the seats in Chamber of Deputies from 99 to 128 seats that equally allocated both to the Christians and Muslims (See table-2.6).

Table 2.6: Distributions of Seats in the Lebanese Parliament Pre-Taif and Post Taif Agreement

Confession	Pre-Taif		Present	
	Seats	(in %)	Seats	(in %)
Maronite	30	(30.30)	34	(26.25)
Greek Orthodox	11	(11.11)	14	(10.94)
Greek Catholic	6	(6.06)	8	(6.25)
Armenian Orthodox	4	(4.04)	5	(3.91)
Armenian Catholic	1	(1.01)	1	(0.78)
Protestants	1	(1.01)	1	(0.78)
Other Christian Groups	1	(1.01)	1	(0.78)
Total Christians	54	(54.55)	64	(50)
Sunni	20	(20.20)	27	(21.09)
Shia	19	(6.06)	27	(21.09)
Druze	6	(6.06)	8	(6.25)
Alawite	0	(0)	2	(1.56)
Total Muslims	45	(45.45)	64	(50)
Total	99	(100)	128	(100)

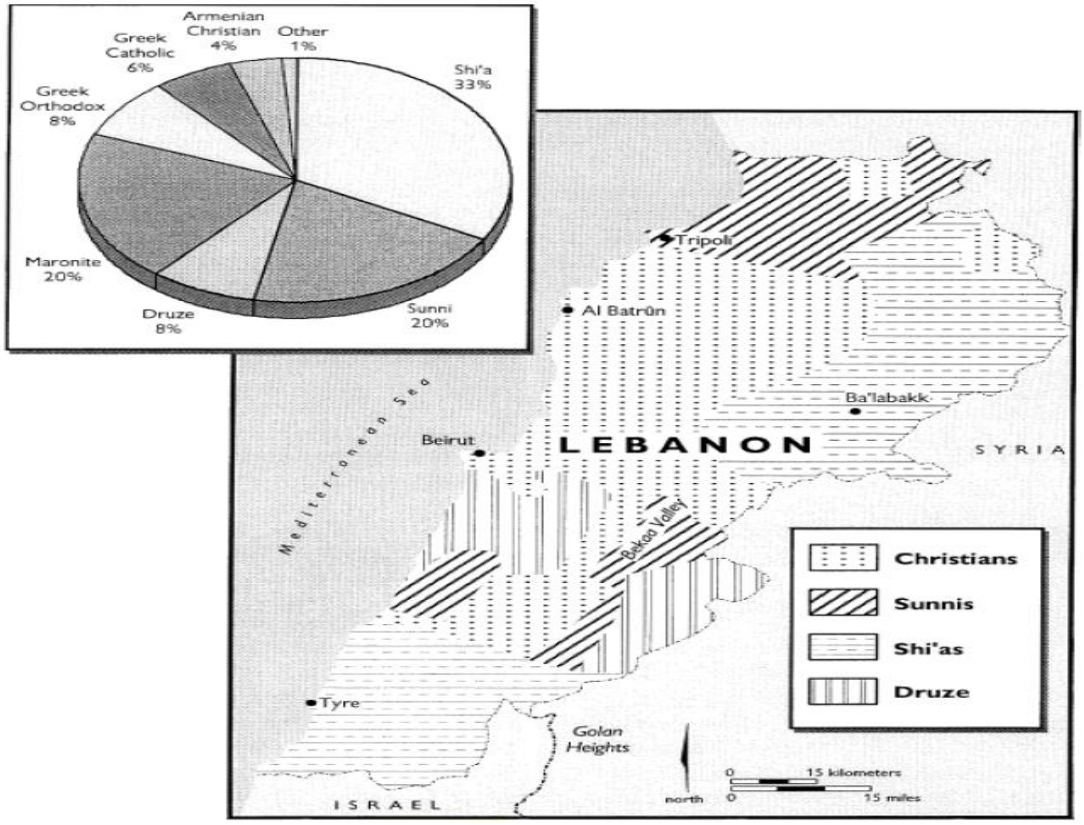
Source: Diss, Mostapha and Frank Steffen (2017), *The Distribution of Power in the Lebanese Parliament Revisited*, France: GATE WP, p.5.

Table 2.6 provides the allocation of seats during the four successive elections of 1960, 1964, 1968, and 1972 under the theme of Pre-Taif. In this allocation, Maronite Christians were holding 30 seats while recognition of Alawites as a sectarian subgroup was absent in the parliament. The theme 'Present' unveiled the distribution of seats for all elections took place in Lebanon since 1992.

[168] Krayem, Hassan (2014), *The Lebanese Civil War and the Taif Agreement*, Beirut: American University of Beirut, pp.2-3.

The geographical distribution of religious groups in the mid-1990s as given in the following figure 2.4 shows deep political reality of the change in power- sharing arrangements after Taif agreement.

Figure- 2.4: The Geographical Distribution of Religious Groups, the mid-1990s



Source: Stewart, Dona J. (1996), "Economic Recovery and Reconstruction in Post-war Beirut", *Geographical Review*, 86(4): 487-504, p.492; Phares, W. Lebanese (1995), *Christian Nationalism: The Rise and Fall of an Ethnic Resistance*, Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner.

The highbrow and lowbrow culture that developed out of the war years into Lebanon's tenuous "second republic" reflected a numbed, shattered people, mostly bereft of positive momentum. Novelist Elias Khoury captured wartime dislocation of time, space, and social existence in his abstract *Gates of the City* (1981).[169] Most post-war writings focused on unhappy Lebanese circumstances, dysfunctional families, survival in a chaotic Beirut, resistance to Israel in the Shia south, or the anguish of exile. During the civil war, the country became a shell filled by warlords and foreign powers. At one point or another, the cockpit of the Levant involved not just

[169] Cited in William, Harris (2012), *Lebanon: A History, 600-2011*, New York: Oxford University Press, p. 233.

Palestinians, Syrians, and Israelis but every significant Arab state and external powers including, Iran, the Soviet Union, and the United States.[170]

Syrian Intervention in Lebanon (1976-2005): Three significant factors including penetration, defensive and invitational all played an essential part for the Syrian involvement in the Lebanese civil war (1975-90).[171] Penetrative objective involved close historical relations and geographic vicinity and no other state than Lebanon is more significant for Syria's regional ambitions. The role of Syria as the champion of the Palestinian cause and primary base for PLO in Lebanon raised high stakes for Syria. The 'fear of contagion' justifies the defensive motives for the Syrian intervention. According to this, elites in one state may intervene in an unstable neighbour because of apprehension over potential imitative unrest at home. This phenomenon may be particularly pronounced if the intervener's society has cleavages parallel to those in the target state.[172] The invitation by both insurgents and members of the Lebanese political parties was considered the most pronounced reason for the Syrian intervention. It manifests both the influence and penetration of Syria in Lebanese politics. In June 1976, on the invitation of then-President Suleiman Franjieh, Syrian troops entered in Lebanon and hence legitimised their presence. Their concentration was mainly witnessed in the central and southern Lebanon along with west Beirut (primarily Muslim dominated), rather than in northern areas consist mainly of the Christian population. The Syrian troops that entered with 5000-6000 in numbers reached around 35000-40000 by 2000.[173] Both pro- and anti-establishment forces were persuaded by the Syrian influence for its assistance.[174]

The 1982 Israeli invasion in Southern Lebanon reverted Lebanon to the ragged patchwork of Ottoman times. The sovereignty of the Lebanese government was limited to the tiny area of 'Greater Beirut', and even that was maintained only with the

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[170] William , Harris (2012), *Lebanon: A History, 600-2011*, New York: Oxford University Press, p. 235

[171] Weinberger, Naomi Joy (1986), *Syrian Intervention in Lebanon*, New York: Oxford University Press, pp.4-5.

[172] Pearson, Frederic S. (1974), "Foreign Military Intervention and Domestic Disputes", *International Studies Quarterly*, 18 (3): 259-290, pp.266-267.

[173] Pan, Esther (2005), "Middle East: Syria and Lebanon", [Online: web] Accessed 2 Sep. 2016 URL : https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/middle-east-syria-and-lebanon

[174] Weinberger, Naomi Joy (1986), *Syrian Intervention in Lebanon*, New York: Oxford University Press, pp.5-6

help of 5,000 U.S. and European troops. Different groups controlled the rest of Lebanon like South Lebanon, and Israeli Army controlled half of Mount Lebanon, and the Christian Lebanese Forces controlled the other half of Mount Lebanon. Furthermore, pro-Syrian forces and Palestinian guerrillas controlled north Lebanon, and lastly, the Syrian army managed Bekaa.[175]

After the Ta'if Agreement, Syria and Lebanon signed a series of additional bilateral agreements. The Treaty of Brotherhood and Cooperation" signed in May 1991, and the "Defense and Security Agreement" signed in September 1991 became the important agreements for determining their future relationship. The Treaty of Brotherhood and Cooperation was considered the jewel in the crown of the Syrian claims in Lebanon. The six articles of the treaty confirmed Syrian influence in wide-ranging areas such as security, foreign policy, and economic affairs and established bodies and commissions to manage the cooperation between the two countries. Lebanese scholar Bou Melhab-Atallah has argued that this agreement "did not only regulate usual bilateral relations, but went as far as to codify and legitimate unequal relations."[176] Agreements including Ta'if Agreement, the treaty of brotherhood and cooperation and seventeen additional treaties fully institutionalised the Syrian control over Lebanon.[177]

The extent of Syrian influence on the configuration of the Lebanese elite and politics in the post-war period can be observed from taking presidential elections into consideration (See table 2.7). The case of President Elias Hrawi (1995) for increasing his term, and election of General Emile Lahoud for the presidential post in 1998 (since in the original constitution, the military commander is not eligible for the office) and efforts to amend the constitution to increase the term of Emile Lahoud are some of the examples of the Syrian influence on Lebanese politics.

[175] Ignatius, David (1983), "How to Rebuild Lebanon", *Foreign Affairs*, 61 (5): 1140-1156, p.1142.

[176] Cited in Husseini, Rola el (2012), *Pax Syriana: Elite Politics in Postwar Lebanon,* New York: Syracuse University Press, p.17

[177] Husseini, Rola el (2012), *Pax Syriana: Elite Politics in Postwar Lebanon,* New York: Syracuse University Press, p. 17.

Table 2.7: List of Presidents of the Lebanese Republic (1945-2016)

Presidents of the Lebanese Republic	Start of Term	End of Term
Bechara Khoury	October 24, 1945	September 18, 1952
Fuad Chehab	September 18, 1952	September 22, 1952
Camille Chamoun	September 23, 1952	September 22, 1958
Fuad Chehab	September 23, 1958	September 22, 1964
Charles Helou	September 23, 1964	September 22, 1970
Suleiman Frangieh	September 23, 1970	September 22, 1976
Elias Sarkis	September 23, 1976	September 22, 1982
Bachir Gemayel	August 23, 1982	September 14, 1982
Amine Gemayel	September 23, 1982	September 22, 1988
Selim Hoss	September 22, 1988	November 5, 1989
Michel Aoun	September 22, 1988	October 13, 1990
René Moawad	November 5, 1989	November 22, 1989
Selim Hoss	November 22, 1989	November 24, 1989
Elias Hrawi	November 24, 1989	November 24, 1998
Émile Lahoud	November 24, 1998	November 24, 2007
Fouad Siniora	November 24, 2007	May 25, 2008
Michel Suleiman	May 25, 2008	May 25, 2014
Tammam Salam	May 25, 2014	October 31, 2016
Michel Aoun (Incumbent)	October 31, 2016	Currently the Sitting President

Source: Chepkemoi, Joyce (2019), "Presidents of Lebanon since Independence", *World Atlas*, [Online: web] Accessed 10 Dec. 2018, URL: https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/presidents-of-lebanon-since-independence-from-france.html

In the opinion of Lebanese political scientist Bassel Salloukh:

> Syria ensured that her allies controlled a substantial percentage of parliamentary seats, and concurrently held control over presidential elections, cabinet formation, and legislation. The Syrian presence can be witnessed in 1992, 1996 and 2000 elections.[178]

However, after the Syrian military withdrawal in 2005, almost all of these Syrian-backed parliamentarians lost their seats. In 2005 sixty-six MPs (51%) from 2000 legislature were re-elected. Out of these, only nine had first been appointed in1991. Three phases distinguished Syrian hegemony in Lebanon. The period from 1990-1998 defines the first phase in which both the countries shared the amorphous structure of relations.[179] Syrian president Hafez al-Assad efforts to make Emile Lahoud as the president of Lebanon were the second phase which began in 1998. The last phase began in 2002 and ended with the Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon in 2005.[180]

Ta'if agreement gave a legitimate cover to Syria's domination over Lebanon's affairs. Syria's role may have acted as a regulator for elites' wrangling. It spurred divisions over Lebanon's political course and its ability to govern its domestic and foreign affairs. The unconstitutional mandate extension of former president Emile Lahoud, and predominantly the assassination of late Prime Minister Rafik Hariri in February 2005 became the reasons for the widespread protests. This Anti-Syrian protests, formally known as the 'Cedar Revolution' destabilised the entire country for almost eight weeks. The departure of Syrian troops under severe international pressure ended these protests. This phases led to the emergence of two groups in the Lebanese politics, namely March 8 (pro-Syrian) and March 14 (Anti- Syrian). March 8 group led by Hezbollah has been playing a role to harmonise Lebanon's path with the Assad regime in Syria. It defends Hezbollah's military power and its position as resistance to Israel. Also, it argues that the Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL), tasked with trying the perpetrators behind Hariri's assassination is a politicised international instrument. March 14 group led by the Sunni-based Future Movement has been trying to create a solid distance between Lebanese politics and the Assad regime. In 2004-2005, it endorsed the 1559 UN Security Council Resolution, calling for the withdrawal of

[178]Salloukh, Bassel F. (2006), "The Limits of Electoral Engineering in Divided Societies: Elections in Postwar Lebanon", *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 39 (3): 635-655, p.641.

[179]Young, Michael (2010), *The Ghosts of Martyrs Square*, New York: Simon and Schuster, p.69.

[180] Ibid. 74-77.

Syrian forces and the demilitarisation of Hezbollah.[181] After 2005, a division occurred between those prioritising a fortress defying Israel and America and those prioritising a revamped peaceable merchant republic, with members of all sects on both sides. Nonetheless, even in this seemingly non-sectarian argument, the hegemonic Shiite party was on one side, and the other side belonged to the mass of Sunnis.[182] Syria always considered Lebanon a part of 'Greater Syria' and therefore did not recognise the sovereignty of Lebanon after its independence in 1943. In October 2008, Syria recognised the sovereignty of Lebanon as an independent state almost after six decades. A decree issued by President Bashar al- Assad establishing the diplomatic relations between both the countries witnessing a new phase in their relationships. The first-ever visit of Lebanese president Michel Suleiman to Damascus in August 2008 played a significant role in formalising the relations between both the countries.[183]

Israel-Hezbollah War (2006): Concerning this war and its implications for Lebanon, an analysis has been done: As claimed by Hezbollah that on July 2006, to release of Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners, they raided across the Israel/Lebanon border in the Galilee. Even leader of Hezbollah, Hasan Nasrallah later proclaimed that he had not anticipated a large scale Israeli response. However, a heavy price paid by Lebanon in this war. From 13 July to 8 September 2006, a complete blockade from air, land and sea routes were imposed by Israel on Lebanon made the condition severe for the country. The massive destruction of the economy, as well as infrastructure, took place. The destruction of roads, airports, bridges, telecommunications, electricity etc. paralysed entire Lebanon. The fiscal cost of the damage came around more than US$15 billion. Additionally, more than 1 million people were displaced, around 1200 lost their lives including one- third of whom were children under the age of 12, and

[181]Felsch, Maximilian and Martin Wählisch (2016), *Lebanon and the Arab Uprisings: In the Eye of the Hurricane*, London: Routledge, p.23.

[182]Harris, William (2012), *Lebanon: A History, 600-2011*, New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 282-283.

[183] Jansen, Michael (2008), "Syria to establish ties with Lebanon" [Online: web] Accessed 10 Oct. 2016 URL: https://www.irishtimes.com/news/syria-to-establish-ties-with-lebanon-1.895954; Black, Ian (2008), "Syria and Lebanon to establish diplomatic relations", [Online: web] Accessed 12 Oct. 2016 URL: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2008/oct/14/syria-lebanon

the numbers of wounded and handicapped reached over 4000.[184] Israel also faced severe repercussions including 158 Israeli lost their lives (in that more than two-thirds were soldiers), 5,000 Israelis were wounded, and US$6 billion damaged occurred to Israeli economy.[185] This war lasted for 34 days during which Israel used aerial bombardment and ground assault to damage Hezbollah. In short, it caused massive destruction and damage to both physical and social infrastructure, including around one thousand deaths in the Shia areas of Lebanon.

Violent clashes in 2008: The Israeli invasions in Southern Lebanon in 1982, 1996, 2006 along with the neglected attitude of the Lebanese government towards economic and political needs of Shia rural areas led to the massive displacement of Shias from rural to suburbs of Sothern Beirut.[186] According to an estimate, during 1943-1973, the migration of the Shia community from south Lebanon to the southern suburbs of Beirut reached 29 percent from 6 percent.[187] By 2005, around 40 percent of the entire population (around 4 million) was constituted by Shia population, believed to be the single largest religious community in Lebanon.[188] The majority of them settled down in Beirut (in southern suburbs of Beirut) from Southern Lebanon resulting in the expansion of the southern suburbs of Beirut due to involuntary creation of vast illegal housing neighbourhoods (slums). By 1990s, the expansion of Shias' started changing the traditional secular fabric of Christian, Sunni, and Druze neighbourhoods.[189] However, the representation system maintained its status quo by not providing municipal or parliamentary seats to the new sectarian residents in either Beirut or suburban areas of Mount Lebanon. Despite their massive presence in these areas,

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[184] Alagha, Joseph (2008), "The Israeli- Hezbollah 34- day War: Causes and Consequences", *Arab Studies Quarterly*, 30 (2): 1-22, pp.2-3.

[185] Cited in Alagha, Joseph (2008), "The Israeli- Hezbollah 34- day War: Causes and Consequences", *Arab Studies Quarterly*, 30 (2): 1-22, pp.2-3.

[186]Nasr, Salim and Dianne James (1985) *Roots of the Shi'i Movement*, Virginia: Middle East Research and Information Project (MERIP), pp.10-16; Salamey, Imad and Frederic Pearson (2007) "Hezbollah: A Proletarian Party with an Islamic Manifesto - A Sociopolitical Analysis of Islamist Populism in Lebanon and the Middle East", *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, 18 (3): 416-438, p.429.

[187] Jaber, Munzer (1999), *The Occupied Lebanese Border Strip: The Paths of Occupation, the Lines of Confrontation, the Fate of the Population*, Beirut, Lebanon: Institute for Palestine Studies, p.520.

[188] Hazran, Yusri (2009), *The Shiite Community in Lebanon: From Marginalization to Ascendancy*, Massachusetts: Crown Centre for Middle East Studies, pp. 2-3.

[189]In Beirut, areas such as Basta, Zkak Al-Bulat, Mousaytbeh, Mazraa, Rawshah, Hamra comprised of Christian, Sunni, and Druze neighbourhoods while in the suburbs, areas such as Hadath, HaratHerik, Khaldah, Shouwayfat, Na'mah etc. consisted of Shias' neighbourhoods.

Shias lacked proportional representation. This shift in the Shia population challenged the confessional polity in Lebanon, based on 1932 census and National Pact. The relevance of the 1932 census has always been in the debate for establishing rearrangements of political structure. Even disruption in the delicate balance of confessional polity due to severe social and radical sectarian mobilisations occurred soon subsequently.[190]

The deep-rooted division among the population resulted in civil conflicts, and armed clashes can be seen even after witnessing the 1958 civil war and 15 years long civil war. On the one hand, Shia population, demographically holding a strong position; however, faced political deprivation, while on the other hand, Sunni, Druze, and Christians consist of politically influential groups represented deep divisions in the Lebanese society. In 2006, these sectarian tensions reached its peak in West Beirut and suburbs, where Shias were on one side while the other side consisted of the Sunni and Druze. The year 2008 witnessed a significant shift in terms of sectarian divisions in Lebanese society. The divisions between Christians and Muslim neighbourhoods were in the forefront during 1975 civil war; however, it got shifted in 2006-2008 that saw divisions in "sectarian Muslim neighbourhoods (Shia vs. Sunni vs. Druze) with the Lebanese army and internal security forces standing in between."[191] Efforts should have been taken to prevent grievances involving sectarian aspect; however, failure of the Lebanese government to deal with the issue disappointed the Lebanese population. The corporate consociationalism did not accommodate the emerging new social forces and their political expressions. Even the traditional corporate arrangement prevented political opportunities for these new forces.[192] It showed the incapability of the traditional and static consociational arrangement to reconcile with the changing demographic sectarian setting, resulted in the eruption of violent clashes in May 2008 in Beirut. These clashes occurred between Hezbollah and Amal militias group, on one side, and Sunni and Druze militia groups, on the other side. Due to the fear of

[190]Jabbra, Joseph and Nancy Jabbra, (2001), "Consociational Democracy in Lebanon: A Flawed System of Governance", in Jamil E. Jreisat (eds.) *Governance and Developing Countries*, Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, pp.72-73.

[191]Salamey, Imad (2009), "Failing Consociationalism in Lebanon and Integrative Options", *International Journal of Peace Studies,* 14 (2): 83-105, p.88.

[192]Nasr, Salim and Dianne James, (1985) *Roots of the Shi'i Movement*, Virginia: Middle East Research and Information Project (MERIP), pp.10-16; Shils, Edward (1966), "The Prospect for Lebanese Civility" in Leonard Binder (eds.) *Politics in Lebanon*, New York: Wiley, pp.7-10.

polarisation between both the establishments along the sectarian lines, the intervention into conflict by the Lebanese armed forces and government security forces were prevented. Therefore this entire crisis brought the Lebanese army and government security forces in the state of paralysis. Even in the eve of the outbreak of the 1975 civil war, the same pretext given for the non-intervention stance by the army and internal security forces in inter-sectarian violence.[193]

4. History and Legal Status of Refugees in Lebanon

Both as a country of origin and the host country, Lebanon witnessed mass waves of conflict-driven displacement. Palestinians and Iraqis refugees, with smaller numbers of Sudanese refugees, were already there before the massive influx of Syrian refugees. In addition to this, Lebanese civil war (1975–1990) witnessed displacement of Lebanese nationals both with and outside Lebanon by consisting of numbers between 600,000- 900,000.[194] As a non-signatory to 1951 convention or 1967 protocol, Lebanon lacks any formal provisions for dealing with the rights of refugees. However, it has been providing shelter to the refugees on humanitarian grounds as well as MoU signed between General Security Office (GSO) and UNHCR that Lebanon could not be considered a country of permanent settlement.

Palestinian Refugees: Based on their legal status and registration with UNRWA, the four groups included "registered, Non-registered, Non-ID and Palestinian refugees from Syria" categorised the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon."[195] UNRWA registered over 504,000 Palestinian refugees in Lebanon by January 2016; however, one study conducted by American University of Beirut (AUB) revealed that approximately 260,000-280,000 Palestinian refugees remained in Lebanon by 2015."[196] "To

[193]Salamey, Imad (2009), "Failing Consociationalism in Lebanon and Integrative Options", *International Journal of Peace Studies*, 14 (2): 83-105, p. 80.

[194] Economic and Social Commission Western Asia (ESCWA) (2009), *The Socio-Economic Impact of Conflict-Driven Displacement in the ESCWA Region*, New York: United Nations, p.29

[195] "Registered" refugees (Palestinian refugees), which are registered with UNRWA and the Lebanese authorities; "Non-registered" Palestinian refugees, which are not registered with UNRWA, but are registered with the Lebanese authorities; "Non-ID" Palestinian refugees, who are neither registered with UNRWA nor with the Lebanese authorities; Palestinian refugees from Syria, who have arrived in Lebanon since 2011

[196]Chaaban, J. et al. (2016), *Survey on the Socioeconomic Status of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon 2015*, Beirut: American University of Beirut (AUB) and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), p.44.

administer the Palestinian presence in Lebanon, the Central Committee for Refugee Affairs was created by the Lebanese government in 1950. Concerning shelter, education, health, and social services for Palestinian refugees, Department of Palestinian Refugee Affairs[197] was established in 1959 to coordinate with the UNRWA.

The Palestinian refugees in Lebanon have faced acute socio-economic deprivation and legal barriers. They have been deprived of social, economic and political rights. Moreover, they have been marginalised and excluded from mainstream society without having right to own immovable property, to access public services such as health and education. Their lives remained in troubled waters due to limited job opportunities along with restrictions regarding specific professions.[198] However, the Lebanese government allows refugees to enrol in Lebanese universities and access primary health care after registering with UNHCR.[199] Among Palestinian refugees, the more precarious situation is for undocumented (non-ID) Palestinian refugees, estimated to be 3,000 to 5,000 due to their lack of registration with UNRWA and non-recognition by the Lebanese government. Non-ID Palestinians and the majority of Palestinian refugees from Syria have been facing challenges for accessing basic services since they lack legal status. Lebanon is the only Arab country "treats Palestinian refugees as foreigners in terms of the right to work and to own property."[200] Around 53 of the registered Palestinian refugees live in the twelve recognised Palestine refugee camps.[201] These camps lack necessities, including infrastructure, water, electricity, sewage, etc. In addition to this, the overcrowding of

[197] In 2000, the name of the Department of Palestinian Refugee Affairs was changed to the Department of Political and Refugee Affairs.

[198]Chaaban, J. et al. (2016), *Survey on the Socioeconomic Status of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon 2015*, Beirut: American University of Beirut (AUB) and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), p.45.

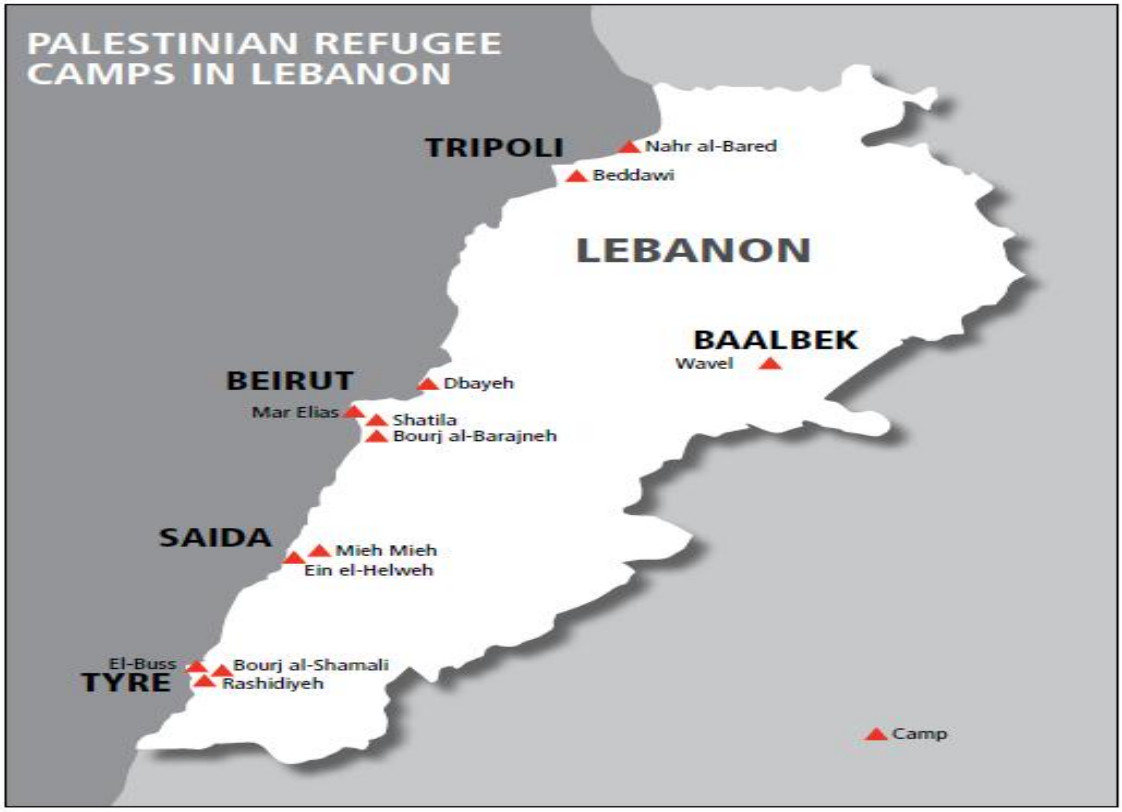
[199]George, Sadek, (2013), *Legal Status of Refugees: Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Iraq*, Washington, DC: The Law Library of Congress, Global Legal Research Centre, 1-6, pp.4-5.

[200]Chaaban, Jad et al. (2010), *Socio-Economic Survey of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon*, Beirut: American University of Beirut and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), p.12.

[201]List of 12 Palestinian refugee camps: Bourj el-Barajneh, Ain al-Hilweh, El Buss, Nahr al-Bared, Shatila, Wavel, Mar Elias, MiehMieh, Beddawi, Burj el-Shemali, Dbayeh camp, Rashidieh

these camps has made their life miserable.[202] The south (Saida and Tyre), central Lebanon, north and Bekaa are four major areas by comprising of 55 percent, 22 percent, 19 percent and 4 percent Palestinian refugees respectively.[203] (See figure-2.5)

Figure-2.5: Palestinian Refugee Camps in Lebanon



Source: Denselow, James (2011), *Terminal Decline?: Palestinian Refugee Health in Lebanon* London: Medical Aid for Palestinians, p.15.

Many Palestine refugees face restrictions on their movement in and out of camps since entry and exit controls of these camps has been tightened, especially in the situations of high-security measures. As a result of these restraints, inaccessibility to employment and essential services has become a common phenomenon, exposing them to increased risk of arrest and detention. Furthermore, despite an increase in the population growth, the land allotted to the refugee camps has not been changed. The arrival of the Palestinian refugees as a consequence of the Syrian civil war added to

[202]UN Habitat (2014), *Profiling Deprivation: An Analysis of the Rapid Needs Assessment in Palestinian Gatherings Host Communities in Lebanon*, Beirut: UNDP and UN Habitat pp. 74-114.

[203]Chaaban, Jad et al. (2010), *Socio-Economic Survey of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon*, Beirut: American University of Beirut and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), p.24.

the strain on an already existing problem of overcrowding.[204] Even restrictions on the movement of building materials into Palestine refugee camps by the Lebanese authorities, prevent them from improving their housing conditions, exacerbated the situation. The efforts taken by the UNRWA's Camp Improvement Initiative in this regard has been facing challenges due to chronic underfunding.

General Security Office (GSO) issues the documents to the Palestinian refugees, registered with the Lebanese authorities who wish to travel from and to Lebanon. As a result of a change in Lebanese law in 2005, 2010 and 2013, Palestinian refugees acquired legal accessibility to some occupation in the private sector that were earlier restricted to Lebanese nationals only.[205] Employment access in the sectors, including construction, electricity, and sales were given to Palestinian refugees in 2013.[206] Nevertheless, employment in 36 liberal or syndicated professions is legally prohibited for Palestinian refugees. Medicine, farming and fishery, and public transportation are some of the occupations come under this category. Moreover, partial accessibility to the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) has been given to the Palestinian refugees. Though annual work permit is available for the Palestinian refugees at no cost; however, the complicated administrative procedures for acquiring that permit has made these legal changes ineffective.[207] It can be considered one of the reasons behind the low numbers of work permit held by the Palestinian refugees, reported by the International Labour Organisation (ILO). Majority of them work in the informal sector including menial and low-paying jobs. The presence of the Syrian migrant labour force, further marginalising the Palestinians in the informal workforce resulted in social tensions.[208] The issue of child labour has also become a serious concern and can be seen in refugee camps and surrounding areas, even they have been working as the armed guards. According to an estimate, around 6 percent children consists of

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[204] US Department of State (2015), "2014-Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – Lebanon", [Online: web] Accessed 2 Sep. 2016, URL: http://www.refworld.org/docid/559bd55a12.html

[205] International Labour Organisation (2014), *Palestinian Employment in Lebanon - Facts and Challenges*, London: ILO, pp. 22-23.

[206]George, Sadek, (2013), *Legal Status of Refugees: Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Iraq*, Washington, DC: The Law Library of Congress, Global Legal Research Center, 1-6, pp.4-5.

[207] International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2014), *Palestinian Employment in Lebanon - Facts and Challenges*, London: ILO, p.100

[208]Halabi, Zeina (2004), "Exclusion and identity in Lebanon's Palestinian refugee camps: a story of sustained conflict", *Environment Urbanization*, 16 (2): 39-48, pp.47-48.

child labour between the ages of 7-17; however, 38 percent are dropouts among them.[209]

The influx of the Syrian refugees in huge numbers and Palestinian refugees from Syria burdened the already strained resources available to the Palestinian refugees, creating tensions in the Lebanese society. The lack of legitimacy and recognition is the characteristic feature shared by all these groups. The naturalisation (*Tawteen*) of Palestinians have been facing stiff opposition by the Lebanese nationals. Even Palestinians, believe in their right to return to Palestine also showed unacceptability towards this naturalisation. The discriminatory and restrictive policies about social, economic, and civil rights of the Palestinians, adopted by the Lebanese government sometimes finds justification in the name of "Right to Return".[210] The term "forgotten people" was given by the Palestinian refugees staying in camps for themselves to show the lack of basic human rights and protection along with their presence in the hostile environment.[211]

Iraqi Refugees: Approximately fifty thousand Iraqi refugees took shelter in Lebanon, entering via Syria both legally and illegally in 2003. The ongoing political instability in Lebanon forced the Lebanese population to opt for a cautious approach towards hosting another refugee population.[212] Even these refugees comprised of Iraqi Christians preferred Lebanon as a destination from the perspective of safety among Lebanon's Christian communities. Due to its demographic and social composition along with the presence of more than 400,000 Palestinian refugees, Lebanon reiterated that it should not be considered a country of asylum or permanent settlement.

Being a member of the UNHCR Executive Committee, Lebanon is obligated towards the provisions; however, the absence of formal acknowledgement about the temporary protection regime resulted in the disillusionment among Iraqi refugees. Lebanese

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[209] UNICEF (2011), *The Situation of Palestinian Children in The Occupied Palestinian Territory, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon*, Amman: UNICEF, pp.86-87.

[210]Hanafi, Sari and Age A. Tiltnes (2008) "The Employability of Palestinian Professionals in Lebanon: Constraints and Transgression" *Knowledge, Work and Society*, 5(1): 1-15.

[211]Chaaban, Jad et al. (2010), *Socio-Economic Survey of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon*, Beirut: American University of Beirut, p.7

[212]Harper, Andrew (2008), "Iraq's refugees: ignored and unwanted", *International Review of Red Cross*, 90 (869): 169-190, p.178.

authorities treated them as illegal migrants, since they were under the Saddam regime and hence at the risk of arrest and deportation for their unlawful entry and stay. The Lebanese government avoided following UNHCR guidelines for the treatment of the Iraqi refugees. Additionally, the vital principle of International law known as non-refoulement regarding the protection of refugees that refuses forceful deportation of refugees in their home country if threat prevails to their lives was violated. As estimated, before 2003, hundreds of Iraqi asylum seekers along with recognised refugees, faced deportation to Iraq. With the assistance of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), voluntary repatriation convoys were organised after 2003.

Any protection measures including at the working place or in the social sphere were denied to them due to their illegal status and therefore forced to work in the exploited environment. Even Iraqi teenagers have been forced to leave their studies and become a part of this exploited environment and work illegally in harsh conditions for providing support to their families. The accessibility to education and health care have been minimal. Although efforts have been taken by the some NGOs to help the Iraqi refugees to meet their basic health needs; however, their limited capacity making them unable to fulfil the requirements. The fear of 'Palestinisation' emerged due to the massive influx of the Iraqi refugee, forcing to provide only generous support rather than the quest for viable solutions. The reluctance towards improving the legal status and living conditions of Iraqi refugees by the Lebanese government emerged due to the fear of history repeating itself.[213]

Conclusion

This chapter analyses the entire trajectory of present Lebanon by covering the historical roots, social composition and critical events in determining the existence of Lebanese politics and society. The fall of the Ottoman Empire brought Mount Lebanon under French Mandate that formed the present political and geographical territories of Lebanon by annexing some coastal regions dominated mainly by Muslims. Two relevant treaties or agreements in the history of Lebanon, the 1932

[213]Samira Trad and Ghida Frangieh, , "Iraqi refugees in Lebanon: continuous lack of protection", [Online: web] Accessed 2 Sep. 2016, URL http://www.fmreview.org/sites/fmr/files/FMRdownloads/en/FMRpdfs/Iraq/15.pdf

census and National Pact of 1943, played a crucial role in Lebanese politics by determining the political arrangements. Though demography has been shifting towards Muslims, still arrangements are based as per the 1932 census, which is inclined towards Maronite Christians. The confessional arrangements based on National Pact came into existence for providing stability to Lebanon, heterogeneous society divided ethnically and religiously. The same confessional agreement that came for their political and social stability became a reason for their instability. Many incidents including the 1958 civil war, Lebanese civil war, Syrian intervention in Lebanon and clashes in 2008 are a testimony for this. Concerning Syrian influence, it was present since the time of the Ottoman Empire; Syria has always considered Lebanon to be a part of 'Greater Syria'. This prevented Syria to recognise the legitimacy and sovereignty of Lebanon till 2008. The Syrian presence in Lebanon in the period from 1990-2005 was a testament to this. It was only in 2008 that diplomatic relations were established between Syria and Lebanon. But it was so short that after three years, Syria engulfed into violent and disastrous civil war and the involvement of Hezbollah complicated the relations between both the countries.

Further, the analyses about Lebanon's policy towards refugees, including Palestinians and Iraqis refugees in the form of informal policies and measures provide a comprehensive understanding. Despite the absence of any legal framework to deal with refugees, Lebanon has been providing humanitarian assistance to these refugees, although in a restricted manner considering the needs of the Lebanese population. The overstretched capacity of the Lebanese government and authorities does not permit to fulfil all the requirements of the refugees, and hence the regional and international cooperation becomes essential in this direction. Recent years witnessed more flexibility in the attitude of the Lebanese authorities about permitting them to work in some professions that were previously limited to Lebanese nationals. In short, Lebanon has been showing solidarity towards the refugee population. This inquiry further provides the ground for understanding the policies and measures of Syrian refugees in further chapters. It frames the scope for the comparative study about the treatment of refugees by Lebanese authorities, or if any difference can be witnessed with respect to the treatment of Syrian refugees.

Chapter- Three

The Syrian Civil War and the Influx of Syrian Refugees to Lebanon

Introduction

The uprising in Syria began with the immediate objective of securing political and economic reforms, although this soon transformed into a direct call asking for regime change. Initial protests and demonstrations turned into a violent and protracted civil war, supported by external powers, between opposition in the country and the Bashar al-Assad regime. The civil war led to immense loss of life, internal displacement, and triggered a massive refugee crisis. At the end of 2016, about 6.6 million Syrians were internally displaced while 4.8 million Syrians sought refuge in neighbouring countries and elsewhere. The Syrian civil war has become one of the major humanitarian crises ever witnessed in the contemporary period. The basic theoretical framework on civil war is analysed to get the understanding of Syrian civil war more comprehensively. It is an attempt to understand the genesis of Syrian civil war from peaceful protests to the violent civil war with its different dimensions and consequences particularly in the form of massive refugee influx to Lebanon. Further, it stresses the role of different state and non-state actors in the Syrian civil war and their position about Syrian refugees. This chapter examines the Syria- Lebanon relations to understand the motivating factors behind the influx of Syrian refugees into Lebanon. Subsequently the last part focuses on major statistics and figures about their movement along with the point of departure as well as their location of settlement.

1. Civil War and its Negative Externalities

Civil war can be defined as "the internal conflicts that cause more than 1,000 battle deaths in a single year."[214] More comprehensively, civil war is defined as "any armed conflict that involves (a) military action internal to the metropole, (b) the active participation of the national government, and (c) effective resistance by both sides." The internality of the war to the territory of a sovereign state and involvement of the government as a combatant creates an important distinction between civil (internal or

[214] Cited in Blattman, Christopher and Edward Miguel (2010), "Civil War", *Journal of Economic Literature*, 48 (1): 3–57, p.3.

intrastate) war and interstate war.[215] Civil war is the most widespread form of organised armed violence, affecting millions of people within and outside the country worldwide every year. It can be perceived as a global phenomenon associated with severe economic, political and social ramifications. It is alarming to witness that from 1946 to 2011, approximately 102 countries that comprise half of the entire world's countries experienced civil wars. A violent civil war constitutes a negative externality not because it disrupts the political and economic situation in its own country but also upset the balance for the same in the host and other neighbouring countries. Fifteen years (1975-1990) long Lebanese civil war is one of the important examples witnessed by the West Asian region. The histories of civil wars from Africa to Latin America exhibited that a civil war in one country considerably increases the probability of the neighbouring countries to experience the civil war.[216] In this direction, the decision of US president Harry Truman to intervene in the Greece civil war (1946-49) was the explicit demonstration about the consequences of intrastate conflicts that goes beyond the boundaries of the civil war state.[217] The year 2006 United States National Security Strategy (NSS) assessment report reflected this notion by stating that "regional conflicts do not stay isolated for long and often spread. This means that even if the United States does not have a direct stake in a particular conflict, our interests are likely to be affected over time".[218] In short, civil war consists of negative externalities acts as a spillover effect both for the regional as well as global peace and security.

The emergence of civil wars can be witnessed from multidimensional perspectives (political, economic, social, ethnic, etc.); nevertheless, poverty considered as the most important factor responsible for the outbreak of civil wars. The literature on civil wars and their causes exhibit the most prominent empirical relationships about the correlation between low per capita incomes and higher propensities for civil wars.

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[215] Small, Melvin and J. David Singer (1982), *Resort to Arms: International and Civil Wars, 1816-1980*, California: Sage, p.210.

[216] Gleditsch, N. P et al. (2002), "Armed Conflict: A New Dataset", *Journal of Peace Research*, 39: 615-637, p. 624.

[217] Cited in Kathman, Jacob D. (2011), "Civil War Diffusion and Regional Motivations for Intervention", *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 55 (6): 847-876, p. 848.

[218] Bush, George W (2006) "The National Security Strategy of the United States of America", *The National Security Council*, [Online: web] Accessed 10 July 2016 URL: http://nssarchive.us/NSSR/2006.pdf

However, this direct casual line from poverty to civil war should be treated with caution since this line can also be drawn in reverse course, i.e. from the civil war to poverty.[219] The example of the Democratic Republic of Congo where millions of people may have died as a result of civil war, primarily due to hunger and disease justifies this reverse relationship.[220] The recent Yemeni civil war can be considered as the most visible example of it.

Refugee crisis: A critical consequence of the civil war- The most serious implication of the civil wars is the massive displacement of people both within and outside the country. This outside movement in the form of massive refugee flow to the neighbouring countries poses a serious threat.[221] Most of the scholarly literature consider refugee flow as a consequence of the civil war rather than the cause. But for many scholars, refugee flow can be regarded as one of the most important reasons for the outbreak of conflicts that gradually transforms into civil war. Many civil wars that occurred in African countries and the Lebanese civil war (1975-1990) in the West Asian region are some of the examples to verify it. Similarly, other literature on civil wars considers refugees, not as a victim but the perpetrator of the civil war; however, it is equally important to understand that radical elements view refugee flow both as an opportunity as well as a medium to facilitate the transnational spread of arms, combatants, and ideologies favourable to the civil war.[222]

Further, "refugees stay in asylum countries for the longer period after the civil war ends, pushes the social and political implications of civil war continue to exist even in peace times." The economic outlook of civil war about refugees flow can be analysed from two perspectives. One focuses on the increase in the labour growth and availability for the host country while the second perspective deals with the reducing per capita income of the home country due to migration.[223] The vast influx of refugees

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[219] Blattman, Christopher and Edward Miguel (2010), "Civil War", *Journal of Economic Literature*, 48 (1): 3–57, pp. 2-4.

[220] Coghlan, Benjamin et al. (2007), "Mortality in the Democratic Republic of Congo: An Ongoing Crisis, [Online: web] Accessed 11 Oct. 2016 URL:" http://www.theirc.org/sites/default/files/migrated/resources

[221] Zolberg, Aristide R. et al. (1989), *Escape from Violence: Conflict and the Refugee Crisis in the Developing World*, New York: Oxford University Press, pp.3-4.

[222] Salehyan, Idean and Kristian S. Gleditsch (2006), "Refugees and the Spread of Civil War", *International Organization*, 60 (2): 335–366, p.338.

[223] Murdoch, James C. and Todd Sandler (2002), "Economic Growth, Civil Wars, and Spatial Spillovers", *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 46 (1): 91-110, p.96.

in the host country despite providing higher labour growth, reduce the wages and create strained relations with the locals led to social disharmony.

As the intensity of civil war grows, the number of refugees subsequently increases. Often, the oppression of minority groups and the ethnic nature of civil war cause the flight of people of particular ethnicities.[224] The involvement of external actors and foreign troops increases the intensity of civil war, making it more violent and disastrous.[225] The Syrian civil war and Yemeni civil war are the recent testimony for this. Even, after the commencement of the civil war, expenditure on military means witnesses a drastic increase by utilising the money meant for social development, both in the country of origin as well in the host country.[226] Hence the relentless intensification of the civil war leads to anti-development growth.

2. The Genesis of the Syrian Civil War

In December 2010 the wave of demonstrations and protests to overthrow the authoritarian regimes witnessed the beginning of the Arab uprisings in different countries of West Asia and North African (WANA) region. While interconnected, uprisings in each nation were shaped in various forms and accordingly attained different implications. These widespread protests emerged to fulfil the aspirations ranging from political reforms including more representative institutions, elimination of corruption, fair distribution of socioeconomic resources to employment and improved living conditions etc.

The wave of Arab uprising touched Syria in the form of peaceful protests for political and economic reforms. Protests and demonstrations erupted in March 2011 in the southern city of Dera'a after the arrest of a group of young men for spraying anti-regime graffiti. This incident led to widespread protests due to the violent means opted by the security forces to suppress the situation. Many were arrested, tortured, and murdered. Because of the brutal suppression by the regime forces, hundreds of thousands joined the protests and started demanding the resignation of President

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[224] Schmeidl, Susanne (1997), "Exploring the Causes of Forced Migration: A Pooled Time-Series Analysis, 1971-1990", *Social Science Quarterly*, 78 (2): 284-308, pp.285-86.

[225] Gleditsch, Kristian Skrede (2007), "Transnational Dimensions of Civil Wars", *Journal of Peace Research*, 44 (3): 293-309, p. 296.

[226] Phillips, Brian J. (2015), "Civil War, Spillover and Neighbors' Military Spending", *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, 32 (4): 425-442, pp. 426-427.

Bashar al-Assad. The demonstrations first spread in rural areas and only later reached Damascus and Aleppo in 2012. The country submerged into ferocious civil war between the Syrian regime and the opposition as violence intensified. Free Syrian Army (FSA), a Sunni rebel group was formed to overthrow the Bashar al-Assad's regime.[227] It acquired the sectarian overtones, pitching the country's Sunni majority against the President's Shia Alawite sect, along with external involvement of regional and global powers. The emergence of the jihadist/radical groups like Jabhat al-Nusra and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) added further complexity to the Syrian civil war.[228]

The prevalence of many phases of political instability has been a part of Syrian history since it acquired independence from France in 1946. Many military coups occurred in Syria as a result of increasing Arab nationalism until the establishment of the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party that brought Hafez al-Assad to power in 1970. Three fundamental ideals that defined the emergence of the Arab Socialist Baath Party includes "Arab nationalism, freedom from foreign rule, and the establishment of a single Arab state."[229] The regimes in Iraq and Syria has been representing the party for the past quarter- century. Michel Aflaq and Salah al-Din al Bitar founded the Ba'th party in April 1947 in Damascus, Syria. It was merged with Syrian Socialist Party to form the Arab Socialist Baʿth (Resurrection) Party early in the 1950s. The organisational structure of Ba'th party is highly centralised, hierarchal and authoritarian including two important levels of National command, regional command along with the membership categories.[230]

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[227] Wimmen, Heiko (2016), *Syria's path from Civic Uprising to Civil War,* Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International peace, p.14; Slackman, Michael (2011), "Syrian Troops Open Fire on Protesters in Several Cities" [Online: web] Accessed 15 April 2016, URL:http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/26/world/middleeast/26syria.html; Ipsos MENA (2016), "A Life Suspended: The State of Syrian Refugees in Jordan and Lebanon" [Online: web] Accessed 2 Jan. 2016 URL:https://www.ipsosmori.com/Assets/Docs/Publications/ipsos-mena-a-life-suspended-syrian-refugees.pdf

[228] Phillips, Christopher (2016), *The Battle for Syria: International Rivalry in the New Middle East*, New Haven: Yale University Press, pp.49-50.

[229] Devlin, John F. (1991), "The Baath Party: Rise and Metamorphosis", *The American Historical Review*, 96 (5): 1396-1407, p.1396.

[230] George, Alan (2003), *Syria: Neither Bread nor Freedom*, London: Zed Books, pp.2-3; Rabinovich, Itamar (1972), *Syria Under the Baʿth, 1963–66: The Army Party Symbiosis*, Jerusalem: Israel Universities Press, pp.4-5.

With a semi-presidential style of government, Syria is considered a unitary republic. However, the highly authoritarian regime can be witnessed with most of the political power lies with the al-Assad family. The responsibility regarding the appointment of members to the Council of Ministers, amendment in the constitution, approval of five-year plans for the government along with the declaration of war lies with the President. Hafez al-Assad as the president fully controlled the public institutions and the economy. It showed that though Syria became politically stable, however, witnessed the authoritarian regime during his period. Bashar al-Assad became President in 2000 after the death of his father, Hafez al-Assad. High hopes emerged for transforming Syria into a vibrant liberal democracy; however, suppression of civil rights and individual freedom continued.[231] The accumulated economic discontentment forced them to raise their voice against the Bashar al- Assad's regime. Syrian official data along with World Bank data provided around 8.1 percent unemployment rate in 2009, while for the same, 24.4 percent was estimated by the Syrian economists. See table 3.1 for the detailed data about the unemployment rate in Syrian during 2005-2011.

Table – 3.1 Unemployment Total (% of the total labour force) in Syria

Year	Percentage
2005	9.1
2006	8.2
2007	8.4
2008	11
2009	8.1
2010	8.6
2011	8.6

Source: World Bank (2019), "Unemployment, total (% of total labor force) (modeled ILO estimate)", [Online: web] Accessed 2 Jan. 2016 URL: https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.TOTL.ZS?locations=SY

[231] Berzins, Janis (2013), *Civil War in Syria: Origins, Dynamics, and Possible Solutions*, Latvia: National Defence Academy of Latvia and Center for Defence and Strategic Research, pp.1-2.

The percentage of absolute poverty rate was 34.3 percent in 2010; however, conditions in the rural areas were more miserable, with 62 percent population suffered from poverty.[232] The United Nations, in its report titled *The World Social Situation 2010* provided the statistics about the Syrian population of 2.3 million were pushed into extreme poverty.[233] Severe droughts between 2006 and 2011 created huge loss to farmers and depleted oil reserves in 2009 were responsible for the decline in oil revenues.[234] Therefore, neoliberal policies adopted by Bashar al-Assad neglected the income distribution, and social protection resulted in anti- developmental growth. In other words, insecurity prevailed among the Syrian population about developmental measures and welfare programmes. Furthermore, lack of democracy, lack of freedom of speech and expression, pervasive inequality, controlled media, widespread corruption, lack of adequate infrastructure and social utilities, all played a crucial role to bring widespread protests to the streets of Syria.

The rural areas and the periphery including the Jazeera, Homs, Hama and northern region witnessed the protests first. The large cities, including Damascus and Aleppo, experienced the protests only at the later stage.[235] This feature distinguishes Syrian uprising from other uprisings in the Arab world since former belong to the Sunni rural periphery and the latter came under the category of urban perception. Even discontentment arose among the rural Alawite community since the rich, privileged Alawite class was dominating Syria, while the former was left with the little tangible benefits. The cuts in the fuel subsidies and new laws limiting the sale of tobacco created discontentment among the rural Alawites.[236] In such circumstances, labour and villagers considered to be his core followers lost the confidence in Assad.

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[232] Matar, Linda (2012), *The Socio-Economic Roots of the Syrian Uprising*, Singapore: Middle East Institute, pp.2-3.

[233] Cited in Starr, Stephen (2012), *Revolt in Syria. Eye-witness to the Uprising*, London: Hurst & Company, p.80.

[234] Matar, Linda (2012), *The Socio-Economic Roots of the Syrian Uprising*, Singapore: Middle East Institute, pp.4-5.

[235] Zissser, Eyal (2013), "Can Assad's Syria Survive Revolution?" *Middle East Quarterly*, 20 (2): 65-71, p.66.

[236] Glodsmith, Leon (2012) "Alawites for Assad; Why the Syrian Sect Backs the Regime", [Online: web] Accessed 4 May 2016, URL: http://www. foreignaffairs.com/articles/137407/leon-goldsmith/al foreignaffairs awites-for-assad?page=show

These economic reasons were not solely responsible for the widespread protests. Political repression was equally responsible for the demonstrations. Ranging from lack of democracy, lack of freedom of speech and expression, controlled media, to the widespread corruption were significant factors responsible for it. However, for some scholars, preferential treatment to the Alawite community (an offshoot of the Shia branch) became the most important political reason for these protests. Even it divided the civil war on the sectarian basis to some extent. Syria is a fragile ethno religious society comprising the population of different sects including Sunni, Christians, Alawites, Druze, Kurds and other minority groups. Despite consisting of 13 percent of the Syrian population, most of Syria's key military units, intelligence services, and ultra-loyalist militias dominated by the Alawites."[237] The following table 3.2 shows clearly presents the sect composition of the Syrian population with their percentage.

Table: 3.2: The Sect Composition of Syrian Population (2011)

Sects	Population (in %)
Sunni Arabs	60 %
Christians	10 – 12 %
Alawites	10 – 12 %
Kurds	10 %
Druze	6 %
Turkmen	4-5%
Assyrians	3-4%
Circassians	1.5%
Armenians	1%

Source: Carpenter, Ted Galen (2013), "Tangled Web: The Syrian Civil War and Its Implications", *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 24 (1): 1-11, p.2; Khalifa, Mustafa (2013), *The impossible partition of Syria*, Paris: Arab Reform Initiative, pp. 3-5.

[237] Goldsmith, Leon (2012), "Alawites for Assad; Why the Syrian Sect Backs the Regime", [Online: web], Accessed 15 July 2016, URL: http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/137407/leon-goldsmith/alawites-for-assad?page=show

Based on the firm loyalty of Alawites in a loose coalition with Christians and Druze was considered as a pillar for Assad family's power seizure for more than four decades. An important feature of the Syrian civil war, considered by scholars was the attempt pursued by Sunni Arabs to overthrow this 'coalition of minorities' regime. However, considering the Syrian civil war only from one angle of the divide between Sunni and Alawite cleavage overlooks the other ethnic distinction among different Sunni groups in Syria including Kurds versus Arabs and other religious minorities such as Christians and Armenians.[238] The complexity of the Syrian society can be witnessed by the fact of the manifold narratives operating simultaneously about ideology, ethnicity, tribal affiliations, religious orientation, and sectarian model. Moreover, "narratives regarding the repressed majority versus a dominant minority divide, with prominent centre-periphery tensions, secular-versus-religious/jihadist cleavage which overlaps partly with the ideological, Baathist versus non-Baathist cleavage add to this intricacy of the Syrian society." [239] All these narratives exhibited that perception of different sects, particularly the attitude of aggrieved minority (Sunni) against the dominant minority (Alawite) being responsible for the emergence of violence in the Syrian civil war. Furthermore, "three factors comprising failure of the regime to unify the Syrian minorities, unemployment and income concentration as a result of the neoliberal reforms and the brutal repression of protests" [240] were considered reasons for the emergence of the Syrian civil war.

The regional context for the Syrian civil war can be explicitly witnessed in a "triangular geopolitical contest for the dominance among Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Turkey along with the inimical rivalry between the Sunni and Shia factions of Islam."[241] Similarly argued that the Syrian civil war is nothing but simply a small

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[238] Christia, Fotini (2013), *What Can Civil War Scholars Tell Us About the Syrian Conflict,* Washington, DC: The Project on Middle East Political Science (POMEPS), pp.8-10.

[239] Fearon, James D. (2004), "Why Do Some Civil Wars Last So Much Longer Than Others"?, *Journal of Peace Research,* 41(3): 275–301, p.277; Fearon, James D. and David D. Laitin (2011), "Sons of the Soil, Migrants, and Civil War", *World Development,* 39 (2): 199–211, pp.200-201.

[240] Cited in Berzins, Janis (2013), *Civil War in Syria: Origins, Dynamics, and Possible Solutions*, Latvia: National Defence Academy of Latvia and Center for Defence and Strategic Research, p.8.

[241] Carpenter, Ted Galen (2013), "Tangled Web: The Syrian Civil War and Its Implications", *Mediterranean Quarterly,* 24 (1), p.3; Demir, Sertif and Carmen Rijnoveanu (2013), "The impact of the Syria crisis on the global and regional political dynamics", *Journal of Turkish World Studies,* 13 (1): 55-77, p.61.

fraction of larger sectarian geopolitical rivalry.[242] Syrian civil war divided the international community into two groups; the first group including Turkey, USA, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, France, Britain and other EU countries and the Arab League, considered change in the Syrian regime only solution available for ending the Syrian civil war and for this they provided support to the rebel forces. The second group consists of Iran, Russia and China, supported the Syrian regime; however, they were different in their orientation.[243]

Different analyses of the Syrian uprising from the Syrian ruling system perspective were also taken into consideration. Syrian ruling system had some relative differences with other Arab countries about the economic situation, political environment and social stability in terms of secular society. The economic gap prevailing in the other Arab countries between the elite ruling class and poor young mass was huge compared to the same in Syria. This was the reason behind widespread poverty and unemployment did not cause the sudden protests. The penetration of Syrian nationalism and socialism into the secular society by the Baath regime provided a platform for people to enjoy their religious and sectarian differences. Even integration of military into regime helped them to develop a strong political safety grid. The incorporation of Sunnis into governance was considered a pleasing policy of the Syrian regime after the massacre of the Muslim Brotherhood by the Syrian forces in 1982. Moreover, more Islamist approaches were taken into consideration.[244] Even Bashar al- Assad in his speech to the People's Assembly on 30 March 2011, stated that "Syria is not isolated from what is happening in the Arab world. We are part of this region. We influence and are influenced by it, but at the same time, we are not a copy of other countries."[245] In other words, Syria is an integral part of the Arab world and therefore not isolated from the incidents occur in the region. He states that Syria acts as an instrument of influence and also get influenced by both the internal and

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[242] Halil Karaveli, "Why Does Turkey Want Regime Change in Syria?" [Online: web], 20 Aug 2016, URL: nationalinterest.org/commentary/why-does-turkey-want-regime-change-syria-7227.

[243] Nerguizian, Aram (2012), *Bracing for an Uncertain Future in Syria*, Washington DC: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, pp.2-3.

[244] Broning, Michael (2011), "The Sturdy House That Assad Built: Why Damascus Is Not Cairo", [Online: web] Accessed 16 May 2016, URL: http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/67561/michael-broening/the-sturdy-housethat-assad-built?page=show,

[245] Cited in Phillips, Christopher (2016), *The Battle for Syria: International Rivalry in the New Middle East*, New Haven: Yale University Press, p.40.

external dynamics. But the important to underline that Syria is a different county seeing its domestic situation and external circumstances, therefore act accordingly.

In the opinion of some scholars, leftist and secularist groups raised voice for their political and social rights and became the first one to come under the category of protesters. But the summers of 2011 changed the face of the protests since other regional powers such as Saudi Arabia, Libya and Qatar started supporting religious groups intentionally to instigate the protest against the Syrian regime. The divided opposition in the form of two groups involving "National Coordination Committee (NCC) and Syrian National Council (SNC)", struggling hard to overthrow Bashar al-Assad's regime. NCC was considered more peaceful and secular group, fighting for democratic transition while SNC, with support from the Muslim Brotherhood and Western alliance along with linkage to the Free Syrian Army, wanted to overthrow the Syrian regime by using any possible means.[246] Free Syrian Army (FSA) with approximately fifty thousand fighters became the largest Syrian opposition group. Apart from FSA, organisations such as Jabhat al-Nusra, the Syrian Islamic Front, the Syrian Liberation Front and the Independent Brigade Alliances belonged to the opposition forces, fighting against Assad's regime. For scholars, Bashar al-Assad is responsible for the emergence of these opposition groups. The contribution of the Syrian regime to empower Jihadi- Salafist groups by providing a platform for their activities and networking cannot be denied. Furthermore, there are reports about releasing a large number of Salafist radicals from Sednaya prison by the Syrian regime in 2011. Later it was noticed that many of them who were released became leaders in Jabhat al-Nusra, the Islamic Front, and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).[247]

The characteristics providing distinctiveness to Syria include "the rigid state structure based on the Nusayri (Alawite) minority, a continued anti-US and anti-Israel policies, close relations with Russia and Iran, along with its profound influence on

[246] Demir, Sertif and Carmen Rijnoveanu (2013), "The impact of the Syria crisis on the global and regional political dynamics", *Journal of Turkish World Studies*, 13 (1): 55-77, p.58.

[247] Hove, Mediel and Darlington Mutanda (2015), "The Syrian Conflict 2011 to the Present: Challenges and Prospects", *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 50 (5): 559–570, p.561.

Lebanon."[248] The Syrian regime could not be overthrown with internal dynamics governed by the Bath regime through the secret police service in Syria. The Alawite community played a crucial role in upholding the power structure in Syria since the beginning of the uprising.[249] As a result, the deep sectarian divisions made the situation more volatile. The Syrian civil war with sectarian tendency share the same sectarian divisions which trembled Lebanon during the 1970s and 1980s and still contagion to Iraq today.[250]

Majorly the research literature available on Syrian civil war deals with the internal unrest rooted in political, economic and social factors overlooks the regional stakes in Syria. The overlooked perspective considered that the civil war did not take place in a vacuum as it continuously reflected the competing interest of the regional actors keen to support the opposition factions in Syria. Moreover, Syrian civil war was considered as an opportunity to shape the regional balance of power in West Asia and North African region when three major traditional pillars of inter-Arab politics namely Egypt, Iraq, and Syria are facing instability.[251]

Table- 3.3: Fiscal cost of damage to the Syrian Civil war (by 2013)

Sectors	Fiscal Cost (In US$ billion)
Total Economic damage	US$143 billion
Public debt	<50 % of GDP (The GDP in 2013 was US$21 billion)
Revenue	US$1 billion
Expenditure	<US$6 billion

Source: Cited in Hamdar, Bassam Charif (2018), "Economic Modelling of the Effects of Syrian Refugees on the Lebanese Economy", *International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management United Kingdom,* 6 (11): 72-85, P.73.

[248] Demir, Sertif and Carmen Rijnoveanu (2013), "The impact of the Syria crisis on the global and regional political dynamics", *Journal of Turkish World Studies,* 13 (1): 55-77, p.57.

[249]Ibid.57.

[250] Carpenter, Ted Galen (2013), "Tangled Web: The Syrian Civil War and Its Implications", *Mediterranean Quarterly,* 24 (1): 1-11, p.2.

[251] Nerguizian, Aram (2012), *Bracing for an Uncertain Future in Syria*, Washington, DC: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, pp.8-10.

The above table 3.3 shows the economic damage to Syria as a consequence of the Syrian civil war. The Syrian civil war cost around US$143 billion by 2013 in terms of total financial loss. More than 50 percent of GDP emerged as the public debt while revenue and expenditure estimation reached US$ 1 billion and US$6 billion respectively. Whenever any country suffers from civil war for a longer period, debates about its reconstruction and development becomes an integral part of both in the international arena as well as in academics. In this direction, the United Nations, in its report estimated that Syria already reached in the phase of regression of 40 years about human development by the end of 2013. The scenario of 2015 showed worse conditions including closing down half of its public hospitals, hardly 50 percent of children were attending the schools and more than 80 percent of Syrians were living in poverty (in which about 26 percent were in extreme poverty). Additionally, lack of vaccination forced long absent diseases such as typhoid and measles to re-emerge and drop in the average life expectancy of a Syrian from 70 to 55 in four years etc. In a span of five-six years, Syrian civil war ruined the economy while transforming large parts of Syrian cities into rubble. Analysing the impact of the Syrian civil war from economic and humanitarian perspectives will be an injustice to Syrian cultural heritage. Syrian civil war severely damaged or destroyed hundreds of the country's valuable cultural heritage locations, including five of its six UNESCO world heritage sites.[252]

Many scholars compared the Syrian civil war with other civil wars across the region as well as the world. Syrian civil war was compared with the violence that occurred in Iraq in 2006. At both the places, the same dynamics of sectarianism prevailed, which eventually led to the outbreak of violence.[253] Similarly, other historians brought the Spanish civil war (the 1930s) for the comparison. The conflict between fascist forces of Francisco Franco and the left-leaning republican government that can be considered a proxy war between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. The similar elements responsible for the above proxy war can be considered for the occurrence of the Syrian civil war. On the one hand, the internal disintegration as the primary driver

[252] Cited in Phillips, Christopher (2016), *The Battle for Syria: International Rivalry in the New Middle East*, New Haven: Yale University Press, p.1.

[253] Carafano, James Jay (2012), "Serious about Syria," [Online: web] Accessed 17 Sep. 2016 URL: Washington examiner.com/serious-about- syria/ article/2501105#.UE9mVK6eKRI.

for the warfare while on the other hand, regional hostility played a significant role.[254] Further analysis of the nature of the Syrian civil war highlighted the same explosion of sectarian revulsion by stating that civil war in Syria became a battle largely "over consolidating sectarian canonisation, or the creation of sub-national units, each of which is dominated by a predominant sect."[255] Persistent divisions on the issue of resolving the conflict between the Syrian regime and opposition forces, including the dispersion among opposition factions complicated every effort for the resolution of the crisis by dialogues. The Kofi Annan Peace Plan is one of the examples of it. Seeing no end to the Syrian civil war and increasing instability, Kofi Annan peace plan for Syria was introduced by the Arab League and the United Nations in March 2012 to resolve the crisis peacefully. It is also known as the six-point peace plan for Syria. Initially the Syrian government tried to comply with the guidelines of the peace plan; however, the violent nature of war and attitude of politicians weakened the plan.[256] Later on, many peace programmes and initiatives including Geneva II Middle East peace conference (2012-13) and peace talks in Moscow in 2013 took place for resolving the Syrian crisis.

The role of actors and non- state actors:

Russia: Syria is an old allay of Russia since its independence. The supply of military weapons in bulk used to come from the Soviet Union and continues even after disintegration. From the strategic perspective, the overthrow of Assad's regime would be a big blow to regional interests of Russia. The removal of the Assad regime would weaken its regional allies, reinforce the US position, weaken the position of Syria's Orthodox Christian population and the most important is the expansion of the Islamist movements that will challenge its position not only in the West Asian region but also in the Caucasus and Central Asian region.[257] Therefore, protecting Tartus naval base, a sole access to Mediterranean Sea, to eliminate ISIS and moreover, to contain

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[254]Carpenter, Ted Galen (2013), "Tangled Web: The Syrian Civil War and Its Implications", *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 24 (1): 1-11, p.4

[255] Rabil, Robert G. (2012), "Syria and the Power of Sectarian Strife," [Online: web] Accessed 15 Oct. 2016 URL: nationalinterest.org/commentary/syria-the- power- sectarian- strife- 7153.

[256] Aljazeera (2012), Kofi Annan's six-point plan for Syria, [Online: web] Accessed 4 Aug. 2016 URL: https://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/03/2012327153111767387.html

[257] Heydemann, Steven (2013) *Syria's Uprising: Sectarianism, Regionalisation, and State order in the Levant*, California: Fride and Hivos, p.5

American influence can be considered important reasons behind the Russian involvement in the Syrian civil war. There is continued Russian support to Assad's regime with critical military supplies and equipment, energy supplies, and financial support. Even at the international level, Russia provided complete support to Assad's government by blocking recurring attempts within the UNSC to levy sanctions and other disciplinary measures against his government.

Iran: The survival of Syrian regime is in the apparent interest of Iran which transcended the religious affiliations shared by both in the form of Shia Islam. It is important to note that Syrian President Bashar al Assad belongs to the Alawite community; a branch of Shia Islam. By following the principle of 'Realpolitik', Iran increases its role as a regional hegemonic power. Because of the American pressure, Iran has been extending its influence through Syria and Lebanon. From Iran's perspective, Syria provides a pragmatic platform for Iran to achieve its regional aspirations; a significant corridor to Mediterranean Sea, to control and support Hezbollah by supplying arms and financial aid through Damascus.

United States: The recent years witnessed the deterioration between US- Syria relationship due to Syria's policy towards Iran, its possession of chemical weapons as well as its evident support to Hezbollah. US passed the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act (SALSRA) in 2003 to "stop Syrian support for terrorism, end its occupation of Lebanon, and stop its development of weapons of mass destruction."[258] Further, Syria has been demanding Golan Heights from Israel that occupied by Israel in 1967 war also contribute towards their deteriorating relations. From the perspective of global dynamics, Syria is an ally of Russia and therefore, the US wants to overthrow Basher al Assad. For achieving this, they have also been supporting Syrian Kurds. However, since US believes in democratic change, human rights, freedom, and better living standards, therefore embraced the idea of regional transformation and supported the aspirations of the revolutionary forces seeking for it.[259] The US tactical position in the West Asian region faced

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[258] US Congress (2003), *Public Law 108–175—DEC. 12, 2003: Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003*, GPO: US Congress, p.2482.

[259] Cordesman, Anthony H. (2008), *Syrian Weapons of Mass Destruction. An overview*, Washington D.C: Center for Strategic and International Studies, p. 3; Crane, Mary (2005), "Middle East: US and Syrian Relations", [Online: web] Accessed 2 Aug. 2016, URL: http://www.cfr.org/middle-east/middle-east-us-syrian-relations/p7852

potential threat from its withdrawal from Iraq and "Iranian-Iraqi reconciliation". Two pillars in the form of Iraq and Assad's regime in Syria (supported by Hezbollah in Lebanon, and Hamas in Gaza) provide the base for Iranian regional power.[260] From the US perspective, the overthrow of Assad's regime would surely limit the Iranian influence along with its hegemonic aspirations. This limited Iranian influence would be a great setback for Hezbollah and its growing a potential that eventually led to political instability in Lebanon.

Turkey: The role of Turkey in the Syrian civil war as a supporter of opposition forces can be perceived as a complicated expression in President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's foreign policy. The Syrian civil war significantly shaped Turkey's approach to deal with regional affairs. Syria has been considered as an important factor in Turkey's regional strategy.[261] In the initial months of the Syrian uprising, Turkey tried to persuade Bashar al-Assad for establishing peace in the region by adopting some political and economic reforms. However, it did not work out, and eventually, Turkey provided full-fledged support to the opposition forces by supplying weapons and facilitating other assistance. Turkey pursued the "policy of disengagement towards the Syrian regime as well as strengthened its military presence along the southern border with Syria."[262]

Throughout Syrian uprising, Turkey emerged as the defender of Syria's Sunni Muslim community and with this taken on a sectarian role. Turkey saw a great opportunity in the Syrian civil war for countering the Kurdish threat. Turkey's support to the extremist Salafist armed groups was considered a counterweight to the PYD (Democratic Union Party) and other Kurdish radical groups, resulted in deterioration of its relationship with both Iraq and Iran. Furthermore, the integration of Turkey as a Sunni Muslim actor in the regional balance of power politics of the West Asian region became one of the significant regional implications of the Syrian civil war.[263]

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[260] Sofer, Ken (2012), "Next Steps in Syria.; A look at US Priorities and Interests", [Online: web] Accessed 10 Dec. 2016, URL:http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/security/news/2012/08/14/11992/next-steps-in-syria/

[261] Heydemann, Steven (2013) *Syria's Uprising: Sectarianism, Regionalisation, and State order in the Levant*, California: Fride and Hivos, p.9.

[262] Bishku, Michael B. (2012), "Turkish-Syrian Relations: A Checkered History", *Middle East Policy*, 19 (3): 36-53, p. 48.

[263] Heydemann, Steven (2013) *Syria's Uprising: Sectarianism, Regionalisation, and State order in the Levant*, California: Fride and Hivos, p.9.

Saudi Arabia, Qatar and UAE: Since the beginning suppression used by the Syrian regime on protesters in Homs, Saudi Arabia and Qatar emerged important support to the Syrian opposition forces in terms of providing financial and military assistance. However, both followed the different orientation of support in terms of armed groups and political opposition. Furthermore, regional and other international entities such as Arab League, Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) under the influence of Saudi Arabia and Qatar aligned themselves against the Syrian regime.[264] The expansion of regional influence by Iran in the West Asian region complicated the power dynamics in the region and became a matter of concern for the regional position of Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf States The involvement of Saudi Arabia in the Syrian civil war can be analysed from the strategic perspective of overthrowing Assad's regime that would lead to the disintegration of Iranian-Syrian-Hezbollah axis It creates a religious divide between a Sunni Syria and other religious sects, and therefore, limiting the influence of Iran would make Saudi Arabia, only hegemonic power in the entire region of West Asia. The issue that causes the removal of Assad is more severe and dangerous is the expanding influence of the jihadist and radical groups including some terrorist factions on Syrian territory which descends latter into more chaos and deep disarray. [265]

In the opinion of UAE, the emergence of a sense of desperation seeing the violence by the Assad regime has been responsible for the intensification of Islamism among the Sunni population in Syria. For UAE, the collapse of the Assad regime and the formation of the Sunni government would be crucial to eliminate fierce belligerence against the Sunni population. To achieve this objective, the role of UAE in funding non-Islamist rebel groups as well as pushing US to opt for more tangible measures to weaken the regime remained critical as UAE fears for its stability if Syrian regime survives.[266]

It can be analysed that all the factors ranging from the mode of intervention by Turkey, roles played by Saudi Arabia and Qatar to the policies opted by Iran and

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[264] Ibid.10.

[265] Stern, Moran (2013), "The Syrian Crisis", [Online: web] Accessed 18 Oct. 2016, URL: http://www.mepc.org/articles-commentary/commentary/syrian-crisis?print

[266] Fromkin, Alissa (2015), "UAE Foreign Policy in Iraq & Syria", [Online: web] Accessed 10 Jan. 2017, URL: http://www.iar-gwu.org/content/part-three-uae-foreign-policy-iraq-syria

Hezbollah under the sectarian influence added to the "radicalisation of the armed opposition as well as deepened the Kurdish-Arab tensions among the opposition."[267] About global powers, their role provided a new dimension to the Syrian civil war. The overthrow of Assad's regime turns out to be so crucial that recognising opposition coalition group (all radical groups, even some are considered as terrorist groups by these countries) became the priority of the time as well as circumstances. France emerged as the first European power by recognising the opposition coalition as the exclusive representative of the Syrian people.[268] Moreover, under the pressure of UK and France, the arms embargo on the Syrian opposition was lifted by the European Union, while continuing the sanctions against Syrian regime especially the oil embargo for deteriorating its economic position.[269]

The role of Hezbollah and instability in Lebanon: Formally in 1985, Hezbollah emerged as a resistance movement in Lebanon and beyond that. Throughout these years, Hezbollah has transformed itself into a significant political, social and military force by exhibiting its strong emergence from the Lebanese civil war, following the penetration into Lebanese politics as a political party and waging a successful guerrilla war in Southern Lebanon resulted in the withdrawal of Israel in May 2000. The strategic alliance between Iran and Syria, as well as their anti- Israel orientation, reinforced Hezbollah's relationship with the Syrian regime. In addition to this, the association of Hezbollah with the Syrian government has been beneficial since Syria provided a channel for weaponry, operational coordination and served as a crucial ally in Lebanese politics. The outbreak of the Syrian civil war created not only a profound challenge to the Hezbollah-Iranian-Syrian strategic axis but also its internal position within Lebanon. Hezbollah justified its participation in the Syrian civil war by stating that they wanted to defend Shia Lebanese living on the Syrian side of the border, or protecting Shia shrines, specifically the Sayyida Zaynab in southern Damascus.[270]

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[267] Heydemann, Steven (2013) *Syria's Uprising: Sectarianism, Regionalisation, and State order in the Levant*, California: Fride and Hivos, p.10.

[268] Saleh, Yasmine and and John Irish (2012), "France recognizes new Syria opposition", [Online: web], Accessed 1 Sep. 2016, URL: http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/11/13/us-syria-crisis-idUSBRE88J0X720121113

[269] Chaffin, Joshua (2013), "UK and France win battle to lift EU's Syria arms embargo", *Financial times*, [Online: web], Accessed 10 June 2016, URL: https://www.ft.com/content/095e5e50-c6c1-11e2-8a36-00144feab7de

[270] Ibid.37

The overthrown of Assad would be a major loss for Hezbollah in Lebanon since the former situation would prove to be political instability and the threat to power dominance of Hezbollah in Lebanon. Furthermore, it would empower the domestic opposition as well as impact the Lebanese Shia community in Lebanon.[271] The changing relationship with its previous allies (Iran and Syria) and the emergence of its new enemies both in Syria and within Lebanon can be seen one of the crucial features of the involvement of Hezbollah in the Syrian civil war. For anti -Assad opposition forces, especially (Salafi-jihadist camp), Hezbollah has been considered a key enemy due to the latter's military involvement in supporting the Syrian regime. The violent battles can exhibit this fight between groups like Jabhat al-Nusra or the Islamic State and Hezbollah. Moreover, this rivalry is intensified by the former's belief that Hezbollah in particular and the Shia community, in general, is heretical in its interpretation of Islam.[272] The proactive support of Hezbollah to the Syrian regime as well as focusing on ISIS as a threat to eliminate showed the changing nature of the national resistance movement with which it was established.

Even Syrian refugees have been considered to be a threat for the movement since many holding anti- Syrian regime attitude with different ideology from Hezbollah along with the fact that majority of them (around 95 %) belong to the Sunni community. The negative implications of Hezbollah's military involvement were not confined to Syria. It had direct repercussions on Lebanon and its politics. The support of Hezbollah to the Syrian regime has not only aggravated the political and sectarian tensions in Lebanon but resulted in major violence against the Shia community in general and Hezbollah in particular. Incidents like suicide bombings against Shia people, rocket attacks against the al-Dahiye- the Hezbollah's stronghold in southern Beirut and bombing the Iranian Embassy in Beirut by al-Qaeda affiliated Abdullah Azzam Brigades in November 2013 were some of the examples to witness the impact of Hezbollah's involvement. Moreover, a violent suicide bombing in the Alawite dominated Jabal Mohsen neighbourhood in Tripoli in January 2015, and tragic suicide attack in south Beirut in November 2015 added more complexity posing a threat to

[271] Ibid.2

[272] Berzins, Janis (2013), *Civil War in Syria: Origins, Dynamics, and Possible Solutions*, Latvia: Center for Defence and Strategic Research, National Defence Academy of Latvia.p.3

Lebanon's security and stability.[273] Further the polarization of the Lebanese political sphere can also be attributed to Hezbollah support to Assad's regime. The involvement of Hezbollah in the Syrian civil war despite signing the disassociation policy of Lebanon in the form of 'Baabda Declaration' resulted into postponement of 2013 parliamentary elections and the presidential vacuum led to an institutional deadlock. With a blocked government, the Lebanese political regime faced a lack of effective and legitimate administration.[274] Therefore, involvement of Hezbollah in the Syrian civil war to maintain its hegemony and security was determined by the internal dynamics and politics in Lebanon.

Political opponents in Lebanon started lamenting Hezbollah for going away with its principles and objective. They now termed Hezbollah a "sectarian militia" which had the historical label of "national resistance."[275] However, Hezbollah remained persistent towards highlighting its role as a "national resistance movement" against two national enemies, one is Israel, and the other is 'takfiri threat'. For Hezbollah, the latter is not a sectarian threat but can be perceived as a national challenge.[276] The relations of Hezbollah with Iran and Syria has not only been redefined due to its protracted engagement in Syria civil war, but to some extent changed its strategic calculus with Israel also. Moreover, Hezbollah learnt the art to deal with its new enemies, including ISIS and al-Nusra on one hand while acquiring competency to involve with countries like Russia on the other side. An interlinked relationship has been developed between the Syrian civil war and Hezbollah's future evolution. In short, the continued prolongation of the civil war would surely increase military expertise and warfare tactics of the group, but at the same time, it would prove to be a threat to its political legitimacy and weakened the status in Lebanon.[277]

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[273] Cited in Ranstrop, Magnus (2016), "The role of Hezbullah in the Syrian conflict" in Maximilian Felsch and Martin Wählisch (eds.) *Lebanon and the Arab Uprisings: In the Eye of the Hurricane*, London: Routledge, pp.39-40.

[274] Assi, Abbas and James Worrall (2015) "Stable instability: the Syrian conflict and the postponement of the 2013 Lebanese parliamentary elections", *Third World Quarterly*, 36 (10): 1944- 1967, pp.1956-58.

[275] Berti, Benedetta (2015), *The Syrian Civil War and its Consequences for Hezbollah*, Philadelphia: Foreign Policy Research Institute, p.1.

[276] Ibid.

[277] Ibid.2.

3. Syria- Lebanon Relations

Lebanon's relationship with Syria was shaped by the shared history of domination both by the Ottoman Empire and the French Mandate rule. The birth and development of Lebanon itself is the result of a process whereby the country's territory was carved out a unified 'Greater Syria'."[278] Syria repudiated to acknowledge this new situation and stated that Lebanon has been detached from its Arab identity and turn into France's territory.[279] In 1943, Lebanon got independence from the French mandate and became an independent entity along with recognised and acknowledged sovereign country internationally. Even Syria gained independence in 1946; however, continuous exertion and influence of Syria on Lebanese politics both directly and indirectly showed its ambition of 'Greater Syria'. Moreover, the civil war in 1958, Lebanese civil war (1975-90) and the Syrian military presence in Lebanon (1976-2005) are some of the most evident occurrences for the manifestation of the undefined nature of the border.[280] Syria has had a significant impact on Lebanon, primarily because of economic, political, and geostrategic relations that historically linked the two countries.[281]

The border between Lebanon and Syrian can be perceived as a political boundary than a historical one and further less a natural boundary that separate these two distinct geographical identities. Some groups of the Lebanese Sunni community and nationalists in Syria defied the creation of these new states of Syria and Lebanon.[282] Arab Nationalist considered Syria consists of Lebanon as a natural entity that cannot be compromised at any cost. However, the establishment of French mandate expelled the proponents of 'Greater Syria', resulted in their expansion into other territories. They tried to achieve their aim of unification of Syria by establishing political parties. The formation of the Syrian Party of Unity (Hizb al-Ittihad as-Suri) in Egypt is one of the examples of it. Even within Syria, political parties such as the People's Party

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[278] Dionigi, Filippo (2016), *The Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon: State fragility and Social resilience*, London: London School of Economics and Political Science, p.30.

[279] Cited in Bassil, Youssef (2012), "Syrian Hegemony over Lebanon after the Lebanese Civil War", *Journal of Science*, 2 (3): 136-147, p.136.

[280] Ibid.30.

[281] Berti, Benedetta (2012), *Tensions in Tripoli: The Syrian Crisis and its Impact on Lebanon*, Tel Aviv: The Institute for National Security Studies, Tel Aviv University, p.1.

[282] Zisser, Eyal (2000) *Lebanon: The challenge of independence*, London: I.B Tauris, p.12.

(Hizb ash-Sha'b) and the Party of Syrian Union (Hizb al-Wahda as-Suriya) aimed for the unification of Greater Syria.[283]

Considering Lebanon as a part of Syrian political entity by the Syrian elites was the result of denial towards 'Greater Lebanon' by the majority of Lebanese Sunni population. However, two factors including the opposition from Lebanese Christians regarding the incorporation of Lebanon into Syria and the changing realities of Lebanese political system positioned Sunnis within the top hierarchical arrangements, paved the way for new political reality. Even the recognition to the independence of Lebanon as a separate state is mentioned as a clause in the Syrian–French treaty of 1936 was concurred with this.[284] So, the integration of Sunnis into the Lebanese system exhibited their acceptance of new regional order. Contrary to established arguments, Syria also supported Lebanon in its quest for independence. To achieve their independence, Syria and Lebanon came together on one platform to negotiate with the French authorities.[285] As a result, both Lebanon and Syria became gained independence in 1943 and 1946, respectively. It was argued that mistrust developed between the ambivalent Lebanon- Syria relations. Each country turned out to be a safe haven for the political opponents of the other. For example, in 1949, after the failed coup in Lebanon, Syrian Social Nationalist Party members took refuge in Damascus. Similarly, some Ex-Syrian ministers and even presidents after their removal came to Beirut. As a result, a strained relationship (especially the ideological one) started to develop between both the countries.[286] The 1958 civil war threatened the stability of Lebanon and Syria's involvement in this forced former to call for UN intervention for checking the interference of the Syrian military in its territory. As a result, the United Nations sent its observation mission to witness the situation. Afterwards, Syrian involvement in Lebanon became much evident both in terms of trans-boundary security operations or political influence. Besides, in 1963, the emergence of

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[283] Ziadeh, Hanna (2006), *Sectarianism and intercommunal nation building in Lebanon*, London: Hurst & Company, pp. 89-90.

[284] Ibid.15.

[285] Frangieh, Samir (2004), "Redressing Syrian–Lebanese relations" in Nawaf Salam (eds.) *Options for Lebanon*, New York: The Centre for Lebanese Studies, p.98.

[286] Picard, Elizabeth (2006) "Managing Identites among Expatriate Business across the Syrian Lebanese boundary", in Inga Brandell (eds.), *State Frontiers: Borders and Boundaries in the Middle East*, London: I. B. Tauris, pp.86.

Baathist-military coalition in power increased the intensity of the Syrian presence in Lebanon.[287]

Changing dynamics between Syria- Lebanon relations: Syrian intervention in Lebanon in 1976 that eventually brought Lebanon under complete control of Syria witnessed major political, economic, and security impact. However, the emergence of Rafik Hariri to transform Lebanon into the flourishing economy and establish political stability became a cause of concern for Syria. Hariri emerged as the popular leader in Lebanon with his commitment to economic liberalism and efforts to rebuild the lost Lebanese economy, For controlling Lebanon, Bashar al-Assad formed a strong Syrian-Lebanese security apparatus under General Lahoud, (later became the Lebanese President) to influence the significant economic and political decisions. But Rafik Hariri completely discarded this diplomatic matrix. The main issue emerged about the term extension of Emile Lahoud as the President. His six-year term was about to end in 2004; however, the Syrian government wanted to reinstate him for three more years. Even constitutional amendment was forced to extend the term for allowing him to stay in the office; however, Hariri opposed the move.[288] Even international community including the US, France came in support of Hariri and explicitly condemned the Syrian interference in Lebanese affairs. Also on 2 September 2004, United Nations Security Council (UNSC) by proposing Resolution 1559 called for the immediate withdrawal of foreign troops (Syrian troops) from Lebanon and disarming of all militias (Hezbollah and some armed Palestinian factions).

Syria made few attempts to comply with the resolution; however, the assassination of Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri in February 2005 raised public outrage, known as 'Cedar Revolution' led to the forceful withdrawal of Syrian military forces. Lebanon witnessed twenty-nine years of long Syrian presence (1976-2005). Even after the withdrawal, Syria continued to exert its presence in Lebanon, especially in the political matters. It was only in 2008, Syria legitimised the sovereignty of Lebanon by giving up its aim of 'Greater Syria' as an ideological premise of Syrian

[287] Ibid.87.

[288] Safa, Oussama (2006), "Getting to Arab Democracy: Lebanon Springs Forward", *Journal of Democracy*, 17 (1): 22-37, pp.28-29.

nationalism and established diplomatic relations.[289] It was so short that after three years of diplomatic relations, Syria descended into civil war, the involvement of Hezbollah complicated the relationship between both the countries and spillover effects of Syrian civil war transformed Lebanon into the more fragile confessional polity.

The presence of Syrians in Lebanon before the outbreak of Syrian civil war: Apart from refugees, who flee their country because of war or other catastrophes, Lebanon has also witnessed a constant flow of migrant workers, who leave their country for economic reasons. The creation of both nation-states in the 1940s initiated the free flow of goods and people between the two countries. This was the time when cheap labour and job market were required by Lebanon and Syria, respectively allowing their free entry and exit.[290] Lebanon was considered a source of employment for Syrians during the economic boom of the 1950s and the 1960s. This period witnessed the first wave of migration "when hundreds of thousands of Syrians searched economic opportunities in the 'Switzerland of West Asia', which was a cultural, intellectual and most importantly economic centre at the time."[291]

Historically Syria and Lebanon share economic and political relations and therefore, became a preferable destination for the refugees. Syrian political exiles and refugees were provided asylum by Lebanon. Even Lebanon became a place to plan and launch many successful or abortive coups against the Syrian regimes.[292] Moreover, the presence of Syrian businessmen and workers both in the formal and informal sectors before the outbreak of the Syrian civil war highlighted the importance of Lebanon for the Syrian economy. The Lebanese civil war created a labour shortage that was fulfilled by the influx of a large number of Syrian economic migrants. A large number of remittances transferred to Syria every year during 1960s-70s. However, the

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[289] Wieland, Carsten (2016), "Syrian- Lebanese Relations: the impossible dissociation" in Felsch, Maximilian, Martin Wählisch (eds.) *Lebanon and the Arab Uprisings: In the Eye of the Hurricane,* London: Routledge, p.167.

[290][290] Rochelle, Doris and Abbie Taylor (2013), *Syrian Refugees in Jordan and Lebanon: A Snapshot from Summer,* Washington, DC: Georgetown University, p.20

[291] Orhan, Oytun (2014), *The Situation of Syrian Refugees in the Neighbouring Countries: Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations,* Ankara: Center for Middle Eastern Strategic Studies (ORSAM), p.3

[292] Weinberger, Naomi Joy (1986), *Syrian Intervention in Lebanon*, New York: Oxford University Press, p.82.

emergence of the Gulf countries as an attractive destination moved the Syrian economic migrants to these places. Many Syrian business communities were settled in Lebanon long back as a result of repressive Baathist policies. Even the theory of 'push and pull' can also be incorporated to justify the departure of the business community from Syria. Approximately several hundred thousands of Syrian businessmen and their families left Syria within four years (1963-67) and settled in Lebanon. As a result of this displacement, Syria faced severe economic challenges and crisis. Lebanon received the large part of the Syrian capital and workforce despite the fragility brought by the brief occurrence of the 1958 civil war. During 1963-1969, the number of Syrians in Lebanon doubled from 129, 509 to 255,264.[293] Even relaxed legislation and endless private accommodation contributed to increasing the numbers. Further, Syrian financial activities were relocated in Lebanon since closing down of banks in Syria and opening of new branches in Lebanon. According to a study, in 1971, 22 out of 70 of the bank directors in Lebanon were of Syrian origin.[294]

The Lebanese civil war troubled the presence of Syrian workforce; however, the reconstruction phase in the 1990s brought back the normalcy. This period witnessed the peak point in terms of numbers for the Syrian workforce, reaching around 600–700 thousand. However, by 2000, their numbers declined to 200–400 thousand due to political instability and other economic challenges. Furthermore, the continued Syrian military presence (1990-2005) impacted the numbers of the Syrian labour force in Lebanon. The negative attitude of Lebanese nationals towards them declined their numbers; however, post-Syrian withdrawal helped to maintain their numbers within the range of 0.2-0.3 million that used to be around 0.6-0.7 million during the 1990s. (See table 3.4).

[293] Picard, Elizabeth (2006) "Managing Identites among Expatriate Business across the Syrian Lebanese boundary", in Inga Brandell (eds.), *State Frontiers: Borders and Boundaries in the Middle East*, London: I. B. Tauris, pp.80-81.

[294] Ibid.81.

Table- 3.4: Presence of Syrian Workers in Lebanon (in Million)[295]

Years	Number of Syrian migrants
In 1990s	0.6- 0.7
1992	0.2
1995-96	0.4-0.7
2000	0.2- 0.4
2011 (before Syrian civil war)	0.3

The year 2011 can be considered as a turning point both for Syria and its population. Before the outbreak of the Syrian civil war, the angle of economic considerations played a crucial role in the movement of Syrians to Lebanon. However, due to the violent civil war, both the volume and nature of the migration changed significantly. The economic interdependence between Syria and Lebanon is determined by geographic proximity and age-old migration along with family relations paved the way for Syrians to choose Lebanon as their preferred destination from 2011 onwards. The fine line between economic migrants coming voluntarily and refugees escaping violence remained highly contested in the current context of Syrians entering into Lebanon.

4. The Influx of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon

Article 1(A) (2) of the 1951 Convention defines a refugee as "a person who is owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself/herself of the protection of that country".[296] A total of 65.3 million people were displaced at the end of 2015, more than at any time since the Second World War.[297] The Syrian civil war alone has created the largest refugee crisis

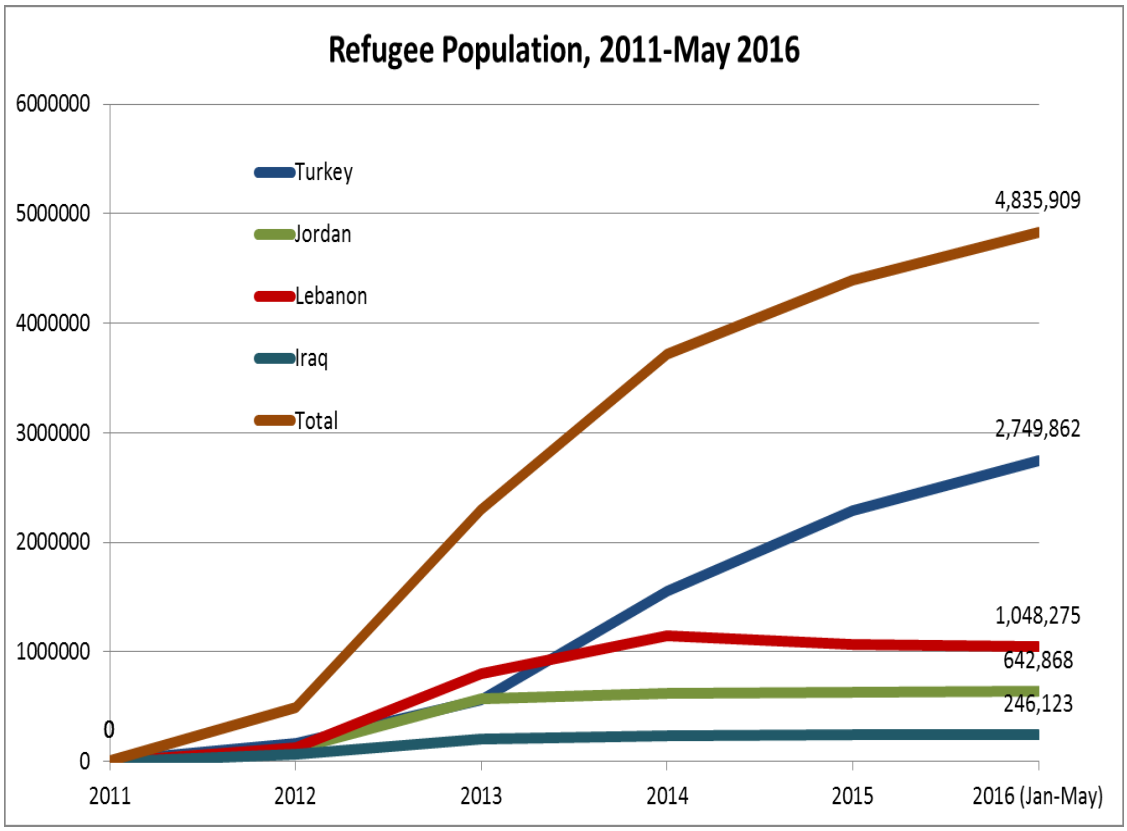
[295] Cited in Vliet, Sam van (2016), "Syrian refugees in Lebanon: coping with unpreceded challenges", in Felsch, Maximilian, Martin Wählisch (eds.) *Lebanon and the Arab Uprisings: In the Eye of the Hurricane*, London: Routledge, p.91; Chalcraft, John (2009), *The Invisible Cage: Syrian Migrant Workers in Lebanon*, Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, pp.147-148.

[296] UNHCR (2010), *Convention and Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees 195*1, Geneva: UNHCR, p.3.

[297] Edwards, Adrian (2016), "Global forced displacement hits record high", UNHCR [Online: web] Accessed 10 Jan. 2017 URL: http://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2016/6/5763b65a4/global-forced-displacement-hits-record-high.html

of contemporary history. Since March 2011 till December 2016, over a quarter of a million Syrians have been killed and over one million have been injured. Approximately, 4.8 million fled to Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and Iraq, and about 6.6 million were internally displaced within Syria, making it the largest displacement crisis globally. Even approximately one million requested asylum to Europe. Majority of the Syrian refugees have taken shelter in the neighbouring countries comprising Lebanon (more than one million), Jordan (more than 0.6 million) and Turkey (more than 2.5 million), placed tremendous pressure on the critical infrastructure of the host countries.[298] Figure- 3.1 and 3.2 present the comparison of Lebanon with other countries about providing shelter to Syrian refugees.

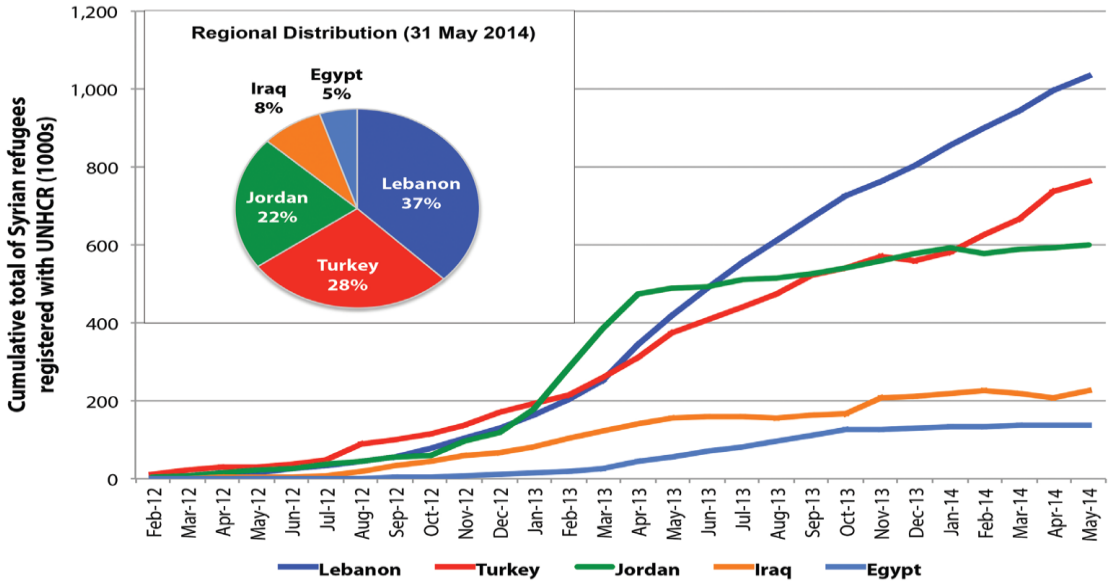
Figure-3.1: Registered Syrian Refugee Population in Neighbouring Countries including Lebanon, 2011-May 2016



Source: UNHCR (2016), *Syrian Refugee Response Plan*, Lebanon, Beirut: UNHCR, p.4.

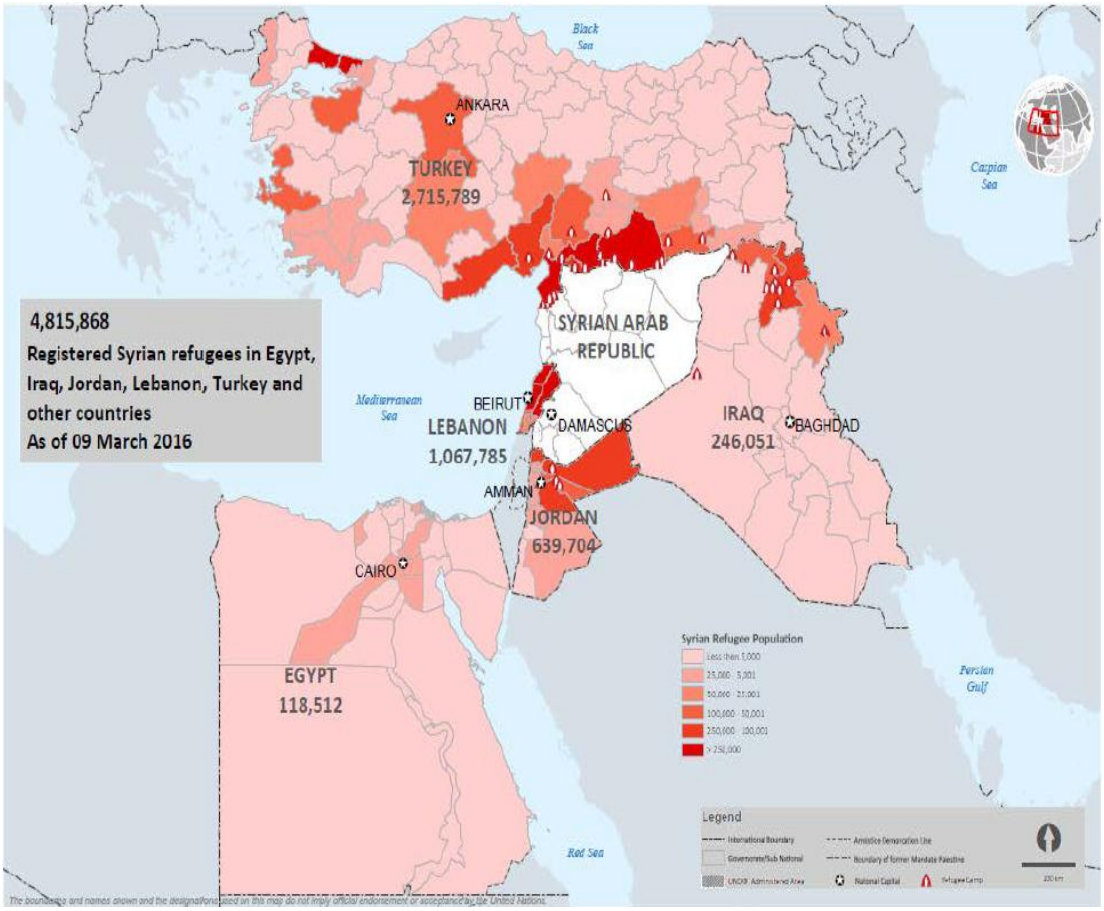
[298] UNHCR (2015), "Syria Regional Refugee Response: Inter-agency Information Sharing Portal", [Online: web] Accessed 15 March 2016, URL: http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php.

Figure-3.2: Regional Distribution of Syrian Refugees (31 May 2014)



Source: UNHCR (2015), *Syrian Refugee Response Plan*, Lebanon, Beirut: UNHCR, p.5

Figure-3.3: Map of Syrian Refugees in Neighbouring Countries of Syria.



Source: Errighi, Lorenza and Jörn Griesse (2016), *The Syrian Refugee Crisis: Labour Market Implications in Jordan and Lebanon*, Luxembourg: European Commission, p.7.

Lebanon was considered a preferred destination for the displaced Syrians. Though the geographic proximity and the civil war's ferocity contributed to this movement, however, it has other broader causes. The social ties and proximity to the borders contributed towards the higher settlements of refugees in border areas rather than in more distant areas.[299] On the popular level, factors such as geographical proximity, the shared political and socio-economic history, inter-Arab migration, family relations as well as close interpersonal relationships, including the intermarriages provided the platform to consider Lebanon as a suitable destination for the Syrian refugees. The bilateral Treaty of Brotherhood and Cooperation (1991) between both the countries, allowed entry of Syrians and Lebanese without the requirement of passport and visa that effectively brought them closer.[300] In October 2008 Syria recognised the sovereignty of Lebanon and established official diplomatic ties leading to the "path of rapprochement" following several years of sentiments holding anti- Syrian attitude in Lebanon.[301] The anti- Syrian sentiments were prevailing due to long Syrian presence in Lebanon from 1990-2005.

Beginning of their movement and settlement: The refugee crisis has changed significantly over time. Earlier, those who had their names on the blacklist due to their proactive involvement in the uprising escaped torture or imprisonment. By the end of 2012 civil war became violent, and many Syrians were left without shelter, food, and water, making their condition worse compared to those who arrived earlier.[302] Main border crossings of al- Qaa and al- Masnaa became the primary access route for the initial waves of Syrian refugees in April 2011 for entering Lebanon and were settled mostly in Northern Lebanon mainly in Tripoli, Wadi Khaled, and Akkar.[303] Then in

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[299] Olwan, Mohamed and Ahmed Shiyab (2012), *Forced Migration of Syrians to Jordan: An Exploratory Study*, San Domenico di Fiesole (FI): Migration Policy Centre, European University Institute: pp.1-2; Guzansky, Yoel and Erez Striem (2013), *The Arab Spring and Refugees in the Middle East*, Tel Aviv: The Institute for National Security Studies, Tel Aviv University, p.3.

[300] Dionigi, Filippo (2016), *The Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon: state fragility and social resilience*, London: London School of Economics and Political Science, p.11; [300] Vliet, Sam van (2016), "Syrian refugees in Lebanon: Coping with unpreceded challenges", in Felsch, Maximilian, Martin Wählisch (eds.) *Lebanon and the Arab Uprisings: In the Eye of the Hurricane*, London: Routledge, p.92.

[301] Yacoubian, Mona (2010), *Lebanon's Evolving Relationship with Syria: Back to the Future or Turning a New Page*, Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, p.2.

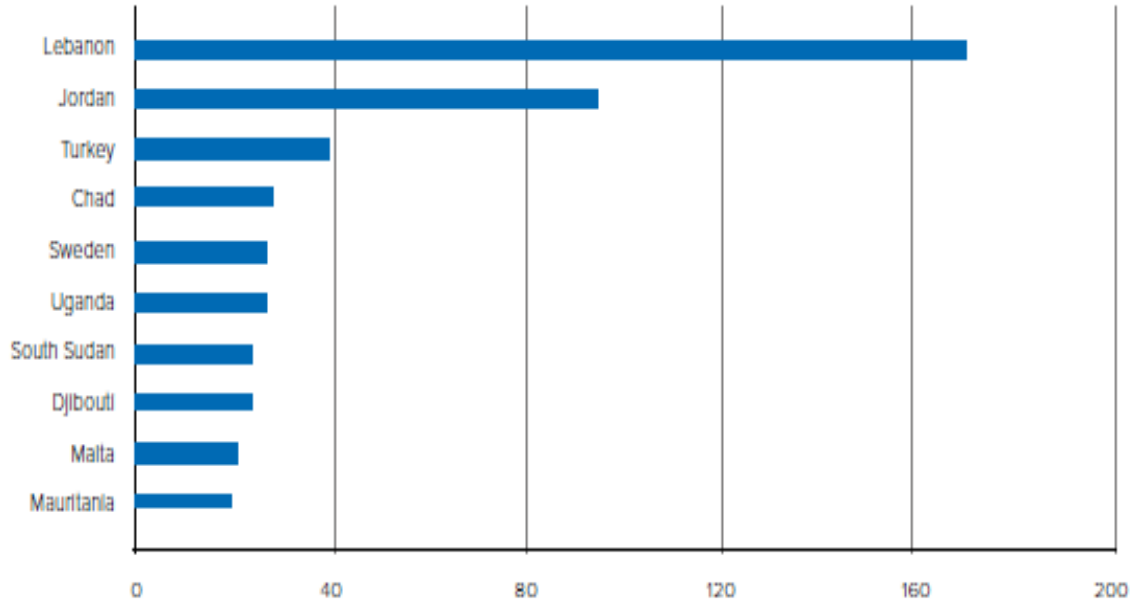
[302] Lust, Ellen (2015), *Syrian Spillover: National Tensions, Domestic Responses, & International Options*, Washington, DC: Project on Middle East Democracy (POMED), pp.3-4.

[303] Rabil, Robert G. (2016), *The Syrian Refugee Crisis in Lebanon: The Double Tragedy of Refugees and Impacted Host Communities*, Maryland: Lexington Books, pp.11-12.

May 2011, mostly women and children escaped to Lebanon from the town of Talkalakh in northwestern Syria to Bekaa valley. Later in March 2012, many Syrian refugees came from Homs, Quseir, Zabadani and Hama to Bekaa valley, making it the primary destination.[304] By analysing the movement of displaced Syrians to Lebanon, Filippo Dionigi stated: "Although it was the country that would have had the least to offer in terms of security, stability, and isolation from the conflict, Lebanon is also the country with the most established migratory record historically in regards to Syrians."[305] Therefore, for taking shelter, Lebanon emerged as an appropriate destination for the displaced Syrians.

Lebanon has become one of the most affected countries due to the arrival of Syrian refugees in huge numbers. It witnessed the severe repercussions due to the massive influx of Syrian refugees, the largest in proportion to its size and hence became the country with the highest per capita concentration of refugees' worldwide (See figure-3.4).

Figure: 3.4 Number of Refugees per 1000 inhabitants (end of 2016)[306]



Source: UNHCR (2016), *Global trends: Forced Displacement*, Geneva: UNHCR, p.20.

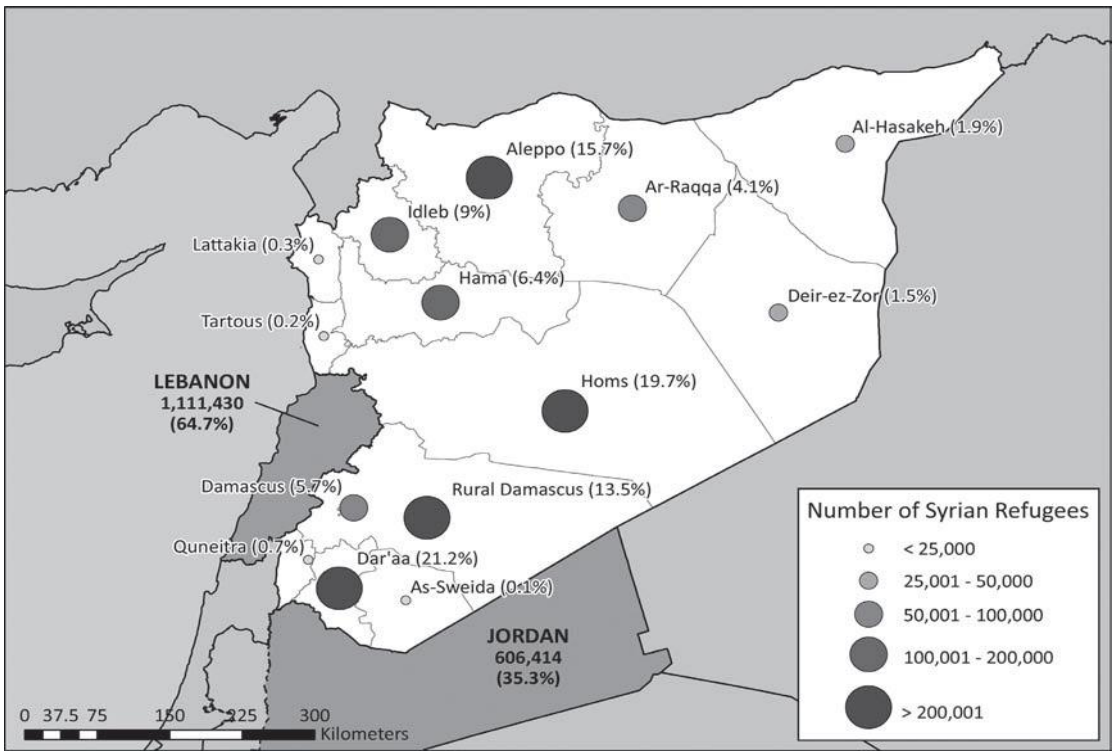
[304] Naufal, Hala (2012), *Syrian Refugees in Lebanon: the Humanitarian Approach under Political Divisions*, San Domenico di Fiesole (FI): Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute.

[305] Dionigi, Filippo (2016), *The Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon: state fragility and social resilience*, London: London School of Economics and Political Science, p.32.

[306] Only countries with national populations over 100,000 were considered in this analysis.

Witnessing the small size of Lebanon (a territory smaller than Maryland), out of more than four million people who fled Syria, more than 1 million registered refugees took shelter in Lebanon, thereby surpassing 25 percent of Lebanon's population (before the influx of Syrian refugees, population of Lebanon was around 4.4 million). It is being estimated that about one in every five people living in Lebanon is a refugee from the Syrian civil war.

Figure-3.5: Map of Density of Refugees Leaving Syria by Governorate, 2011–14 (in %)



Source: Verme, Paolo et al. (2015), *The Welfare of Syrian Refugees: Evidence from Jordan and Lebanon*, Washington, DC: World Bank, p.41.

Figure 3.5 presents the density of all refugees leaving Syria by governorate who registered with the UNHCR in either Lebanon or Jordan. From the statistics, it was estimated that Lebanon was chosen by around 65 percent of all Syrian refugees for shelter. Only three governorates, namely Homs (21.4 %), Aleppo (20.5 %), and Damascus (14.1 %) in Syria became major places of origin for the displaced Syrians in Lebanon. More than 50 percent of Syrian refugees registered in Lebanon came from these locations. Moreover, Bekaa (36 %), North Lebanon (25 %), and Mount Lebanon (25 %) became the main areas of settlement for about 85 percent of Syrian refugees in Lebanon.

The predominant Sunni population and Syrian residents in northern Lebanon received mostly Sunni Syrian refugees in their neighbourhoods and homes. Since 2012, Bekaa valley emerged as the primary destination for the Syrian refugees, the reasons being given the geographical proximity to Syria and its town and cities such as Homs, Quseir, Hama, Zabadani and the countryside of Damascus. Unlike in northern Lebanon, a small number of refugees, except Arsal and certain areas in the northern Bekaa, were hosted by Lebanese families, while the majority moved into overcrowded rented houses and apartments or shelters provided by local communities or set up informal settlements (tents) on abandoned or rented plots of land.[307]

Majority of the Syrian refugees consists of women and children. The most affected population among the Syrian refugees are children that comprising more than fifty percent (27% boys and 26% girls) of all the Syrian refugees as per UNHCR estimates. While children under 18 years consist of around 2 percent. About the population of women and men over 18 years of age consists of 26 percent and 21 percent of the refugee population, respectively.[308] In short, more than half of the school-aged children in Lebanon are now Syrians.[309] A significant number of Syrians have entered Lebanon illegally and that newborn Syrians in the country have been thus far considered stateless. Lebanon, until 2014, maintained an 'Open Door Policy' based on mutual compassion, recognition of the "principle of *non-refoulement"* and the 1993 bilateral agreement for Economic and Social Cooperation and Coordination between the two countries. The Lebanon Crisis Response Plan for 2015– 2016 highlighted the position of the Lebanese government with regard to Syrians who fled to Lebanon as "displaced" and diplomatically uses the terms "persons with UNHCR registered as refugees" or "de facto refugees.[310] Registration certificates were given to refugees registered with the UNHCR and the High Relief commission with the aim of preventing fraud and facilitating access to needed services. As the magnitude of the

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[307] Rabil, Robert G. (2016), *The Syrian Refugee Crisis in Lebanon: The Double Tragedy of Refugees and Impacted Host Communities*, Maryland: Lexington Books, pp.11-12.

[308] UNHCR (2015), "Syria Regional Refugee Response, Inter-agency information sharing portal", Lebanon, [Online: web] Accessed 25 Sep. 2016, URL: http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=122

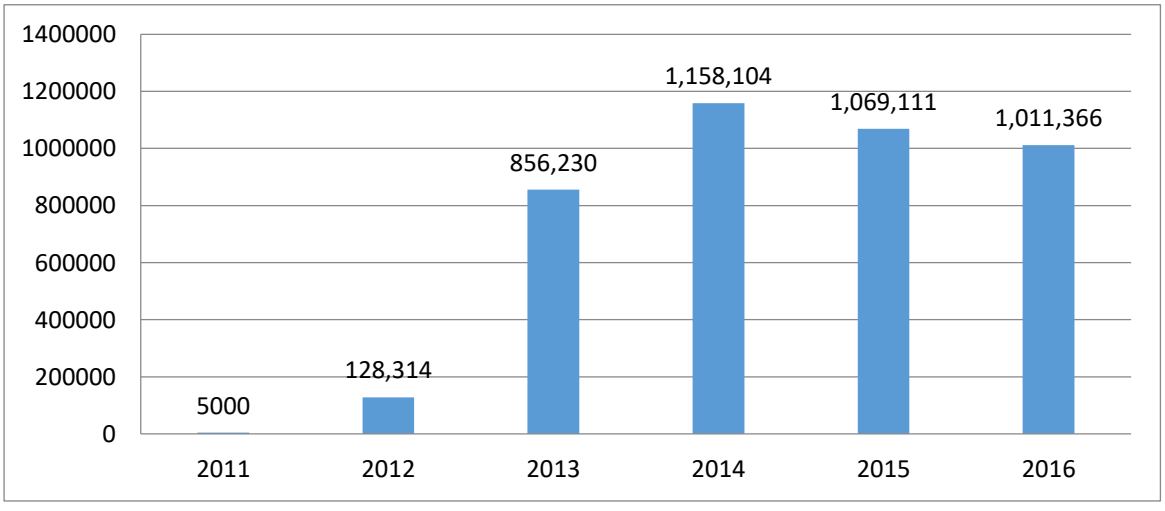
[309] Betts, Alexander and Paul Collier (2015), "Help Refugees Help Themselves: Let Displaced Syrians Join the Labor Market", *Foreign Affairs*, 84-92, p.86.

[310] Vliet, Sam van (2016), "Syrian refugees in Lebanon: Coping with unpreceded challenges", in Felsch, Maximilian, Martin Wählisch (eds.) *Lebanon and the Arab Uprisings: In the Eye of the Hurricane*, London: Routledge, p.92.

Syrian civil war expanded, the influx of Syrian refugees to Lebanon increased significantly.

Numbers of the registered Syrian refugees by 2016: Initially, Syrian refugees took shelter in the Bekka valley and northern Lebanon. But later on, Syrian refugees widened their reach by spreading throughout the country as their numbers shoot up exponentially. By the end of 2013, Lebanon received 36 percent of the Syrian refugees. More than 51,300 Palestinian refugees from Syria and 17,500 Lebanese returnees were registered in 2013. The arrival of refugees to Lebanon increased at unprecedented levels in 2013 and 2014 with 47, 000 refugees on average being registered by UNHCR per month. As the Syrian civil war showed no signs of a settlement, the Lebanese government began in mid-2014 to take measures to limit the number of Syrian refugees entering Lebanon. As of July 2015, UNHCR registered 1,172,753 Syrian refugees. By December 2015, the numbers of Syrian refugees declined to 1,069,111 as a result of temporary suspension of new registrations by UNHCR in May as per the Lebanese government's instructions.[311] Even it reached 1,011,366 at the end of December 2016. Figure 3.6 shows these numbers more evidently. The complex and costly regulations to renew their residency visas, expensive accommodation, extreme poverty and sense of insecurity forced them to search for other alternatives.

Figure-3.6: Number of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (April 2011- December 2016)



Source: UNHCR (2015), "Syria Regional Refugee Response: Inter-agency Information Sharing Portal",[Online: web] Accessed 15 March 2016, URL: http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php.

[311] Ibid.12-13

Conclusion

The Syrian civil war became one of the biggest humanitarian crises in contemporary history, creating massive displacement both within and outside Syria. The role of Hezbollah in the civil war, its spillover on Lebanon in general and on Lebanese politics, in particular, became an important area of analysis. The involvement of other state and non-state actors made this crisis more violent and complicated by transforming it into a struggle for regional as well as global superiority. In this entire game of power politics and achieving regional and global supremacy, one community that bears the brunt most due to this crisis was forgotten comprising the displaced Syrians. The influx of Syrian refugees can be witnessed in other neighbouring countries such as Jordan, Turkey, Egypt and Iraq but their arrival in Lebanon in large numbers was determined by many factors, including geographical proximity, shared political and socio-economic history, inter-Arab migration, family relations as well as close interpersonal ties.

They entered into Lebanon both via legal and illegal routes and means. The brotherhood treaty signed between Lebanon and Syria in 1991 played a significant role in the movement of these displaced Syrians in Lebanon. Though Syrians in the form of economic migrants were already present in Lebanon even before the Syrian civil war, their movement as refugees posed problems for Lebanon. Initially, Syrian refugees were received both by Lebanon and the Lebanese population on humanitarian grounds and to return the favour of providing shelter by Syrians to the Lebanese people during the Lebanese civil war (1975-1990). However, as their numbers started increasing and putting pressure on the economy, critical infrastructure and services, the earlier receptive attitudes soon transformed into one of restriction by the state and local population. A majority of the Syrian refugees took shelter in the marginalised locations in Lebanon, mainly in Bekka valley and Northern Lebanon, where the existing infrastructure and necessary amenities had already become saturated, making the situation more miserable, both for the Syrian refugees and the host community.

Chapter- Four

The Challenges for Syrian Refugees in Lebanon

Refugees are people like anyone else, like you and me. They led ordinary lives before becoming displaced, and their biggest dream is to be able to live normally again.[312]

Ban Ki-moon, United Nations Secretary-General (2007-2016)[313]

Lebanon hosts the highest number of refugees per capita worldwide by comprising around 1.2 million registered Syrian refugees. One in every four people in Lebanon is a Syrian refugee. In the initial years of the Syrian civil war, Syrian refugees were welcomed in Lebanon; however, later their massive inflow became a huge burden both for Lebanon as well as its local communities. Their large numbers and competition for resources and employment opportunities fuelled tensions between Syrian refugees and the local population. Since Lebanon was already suffering from economic and political vulnerability, in that situation providing services to these Syrian refugees in large numbers in itself became a huge burden on the Lebanese government. Therefore, accessibility to basic resources and services became a challenge for the Syrian refugees. Even 'no-camp' policy forced them to live in informal settlements making their lives more miserable. The increasing cost of living, payment for rent accommodation, and growing indebtedness, can be considered serious problems faced by them. Initially, Lebanon embraced an 'Open Door Policy'; however, adopted regulatory policies later after witnessing their presence in large numbers. In May 2015 new registration of Syrian refugees was temporarily suspended by UNHCR Lebanon as per the instructions given by the Lebanese government. The political instability did not permit the Lebanese state to opt for any incoherent policy towards Syrian refugees. It was only in October 2014, 'Policy Paper' with regard to Syrian refugees and their repercussions on the state was adopted to prevent more vulnerability for Lebanon from economic, political and security perspectives Ministry

[312]United Nations (2015), "World Refugee Day 20 June: Secretary-General's Message for 2015", [Online: web] Accessed 5 February 2017, URL:https://www.un.org/en/events/refugeeday/2015/sgmessage.shtml

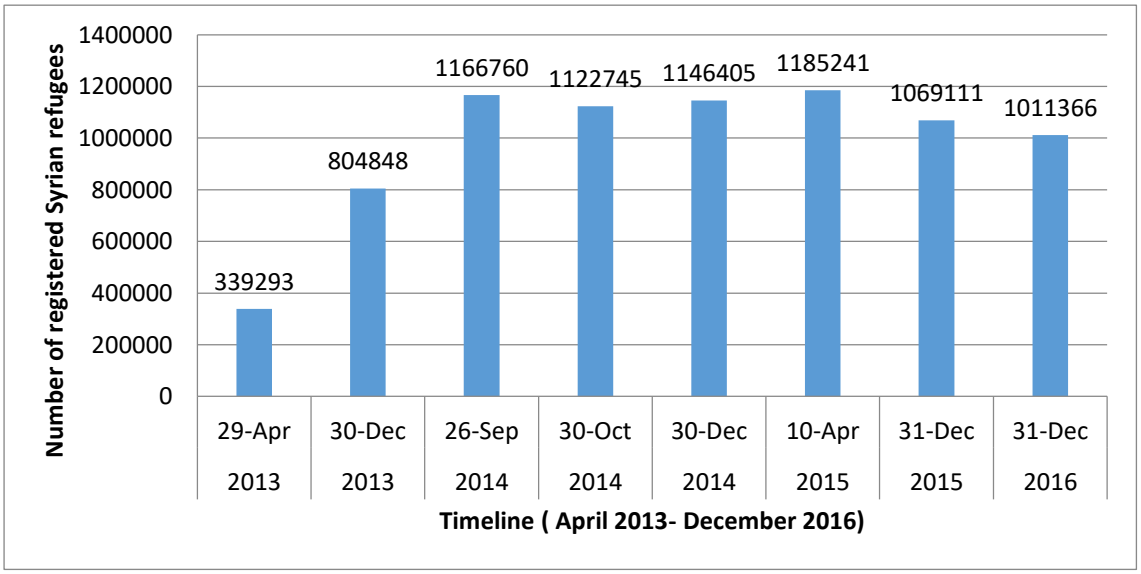
[313]Ban Ki-moon was the eighth Secretary-General of the United Nations. He held office from 1 January 2007 to 31 December 2016. On 21 June 2011, he was unanimously re-elected by the General Assembly for a second mandate.

of Social Affairs (MoSA) with the cooperation of other institutions and humanitarian agencies responded towards the needs of both Syrian refugees and local population.

1. Registered or Unregistered Syrian Refugees and Issues Associated

Following a security crackdown in the neighbouring town of Talkalakh in April 2011 and occurrence of major clashes in the city of Homs in March 2012, around 5000 Syrian refugees entered in Lebanon.[314] These displaced Syrians entered into Lebanon both legally and illegally. Masnaa and ka'a became the major official border crossing for the movement of these displaced Syrians to Lebanon. However, minority opted for the unofficial border crossings due to its proximity and accessibility. Around two thousand refugees were entering into Lebanon each day, and as a result, approximately 0.5 million displaced Syrians arrived in the country by June 2013. During 2013-2014, an average of 47,000 refugees was registered per month by the UNHCR. It became unmanageable for the Lebanese government on its own to deal with this huge influx. So, from January 2013, with the help of the UNHCR, the cabinet agreed for the registration of Syrian refugees.

Figure-4.1: Registered Syrian Refugee Population in Lebanon, (2013-2016)

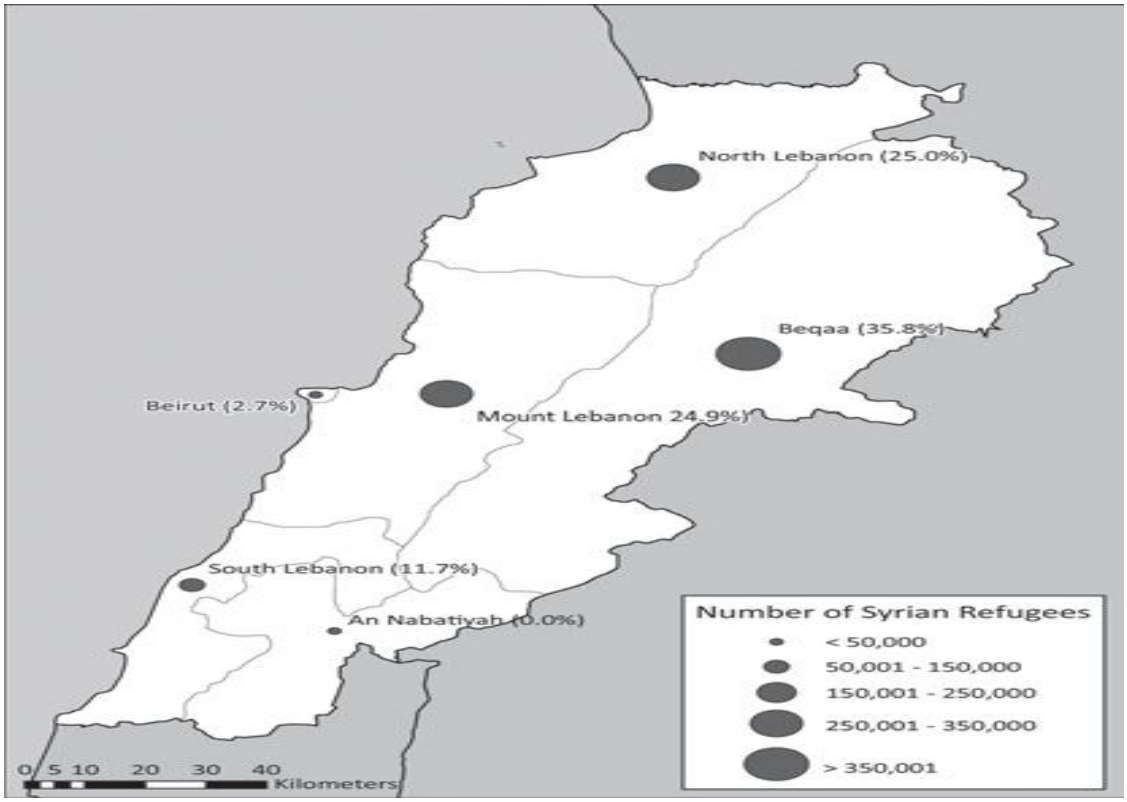


Source: UNHCR (2017), "Syria Regional Refugee Response, Lebanon", [Online: web] Accessed 10 January 2017, URL: data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria/location/71

[314]Cited in Vliet, Sam Van and Guita Hourani (2012), *Refugees of the Arab Spring: Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (April 2011-April 2012)*, Cairo: Center for Migration and Refugees Studies, American University of Cairo, p.19.

Figure 4.1 shows the population of displaced Syrians surpassed one million by April 2014, comprising half of them under the age of eighteen. By May 2014, approximately 1,030,413 registered Syrian refugees witnessed their presence in Lebanon. Out of this, approximately 16 percent belong to the youth aged 15-24 years.[315] By December 2014, these registered refugees reached 1,146,7405 in numbers. On 10 April 2015, registered Syrian refugees touched all-time high numbers by comprising 1,185,241 that started declining afterwards due to the regulatory policy adopted by Lebanon in May 2015 for limiting the entry of Syrian refugees. As a consequence, the official registered Syrian refugees in Lebanon reached 1,011,366 by 31 December 2016.[316]

Figure-4.2: Density of Syrian Refugees in Host Communities by Governorate in Lebanon, 2011–14 (in %)



Source: Verme, Paolo et al. (2015), *The Welfare of Syrian Refugees: Evidence from Jordan and Lebanon*, Washington, DC: World Bank, p.42.

[315] Chahine, Ali et al. (2014), *Situation Analysis of Youth in Lebanon Affected by the Syrian Crisis*, New York: United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), p.3

[316]UNHCR (2017), "Syria Regional Refugee Response, Lebanon", [Online: web] Accessed 10 January 2017, URL: data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria/location/71

As shown in figure 4.2, three governorates of Lebanon namely Bekaa (36%), North Lebanon (25%), and Mount Lebanon (25%)" became the major destinations for the settlement of these Syrian refugees due to border proximity. The area of their origin and location of their settlement in Lebanon made the situation more complex since both the areas come under the category of the relatively more impoverished parts of both the countries. Due to safety and familial ties, many started settling down in cities such as Tyre (Sour), Saida, and Tripoli. About getting assistance from the UNHCR, sending children to schools or further accessibility to get work, only two-thirds of the registered Syrian refugees are capable of acquiring these benefits. Remaining refugees did not register themselves as refugees due to various reasons including lacking knowledge about the processes, their plans to go back to Syria, and fear to get caught at the border areas. But as per the statements released by the UNHCR officials, personal considerations, violent situation and fear of sharing their information with both Syrian and Lebanese authorities were the reasons behind staying in Lebanon without not getting registered with the UNHCR.[317]

By December 2016, registered Syrian refugees comprised around 1 million population in which around 48 percent were males and 53 percent comprised females. Moreover, significant percentage consists of age group between 18-59 in which male includes of about 18 percent while female consists of 24 percent (See table 4.1). Still, Syrian refugees have one or more family members present in Syria, mainly to protect the property of families. In addition to this, 235,024 Syrian households were also present in Lebanon at that time.[318] Furthermore around 53,070 comprised of the Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) by April 2014 as it is important to underline the difference between refugees from Syria (that includes Palestinian refugees) and Syrian refugees exclusively.

[317]Orhan, Oytun (2014), *The Situation of Syrian Refugees in the Neighbouring Countries: Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations*, Ankara: Centre for Middle Eastern Strategic Studies, p.33.

[318]UNHCR (2016), "Syria Regional Refugee Response Plan –Lebanon", [Online: web] Accessed 2 Jan. 2017, URL: http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria/location/71

Table-4.1: Demography of the Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (by 31 December 2016)

Male (47.9%)	Age	Female (52.5%)
9 %	0-4	8.6 %
12.2 %	5-11	11.7 %
6.8 %	12-17	6.5 %
18.3 %	18-59	24.1 %
1.2 %	60+	1.5 %

Source: UNHCR (2016), *Syria Regional Refugee Response*, Beirut, Lebanon: UNHCR

A regulatory framework for visa and its fee structure: The major challenge faced by the Syrian refugees lacking a valid ID, entered illegally and unable to renew their residency permit due to exorbitant fee and therefore came under the category of the undocumented (illegal) residents, became eligible for the deportation. To stay in Lebanon, it became essential for the Syrian refugees to acquire a valid visa for six months. Renewing their visas every six months is necessary that are free of cost, including both entry visa and its extension. However, after one year, US$200 per person above the age of 15 was required to pay for this visa to the General Security Directorate. This excessive visa fee for an average family, forcing them to go back to Syria and acquire a new exit visa to Lebanon due to the unaffordability of the fee. According to an estimate, around 0.3 million Syrians travel across the border for this despite the risk of being detained at the border areas.

The growing numbers of the Syrian refugees forced Lebanese government to opt for more rigorous and restrictive policies concerning their entry into Lebanon. On the one hand, regulations about visa requirement have gradually been tightened and on the other hand, the 'signing of a pledge not to work' became mandatory for getting new entry visas and the extensions of old ones and failing in this would face jail. This validation was not just confined to visa obligations, but the place of residence equally came under this category. For example, if Syrian refugees failed to get the validation of small shelter unit (SHU), collective shelters (CS), or other informal tented settlements (ITS) the landlord has the responsibility for validating their place of residence along with the document, signed by the local mayor (*mukhtar)*, showing

proof of ownership of the property. Seeing the complications, many Syrian refugees go unregistered instead of attempting the extension for their visas due to the unaffordability to fulfil these requirements.[319]

Other immigrants in Lebanon were denied asylum, detained, or deported but Syrian refugees until January 2015, benefitted due to special relationship between Lebanon and Syria as per the "Treaty of Brotherhood, Cooperation, and Coordination" (1991). This treaty streamlined two important objectives of the two countries, i.e. foreign policy and security and, asked to act towards "harmonise their foreign policies and not threaten each other's security."[320] This treaty became a foundation for another following bilateral agreement for socio-economic cooperation (1993) that comprehensively provided the preferential treatment of Syrian nationals. The signing of brotherhood treaty of 1991 between both the countries removed the clause of passport and visa requirement while crossing the borders. As per the provisions of this treaty, with a valid identity document, any Syrian can go to Lebanon and stay for six months. As per the estimates, approximately 3- 5 lakhs Syrians were already staying in Lebanon for the work mainly in the agriculture and construction sector along with tourism motives before the beginning of the Syria civil war.[321] In the first year of the Syrian civil war, the number of Syrian labour migrants outweighed the number of Syrian refugees in Lebanon. In addition to all this, it is important to note that as a result of the 1994 naturalisation decree, many Syrian refugees hold Lebanese citizenship.[322] Therefore their dual citizenship status provides them with the rights not only as refugees but also as Lebanese citizens, making the situation more complicated.[323]

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[319]Knudsen, Are John (2017), "Syria's Refugees in Lebanon: Brothers, Burden, and Bone of Contention" in Rosita di Peri and Daniel Meier (eds.) *Lebanon Facing The Arab Uprisings: Constraints and Adaptation*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, p.143

[320] Knudsen, Are John (2017), "Syria's Refugees in Lebanon: Brothers, Burden, and Bone of Contention" in Rosita di Peri and Daniel Meier (eds.) *Lebanon Facing The Arab Uprisings: Constraints and Adaptation*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, p.143.

[321]Orhan, Oytun (2014), *The Situation of Syrian Refugees in the Neighbouring Countries: Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations*, Ankara: Centre for Middle Eastern Strategic Studies, p.33.

[322]The1994 Naturalisation Decree was signed by the President of the Lebanese Republic, Elias El-Hrawi, Prime Minister Rafic Hariri and Minister of Interior Beshara Merhej, granted Lebanese nationality to 88,278 persons. Among them, over 42% of the naturalised were Syrian nationals i.e. approximately 37,076.

[323]Cited in Vilet, Sam Van (2016), "Syrian refugees in Lebanon: coping with unpreceded challenges" in Maximilian Felsch and Martin Wählisch (eds.) *Lebanon and the Arab Uprisings: In the Eye of the Hurricane*, London: Routledge, p.94.

2. Shelter and Accommodation

Undoubtedly, the role of Lebanon in protecting Syrian refugees remained significant despite being non-signatory to both the 1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol. However, past experiences with the Palestinian refugees have affected its practices and policies towards Syrian refugees.[324] The sceptical attitude also terms the setting up of tents as illegal, resulting in no formal refugee camps for the Syrian refugees.[325] As a result of this 'no-camp' policy, finding a shelter became challenging for them. More than 80 percent of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon, dwelling around 1,700 locations countrywide, pay around US$200 rent per month for their accommodations.[326] Even this policy made the assistance provided by the humanitarian agencies including UNHCR and other UN agencies and NGOs, a difficult task since the presence of official camps guarantees the protection of the refugees and coordinate aid relief effectively.[327]

Informal settlements: The 'no camp' policy of Lebanese authorities has forced the Syrian refugees to reside in the informal settlements such as substandard houses, informal tented settlements, garages or unfinished buildings. According to an estimate, 57 percent live in finished apartments or houses and pay for rent or other utilities, while around 25 percent and 16 percent of Syrian refugees live in unfinished or sub-standard buildings and informal settlements respectively. These shelters exist with poor access to water and sanitation services.[328]

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[324]Thorleifsson, Cathrine (2016), "The limits of hospitality: Coping strategies among displaced Syrians in Lebanon", *Third World Quarterly*, 37 (6): 1071-1082, p.1074.

[325] UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (2014), "Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2015-2016", [Online: web] Accessed 20 Jan. 2016, URL:https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/lebanon-crisis-response-plan-2015-2016

[326]UNHCR (2015), "Humanity, hope and thoughts of home: Syrian refugees in southern Lebanon", Online: web] Accessed 2 Feb. 2016, URL http://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2015/2/54ede4b16/humanity-hope-thoughts-home-syrian-refugees-southern-lebanon.html

[327]Thorleifsson, Cathrine (2016), "The limits of hospitality: Coping strategies among displaced Syrians in Lebanon", *Third World Quarterly*, 37 (6): 1071-1082, p.1074.

[328] Norwegian Refugee Council (2014), "A Precarious existence: The Shelter situation of refugees from Syria in neighbouring countries", [Online: web] Accessed 10 May 2016,URL: https://www.nrc.no/resources/reports/a-precarious-existence-the-shelter-situation-of-refugees-from-syria-in-neighbouring-countries/

Figure 4.3: Syrian refugee children in an informal settlement in Bekaa Valley, Lebanon[329]

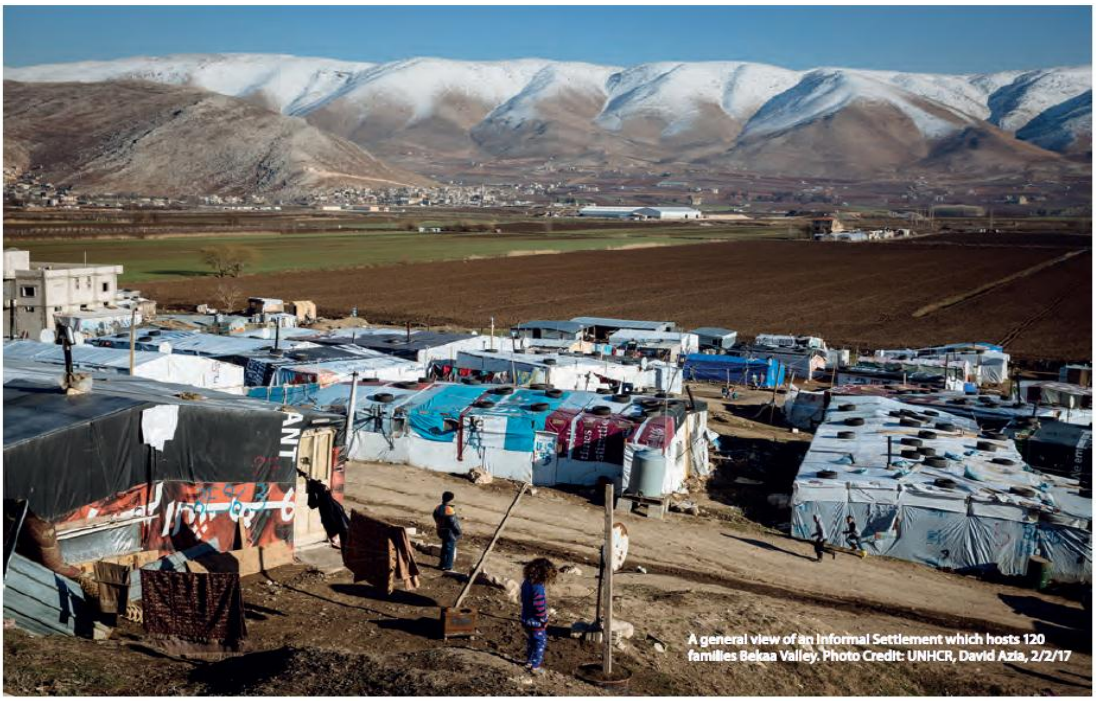
(A)

(B)

[329] Source: (A) Cited in Geha, Carmen and Joumana Talhouk (2018), *Politics and the Plight of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon*, Beirut: American University of Beirut, p.2; (B) Cited in Source: Cited in Government of Lebanon and United Nations (2018), Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (2017-20), Beirut: United Nations, p.107.

Figure-4.4: Informal Tented Settlement in Bekaa[330]

(A)



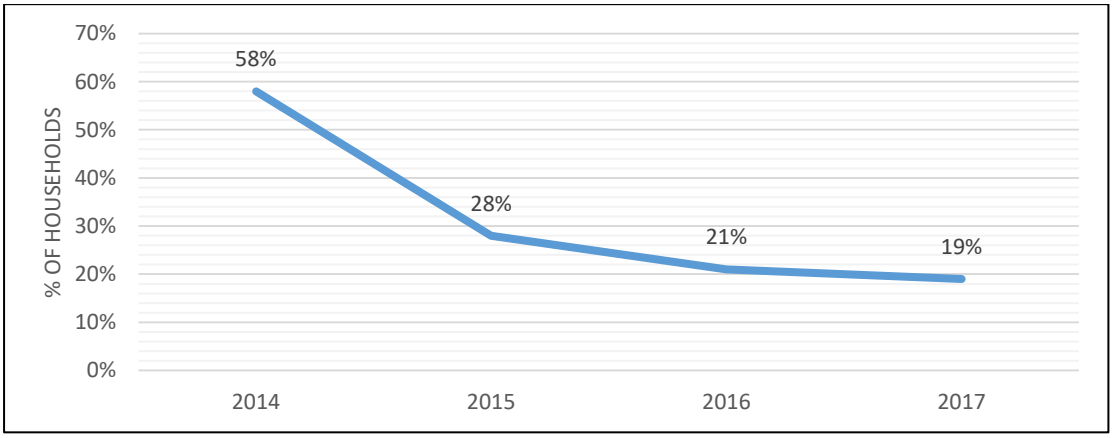
(B)

[330] (A) Source: Save the Children (2014), "Humanitarian Response", [Online: web] Accessed 1 March 2016, https://lebanon.savethechildren.net/what-we-do/humanitarian-response; (B) Source: Cited in Government of Lebanon and United Nations (2018), Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (2017-20), Beirut: United Nations, p.18.

Some of tented settlements were not officially recognised by the Lebanese authorities comprising 10 percent of the Syrian refugees.[331] The cases of mass forced eviction of the refugees increased, mainly occurring among those perceived as becoming 'too permanent'. In addition to forced removal from the informal settlements, reports of higher rates of forced evictions of refugees from rental accommodation equally witnessed. This risk of homelessness became much evident among female-headed households.[332]

The problem of valid residency permits: The United Nations in its report highlighted that in July 2015, around 61 percent of Syrian refugee households lacked valid residency permits as Lebanese government introduced new criteria to renew their residency permits in January 2015. This invalid residency made them more vulnerable and exposed to numerous challenges including human rights violations, arbitrary arrest, detention and deportation, incapability to seek redress, restrictions on movement, inability to register births and marriages and difficulties in accessing basic services such as health and education.

Figure-4.5: Percentage of Syrian refugees' households with all members having valid legal residency (2014-2017)



Source: *Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASyR)*[333] (2017), Beirut: UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP

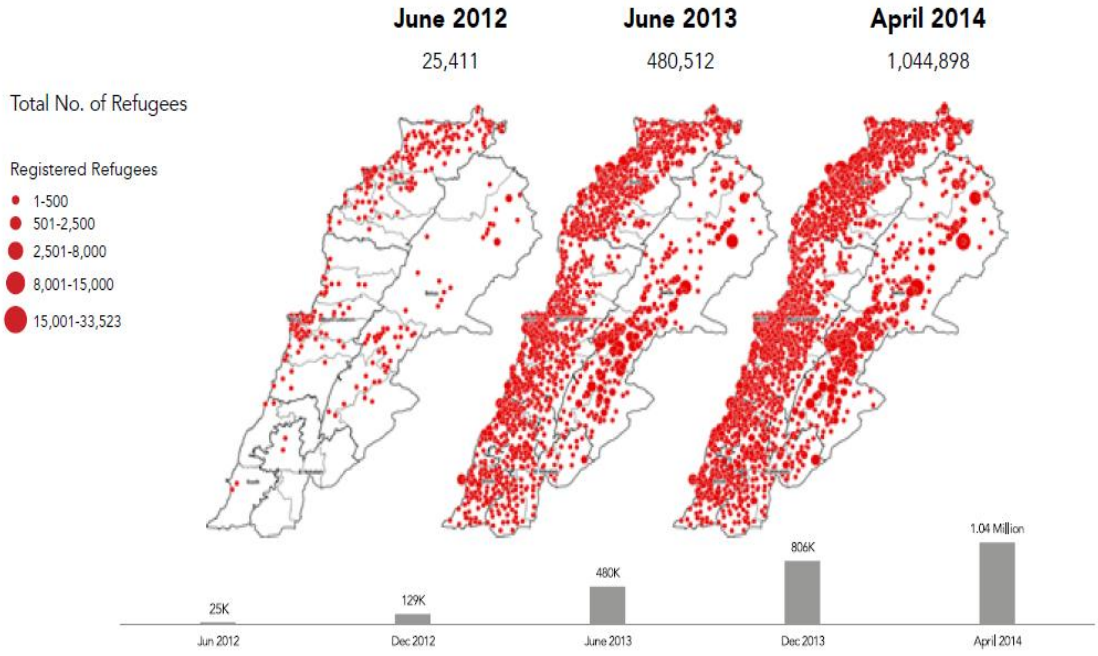
[331]Bidinger, Sarah et al. (2015), *Protecting Syrian Refugees: Laws, Policies, and Global Responsibility Sharing*, Boston: Boston University, p.47.

[332]Norwegian Refugee Council (2014), "A Precarious existence: The Shelter situation of refugees from Syria in neighbouring countries", [Online: web] Accessed 10 May 2016,URL: https://www.nrc.no/resources/reports/a-precarious-existence-the-shelter-situation-of-refugees-from-syria-in-neighbouring-countries/

[333] The Vulnerability Assessment for Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASyR) was conducted jointly by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP).

It was estimated that around 74 percent of surveyed Syrian refugees aged 15 and older lacked legal residency. Figure 4.5 clearly shows the declining percentage of valid legal residency from 58 percent in 2014 to 28 percent in 2015 that eventually reduced to 21 percent in 2016 and reached 19 percent in 2017. The complex procedures and the exorbitant fee for renewing the residency permits were the main reasons responsible for this declining percentage of legal residency. It was calculated that only one in five households were granted legal residency for all its members. It was observed that compared to male- households, slightly (20% versus 19%) more female-headed households had legal residency for all members. The areas such as Nabatieh (32%), the South (29%) and Mount Lebanon (28%) witnessed the highest concentrations of households with all members holding legal residency.

Figure-4.6: The Concentration of Registered Syrian Refugees in Different Governorates in Lebanon (2012-2014)



Source: Cited in World Health Organisation (2016), *WHO support to the humanitarian response in Lebanon, 2 years in review (2014–2015)*, Beirut: World Health Organisation, p.5.

Moreover, these valid residency provisions are also divided according to the type of shelters. For example, Syrian refugees those were living in the residential homes, non-residential and informal settlements were comprising 22 percent, 14 percent and, 11 percent of households with all members having legal residency respectively. As per the result of different surveys, families having at least one member with legal

residency constituted on an average 45 percent. From 2015-2017, the percentage for the households having legal residency for none of its members was increased to 55 percent that was around 29 percent and 20 percent in 2016 and 2015 respectively. Akkar witnessed the highest concentration of households without any legal residency with 61 percent.

UNHCR has estimated around 240 informal settlements in Bekaa alone, ranging from less than ten tents to more than 100. The above figure 4.6 explicitly witnessed the areas with the highest concentration of Syrian refugees including Bekka (Bekka valley) and North Lebanon representing the total numbers of registered refugees under the category of 15001- 33,523 by April 2014. The governorates such as North, the Bekaa, the South and the Palestinian refugee camps come under the category of the highly impoverished and vulnerable areas resulted in direct competition for resources and jobs with Lebanese population those already struggling for their survival. Other governorates in Lebanon also witnessed the presence of the Syrian refugees; however, two locations mentioned above comprised the largest number of registered Syrian refugees. As per the statistics, around 86 percent of the Syrian refugees were located in these vulnerable areas that were already a home for approximately 66 percent of the marginalised Lebanese population. The situation became so intense that in some of the areas the numbers of the Syrian refugees have surpassed the population of locals, resulted in the social tensions between two communities due to the competition for the basic resources including water, health, education, employment etc.[334] Many Syrian refugees live with their relatives or in rented accommodation. Since the settlements lack basic living standards, including vulnerability to water flooding and fire, the lives of the Syrian refugees became more miserable. The limited access to sanitation, water, electricity and other services increased the problems faced by the Syrian refugees. Health problems and epidemic outspreads are inevitable in these unsanitary settlements that receive petty aid, especially in the summer witnessing temperature with more than 40 °C.[335] Moreover,

[334]Vilet, Sam Van (2016), "Syrian refugees in Lebanon: coping with unpreceded challenges" in Maximilian Felsch and Martin Wählisch (eds.) *Lebanon and the Arab Uprisings: In the Eye of the Hurricane*, London: Routledge, p.95.

[335] Loveless, Jeremy (2013), "Crisis in Lebanon: camps for Syrian refugees?", *Forced Migration Review*, 43: 66-68, p.67.

harsh winters in Bekaa valley make their lives more miserable.[336] Some of the most economically vulnerable groups among the Syrian refugees live in these informal settlements.[337] Even their settlement in these locations became a challenge both from logistical and security perspective. Some of these areas are perceived as an insurgent base and faced the spillover of the Syrian civil war, especially near border areas.

Factors determining their choice of settlement: The factors like availability of the work, sectarianism, and locations of the Syrians already staying in Lebanon became decisive factors for choosing their settlements. The similarities of the political views with the host community equally impacted their decision about choosing the settlement. However, since 2013, this trend witnessed the break since Syrian refugees started moving to other areas regardless of the factors mentioned above. Different localities of displacement showed different reactions concerning Syrian refugees. In many of the cases, their political stand about Syrian regime determining their presence in a particular location. In other words, the level of the receptiveness towards Syrian refugees can be analysed in the background of the sectarian dimension of the Lebanese hosting area as well as their orientation towards the Syrian regime. For example, Hermel or Baalbek region in Lebanon became the preferred destination for the Syrian families with pro- Syrian regime attitude. The South appears to be different witnessing the presence of both regime loyalists and pro-rebel Syrians. As far as the link between the area of settlement and the availability of the work opportunities is concerned, big cities like Beirut and Sidon, providing the work opportunities, particularly in the construction sector attracted the Syrian refugees.

Furthermore, the financial status of the Syrian refugees has also determined their hosting areas and kind of housing structure for their stay. As their economic characteristics varied, many Syrian refugees opted for empty building or shared apartments due to the unaffordability of rents while Syrian refugees belonging to the middle-class families choose for the rented apartment or bought houses. Other groups of Syrian refugees consists of Syrian migrants already present here in Lebanon are

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[336]Jawahiry, Warda Al (2016), "As winter blows in across Lebanon, refugee struggles", [Online: web] Accessed 10Jan 2017, URL: http://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2016/12/585cddcf4/winter-blows-across-lebanon-refugees-struggle.html

[337] Cited in Harb, Charles and Rim Saab (2014), *Social Cohesion and Intergroup Relations: Syrian Refugees and Lebanese Nationals in the Bekaa and Akkar*, Save the Children Report, Beirut: American University of Beirut, p.8

trying to manage with the increasing living costs. Even some Syrian refugees are getting benefitted from the presence of their relatives, both from the perspective of shelter as well as in the job market. However, there are many Syrian refugees, lacking in local connections both for the work opportunities and the housing, left only with one option of searching for a new livelihood in Lebanon.[338] The initiatives and efforts advocated by the UNHCR in this situation are much appreciated since it encouraged the creation of the transit camps to aid with registration and relief efforts.

3. Employment and Economic Status

The high rate of unemployment and low skilled jobs were already prevalent in the Lebanese labour market even before the Syria civil war.[339] Sectors including agriculture, construction and services have been employing the low skilled Syrian workers in the large numbers (See figure- 4.8). The shared close historical and geographical relations between Lebanon and Syria are the reason behind this labour exchange between both the countries. The presence of the Syrian refugees in large numbers increased the labour supply; however, it raised the competition for jobs in the labour market. But important to highlight that whether competition has increased in the formal or informal market. It was observed that employment of Syrian refugees for the low wages had increased the informality of the Lebanese market, lacking access to labour regulations and social insurance resulting in the labor exploitation. Therefore, the willingness of the Syrian refugees to work for the lower wages has undoubtedly impacted the wages and the unemployment rate.[340]

Furthermore, to renew their residency visa based on their UNHCR registration document, signing a pledge not to work is required for the refugees from Syria (includes both Palestinian refugees from Syrian and Syrian refugees). If the situation doesn't favour them, an alternative is available in the form of relinquishing the UNHCR registration and signing a pledge by the Lebanese citizen on his or her basis

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[338]Vilet, Sam Van (2016), "Syrian refugees in Lebanon: coping with unpreceded challenges" in Maximilian Felsch and Martin Wählisch (eds.) *Lebanon and the Arab Uprisings: In the Eye of the Hurricane*, London: Routledge, pp.95-96.

[339] World Bank (2013), *Lebanon: Economic and Social Impact Assessment of the Syrian Conflict*, Washington DC: World Bank, p.3.

[340]Itani, Faysal (2013), *Syria's War Threatens Lebanon Fragile Economy*, Washington, DC: Atlantic Council,1-8, p.4

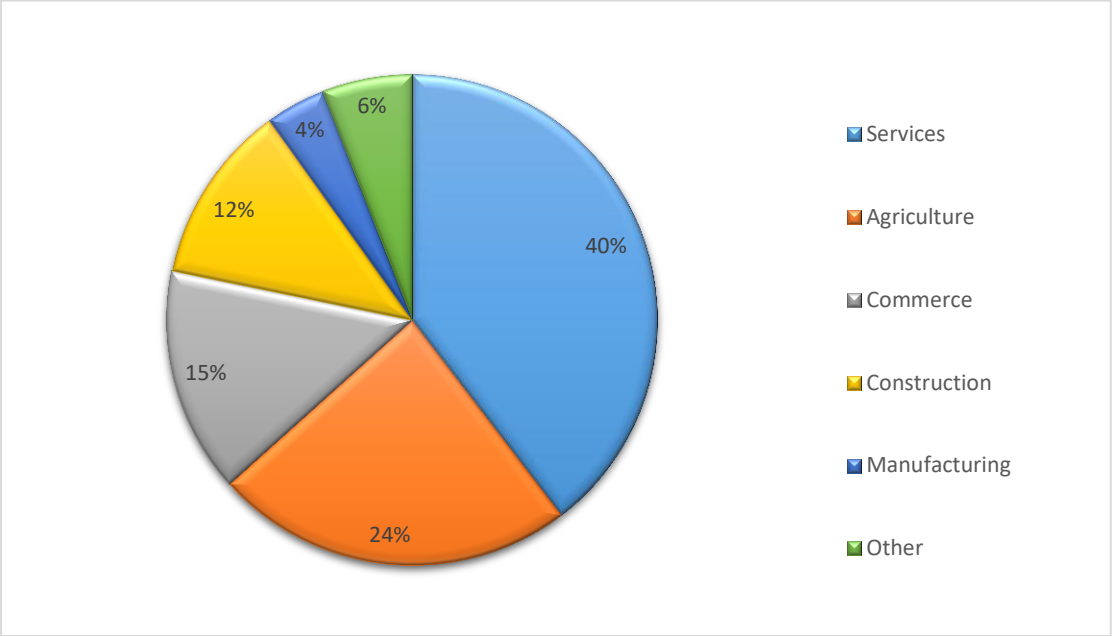
to take responsibility for the refugee. Undoubtedly this option provided access to the labour market for the refugees; however, a dependency created between the local population and the refugees. The legal status of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon is precarious. No legal rights about the work and working conditions are available to the majority of the Syrian refugees. With huge numbers, approximately 92 percent of the refugees from Syria who work lacks a formal contract. While refugees work on a seasonal, weekly or daily basis comprise around 56 percent, their numbers reach only 23 percent for the refugees earning regular monthly wages.[341] All these factors lead to exploitation, mistreatment and undercutting of wages that straining their relations with the host community.

As mentioned above, 1/5 of the refugee households headed by the women in the absence of the males of the family. So responsibility for the work also lies with them. The burden of childcare have impeded them to take up any employment, and therefore, high unemployment level (about 68 percent) can be witnessed among female Syrian refugees. Around 6 percent Syrian refugee women aged above 15 years out of all the female Syrian refugees are presently working in Lebanon. The average monthly income of the Syrian refugees consists of LBP 418,000 (around US$277) a month. The gender gap is significant about earnings as females earn 40 percent less than males. Akkar and Tripoli are the two areas witnessing the lowest average monthly incomes, while South Lebanon reported the highest average monthly incomes. It is important to highlight the other sources of income, including UNHCR assistance or personal savings that compensated their low wages. Approximately 36 percent Syrian refugees revealed these other sources of income in the study conducted by the ILO.[342]

[341] Ibid.8

[342] Ibid. 8-9.

Figure- 4.7: Estimated distribution of Syrian refugee workers by different sectors in Lebanon (2013-14)



Source: Ajluni, S and M. Kawar (2015), *Towards Decent Work in Lebanon: Issues and Challenges in the Light of the Syrian Refugee Crisis*, Beirut: International Labour Organization Regional Office for the Arab States.

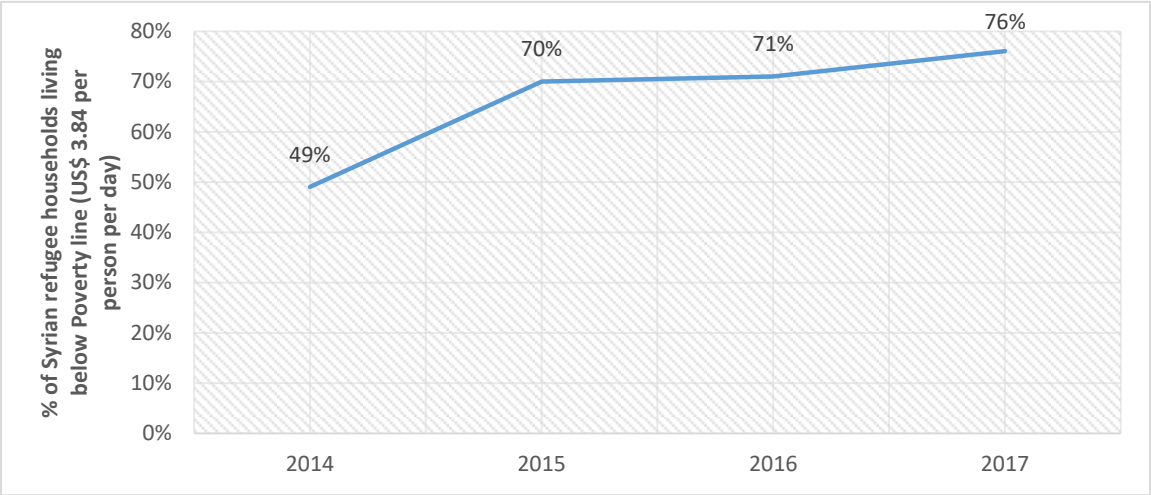
The figure given above provides the data about the presence of the Syrian refugees in different occupations in Lebanon. Services consist of 40 percent Syrian refugees while agriculture, commerce and construction witness about 24 percent, 15 percent and 12 percent of Syrian refugees' employment. Manufacturing and others include about 6 percent and 4 percent, Syrian refugees.

4. Poverty

The high rents, increasing the cost of living, food insecurity, exorbitant visa fee along with an excessive fee for renewing residency permits contributed towards increasing poverty among Syrian refugees. Their precarious legal status and absence of valid visa are posing difficulty to access the aid and assistance from the international agencies including UNHCR are posing major challenge. As a result, they are dependent on their small savings and borrowed money leading to a debt trap. By 2016, around 70 percent of Syrian refugees were living below the poverty line and around 58 percent of Syrian refugee households witnessed the condition of extreme poverty. The following figure 4.8 displays the percentage of Syrian refugee

households living below the poverty line, i.e. US$3.84 per person per day that increased to around 71 percent in 2016 from 49 percent in 2014. Syrian refugees spend 90 percent of their monthly income on average monthly rent while 43 percent of a Syrian refugee household's monthly expenditure devoted to the same purpose of paying rents.

Figure-4.8: Percentage of Syrian Refugee Households Living Below the Poverty Line (US$ 3.84 per person per day)



Source: Issam Fares Institute (2018), *Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon: Fatigue in numbers*, Beirut: American University of Beirut, p.1.

In short, accommodation and paying rent for the same became the major expenditure that is paid by savings, cash assistance and borrowed money. As a result, Syrian refugees are trapped into large debts or falling for other negative coping strategies, including selling food rations and child labour to fulfil basic living costs that have become expensive.[343] The presence of Syrian refugees in huge numbers provided oversupply of cheap labour resulted in a decrease in wages and at the same time rise in demand increased the cost of housing, making lives difficult both for the Syrian refugees and the local population, and intensifying tensions between them. Furthermore, checkpoints also play an important role in terms of the movement of these Syrian refugees and accessing services. In a large-scale survey conducted by Norwegian Refugee Council, around 71 percent of refugees stated that in terms of

[343]Norwegian Refugee Council (2014), "A Precarious existence: The Shelter situation of refugees from Syria in neighbouring countries", [Online: web] Accessed 10 May 2016,URL: https://www.nrc.no/resources/reports/a-precarious-existence-the-shelter-situation-of-refugees-from-syria-in-neighbouring-countries/

accessing work or services, checkpoints play a significant role, and in the absence of proper legal documents and other reasons, difficulties faced at these points reported by about 37 percent of refugees.[344]

5. **Children, Youth and Education**

The most affected population among the Syrian refugees are children comprising more than fifty percent (27% boys and 26% girls) of all the Syrian refugees as per UNHCR estimates. Children under 18 years consist of around 2 percent. Women and men over 18 years of age consist of 26 percent and 21 percent of the refugee population; respectively.[345] The children, youth and adolescents have been the most affected groups due to economic hardships and limited access to essential services.

Education: Accessibility to education has become a critical issue of assistance since the majority of the Syrian refugee population comprise of the school-age children. By 2016, around 220,000 Syrian refugee children enrolled in public schools that consists of double shifts accommodating 150,000 in numbers. However, this resulted in approximately 44 percent, i.e. 170,000 out of school. There is a disagreement among official agencies regarding the percentage of Syrian refugee children enrolled in secondary school. As per World Bank estimates, secondary schools have accommodated only 10 percent of the Syrian refugee children while this percentage reduced to 5 by UNHCR in its report.[346] In other words, less than 40 percent of the Syrian refugee children enrolled in the formal education.[347]

[344]Alsharabati, Carole and Jihad Nammour (2015), "Survey on Perceptions of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon", [Online web] Accessed 20 April 2017, URL: https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/45083

[345] UNHCR (2015), "Syria Regional Refugee Response, Inter-agency information sharing portal", Lebanon, [Online: web] Accessed 25 Sep. 2016, URL: http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=122

[346] Karasapan, Omerand Sajjad Shah (2018), "Syrian refugees and the schooling challenge", [Online: web] Accessed 12Dec. 2018, URL: https://www.brookings.edu/blog/future-development/2018/10/23/syrian-refugees-and-the-schooling-challenge/

[347]Culbertson, Shelly and Louay Constant (2014), *Education of Syrian refugee children: Managing the crisis in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan*, California: RAND Corporation, pp.8-10.

Figure- 4.9: Syrian Refugee Children in Baalbek and Bekaa Valley in Lebanon.[348]

(A)

(B)

(C)

(D)

[348] (A) Cochran, Judith (2014), "The Education of Syrian Refugee Children", [Online: web] Accessed 1 March 2016, URL:https://www.mei.edu/publications/education-syrian-refugee-children; (B) Chebaro, Mohamed (2019), "Lebanon's problems cannot be blamed on Syrian refugees", [Online: web] Accessed 2 May 2019, URL: http://www.arabnews.com/no"de/1477606**;** (C) and (D): Addario, Lynsey (2013), For Syrian Refugees, Obstacles to School Are Many, [Online: web] Accessed 10 March 2016, URL: https://www.nytimes.com/slideshow/2013/12/20/world/middleeast/20131222-REFUGEE/s/20131222-REFUGEE-slide-5BBO.html

Challenges in accessing the education: There are no restrictions on access to education. Free enrolment in the public schools is equally available to both Lebanese and non-Lebanese students; however, Lebanon has been lacking high-quality public education and therefore, many Lebanese prefer private schooling, if they can afford it. But this luxury is not available for most of the Syrian refugees. As a result of 15 years long violent civil war, the public school system has been facing the severe issue of underfinancing, resulted in the enrolment of around 70 percent of Lebanese children in private schools. By December 2013, about 300,000 Lebanese children outnumbered by the estimated 400,000 Syrian school-age children in public schools[349]

This considerable influx has inevitably overwhelmed the capacity of the already burdened and fragile Lebanese public school system. Around seventy percent of the government schools do not fulfil the basic infrastructure requirements, including water and toilet facilities making their lives more difficult and creating distance from getting into formal education. Syrian children could be enrolled in public schools regardless of their legal status. But Syrian refugee children have not been attending schools. Many factors are responsible, ranging from overcrowding, transportation and tuition fees, and co-ed education to the language barrier leading high dropout rates. The Syrian children who did their schooling primarily in the Arabic language face additional obstacles due to the curriculum, which is in English and French, especially in secondary school. With the estimated enrolment rate for Syrian refugee children between only thirteen and twenty-five percent, Lebanon ranked the lowest among the primary host nations.[350]

Measures taken by Lebanon's Ministry of Education: Lebanon's Ministry of Education has taken several positive steps in this direction but unable to fulfil the desired expectations. To provide education both to the refugees and vulnerable Lebanese students to make it more inclusive, the Lebanese Ministry of Education launched an initiative called "Reach All Children with Education" (RACE) in 2014. It

[349]Onishi, Norimitsu (2013), "For Most Young Refugees from Syria, School is as Distant as Home," *The New York Times*, [Online: web] Accessed 10 Jan. 2017, URL: https://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/22/world/middleeast/for-most-young-refugees-from-syria-school-is-as-distant-as-home.html

[350]Cited in Rourke, Joseph O (2015), "Education for Syrian refugees: The failure of second generation human rights during extraordinary crises", *Albany Law Review*, 78 (2): 711-738, pp.721-723.

is a three-year programme including all elements ranging from expenditure, improving education quality and strengthening national education systems to policies and monitoring the entire system for making it more vibrant and successful.[351] By 2020-2021, this programme is expected to enrol around 440,000 Syrian refugees in public schools. Moreover, the Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP) also introduced for catering the need of about 10, 000 students regarding understanding and catching up with the Lebanese curriculum. Educating these refugee children, especially the youth, is essential not only for the Lebanese society but more crucial in the rebuilding of Syria. Their experience of limited access to education with severe physical and mental stress would make them prone to fall for negative coping strategies that are harmful to both countries. Maria Calivis, the regional director of UNICEF, highlighted the long terms issues associated with the absence of education among children and particularly to youth along with the repercussions facing by Syria "If this problem [failure to educate youth] is left unaddressed, the children will lose hope, and especially the adolescents . . . They will replicate and perpetuate the violence that they have seen. And they will lack the skills and knowledge that one day will be needed to rebuild Syria."[352]

Child Labour and Children with Disabilities: For the young refugee population, child labour has become a significant concern. In the absence of legal work opportunities and the fear of deportation along with the increasing needs of families, children are forced to work that depriving them of the education. Issues such as high rents, increasing cost of living, unemployment, visa fee etc. making children as the only option to support their families by working in restaurants, fields, and farms etc. The employment of children under 14 prohibited in Lebanese law and moreover working hours restricted to six hours a day for the children aged 14-18. However, seeing the situation in Lebanon, rarely enforcement of these child labour laws are witnessed.[353] In 2011, a study was conducted to highlight the prevalence of child

[351]Watkins, Kevin and Steven A. Zyck (2014) *Living on hope, hoping for education*: *The failed response to the Syrian refugee crisis*, London: Overseas Development Institute (ODI), p.1

[352]Onishi, Norimitsu (2013), "For Most Young Refugees from Syria, School is as Distant as Home," *The New York Times*, [Online: web] Accessed 10Jan. 2017, URL: https://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/22/world/middleeast/for-most-young-refugees-from-syria-school-is-as-distant-as-home.html

[353]Bidinger, Sarah et al. (2015), *Protecting Syrian Refugees: Laws, Policies, and Global Responsibility Sharing*, Boston: Boston University, p.52.

labour in Bekaa governorate. The survey of 192 working children revealed that about 140 were Syrians and among them, around 37 percent belonged to the category of under 13 years of age.[354] Apart from all these concerns of education, health, child labour, one major issue that requires the immediate attention of authorities is the involvement of the youth in the ills of drugs, alcohol along with joining radical groups.

Among Syrian refugees, an important issue that overlooked in the literature is the status of the youth suffering from one or other disabilities. According to an estimate, between the ages of 18 and 24, around 3 percent of youth suffer from different kinds of disabilities, including physical, sensory, and mental/intellectual. About households of Syrian refugees, on an average 7 percent having a child or young person with a disability. Across all age groups among Syrian refugees, children with disabilities have witnessed lower school attendance. In the age group 12 and older, around 9 out of 10 children with disabilities do not attend school. The age group between 9-11 and 12-14 witnessed the most prominent differences.[355]

Registration of the Newborn: Children like other Syrian refugees became equally victim for lacking the legal status. The procurement of birth, marriage, and death certificates became a difficult task for both Syrian and Palestinians from Syria and facing similar issues. The question of the registration of new-born babies to Syrian parents emerged a critical issue for debate. The parents must register their birth in Syria or go through a cumbersome and complex legal process of registration in Lebanon, otherwise their children are considered undocumented. More appropriately acquiring the status of stateless in the absence of either process that being faced by a large number of refugees. Even the absence of required legal documents of their parents is equally posing difficulty in the registration of these newborn babies.[356] In 1991, Lebanon ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), under that all newborn children in the country have the right to registration at birth. According to Article 7 of the convention "the child shall be registered immediately after birth and

[354]Khoury, Roula Abi Habib- (2012), *Rapid assessment on child labour in North Lebanon (Tripoli and Akkar) and Bekaa Governorates*, Beirut: ILO, p.11.

[355] Ibid.13-14.

[356]Norwegian Refugee Council (2015), "Birth Registration Update: The Challenges of Birth Registration in Lebanon for Refugees from Syria", [Online: web] Accessed 13 Sep. 2016, URL: http://www.nrc.no/arch/_img/9192872.pdf

shall have the right from birth to a name, the right to acquire a nationality and, as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents."[357] Therefore, it becomes an international obligation for Lebanon to provide registration to these newborn babies to save themselves for coming under the category of stateless.

6. Gender-based violence (GBV)

Undoubtedly, women and children are the most affected groups in the conflict zones both inside and outside the country. Women and girls consist of the majority of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, and women headed one-fifth of Syrian refugee households. Gender-based violence has become a significant problem in Lebanon. Both inside and outside the home, they have been suffering from physical and mental distress. Though emotional violence is common; however, the majority of them reported the cases of sexual abuse.[358] Over the past few years, more Syrian refugees have occupied the space in the largest psychiatric hospital in Lebanon with more severe psychopathology and suicidality.[359] No doubt unavailability of the resources to support Syrian refugees due to their growing numbers has dwindled, resulting in the rise of human trafficking, prostitution, and other types of crimes, further straining their relationship with the Lebanese population.[360]

The refugee settlements lacking privacy and safety has become a threat and a major critical issue for the Syrian refugees, particularly to females. They have been suffering from many problems and getting victimised daily such as discrimination, domestic violence, trafficking, early marriage, sexual harassment etc. even though Lebanon has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Not only employers but police officers, government office employees in charge of renewing residence permits, neighbours, bus and taxi drivers all were taken in the category while reported sexual harassment. The tragedy is that

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[357]Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), adopted on November 20, 1989, and entered into force on September 2, 1990. It was ratified by Lebanon on May 14, 1991.

[358]Spencer, R. A et al. (2015), *Gender Based Violence Against Women and Girls Displaced by the Syrian Conflict in South Lebanon and North Jordan: Scope of Violence and Health Correlates*, Madrid: Alianzapor la Solidaridad, p.7.

[359]Hijazi, Z , I Weissbecker (2015), *Syria Crisis: Addressing Regional Mental Health needs and Gaps in the Context of the Syria Crisis*, Washington DC: International Medical Corps, pp.4-5.

[360]Zeid, Mario Abou (2014), *A Time Bomb in Lebanon: The Syrian Refugee Crisis, Washington*, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International peace, pp.7-8.

they cannot even formally report the cases of these sexual harassments and other mistreatment due to lack of valid residence permits, the leading cause behind their helplessness. One in four cases belongs to the category of sexual GBV. However, many cases go unreported.[361] The lack of resources and economic precariousness and instability equally contributed towards their vulnerability to sexual exploitation, trafficking and forced prostitution. Moreover, the restricted accessibility of health and psychiatrist services for the survivors of GBV due to the availability of these services in far distance areas has made their lives more difficult and miserable.[362] The lack of valid resident permit restrict their freedom of movement and hence, cannot visit these locations for clinical care for sexual violence. The trend of forced marriages is common among the Syrian refugees' girls, including the young girls at an early age due to families' believe of their safety in this institution more than living unmarried as refugees. [363] According to a study, around 23 percent of Syrian refugee girls did not reach the age of 18 and were married.[364]

According to all international human rights treaties, agreements and other instruments, sex, gender, race, religion, ethnicity and nationality should not be considered a ground for any discrimination for any individual including IDPs, refugees, women, children, minorities etc. Lebanon, a country known for its composite culture, freedom and diversity, should amend laws that are discriminatory against women. It should make more laws for the protection of women's' rights both in public and private sphere equally applicable to refugees and the local population. Being a state party to the CEDAW[365], Lebanon is obliged to revoke laws that questions the safety and protection of women in the country. "All women and girls

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[361] Palermo Tia et al. (2014), "Tip of the iceberg: reporting and gender-based violence in developing countries", *American journal of epidemiology,* 179 (5): 602-612, p.604.

[362] Masterson Amelia Reese et al. (2014), "Assessment of reproductive health and violence against women among displaced Syrians in Lebanon", *BMC Women's Health,* 14 (25): 1-8, p.2.

[363]Bidinger, Sarah et al. (2015), *Protecting Syrian Refugees: Laws, Policies, and Global Responsibility Sharing*, Boston: Boston University, p.51.

[364]Cited in Spencer, R. A et al. (2015), *Gender Based Violence Against Women and Girls Displaced by the Syrian Conflict in South Lebanon and North Jordan: Scope of Violence and Health Correlates*, Madrid: Alianzapor la Solidaridad, p.9.

[365]The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is an international treaty adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly. Described as an international bill of rights for women, it was instituted on 3 September 1981 and has been ratified by 189 states.

within the jurisdiction of the state" despite holding the citizenship of the state or not, should be provided with fundamental human rights regardless of gender.[366]

7. Attitude of both Syrian Refugees and the Lebanese Population Towards Each Other

Causes for increasing social tensions: The settlement of the Syrian refugees in the Bekaa valley and in the Hermel district near Syrian border that has already been constrained with limited resources and overcrowding has made the situation more challenging. It caused more strained relations between the Syrian refugees and the Lebanese population. Issues such as weak economy, poor infrastructure, dwindling jobs (particularly in the construction sector and quarries), high living costs, and growing rents etc. have been existing in these areas even before the Syrian civil war. Therefore, in such a situation, the presence of Syrian refugees in huge numbers making the lives miserable both for the Lebanese people as well as for themselves. In addition to this, security threats alongside the border areas including suicide bombing, cross-border shelling, border-area skirmishes intensifying the tensions on the one hand and creating susceptibility towards Syrian refugees.

Tensions have been rising and reached to the extent that Syrian families have been attacked and forced to leave their settlement", much evident in areas like Tyre. Sometimes issues are so minor like "child picking fruits from private garden trees without permission; however leading to clashes between adults. To save themselves from attacks, Syrian refugees' families have opted for the relocation, i.e. near the centre of town.[367] Even many Syrian families overlooked the security concerns and choose to return to Syria in order to have better living conditions in comparison to Lebanon that has been suffering from adverse living conditions, inaccessibility to health care facilities, economic instability etc.[368] It was observed that those who went back to their homes in Syria were people who resisted to take sides with the Syrian opposition openly or avoided participation in the armed struggle against the Syrian regime actively.

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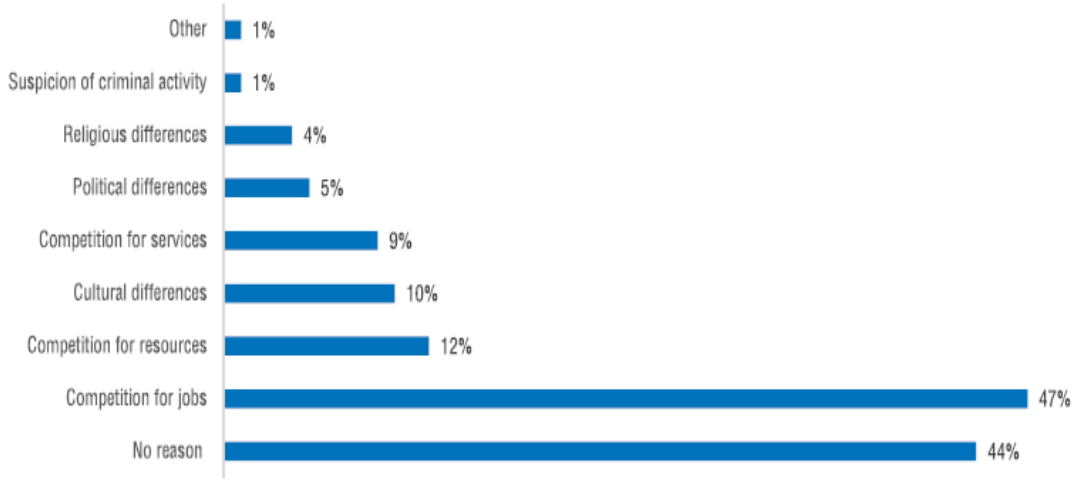
[366] Amnesty international (2016), *Refugee women from Syria uprooted and unprotected in Lebanon*, London: Amnesty International, p.6

[367]Knudsen, Are John (2017), "Syria's Refugees in Lebanon: Brothers, Burden, and Bone of Contention" in Rosita di Peri and Daniel Meier (eds.) *Lebanon Facing The Arab Uprisings: Constraints and Adaptation*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, p.148

[368]Orhan, Oytun (2014), *The Situation of Syrian Refugees in the Neighbouring Countries: Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations*, Ankara: Centre for Middle Eastern Strategic Studies, p.41.

Figure- 4.10: Distribution of the Households by Factors Driving Community Tensions[369]



Source: *Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASyR)*,(2016) Beirut: UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP, p.16

As figure 4.10 highlights, competition for jobs was considered the most common factor is creating tensions between the host community and the Syrian refugees, followed by the competition for resources and services. Around 55 percent of the households were unable to mention any specific reason for the community tensions. While on the other hand, 71 percent and 25 percent of the families considered community relations to be fair and minimal interaction with the host community, respectively.

The allocation of high amounts of international assistance disproportionately to the Syrian refugees while neglecting the needs of the vulnerable and poverty-stricken Lebanese citizens became one of the reasons for the increasing resentment among host communities.[370] The host community, mainly belonging to the lower income groups perceived this behaviour as discriminatory since both local and international organisations have been providing assistance to the Syrian refugees and overlooking

[369]The assessment surveyed 4,596 Syrian refugee households. The interviewed households were composed of 22,983 individuals, out of which 4,561 were children under the age of five. The population was stratified by district and governorate in or der to obtain representative information at both geographical levels.

[370] Lust, Ellen (2015), Syrian *Spillover: National Tensions, Domestic Responses, & International Options*, Washington, DC: Project on Middle East Democracy (POMED) p.2; Thorleifsson, Christophersen, M et al. (2013), *Lebanese attitudes towards Syrian refugees and the Syrian crisis: Results from a national opinion poll*, Oslo: Fafo, p.8.

the needs of the locals. [371] Furthermore, this attitude, identified as one of the factors for the increasing social tensions between both the Syrian refugees and the Lebanese population. Moreover, the money devoted for the developmental expenditures and the social welfare of the Lebanese population has also been distributed for mitigating the problems of the Syrian refugees resulted in resentment by the Lebanese citizens towards the former. [372]

Perception of threat among both the communities: The already saturated Labour market resisted Lebanese authorities to expand the skills training programmes to the Syrian refugees considering its addition to the already prevailing social tensions between both the communities. Syrian refugees, perceived as both symbolic and economic threats (i.e. a threat to their economic livelihood and their value system) by over 90 percent of the Lebanese population, highlighted by Save the Children in their 2013 report. Further, considering refugees as an existential threat consists of the opinion given by over two-third Lebanese population. On the other hand, Lebanese nationals are considered as symbolic and economic threats (especially in Akkar) but not as an existential threat by the majority of the Syrian refugees.[373]

In May 2013, Fafo, an NGO, surveyed on the outlook of the Lebanese nationals about the impact of Syrian refugees in Lebanon by taking 900 Lebanese citizens in the sampling representation. In both the North and the Bekaa, over 90 percent of those polled stated that

a) Wages in the Lebanese labour market are declining due to the Syrian crisis.

b) Lebanese are getting deprived of the jobs since Syrian refugees are taking up jobs even for the lower wages.

c) Resources such as water, electricity and other energy resources are getting overburdened with the presence of the Syrian refugees in large numbers.

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[371]Christophersen, Mona and Catherine Thorleifsson, (2013) "Lebanese Contradictory Responses to Syrian Refugees Include Stress, Hospitality, Resentment"[Online: web] Accessed 25 April 2016, URL: http://www.aub.edu.lb/ifi/Documents/policy_memo/20130705ifi_memo_Fafo_IFI_Policy_brief_Syrians_in_Lebanon.pdf

[372]Bidinger, Sarah et al. (2015), *Protecting Syrian Refugees: Laws, Policies, and Global Responsibility Sharing*, Boston: Boston University, p. 44.

[373]Harb, Charles and Rim Saab (2014), *Social Cohesion and Intergroup Relations: Syrian Refugees and Lebanese Nationals in the Bekaa and Akkar*, Save the Children Report, Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1-45, p.5.

d) The Syrian crisis damaged the Lebanese commerce or businesses.

e) The Syrian crisis negatively impacted the capacity and capabilities of the Lebanese government to govern and protect its citizens.

Even disproportionate financial assistance to the Syrian refugees as mentioned above, was also taken into consideration and supported by 84 percent and 64 percent of Lebanese nationals those polled in the North and the Bekaa respectively.[374] It is important to analyse the situation from the perspective of the Syrian refugees as well. It is not only the Lebanese population who consider themselves suffering from the threat and insecurities; Syrian refugees are equally facing this threat and vulnerability. Beirut Research and Innovation Centre (BRIC) in its countrywide survey of Syrian refugees in Lebanon reported the safety issues among Syrian refugees and highlighted that approximately 32 percent do not feel safe and secure in their new settlements, largely due to crime and prejudice against them. Similarly, the World Food Program (WFP) in 2013 conducted a country-wide survey of registered Syrian refugees regarding difficulties faced by them. In this survey, around 10 percent of the Syrian refugees stated the discrimination and mistreatment, including robberies, threats etc. occurred three months before the study. The list of perpetrators for these harassment and the discrimination topped by the neighbours with 42 percent followed by hosts and landlords, shops, local authorities or others" with 14 percent, 11 percent, 10 percent, and 30 percent respectively.[375]

8. The Attitude of the Lebanese Authorities

The receptive attitude of Lebanese authorities towards Syrian refugees raised mixed responses; however, Lebanon received appreciation in terms of generosity and resilience by the international community.[376] Experts criticised Lebanon's attitude

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[374]Christophersen, M et al. (2013a), *Lebanese attitudes towards Syrian refugees and the Syrian crisis: Results from a national opinion poll*, Oslo: Fafo, p.6.

[375]World Food Program-Lebanon (2013), "Vulnerability assessment of Syrian refugees in Lebanon"[Online: web] Accessed 15 Oct. 2016, URL: http://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/vulnerability-assessment-syrian-refugees-lebanon-2013-report

[376] United Nations Security Council (2015), "Statement by the President of the Security Council," [Online: web] Accessed 15 April 2016, URL: http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/PRST/2015/10. See also European Commission (2016), "Lebanon: Syria Crisis," *ECHO Factsheet*, [Online: web] Accessed 15 May 2016, , URL: http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/lebanon_syrian_crisis_en.pdf.

towards Syrian refugees and regarded its policy as shortsighted, and labelling it as the "policy of the non-policy."[377] Undoubtedly Lebanon's 'Open Door Policy' initially for allowing displaced Syrians to take shelter in the country and respect towards the principle of Non- refoulement showed solidarity towards the refugees.[378] However, policies and measures opted for the governance, and their protection remained ad hoc in nature.[379] From 2011-2014, Lebanon lacked a coherent policy towards managing the presence of the Syrian refugees despite their constantly growing numbers.[380] It was only in October 2014, the Lebanese government opted for clear and comprehensive policy towards this issue in the form of the introduction of the 'Refugee Policy Paper'. In April 2013, their numbers reached around 1 million, "a moment that UNHCR called a devastating milestone."[381] The attitude of Lebanese authorities can be divided into two phases, i.e. 2011-2014 and 2014-2016.

8.1 Phase I: 'Open Door Policy' (2011-2014)

Until March 2014, Lebanon opted for an 'Open Door Policy' due to shared political and economic relations historically between Lebanon and Syria. Even giving shelter to Lebanese refugees in Syria during the Lebanese civil war (1975-90) can also be considered an important reason in terms of returning the favour for their unhindered entry.[382] Further, political instability in Lebanon was equally responsible for not adopting any coherent policy towards this issue. However, this attitude witnessed the change as Syrian refugees were growing in large numbers and crossed 1 million.

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[377]Abi Khalil, Sally and Valentina Bacchin, (2015), *Lebanon Looking Ahead in Times of Crisis: Taking Stock of the Present to Urgently Build Sustainable Options for the Future*, Oxford: Oxfam International, pp.12-14

[378]Aranki, Dalia and Olivia Kalis, "Limited Legal Status for Refugees from Syria in Lebanon," *Forced Migration*

Review 47: 17-18, p.17; Dionigi, Filippo (2016), *The Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon: state fragility and social resilience*, London: London School of Economics and Political Science, p.34.

[379]Janmyr, Maja (2016), "Precarity in Exile: The Legal Status of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon", *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 35 (4): 58-78, p.59.

[380]Saghieh, Nizar and FrangiehGhida (2014)"The most important features of Lebanese policy towards the issue of Syrian refugees: From hiding its head in the sand to soft power", [Online: web] Accessed 16 Dec. 2016, URL:http://lb.boell.org/en/2014/12/30/most-important-features-lebanese-policy-towardsissue-syrian-refugees-hiding-its-head

[381]UNHCR (2014), "Syrian refugees hit million mark in Lebanon" [Online: web] Accessed 25 April 2016, URL: http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refdaily?pass=52fc6fbd5&id=533e3e078

[382] Lynch, Marc and Laurie Brand (2017), *Refugees and Migration Movements in the Middle East*, Washington DC: Institute for Middle East Studies, George Washington University, p.25.

Lebanese government's attitude towards the influx of Syrian refugees was in line with previous refugee flows, described as a policy of "hiding its head in the sand."[383] The government's inability to make politically sensitive decisions resulted in official statements playing down the crisis and refused to acknowledge the effect emerged due to this situation. Initially, Syrian refugees were framed as IDPs (internally displaced persons, 'nazih' instead of 'lajih'-refugees) and illegal entry to Lebanon was not fined, based on a complete lack of ownership or accountability of the Lebanese state towards the Syrian refugee influx. The "Lebanon Crisis Response Plan for 2015–2016" made a note of the Lebanese government's framing of Syrians who fled to Lebanon as "displaced" and diplomatically uses the terms "persons with UNHCR registered as refugees" or "de facto refugees". The reason behind keeping them in these grey areas to escape the obligations of the term 'refugee' can demand.[384] UNHCR has been active in dealing with the Syrian refugee crisis; however the Lebanese government failed to adopt a clear strategy or policy to deal with the issue due to the political instability witnessed during that particular period.

The massive presence of the Syrian refugees was also considered an instrument in the hands of the regime's critics to show the tyranny and suppression by the Bashar al-Assad's regime and its consequences for Lebanon.[385] In June 2011, Saad Hariri, then Prime Minister was replaced by Najib Mikati, more closely associated with the Syrian establishment. Since the MoSA, Since MoSA, the High Relief Committee and the UNHCR were the leading agencies dealing with the crisis management; no significant changes witnessed in the approach towards the issue adopted by Najib Mikati's government. Later on less engagement were showed by his government as conflict transformed into violent civil war and became more complicated. The already polarised Lebanese politics became more divisive due to the presence of Syrian refugees and issues associated with them from political, economic, security and, social perspectives. To maintain neutrality in the regional and international conflict in

[383]Ibid. 92.

[384]Dionigi, Filippo (2016), *The Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon: state fragility and social resilience*, London: London School of Economics and Political Science, p.23.

[385]Goldberg, Jeffrey (2012), "Hillary Clinton: Bashar's Days Are 'Numbered'', [Online: web] Accessed 25 May 2016, URL: http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/07/hillary-clinton-bashars-days-are-numbered/

259547/

general and the Syrian civil war in particular, Lebanon with the consensus of all political parties adopted the dissociation policy as part of its 'National Dialogue' framework, formally known as the 'Baabda Declaration' in June 2012. It is important to highlight that this declaration lacked officially any mention of the refugees' situation; however, the significance of the right to humanitarian solidarity based on the constitution and the legal framework was referred under this formal policy.

In the late spring of 2012, as per the news reports, the process of repatriation of Syrians including refugees initiated by General Security Office (GSO) resulted in the deportation of fourteen Syrian refugees in August 2012, breaching the *non-refoulement* principle[386]. Najib Mikati's government adopted the non-refoulement policy in September 2013 that acknowledged by the GSO; however, reports of forced repatriation have occasionally appeared. Mikati's government started showing the signals of instability and began to fall apart in October 2012. The opposition was seeking for an opportunity to make his government fall and assassination of Wissam al-Hassan,[387] provided them a chance for demanding his resignation. Nonetheless, he remained in power until March 2013 when Tammam Salam, closely associated with Saudi influence succeeded him as a new Prime Minister. In the absence of any clear policy due to instability faced by Lebanese domestic politics, the presence of the Syrian refugees became much evident with large numbers. The 'Open Door' policy adopted by Lebanon played a crucial role in allowing free flow of huge numbers of Syrian refugees without any restraint or identification with the specific nature of displacement. The presence of Syrian refugees was not politicised for a very long time since it never reached the top of the political agenda within the context of political instability and worsening conflict."[388]

Factors determining the incoherent approach: The lack of systematic approach followed by the Lebanese government didn't prevail in the vacuum; instead

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[386]'Non-refoulement' is a principle of international law that reflects the commitment of the international community to ensure that refugees are not returned to persecution or danger.

[387]Wissam Adnan al-Hassan was a brigadier general at the Lebanese Internal Security Forces (ISF) and head of the information branch of the ISF, tasked with leading the investigation to Rafik Hariri's death. He was considered a leading Sunni figure in Lebanon, and was also a key player in the opposition March 14 alliance without having a political position. On 19 October 2012, al-Hassan died in a massive car bombing near the Achrafieh neighborhood of Beirut.

[388]Dionigi, Filippo (2016), *The Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon: state fragility and social resilience*, London: London School of Economics and Political Science, p.12.

determined by the four major factors. It includes the enormous burden of refugees in huge numbers for a small country, history and experiences with already existing refugees particularly the Palestinians refugees, fear for demographic imbalances and, domestic political instability along with external ramifications. As a result, local institutions particularly the municipalities were delegated with the responsibilities to manage this massive influx of the refugees and established more arbitrary implementation mechanisms. This incoherent approach posed more vulnerability and insecurity to the Syrian refugees.[389] As a result, local institutions particularly the municipalities were delegated with the responsibilities to manage this massive influx of the refugees and established more arbitrary implementation mechanisms. This incoherent approach posed more vulnerability and insecurity to the Syrian refugees.[390]

In the 2017 Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP), Lebanon stated about its rights about the influx of Syrian refugees:

> The UN characterizes the flight of civilians from Syria as a refugee movement, and considers that these Syrians are seeking international protection and are likely to meet the refugee definition. The Government of Lebanon considers that it is being subject to a situation of mass influx. It refers to individuals who fled from Syria into its territory after March 2011 as temporarily displaced individuals, and reserves its sovereign right to determine their status according to Lebanese laws and regulations.[391]

The detailed categorisation of the rights of the refugees, including the principle of *non-refoulement* at the international level, provided in the 1951 UN Convention and 1967 protocol dealing with the status of refugees. Since Lebanon is not a signatory to both the agreements, the policies adopted by the Lebanese authorities remained ad-hoc in nature and considered refugees and asylum seekers as 'illegal immigrants'.[392] In this situation, many analysed the refugee policies adopted by the Lebanese authorities as a charity based. For addressing the specific needs of refugees and asylum-seekers, Lebanon lacks any legislation or administrative practice according to

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[389]Yahya, Maha et al. (2018), *Unheard Voices: What Syrian Refugees need to return home*, Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, p.14.

[390] Ibid.13.

[391]*Government of Lebanon (2017), UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Lebanon, Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2017-2020, Beirut: UNHCR*

[392]Vliet, Sam van and Guita Hourani (2012) *Refugees of the Arab Spring: Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (April 2011-April 201,* Cairo: Center for Migration and Refugees Studies, American University of Cairo (AUC), p.15

UNHCR.[393] The governing framework in Lebanese politics in the form of confessional democracy holds a unique characteristic, making the consensus on any issue a problematic task. Therefore, considering this situation along with the past experiences with Palestinian refugees and other religious-sectarian contentions, a more hesitant and inconsistent approach was adopted by the Lebanese government to address the problems of Syrian refugees particularly at the central level.

Debates about the establishment of the refugee camps:

The setting up the camps for the Syrian refugees became a large debate in Lebanese politics. On the one hand, to deal with the refugee flow, some politicians favoured the creation of the refugee camps since the commencement of the crisis in 2011. While on the other hand, complete denial for the establishment of these refugee camps was adopted by the majority of the government under the lead of Hezbollah.[394] However, "humanitarian responsibility" and reciprocity were two factors justified both Hezbollah and Amal movement's openness towards Syrian refugees. Rather than political nature of protests in Syria, religious as well as cultural and political relations between both the countries determined their approach towards Syrian refugees. Considering camps as safe havens for the Syrian rebels and using humanitarian actions for military purposes were given as main arguments behind not establishing refugee camps.[395] In the words of the Gebran Bassil, Lebanon's foreign minister, Syrian refugees camps could act as an "incubator for terrorism" in Lebanon. His attitude was backed by the comparison of the Syrian refugees with the Palestinian refugees whose initially peaceful presence turned into militarised one causing violent civil war for 15 long years (1975-1990).[396] The Palestinian armed resistance movement in the form of Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) flourish in these refugee camps and later became the centre for the same. However, others argued that the denial of setting up the refugee camps was the strategic decision of March 8 group

[393]United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (2013), *UNHCR Country Operations Profile 2012*, Lebanon, Beirut: UNHCR.

[394] Chahine, Fadi (2011), "Politicians call for establishment of Syrian refugees camps", [Online: web] Accessed 2 Sep. 2016, URL: http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Politics/2011/Nov-08/153401-lebanese-figuressay- safe-haven-needed-for-syrian-refugees.ashx

[395] International Crisis Group (2014), *A Precarious Balancing Act: Lebanon and the Syrian conflict*, Middle East Report no-132, Beirut: ICG, p.17.

[396]Ibid.15.

to evade the Assad regime from any strain as the creation of refugee camps in Lebanon would be an indication of instability in the Assad's regime.[397]

Majority of the scholars are agreed that 'No camp' policy adopted by the Lebanese authorities towards Syrian refugees due to their experience with the Palestinian refugees. However, for some scholars, complex relations shared between Lebanon and Syria both at economic and political levels can be considered an important reason behind this. Further, for many, this decision was the product of the polarised Lebanese politics regarding the Syrian civil war, instead of a humanitarian gesture.[398] Undoubtedly, domestic politics in Lebanon and its relations with Syria demanded the re-ordering of the arrangements due to the Syrian refugee crisis; however, belief of "a weak state facing imminent collapse" were defied.[399]

Even the Lebanese government rejected the idea of creating readymade temporary housing units or box shelters (17.5 m2 in size) due to their sturdiness and appear permanent. Even though easy in dismantling and regardless of the responsibility of paying for the same, Lebanese authorities showed indifferent attitude. The justification being given by the government officials is the fear of refugees' permanent stay in the country even if the war gets over. But the establishment of "safe zone" camps inside Syria and alongside the Syrian-Lebanese border was advocated by the Lebanese authorities; however UNHCR resisted this initiative. The 'no-camp' policy adopted by the Lebanese government has been officially in place since May 2014, but as mentioned above, opinions polarised regarding the establishment of refugee camps. In the view of the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA), for solving the problem of an acute housing shortage, the establishment of the camps appears the only feasible option and therefore expressed their support for the same. On the other hand, many scholars perceived the attitude of the high-rank officials in the Lebanese government is one of the reasons contributing to the suffering of the refugees.

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[397]Naufal, Hala (2012), *Syrian Refugees in Lebanon: the Humanitarian Approach under Political Divisions*, San Domenico di Fiesole: Robert Schuman Center for Advanced Studies, European University Institute, pp.12-14.

[398]Migration Policy Centre (2012), *After Libya, Syria: Towards a New Crisis on the Border of Europe?* San Domenico di Fiesole: Robert Schuman Center for Advanced Studies, European University Institute, p.2.

[399]Knudsen, Are John (2017), "Syria's Refugees in Lebanon: Brothers, Burden, and Bone of Contention" in Rosita di Peri and Daniel Meier (eds.) *Lebanon Facing The Arab Uprisings: Constraints and Adaptation*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, p.135.

Phase-II: Regulatory Policy (2014-2016)

In March 2014, the question of Syrian refugees taken into consideration in the official policy statement delivered by Tammam Salam. This policy statement included all necessary measures to deal with the issues of Syrian refugees from every possible dimension including political, economic, security, and social to limit the implications of their temporary presence. Moreover, to fulfil its ethical and humanitarian obligation along with facilitating return to their homes, the help and assistance both from the Arab world and the international community were taken and much appreciated.[400]

The establishment of an inter-ministerial crisis cell: The fast-growing numbers of the Syrian refugees reaching more than 1 million in May 2014 forced the Lebanese government to establish an inter-ministerial crisis cell headed by the Prime Minister to oversee the crisis management. This cell comprised of various ministries and institutions including Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Migration, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) and the GSO. Each ministry received specific tasks, such as following international standards, while dealing with the situation of refugees internally was given to the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities. Further, in order to relocate the refugees, exploring the possibility of creating safe zones in Syria were tasked to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Migrants. MoSA was given in charge of the coordination between international organisations and local administrations.[401]

'Refugee Policy Paper' (October 2014): The Lebanese government presented a 'Refugee Policy Paper' in October 2014 in response to the growing sentiments against Syrian refugees. This paper mainly focused on the negative implications of the refugee presence on the national economy, politics and, security, initiated to adopt more restrictive policies towards Syrian refugees. The unanimous approval of a policy paper by the government and other political parties in the same month that laid down new measures for 2015 became a turning point. However, Gebran Bassil, the Lebanese minister of foreign affairs showed critical attitude towards the policy paper

[400]Ibid.12-13

[401] Ibid.13.

as instead of widening the international support, it stressed on the responsibilities of the host states considered to be discriminatory. Since the final document of the policy paper proposed at the London conference on 4 February 2016[402], the legitimation and significance can't be overlooked. Further, Bassil brought the Cairo Agreement of 1969 into consideration for comparing the situation. Under this agreement, the status of Palestinian groups operating in Lebanon were acknowledged by the Lebanese authorities and granted them the power to control the Palestinian refugee camps in the country,[403] resulted 'a state within a state'. Majority of the scholars shared their consensus that the Cairo Agreement triggered Lebanon's Civil War (1975) and Israeli invasion of 1982, two critical occurrences in the history of Lebanon. The adoption of policy paper along with revised policy towards Syrian refugees, sets three priorities, including reducing the numbers of registered Syrian refugees by UNHCR and reducing the economic burden by preventing Syrian refugees from working unlawfully. In addition to this, commitment to maintaining a high-security alert and their repatriation or resettlement in third countries by employing all possible means included in this policy paper. In December 2014, a list of professions for Lebanese nationals, introduced by the Ministry of Labour keeping three sectors namely agriculture, cleaning and construction out of that list that has been dominated by the Syrian workers. Even new rules and regulations introduced about sponsorship for the Syrian workers.[404]

For the implementation of the 'policy paper', the Lebanese government and GSO adopted for measures in December 2014. The introduction of new criteria in January 2015 related to entry and exit constrained the capacity of Syrians to enter Lebanon. Meanwhile, security forces also took a tougher approach to informal refugee settlements, as they forcibly removed some of them.[405] In other words, the objective of the government behind taking all these steps includes reducing the numbers of

[402]On 4 February 2016, the UK, Germany, Kuwait, Norway and the United Nations co-hosted a conference on the Syria crisis in Londonto raise significant new funding to meet the immediate and longer-term needs of those affected. The conference raised over US$12 billion in pledges – US$6 billion for 2016 and a further US$6.1 billion for 2017-20 to enable partners to plan ahead.

[403]Trabulsi, Fawwaz (2007), *A History of Modern Lebanon*, London; Ann Arbor, p. 154.

[404]Migration Policy Centre (2019), "Lebanon", [Online: web] Accessed 2 Jan. 2019, URL:http://www.migrationpolicycentre.eu/profile-lebanon/

[405]Vilet, Sam Van (2016), "Syrian refugees in Lebanon: coping with unpreceded challenges" in Maximilian Felsch and Martin Wählisch (eds.)*Lebanon and the Arab Uprisings: In the Eye of the Hurricane*, London: Routledge, p.92

Syrian refugees, easing the burden on Lebanese citizens and its economy and enforcement of laws for protecting the Lebanese population in the labour market and other fields of work.[406] Undoubtedly the flow of refugees became sluggish after the adoption of these measures; however, it made their presence even more challenging.

From the government side, the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) and the High Relief Committee have been given the responsibility to provide all necessary assistance and humanitarian consideration to the Syrian refugees. However, UNHCR and inter-ministerial committee faced criticisms for their ambiguous response to deal with the situation of Syrian refugees and therefore compelled other institutions and organisations including political parties, Islamic charities, and local and regional NGOs to fill the gap. Even the concentration of the distribution of financial and humanitarian assistance to the border areas and overlooking the needs of the refugees settled in the cities and towns also become a matter of concern.[407] Though differential treatment by the Lebanese authorities was observed between Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) and Syrian refugees; however in the absence of formal policy framework dealing with entry, exit and other legal procedures, both groups have been facing the protection issues.[408] This policy provided the platform to introduce the arbitrary policies towards Syrian refugees in the form of excessive visa fee to stay in the country and complicated procedures for valid residency permits.

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) 2003: Undoubtedly, the pre-existing refugee problem, particularly concerning Palestinian refugees, has been determining every decision of the Lebanese authorities towards the Syrian refugees. Presence of the Palestinian refugees can be considered an important reason behind becoming non-signatory to both the 1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol and therefore, Lebanon lacks "refugee law per se. In this situation, Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between Lebanese General Security Office and UNHCR in 2003, governs its policies towards Syrian refugees. This MoU defines the role of the Lebanese authorities about the rights of refugees and asylum seekers. The importance

[406]Amnesty international (2016), *Refugee women from Syria uprooted and unprotected in Lebanon*, London: Amnesty International, p.18.

[407]Knudsen, Are John (2017), "Syria's Refugees in Lebanon: Brothers, Burden, and Bone of Contention" in Rosita di Peri and Daniel Meier (eds.) *Lebanon Facing The Arab Uprisings: Constraints and Adaptation*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, p.141.

of this agreement lies in the fact that Lebanon should not be considered a country for the permanent settlement of refugees and UNHCR should find for the durable solutions within a stipulated time about the resettlement of these refugees.

Cautious attitude and strengthening the institutional capacity: Since 2014, new programs and assessments, framed around ‘resilience', ‘social stability', ‘social cohesion' and ‘relations with host communities'. Due to the instability of Lebanese politics, UNHCR and other NGOs have been playing an important role to assist refugees, highlighting the importance of the well-functioning relationship between the government and NGOs. Moreover, humanitarian agencies have embraced the role of local municipalities in ensuring local acceptance for Syrian refugee support and mitigation of tensions. Lebanese government assured both UNHCR and UNRWA about not breaching the principle of non- refoulment; however, this guarantee should not be considered as a rule but rather a discretion of the government and can witness changes if required stated by one of the officials at MoSA. The penalties and deportation for lack of status are provided in 1962 law on Entry and Exit from Lebanon. The assessment of criminal charges and penalties imposed on people entering Lebanon illegally whether belonging to the category of Asylum seekers or not are mentioned in Article 32 under this law.[409]

The capabilities of the Lebanese government have been enhanced to cope with the vast numbers of Syrian refugees. To improve the institutional capacities of the Lebanese ministries, an additional staff of around 772 were recruited both at the national and the field levels. The contributions made by the international donors in the form of the funding, as part of the US$157.5 million to make public institutions robust and effective, played an important role in this additional recruitment of staff members. As compared to 2015, the overall financial and staff support was declined due to the shortage of monetary requirements and security reasons; however, three main fields were given particular focus namely Ministry of Education, Ministry of Social Affairs and Municipalities seeing their reach and potential to respond both the vulnerable Lebanese and refugee communities.[410]

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[409]Bidinger, Sarah et al. (2015), *Protecting Syrian Refugees: Laws, Policies, and Global Responsibility Sharing*, Boston: Boston University, p.43

[410]Yassi, Nasser (2018), *101 Facts & Figures on the Syrian Refugee Crisis*, Beirut: Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs, American University of Beirut p.110.

Obligations under various international treaties: Early 2015 to February 2016 (London pledging conference) witnessed no significant change in the political debates and policies towards Syrian refugees. As a non-signatory to 1951 convention or 1967 protocol, Lebanon lacks any formal provisions for dealing with the rights of the Syrian refugees. But this cannot be considered as an excuse to escape from the obligations exists under other international and human rights treaties for the safety and the protection of refugees to which Lebanon is a party. Even some of the provisions mentioned in the 1951 convention can be seen in these human rights treaties[411] for the safety and the protection of refugees to which Lebanon is a party. Even some of the provisions mentioned in the 1951 convention can be seen in these human rights treaties. While Lebanese laws have no social protections for non-citizens, Lebanon being a member of these treaties, is bound by their principles and obligations. For example, the non-recognition of the rights of refugees both about shelter or means to livelihood violates the Article 11 of the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights that emphasises on adequate food, clothing, and shelter and the constant improvement in the living standards.

Furthermore, Article 9 of 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights states about informing the reasons for the arrest of any individual and charges imposed at that particular time. This provision is the foundation for the freedom from arbitrary detention and also get mentioned in the customary international law. To take measures and to adopt for formal legislation about trafficking and prostitution holds the main provisions in the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.[412] Therefore, regardless of the status of Syrian refugees, Lebanon, and the international community carry some important legal duties and obligations towards the rights and protection of these refugees.

In these circumstances, some words stated by the Filippo Grandi, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for managing the crisis have been playing a significant role: “We are at a watershed, where success in managing forced

[411]These human rights treaties include the 1984 Convention Against Torture, the 1965 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Arab Charter of Human Rights.

[412]Bidinger, Sarah et al. (2015), *Protecting Syrian Refugees: Laws, Policies, and Global Responsibility Sharing*, Boston: Boston University, pp.34-35.

displacement globally requires a new and far more comprehensive approach so that countries and communities aren't left dealing with this alone."[413]

The safe return of the refugees to their home country lies with changing political reality in Syria. It has become the responsibility of the international community to hold Assad regime accountable for their arbitrary policies towards Syrians. The explicit and effective presence of international organisations inside Syria has become essential to ensure the security, rights, and freedoms of the returnees, and serious efforts must be taken in this direction.[414]

Conclusion

The status of Syrian refugees in Lebanon can be considered more difficult and complicated. Their initial arrival witnessed the welcoming attitude; however, massive influx started posing difficulties. Their settlement in the already marginalised areas created several problems for their survival. Further challenge added by the absence of formal refugee camps, forced them to opt for Informal settlements across different areas in Lebanon. Majority of them settled, in the North and Bekaa, already strained with limited resources. The struggle for resources including water, electricity, health and education as well as competition for jobs became significant challenges for them that eventually turned out to be crucial reasons for strained relations between both the communities. The introduction of complex regulations for a valid residency permit and exorbitant visa fee restricted their movement and exposed them to exploitation and other human rights violation. Their employment for lowest wages, mainly in the informal sector and inaccessibility to social security and labour regulations, further contributing towards their mistreatment and exploitation. In all this, Women and children are primary victims. In the absence of males in the family, the entire responsibility for family expenses lies with them, making their lives more miserable.

[413]UNHCR (2108), "Forced displacement above 68m in 2017, new global deal on refugees critical", [Online: web] Accessed 8 Oct. 2017, URL: https://www.unhcr.org/news/press/2018/6/5b27c2434/forced-displacement-above-68m-2017-new-global-deal-refugees-critical.html

[414] Habbal, Tesbih (2019), Syrians in Lebanon: A Life of Misery, or a Return to the Unknown, [Online web] Accessed 11 July 2019, URL: https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/syrians-in-lebanon-a-life-of-misery-or-a-return-to-the-unknown

Considering the economic burden and political fragility, Lebanese government priorities the issue in mid-2014. The shift from ‘Open Door Policy’ to the restricted entry policy by Lebanese authorities added more complexities resulted in a decline in their numbers. However, the government's erratic response must be understood within the context of the polarisation in the Lebanese politics after 2005, past experiences with the Palestinian refugees, political instability due to the involvement of Hezbollah along with the absence of any legal and administrative framework to deal with the refugee issues. The political deadlock due to the postponement of elections and presidential vacuum for a more extended period did not allow for prioritising the matter of Syrian refugees and problems associated with them in the political spectrum. Lebanon tried to show solidarity towards the refugees by opting systematic approach even in the absence of formal framework; however, witnessed mixed responses. A structured and comprehensive legal framework should be developed to make a more transparent and inclusive refugee policy by incorporating international refugee norms and rights. The political solution in Syria and the safe return of the refugees to their home country is the only feasible solution for mitigating the crisis, but till that time, a collective and collaborative framework is needed between the host country and the international community for preventing the situation to become more worse and unstable. They should work towards implementing more pragmatic but at the same time, generous policies considering the issue from the humanitarian dimension as well. Addressing the needs of both the communities, including Syrian refugees and marginalised Lebanese nationals to better deal with the humanitarian crisis and improving the overall situation becomes essential. Though Lebanon is not a signatory refugee conventions regarding rights of refugees; however, being a signatory of other international treaties, it becomes the duty of Lebanon to fulfil its obligations towards the rights and protection of Syrian refugees.

Chapter-Five

Economic and Political Implications of the Syrian Refugee Crisis

Introduction

The Syrian civil war in general and the influx of Syrian refugees, in particular, posed severe challenges to Lebanon's political and economic stability. Lebanon has been already facing enormous challenges as a host to Palestinian and Iraqi refugees for many years, but the recent upsurge due to the influx of Syrian refugees has alarmed Lebanon's political and economic conditions. The Syrian refugee crisis has made Lebanon more fragile. Lebanon, which is still struggling to come out from the shadow of the Lebanese civil war, is now facing the considerable resource burden. But at the same time, debates revolves around considering refugees as consumers and aid from the international community tried to balance out the adverse shocks of the presence of Syrian refugees formed different narratives. The Syrian refugee crisis is also affecting the fragile political system of Lebanon. The influx of Syrian refugees is posing a severe threat to its demographic balance. Since the majority of the refugees belong to the Sunni community, Lebanon is now feeling the heat of sectarianism. The refugee crisis is creating a new political reality in Lebanon, posing a threat of political instability and policy paralysis. Since 2009, Lebanon has witnessed the collapse of its government twice in 2011 and 2013, which further led to presidential vacuum for more than two years. However, the parliament extended its mandate on several occasion but the threat of refugee crisis to Lebanese political and economic situation added further complications. The incidents of suicide bombing, clashes at the border along with political assassinations amidst the refugee crisis has further alarmed the security concern in Lebanon. The Syrian civil war and the refugee crisis has made Lebanon more vulnerable. As far as the humanitarian and financial assistance is concerned, Lebanon has received assistance from the different regional, national, international agencies, INGOs, NGOs, think tanks, Islamic charities etc. However, seeing the numbers, financial aid did not fulfil the needs of all the refugees. This chapter makes an attempt to understand the political and economic impact of refugee crisis on Lebanon.

1. Nature of the Lebanese Economy

The economic implications of Syrian refugees crisis on the Lebanese economy is a significant inquiry. Since 1943, the nature of the Lebanese economy has a laissez-faire system where the private sector plays an important role. The Service industry (finance, insurance, transport), including the banking and tourism sectors (the core of the service sector), has a formidable presence in the Lebanese economy. Approximately 69.5 percent of Lebanese GDP originate from this sector. Lebanon's economy benefited from this system throughout 1950s, 1960s and early 1970s. The good inflow of capital from the Gulf countries in the form of oil rents, as well as remittances from the Lebanese diaspora further helped Lebanon's economy to prosper

Before the Syrian civil war started, Lebanon has witnessed the investments in human capital especially the education sector resulted in a huge supply of dynamic labour force contributing towards the development of the Lebanese economy.[415] In the Arab world, Lebanon has the highest adult literacy rate by comprising around 73.5 percent making it one of the highest among developing countries.[416]

Traditionally, Lebanon has always had supply from Palestinian and Syrian workers (skilled and semi-skilled). These immigrants' labours hugely invested into the Lebanese economy. Traditionally influential business class and their close links with political elite made it possible to flourish the liberal market economy. The widespread intersection of interests of Maronite bureaucrats and business families belonging to the Sunni community provided the Lebanese economy with the character of the confessional economy. This intersection of interests manifested itself politically in the 'National Pact'.[417] Measures taken in the form of conservative fiscal and monetary policies nurtured a laissez-faire economy that in turn, benefited the business class. Lebanon was considered as the "Switzerland of West Asia" before the commencement of the civil war in 1975. The growth of the Lebanese economy was

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[415]Saidi, Nasser H. (1986), *Economic Consequences of the War in Lebanon*, Oxford: Centre for Lebanese Studies, p.4.

[416] Richards, Alan and John Waterbury (1990), *A Political Economy of the Middle East*, Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, pp.7-8.

[417]Kubursi, Atif A. (1999), "Reconstructing the economy of Lebanon", *Arab Studies Quarterly*, 21 (1): 69-95, p.71.

impressive.[418] In its report of May 1975, World Bank stated that "Lebanon is aiming for European living standards and should be compared with a European country in the lower income bracket". The significant financial performance of the economy was the reason for comparing living standards of Lebanon with the European country. It is important to note that the overall balance of payments (BoP)[419] remained positive during 1951-82.

As a result of the Lebanese civil war (1975-1990), there was massive destruction of the country's economic, physical and social infrastructure along with human capital. The national output was declined by half while considerable damage occurs to the status of Lebanon as banking hub of the West Asian region.[420] There was a decline in real GDP from US$19.8 billion in 1974 to US$13.7 billion in 1975 that further reduced to US$5.8 billion in 1976. Within two years of war, more than 70 percent of the country's income disappeared.[421] The estimated cost of physical damage was around US$25 billion including massive loss of human lives ranging from 90,000 to 170,000, comprising about 3 to 5 percent of the population. In addition to this, approximately 300,000 injured, as well as 800,000, displaced. One in every four Lebanese belongs to the category of displaced persons. Since Lebanon became dependent on the remittances, about 550,000 to 880,000 Lebanese migrated to other countries. (See table-5.1)

[418]Issawi, Charles (1982), *An Economic History of the Middle East and North Africa*, London: Methuen, pp.5-6; Persen,William (1958), "Lebanese economic development since 1958", *The Middle East Journal*, 12 (3): 277–294, pp.277-278.

[419]The Balance of Payments (BoP) is a statement of all transactions made between entities in one country and the rest of the world over a defined period of time, such as a quarter or a year.

[420] Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) (2016), World Fact Book, 'Lebanon'**[**Online: web] Accessed 10 Jan 2017, URL: https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/print_le.html

[421]Felsch, Maximilian and Martin Wählisch (2016), *Lebanon and the Arab Uprisings: In the Eye of the Hurricane*, London: Routledge, p.122.

Table 5.1: Personal Remittances, Received (% of GDP)[422]

Remittances	% of GDP
1977	0.3
1980	0.4
1985	0.38
1990	0.4
1995	0.31
2000	0.37
2005	0.54

The disappearance of the scope and capacity of the government due to the civil war pushed the private sector to fill the vacuum and gradually substitute public institutions.[423] During 1981, some improvements witnessed in the economy that reversed in 1982 following the Israeli invasion of southern Lebanon. The aggregate income which was improved by 1981, touched again almost 1974 levels by 1982.[424]

Post-civil war, the role of Prime Minister Rafik Hariri in the social and economic reconstruction of the Lebanese economy remains remarkable. In the 1990s, an ambitious recovery programme called 'Horizon 2000', initiated by Rafik Hariri to restore the traditional status of Lebanon as an important regional centre of finance and commerce. The return of international companies and rebuilding of physical infrastructure played a significant role to restructure the Lebanese economy. However, the critics argued that not the entire Lebanon rather Beirut remains the centre for attraction for the reconstruction both physically as well as economically.

[422] Source: World Bank (2019), "Personal remittances, received (% of GDP)", [Online: web] Accessed 6 Dec. 2017, URL https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.DT.GD.ZS

[423]World Bank (1995), *Lebanon: Private Sector assessment*, Washington DC: Private Sector Development and Infrastructure Division, Middle East and North Africa Region (World Bank), pp.10-11.

[424]Felsch, Maximilian and Martin Wählisch (2016), *Lebanon and the Arab Uprisings: In the Eye of the Hurricane*, London: Routledge, p.122.

The Lebanese economy was reeling under huge public debt under the shadow of civil war and significant borrowing from domestic banks under the reconstruction program. However, it succeeded to restore its affected economy and its critical physical and financial infrastructure. Tax rates were reduced to attract and encourage investments, resulted in budgetary austerity that further led to limited investment in social infrastructure. The economy became more complicated due to its growing reliance on indirect taxation. All these measures widened the gap between rich and poor significantly. 'Horizon 2000' as mentioned above, witnessed mixed responses consisting of both positive and negative results. Seeing the positive side, it helped Lebanon to improve its physical infrastructure on the one hand, and received constructive international attention. However, the programme suffered from some serious challenges, including its economic viability, forced the country into a grave debt crisis.

Furthermore, post-Taif institutional arrangement was linked to the problems such as corruption, debt crisis, and other inefficiencies.[425] The program 'Horizon 2000' and low income taxes benefitted a small fraction of Lebanese population while many suffered and came to live below the poverty line. It was estimated that in 1998, one in every three Lebanese living below the poverty line. By 1998, Horizon 2000 reached to a standstill due to the rising debt problem and the failure of the real-estate sector. In order to solve the economic crisis, Rafik Hariri approached International Monetary Fund and World Bank during a donor conference in Paris in 2002. However, pledges mostly made at conference gone unfulfilled including those made during the Paris III donor conference in 2007, following the July 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah.[426] Besides the security and political linkage with the economy, the component of foreign funding and its continuation supply, its linkage with the oil prices had a significant impact on the Lebanese economy. The increasing oil prices and tourism witnessed an increase in the capital inflows during 2007-2010. These capital inflows contributed towards the growth of the economy largely by domestic

[425]Najem, Tom (1998) "Horizon 2000: Economic viability and political realities", *Mediterranean Politics*, 3 (1): 29-56, p.29.

[426] Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) (2016), World Fact Book, 'Lebanon' [Online: web] Accessed 10 Jan 2017, URL: https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/print_le.html

consumption, development of bank credit along with the activities in the construction sector.[427]

Though the Lebanese economy grew uninterruptedly since the Taif Accord (1989), the assassination of Rafik Hariri in 2005 and 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah slowed the pace of the growth.[428] The Lebanese civil war of 2006 had a massive impact on the Lebanese economy, reducing the real growth rate by 5 per cent. This loss of economy was under the rubric of the enormous loss of human and infrastructure cost. The two significant factors, including political instability and polarisation in Lebanese politics, were responsible for making the progress of the Lebanese economy very slow. However, regardless of the global economic crisis, the Lebanese economy managed to grow after 2007. The sectors, including construction and tourist arrival, witnessed significant growth while considerable investments in the banking sector contributed to the economy immensely. The large capital inflows to finance its public debt and domestic consumption led to the emergence of the outsized banking sector. The consolidated balance sheet of commercial banks reached 360 percent of GDP in 2013 from 188 percent of GDP in 1997. Almost a century ago, Khalil Gibran on the Lebanese economy writes "Pity the nation that wears a cloth it does not weave, eats a bread it does not harvest and drinks a wine that flows not from its own wine-press". His words even after a century stand correct.[429]

2. Economic Implications of the Syrian Refugees

The Syrian civil war, in general, created enormous macro-economic challenges in Lebanon than the presence of the Syrian refugees. Undoubtedly, the Syrian crisis has "accentuated the weaknesses of the Lebanese economy."[430] Syria is not only an important trading partner to Lebanon but provides a significant transit route. Lebanon's trade with UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Oman takes place through Syria. Due to the Syrian civil war, Lebanon was forced to opt for more expensive

[427] David, Anda et al. (2018), *The economics of the Syrian refugee crisis in neighboring countries: The case of Lebanon*, Giza, Egypt: The Economic Research Forum, pp.5-6.

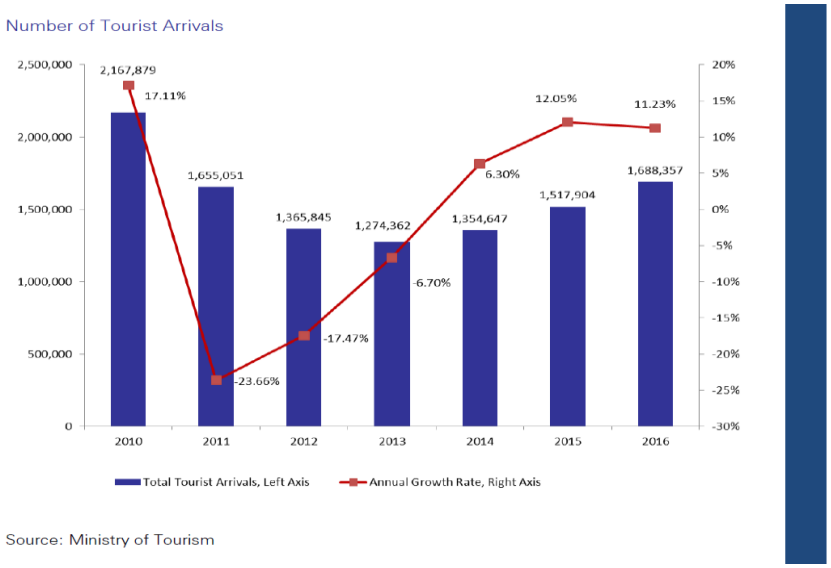
[428]Felsch, Maximilian and Martin Wählisch (2016), *Lebanon and the Arab Uprisings: In the Eye of the Hurricane*, London: Routledge, pp.122-123.

[429]Chaaban, Jad (2015), "Our small, dependent economy", [Online: web] Accessed 25 Sept. 2016, URL:http://www.executive-magazine.com/opinion/comment/small-dependent-economy,

[430] Amine, Ramzyel (2013), "Counting the cost", *Executive*, [Online: web] Accessed 8 September 2016, URL: http://www.executive-magazine.com/economics-policy/lebanon-syria-crisis

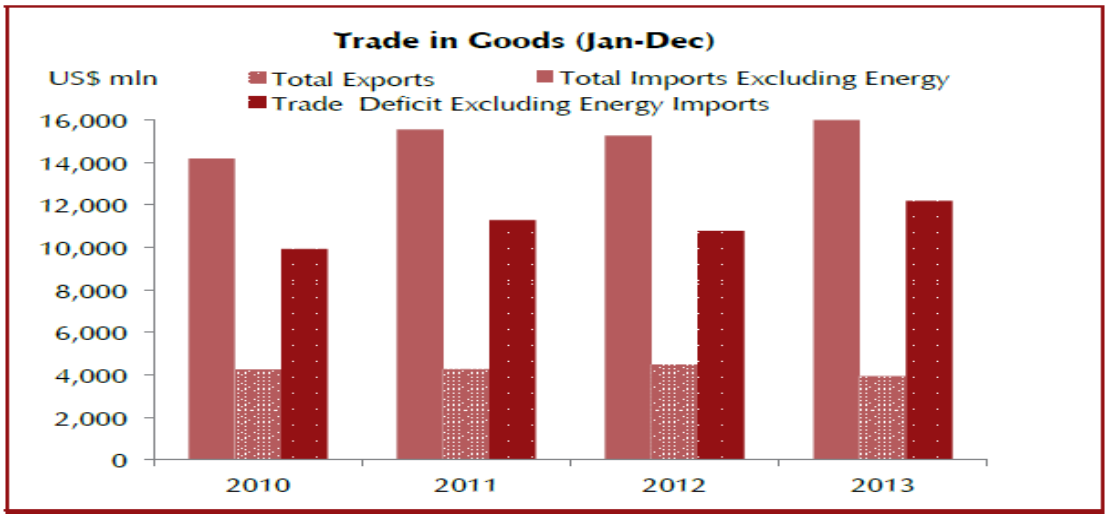
alternative trade routes, increasing the export prices hurting competitiveness.[431] Moreover, tourism industry witnessed a drastic change in the form of decline in the tourists' arrival (See figure-5.1). In other words, the Syrian civil war impacted the Lebanese economy both with direct and indirect fiscal costs.

Figure-5.1: Number of Tourist Arrival (2010-2016)



Source: Government of Lebanon (2018), *Number of Tourists' Arrival* (2011-2016), Ministry of Tourism, p.6.

Figure-5.2: The Trade-in-Goods (2013)



Source: *Lebanon Economic Monitor: A Sluggish Economy in a highly volatile Environment* (2014), Washington DC: World Bank, p.14.

[431] International Rescue Committee (2016), *Policy brief: Impact of Syrian refugees on host communities*, Washington DC: International Rescue Committee, p.6

Early 2013 witnessed the real impact, when the trade flows of consumer products saw negative growth. The trade disruptions brought an unprecedented price rise in the domestic market. The price rise of staples like wheat flour severely affected the poor people and made their life miserable. The change in the Lebanese demography in the wake of the refugee crisis deteriorated Lebanon's trade-in-goods balance in 2013. According to Lebanese customs data, there was a periodic decline of 3 percent in trade in goods of US$17.3 billion (39 % of GDP) in 2013 compared to 2012. The trade imbalance in 2013 showed widening of the trade deficit by 13.2 per cent. There was a 5.7 percent rise in the import, while the export drop by 12.2 percent during the same period. With the increase of Syrian refugees, the consumption pattern also showed a different design. During this period there was a rise in imports by 4.1 and 19.5 percent, respectively (See figure 5.2). This period saw a sharp decline in tourist consumption.

Ever since the end of the civil war in Lebanon in 1990, all successive governments committed themselves to launch economic and political reforms. In the aftermath of multiple external shocks and due to the lack of internal political stability, Lebanon faces significant challenges including sizable public debt (148 % of GDP in 2016), public deficit, sluggish economic activity, corruption, increasing unemployment rate and inflation. The inflow of Syrian refugees since the beginning of the war in Syria in 2011 (estimated to be more than 1 million by UNHCR in December 2016), considered "a gathering storm" complicates the situation even more and makes the economic system more vulnerable to external shocks.[432]

Understanding the economic impact of the Syrian refugees on the Lebanese economy can be studied through the World Bank data during 2012-14 stating the fiscal cost of the effects of the refugee crisis. The World Bank data estimates the cost at US$1.1 billion (2.3% of annual GDP); however, this estimation is not just confined to the refugee aspect, but also includes the impact of the Syrian civil war in the form of second-round effect generally. It corresponds to about US$0.9 billion each year which can be divided into lower economic activity (US$0.5 billion) and higher operating costs (US$0.4 billion), led to increased demand for government services. During

[432]Mehanna, Rock-Antoine and Rayan Haykal (2016), "A sectoral study of Lebanon's economy: A dynamic CGE model", *The Journal of Developing Areas*, 50 (3): 389-416, p.390.

2011-2015, the overall Syrian crisis related operating costs reached around US$2 billion, i.e. about US$400 million each year.[433] The pre-existing subsidy schemes on goods and services that witnessed an increase in demand, including bread and electricity, added to the additional pressure on the budget expenditure. In this situation, it can be said that Lebanon failed to implement the fiscal and structural reforms signed up to in 2007 as a part of the international donors' conference.[434]

Furthermore, poverty rates have mounted, and the quality of public service delivery has deteriorated significantly. Moreover, the revenue collection during 2012-14 also saw a sharp decline estimated at US$ 1.5 billion; the general downturn in the economy and particularly in the tourism sector attributed the decline.[435] Further, regional insecurity and uncertainty have impacted investor and consumer confidence in Lebanon, with economic growth declining from 8 per cent between 2007 and 2010 to 3 per cent in 2011 and 2 per cent in 2012.[436] Further, it declined to 1.5 percent by 2016. The labour market conditions were exacerbated by the massive presence of the Syrian refugees, resulting in the adoption of strict policies by the Lebanese authorities to restrict the scope for the Syrian refugees to engage in the productive employment activities.

Lebanon being the non-signatory to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and also due to the 1967 protocol, helped Lebanon to opt for such restrictive policies. Even labour legislation of Lebanon has avoided to explicitly mentioning the right of refugee regarding work and related opportunities.[437] Otherwise, the rights of refugees to get involved in wage-earning employment and self-employment activities are mentioned in the refugee convention. It would not be appropriate to state that Syrian refugees complicated the situation and responsible for the increasing unemployment since Lebanon was already in a dire situation in terms of employing its citizens. The

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[433]Tiffin, Andrew et al. (2016), *Lebanon: Selected Issues*, Washington DC: IMF, p.8.

[434] Errighi, Lorenza and Jörn Griesse (2016), *The Syrian Refugee Crisis: Labour Market Implications in Jordan and Lebanon*, Luxembourg: European Commission, pp.8-9

[435]World Bank (2013), *Lebanon - Economic and social impact assessment of the Syrian conflict*, Washington DC: World Bank, p.10.

[436]International Rescue Committee (2016), *Policy brief: Impact of Syrian refugees on host communities*, Washington DC: International Rescue Committee (IRC), p.7.

[437]Errighi, Lorenza and Jörn Griesse (2016), *The Syrian Refugee Crisis: Labour Market Implications in Jordan and Lebanon*, Luxembourg: European Commission, p.11.

Lebanese economy has been facing the acute burden of around US$ 70 billion in public debt with a ratio of 148 percent to GDP, making it difficult to deal with the situation of Syrian refugees and assist host areas and municipalities.[438]

From 2012 to 2015, the average standard of living deteriorated as a result of slower growth led to decline the real per capita GDP with the drop of 8.3 percent, costing a total loss of US$ 726 million. The large fiscal deficits have been posing a significant problem, and the massive influx of the Syrian refugees has been burdening the budgetary resources and the infrastructure added to more difficulties. The fiscal vulnerability of the Lebanese government got aggravated with the instability as a result of the Syrian civil war along with costs accompanying with the vast numbers of the Syrian refugees.[439]

The following sectors including labour market, unemployment, rental and real estate market, GDP growth, public finances along with poverty are dealt separately to see the impact of the Syrian refugees on the Lebanese economy and find out the answers whether they are just putting severe burden on the economy or to some extent contributing the economy at the same time.

Labour market and unemployment: The most visible economic impact due to the presence of Syrian refugees can be seen in the labour market. The spillover of the Syrian civil war worsens the already difficult labour market conditions. Even before the Syrian civil war, high rate of unemployment (particularly among youth) was prevailing in Lebanon. The coexistence of the unemployment rate with discrepancies in the labour market, along with widespread low-productivity jobs made the situation more complicated.[440] In other words, the prolonged duration of unemployment has been afflicting the Lebanese economy since a very long time. As per the World Bank report, Lebanon could not create adequate jobs for its population even during the time of economic prosperity. The entire situation was defined as one of the worst unemployment crises faced by Lebanon that aggravated with the sudden arrival of the

[438]Charafeddine, Raed H. (2016), *The Impact of the Syrian Displacement Crisis on the Lebanese Economy*, Geneva: Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, p.8

[439]Immenkamp, Beatrix (2017), *Syrian crisis: Impact on Lebanon*, Brussels: European Parliamentary Research Service, p.8.

[440]World Bank (2013), *Lebanon - Economic and social impact assessment of the Syrian conflict*, Washington, DC: World Bank, p.16.

Syrian refugees in large numbers.[441] One in every five Lebanese is unemployed. Unemployment has increased to an estimated 18-20 percent, which was around 11 percent before the crisis. The most affected section of the Lebanese society belong to this category are the youth population, particularly the age group of 15-24. Two significant factors, including limited work opportunities along with weak economic growth and competition for jobs between the Syrian refugees and the host community, were responsible for this situation. There is an important fact not to be overlooked that Syrian refugees have provided a large pool of cheap labour for the Lebanese economy resulted decline in the payroll costs by Lebanese companies and boosting the competitiveness of certain companies.[442] The Majority of the Syrian refugees come in the category of unskilled labour and work for the low productivity jobs in the informal sectors. Majority of the Lebanese nationals avoid taking up the jobs that opted by the Syrian refugees, however, Lebanese people belong to the category of low income sections and come under the poverty line were affected due to the presence of Syrian refugees. On average US$250 per month were earned by the Syrian refugees that is much lower compared to the national minimum wage set at US$450 and hence limiting their potential to boost economic growth. Additionally, this led to the decline in wage level primarily impacting the Lebanese population. According to International Labour Organisation, 88 percent of refugees are paid 40 percent less than the minimum wage in Lebanon (the equivalent of roughly US$ 280/month)[443] while children, some as young as six, are paid US$ 4 a day[444] in some areas in North Lebanon.

Employers are getting benefitted in the absence of formal contracts as there were no obligations about paying social security or insurance contributions. As a result, low

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[441] Kadi, Samar (2017), "Lebanon's youth bearing the brunt of unemployment, regional instability", [Online: web] Accessed 5 Jan. 2018, URL: https://thearabweekly.com/lebanons-youth-bearing-brunt-unemployment-regional-instability

[442]Khouray, Bichara el, (2017), *The Economic Benefits of the Massive Presence of Syrian Refugees*, Beirut: UNDP p.7.

[443]International Labour Organisation (2014), "Syrian refugees in Lebanon face harsh working conditions", [Online: web] Accessed 10 Aug. 2016, URL: http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_240126/lang--en/index.htm

[444]International Labour Organisation (2016), "Refugee crisis: Child Labour in agriculture on the rise in Lebanon", [Online: web] Accessed 5 Sep. 2017, URL: http://www.ilo.org/beirut/media-centre/fs/WCMS_496725/lang--en/index.htm

wages became the reality of the Lebanese labour market.[445] The Syrian refugees provided a significant impetus to Lebanese services exports as per the analysis was done by the econometric analysis.[446] The informal sector in the Lebanese economy offers 56 percent of total employment but due to jobs taken by the Syrian refugees at low wages intensified the competition in the industry and made it difficult for young Lebanese to get work. As a result, one -third of the young Lebanese are unable to find work which further impacting labour market standards.[447] In fact, it has been estimated that as many as 300,000 Lebanese have become unemployed, the majority unskilled youth[448], due to the crisis. The presence of Syrians in the form of seasonal workers in the sectors such as agriculture and construction are a part of the history of the Lebanese labour market. [449] Their contribution in the Lebanese economy was immense before the Syrian civil war.

Due to the skill distribution, almost half of the working population has been of low-skilled. In the category of the low- skill workers; 32 percent Lebanese fall into this category compare to Syrian refugees and other foreign workers stands at 54 percent and 68 percent respectively. Seeing the situation, it can be analysed that the impact of the Syrian refugees in huge numbers is primarily visible in the low-skill category and affecting the Lebanese population and other foreigners belonging to the same category.[450]

The education status of the Syrian refugees along with restrictive legal policies by the authorities was responsible for not getting them into the competitive sectors occupied

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[445] Chaaban, Jad (2017), "Should Lebanon get more funds for hosting refugees?", [Online: web] Accessed 10 Aug. 2016, URL:https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/04/lebanon-funds-hosting-refugees-170405082414586.html

[446]Lebanon Economic Monitor (2017), *Global Practice for Macroeconomics & Fiscal Management, GMFDR Middle East and North Africa Region*, Washington DC: World Bank, p.44.

[447] Cheri, Zeinab, et al. (2016), "The Lebanese–Syrian crisis: impact of influx of Syrian refugees to an already weak state," *Risk Management and Healthcare Policy*, 9 (1): 165–172, p.169.

[448]World Bank (2017), "Lebanon Country overview", [Online: web] Accessed 10 June 2017,URL: http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/lebanon/overview, Elias al-Araj (2014) "How the war on Syria left its mark on Lebanon's economy", *Al-Monitor*, [Online: web] Accessed 22 Sep. 2016, URL: http://www.al monitor.com/pulse/business/2016/05/lebanon-syria-war-economyrepercussions-banking sector.html#ixzz4kh7AX8nt

[449]World Bank, (2013), *Lebanon: Economic and Social Impact Assessment of the Syrian Conflic*t, Washington, DC: World Bank, p.83.

[450] David, Anda et al. (2018), *The economics of the Syrian refugee crisis in neighboring countries: The case of Lebanon*, Giza, Egypt: The Economic Research Forum, pp.6-7.

by the majority of the Lebanese nationals. More than half of the refugees are under the age of 24, a third of whom are illiterate, 40 percent have completed primary school, and 3 percent have attended university. Also 92 percent of the active population work illegally.[451] On the other hand, Lebanese consisted of enrolment rate of 106.6 percent and 86.3 percent in primary and secondary education respectively along with more than 46 percent attended the university[452] in 2012. So, it can be derived from the above analysis that though the presence of Syrian refugees is affecting the employment situation, but the impact is more prevalent in the low skilled category and informal sector. Undoubtedly, even before the crisis, the state of employment was not in a better condition; however, the crisis due to Syrian refugees has intensified the situation.

As a result of competition from Syrian labour and reduced border trade activities, approximately sixty percent drop in wages witnessed in North Lebanon and the Bekaa region.[453] Further, the diversion of development programs on agriculture, waste management, water systems or other public infrastructure to emergency response programs for Syrian refugees complicated the situation for host communities. Though the income of Lebanese families has remained the same or decreased, their family expenditures increased due to the Syrian refugees. Even the establishment of new Syrian businesses aggravated the resentment among Lebanese entrepreneurs concerning deterioration in the economic situation. The remote areas faced the most significant burden due to the presence of Syrian refugees. In other words, peripheral areas witnessing more spillover comparatively to central areas like Beirut. One positive aspect of their existence is the benefits to the farmers due to the availability of the Syrian refugees in the form of cheap labour, making the Lebanese agricultural products competitive; even their settlement in the rural areas reducing the economic stress and vulnerabilities of the Lebanese farmers.[454]

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[451]International Labour Organization (2014), *Assessment of the Impact of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon and their Employment Profile 2013*, Beirut: International Labour Organization (ILO), pp.22-24.

[452] Bankmed (2015), "Analysis of Lebanon's Education Sector", **[**Online: web] Accessed 15 Oct 2016, URL: https://www.bankmed.com.lb/BOMedia/subservices/categories/News/20150515170635891.pdf

[453] Food and Agriculture Organisation (2013) "Agricultural Livelihoods and Food Security Impact Assessment and Response Plan for the Syria Crisis in the Neighboring Countries of Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey", **[**Online: web] Accessed 15 May 2017, URL: http://www.fao.org/emergencies/resources/documents/resources-detail/en/c/173889/

[454]Holmes, Oliver (2013), "Syrian refugees burden and benefit for Lebanese economy", [Online: web] Accessed 12 Sep. 2017, URL: from https://www.reuters.com/article/us-crisis-lebanon-refugees/syrian-refugees-burden-and-benefit-for-lebanese-economy-idUSBRE93G0MW20130417

Rental market and real estate: Undoubtedly Lebanon is burdened with the massive influx of Syrian refugees but simultaneously ignoring the benefits to the Lebanese economy due to the presence of Syrian refugees would be an incomplete study. It was argued that Syrian refugees benefited the Lebanese economy in different ways. Only 17 percent of Syrian refugees live in refugee camps, while the majority of them are dependent on the rental market which in turn creates pressure on rental prices. The first wave of Syrian refugees consisted mostly of middle class and businessmen preferred to stay in hotels.[455] But the continuation of the Syrian civil war pushed them to opt for renting the apartment. A considerable number of these Syrian refugees opted for the luxury apartments ranged US$50,000 to US$70,000 per year. The remaining refugees of the first wave chosen the apartments within the range of US$18,000 to US$30,000.[456] Therefore, as a result of Syrian investments in the real estate sector, there is an increase in rent by 40 percent during 2012. It has boosted demand and increased bank deposits.[457] In addition to this, around US$36 million was contributed to the Lebanese economy every month in the form of rent payment by Syrian refugees to the Lebanese property owners in 2014. Therefore, it can be said that one of the consequences of 'no-camp' policy adopted by the Lebanese authorities benefited the local economy in the form of income generated through renting private accommodations, rooms and lands to the Syrian refugees. During June 2012 to June 2013, an increase in rent reached 44 per cent, making lives of vulnerable Lebanese more miserable who were not able to cope with these high rent prices.[458] Further, in April 2014, it was estimated that apartment rents in Beirut increased by 400 to 700 US dollars per month due to the growing flow of refugees and the influx of international aid workers. This raised demand pushed some real-estate developers to invest parts of their stocks to the rental market. Even investments by many Syrian businessmen in

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[455] Barnard, Anne (2012), "Resurgent Beirut Offers Haven Amid Turmoil of Arab Spring,", *The New York Times*, [Online: web] Accessed 20 January. 2017, URL: https://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/14/world/middleeast/resurgent-beirut-offers-a-haven-in-the-arab-spring.html

[456]Ohrstrom, Lysandra (2013), "Residential real estate: small is not cheap,"*The Daily Star*, [Online: web] Accessed 10 December 2016, URL: http://www1.dailystar.com.lb/Business/Lebanon/2013/Jan-14/202095-residential-real-estate-small-is-not-cheap.ashx

[457]Ashkar, Hisham (2015), "Benefiting from a Crisis: Lebanese Upscale Real-Estate Industry and the War in Syria", *Confluences Méditerranée*, 92: 89–100, p.95.

[458]Zetter, R, et al. (2014), *The Syrian Displacement Crisis and a Regional Development and Protection Programme: Mapping and Meta-Analysis of Existing Studies of Costs, Impacts and Protection*, Oxford: Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford, pp.6-7.

high-end restaurants in the posh areas of Beirut further contributed to increasing retail rent prices.

The slow growth of the Lebanese economy emerged due to the prevailing regional instability and security concerning the West Asian region. However; the well-off Syrians contributed largely to the local Lebanese economy by investing in the real estate sector. With an estimate value of around US$78,700,180, Syrian owned real estate in Lebanon in 2016. In terms of holding the portion of real estate by foreigners, Syrians ranked first by comprising around 14.17% while second position acquired by Saudi Arabia with 7.4 percent. The year 2016, in comparison to 2015 witnessed a slight increase in real estate market owned by the foreign nationals.[459]

UNHCR, in its study highlighted that refugees spent US$378 million, equivalent to US$1.03 million a day, as a total amount for renting purposes in 2016. Furthermore, 7 percent of Syrian refugee households also cover the costs of their accommodation by working for their landlord. The renting of garages, spare bedrooms and unfinished apartments has generated new revenue for Lebanon's real estate market. This potential to bolster the support of non-governmental organisations has harnessed the local economy. For instance, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) started a program known as "occupancy free of charge" in 2013 which provides landlords with a package of upgrades for unfinished buildings in exchange of offering free housing for refugees. Investing in ensuring access to decent housing for refugees does not only help the local economy but also provides essential protection to this vulnerable community.[460] Since 2012, the World Food Programme (WFP) in the form of cash-based interventions, injected around US$965.5 million into the Lebanese economy. Providing this type of assistance not only delivers essential aid to vulnerable communities but also encourages the Lebanese economy. In such a situation, refugees can be valuable consumers and can contribute to the local economy.[461]

GDP growth and other economic indicators: As per the statistics revealed by the World Bank, Lebanon has registered an average growth rate of less than 2 percent of

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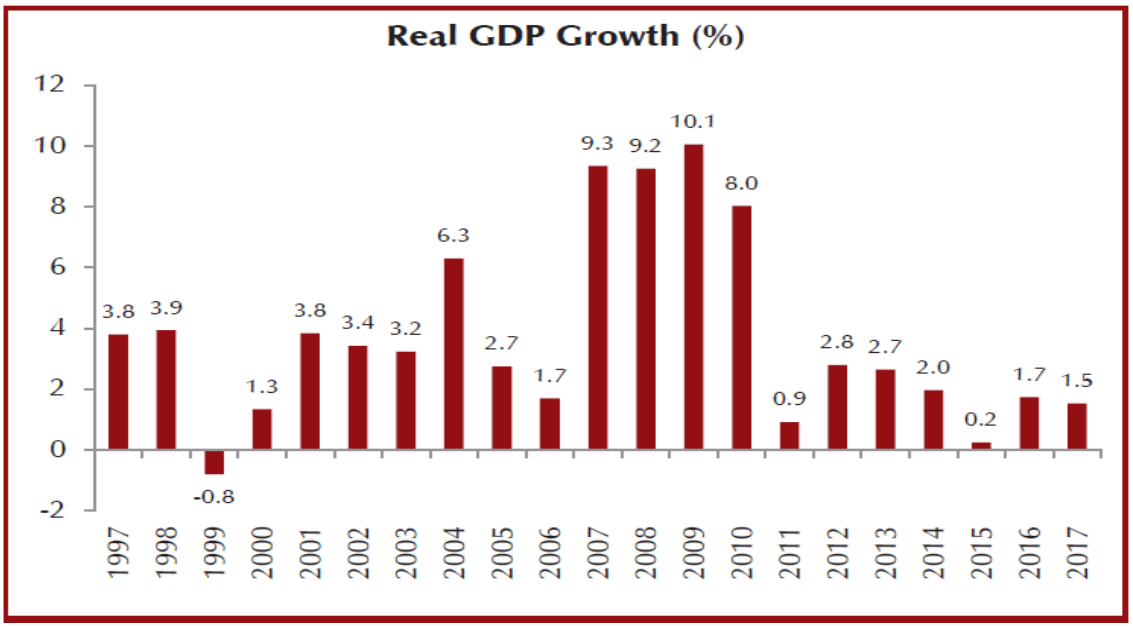
[459]Yassi, Nasser (2018), *101 Facts & Figures on the Syrian Refugee Crisis*, Beirut: Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs, American University of Beirut p.95.

[460]Ibid.p.96.

[461]Ibid.97.

GDP in 2011-2015 that was more than 8 percent on average during 2007-2010; however, this slowdown cannot entirely be attributed to the crisis in Syria and Syrian refugees.[462] The internal dynamics equally played a crucial role in impacting economic growth.

Figure-5.3: Real GDP Growth (%) (1997-2017)

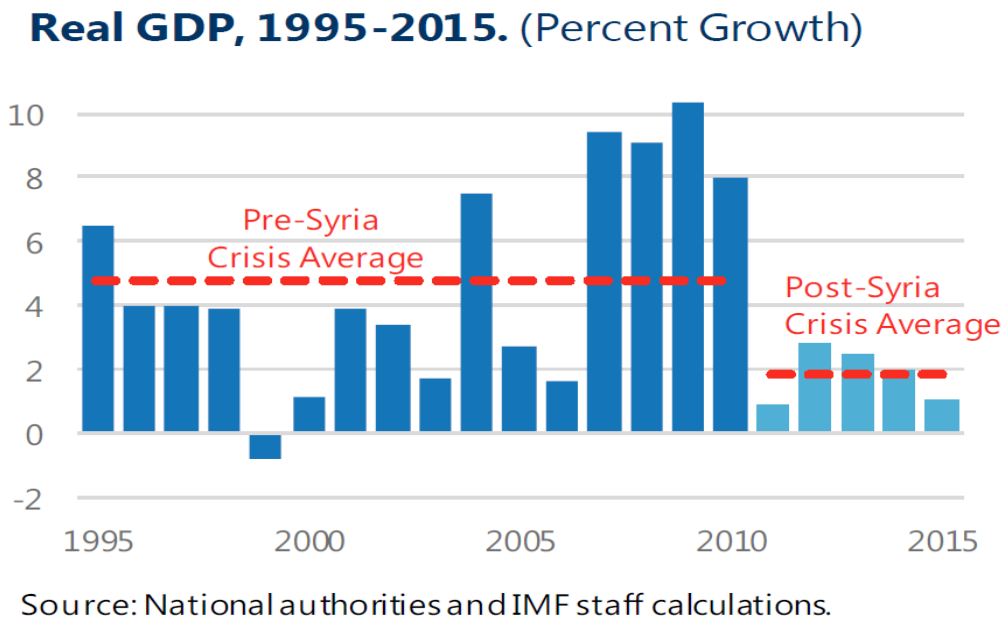


Source: Lebanon Economic Monitor (2018), Washington, DC: World Bank, p.7

Figure 5.3 shows the real GDP growth was 3.8 percent in 1997 that reached negative (-0.8 %) in 1999. In 2004, it jumped to 6.3 from 3.2 in the previous year. It reached 1.7 percent in 2006 as a result of internal and external instabilities, including the major one was Israel- Hezbollah war (2006). From 2007, it started rising and reached around 10 percent in 2009. From 2011, it started worsening as a result of the Syrian civil war and its spillover and touched on average growth of 2 percent during 2011-2016.

[462]Lebanon has been hard-hit by the Syria conflict since 2011, which has negatively affected its tourism sector and investment in real estate, two of its major growth drivers. It is, however, important to note that Lebanon's growth in the preceding years had also been unusually high, having been boosted temporarily by one-off idiosyncratic factors (e.g. related to reconstruction after the armed conflict with Israel in 2006).

Figure-5.4: Real GDP, 1995-2015. (Percent Growth)



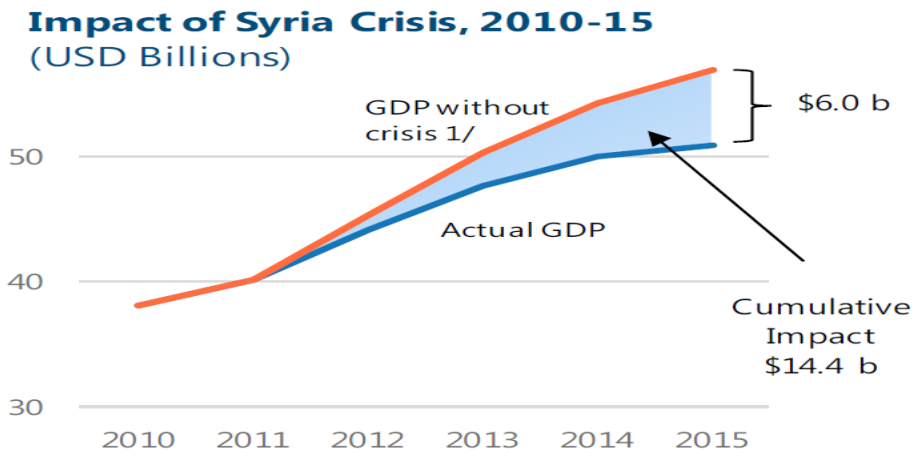
Source:Tiffin, Andrew et al. (2016), *Lebanon: Selected Issues*, Washington DC: International Monetary Fund, p.7.

The above figure 5.4 demonstrated real GDP growth more explicitly in the form of pre-Syria crisis average and the post-Syria crisis average. Lebanon suffered enormous loss of US$13.1 billion between 2012 and 2015. In the year 2015 it almost reached to US$5.65 billion alone about 11 percent of GDP, assessed by World Bank in its report.[463] The report further estimated the spillover cost of the Syrian civil war on Lebanon. It stated that the annual GDP growth rate of Lebanon reduced by an average of 2.9 percentage points, which cost Lebanon almost US$14.5 billion by 2016. The estimated cost was equivalent to a cumulative loss of almost 30 percent of GDP. (See figure 5.5).[464]

[463] Macaron Joe (2018), *Syrian Refugees in Jordan and Lebanon: The Politics of their Return*, Washington DC: Arab Centre, p.3.

[464]Tiffin, Andrew et al. (2016), *Lebanon: Selected Issues*, Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund, p.7

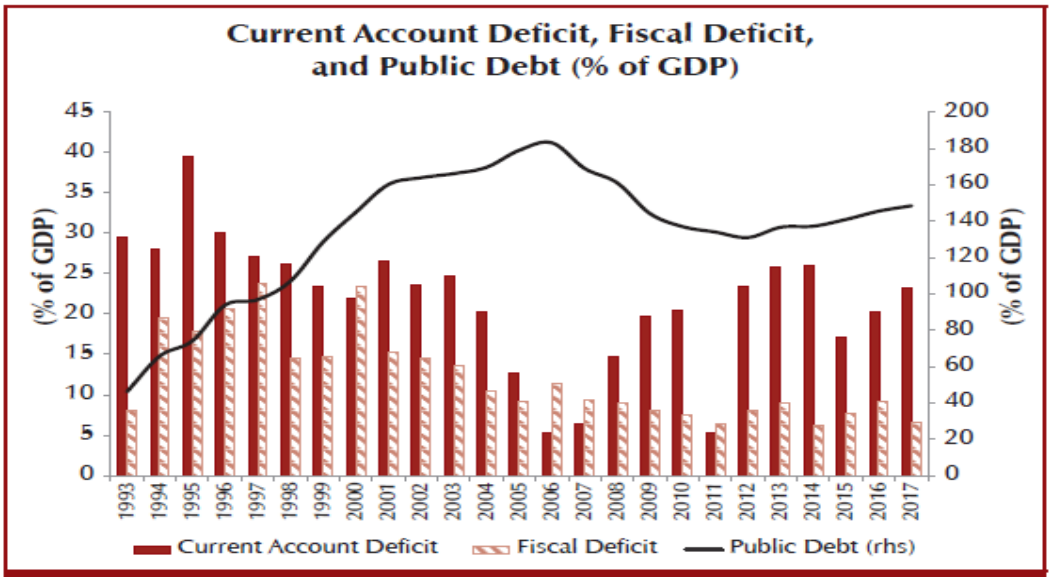
Figure-5.5: Impact of the Syrian Crisis (2010-15)



Source: Tiffin, Andrew et al. (2016), *Lebanon: Selected Issues*, Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund; p.7.

The debt to GDP ratio reduced from about 180 percent in 2006 to 134 percent at the beginning of the Syrian civil war in 2011. The spillover of Syrian civil war halted Lebanon's significant progress in reducing its debt-to-GDP ratio as a result of wider fiscal deficits, lower economic growth, and rising interest risk premium. The debt-to-GDP ratio again rose to 148 percent in 2017, became the third highest in the world (See figure 5.6). This debt mainly taken by Lebanese domestic banks.

Figure-5.6: Public Debt of Lebanon (% of GDP)



Source: World Bank (2014), *Lebanon Economic Monitor*, Washington DC: World Bank, p.7.

During 2012-2016, the inflows of foreign capital, as one of the key factors in deterring the Lebanese economy witness a severe decline making it a less attractive destination for FDI (e.g. real estate, tourism). Primarily due to a sharp 47 percent fall in outbound FDI, it grew in 2015 by 2.4 percent to US$ 1.7 billion (3.6 percent of GDP). The pre-crisis period showed the situation in a much better way by stating the net FDI averaged around 9.5 percent of GDP between 2000 and 2010. However, the inflow of international aid targeting Syrian refugees by providing additional support to the balance of payments has partially compensated for the overall loss of inflows of FDI. UNDP in its study, has assessed the impact of international humanitarian aid on the Lebanese economy distributed by UN agencies to the Syrian refugees. It highlighted that over a billion dollars aid between 2012 and 2014, has a multiplier effect added to GDP growth in 2014.[465]

Poverty: The Bekaa region and North Lebanon, home to some of the most impoverished villages by per capita GDP have witnessed the enormous influx of Syrian refugees. About 45 percent of Lebanese villages have seen their population more than double since January 2013, highlighted by Central Management Unit for Poverty. World Bank, in its report highlighted that before the refugee crisis, 25 percent of the Lebanese population lived below the upper poverty line of US$4 per day. The Syrian refugee crisis deteriorated it substantially. Since 2011, around 170,000 Lebanese citizens (about 4 %of the population)[466] pushed into poverty and reached 2.1 million. Around 1.5 million Lebanese nationals are considered to be in a situation of vulnerability due to the Syrian crisis.[467] Out of this, about 336,000 are surviving with less than US$2.4 per day, which is under Lebanon's lowest poverty line.[468] To guard its population, the Lebanese government, unlike Egypt, has not

[465] World Bank (2018), *Lebanon Economic Monitor*, Washington, DC: World Bank, p.17

[466]Chronicle (2015) "Lebanon: Syrian Refugees Costthe Economy US$4.5 Billion Every Year"[Online: web] Accessed 2 Oct. 2016, URL:https://chronicle.fanack.com/lebanon/economy/lebanon-syrian-refugees-cost-the-economy-4-5-billion-every-year/

[467]Government of Lebanon and the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Lebanon (2018), *Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2017-2020*, Beirut: Government of Lebanon and the United Nations, pp.2-4.

[468] Government of Lebanon and UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Lebanon (2016), "Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2015-2016", [Online: web] Accessed 15 September 2016, URL: http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/ resources/2015-2016_Lebanon_CRP_EN.pdf. Accessed December 1, 2015

permitted Syrians to open small businesses and make their profession.[469] Even before the onset of the Syrian civil war and the inflow of large numbers of Syrian refugees, poverty in Lebanon was significant. The Household Budget Survey(HBS 2011-12) shows that poverty in Lebanon was 27 percent (pre-Syrian crisis), which implies that about one million people had levels of consumption below the annual poverty line set at LBP 4.7 million per capita per year (US$3,150), the equivalent of approximately US$ 8.5 per day. However, as per the figures are given by the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (2017-2020), around 30 percent of people in Lebanon lived beneath the national poverty line before the crisis.[470] Similarly, extreme poor (i.e. below the food poverty line) Lebanese individuals live on LBP 3.1 million per year (US$2,078), the equivalent of approximately US$5.7 per day while 10 percent of Lebanese families[471] live in extreme poverty. Poverty incidence among Lebanese has risen to 53 percent in the North, 42 percent in the South and 30 percent in Bekaa, compared with the national poverty rate at 28 percent.[472]

3. Syrian Refugees: Contribution to the Lebanese Economy

Undoubtedly, the Syrian civil war in its entirety caused negative shock to GDP growth in Lebanon; however, the presence of Syrian refugees, contributed to the economy simultaneously.[473] It has been argued that economists overlooked the economics of wartime since they often forget that refugees are "consumers, producers, buyers, sellers, borrowers, lenders and entrepreneurs", and not just a

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[469] Ferris, Elizabeth et al. (2013), *Syrian Crisis: Massive Displacement, Dire Needs And A Shortage Of Solutions*, Washington DC: Brookings Institution, p.31.

[470]Government of Lebanon and the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Lebanon (2017), *Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2017-2020,* Beirut: Government of Lebanon and the United Nations.

[471]UNICEF, UNHCR and WFP (2016) "Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon 2016", [Online: web] Accessed 2 Jan. 2016 URL: Available: http://www. refworld.org/docid/586f59c94.html; Government of Lebanon and the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Lebanon (2018), *Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2017-2020,* Beirut: Government of Lebanon and the United Nations, p.5

[472] Search for common ground (2014), "Dialogue and local response mechanisms to conflict between host communities and Syrian refugees in Lebanon", [Online: web] Accessed 10 April 2016,URL:file:///C:/Users/dell/Downloads/dialogue_and_local_response_mechanisms_to_conflict_between_host_communities_and_syrian_refugees_in_lebanon.pdf

[473]International Monetary Fund (2014), *Lebanon: 2014 Article IV Consultation – Press Release, Staff Report, and Statement by the Executive Director for Lebanon*, Washington D.C: International Monetary Fund, p.12; World Bank (2013), *Lebanon - Economic and social impact assessment of the Syrian conflict,* Washington, DC: World Bank, p.2.

humanitarian matter.[474] Seeing this analysis, refugees boost demand for meeting their basic necessities and hence contribute to the economy. Two important factors, including fiscal and foreign transfers, provide impetus to these additional demands. It leads to increase in supply side for basic goods including retail trade and transport, in turn boosting GDP; however, failed to maintain pace with the increasing population and hence decline in GDP per capita are witnessed.

Since Syrian refugees were not eligible for official support, they mostly relied on their own resources or the aid from UN agencies and other international donors including NGOs, INGOs. Therefore, in this situation, the direct impact of Syrian refugees on the Lebanese budget may be limited. However, the presence of the Syrian refugees burdened the already fragile and critical public infrastructure, resulted in decline in quality of services for Lebanese population.

It has been estimated that additional US$2.5 billion (5 percent of GDP) is needed to bring back the service quality to the pre-crisis level. The impact of Syrian refugees on the Lebanese economy has, however, showed a mixed response. On the one hand, it was argued that Syrian refugees impacted Lebanese economy severely while on the other hand, Syrian refugees are considered consumers and despite having limited income, their contribution to Lebanese economy in the form of expenses through their savings, borrowing, and international assistance has been taken into consideration. The growth in Lebanon could have been considerably lower without this assistance.[475]

Syrian refugees consumed locally at an average of US$106 per capita (2016 figures), which represents, based on the official number of refugees registered with the UN, roughly US$1.5 billion per year. This boosted private consumption, which is one of the main components of the GDP, and thus contributed to economic growth, even if it has been modest in recent years. The rental market alone has a turnover of almost US$50 million, not to mention the rent paid to tent owners in informal camps, varying on average between US$100 and 160 per household.

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[474] Betts A. and Collier Paul (2017 *Refuge: Transforming a broken refugee system*, London: Penguin Random House, p.154.

[475]Tiffin, Andrew et al. (2016), *Lebanon: Selected Issues*, Washington, DC: IMF, p.8.

The presence of more than one million Syrian refugees boosted the revenue of the consumption tax was by purchasing basic consumer goods in the local market. As a result, during 2011-2016, state revenue raised by US$600 million. The indirect taxation of goods and services consisted of the major portion of this state revenue. In addition to this, the role of Syria refugees in contributing towards the economy by the telecommunication sector also played an important role. The period of 2011-2016 witnessed a significant increase in the number of mobile phone subscribers by consisting of 5.7 million in 2016 that was earlier 2.9 million in 2011. The mobile subscriptions by the Syrian refugees are considered the primary reason responsible for this increase since 85 percent of refugee households owned a mobile phone revealed at the recent survey study.[476] Another source of public revenues is the cost of residence permits, introduced in the beginning of 2015, i.e. US$200 per year for each Syrian citizen aged 15 and above. If only 20 percent of the people concerned[477] renew their documents now, this will allow the state, mostly thanks to refugees, to increase its revenues from residence fees (all categories of foreigners combined) from US$35 million to 50 million between 2011 and 2015.

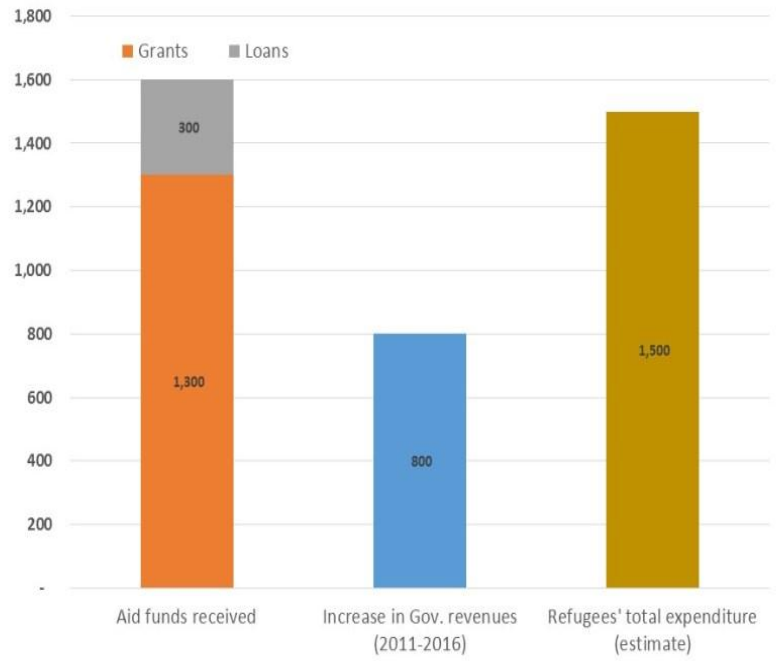
The debate revolving around the implications of the Syrian refugees on the Lebanese economy denied the claim about the Lebanese economy is on the 'verge of collapse' due to the presence of Syrian refugees. For justifying this, the country received the inflow of enormous aid consisting of more than US$1.5 billion every year since the commencement of the Syria civil war. Meeting the basic need assistance became the major part of this financial, and humanitarian aid and that showed absence by the local public spending. During 2011-2016, the revenue of the Lebanese government mainly consists of consumption taxes, increased by US$800 million (See figure 5.7). The presence of Syrian refugees stimulated local commerce by increasing domestic demand. The same period showed an increase in the imports of food beverages by 12 percent while petroleum derivatives witnessed a rise by 44 percent. The net overall

[476]Chaaban, Jad (2017), "Should Lebanon get more funds for hosting refugees?", [Online: web] Accessed 10 Aug. 2016, URL: https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/04/lebanon-funds-hosting-refugees-170405082414586.html

[477]World Food Program-Lebanon (2013), "Vulnerability assessment of Syrian refugees in Lebanon"[Online: web] Accessed 15 Oct. 2016, URL: http://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/vulnerability-assessment-syrian-refugees-lebanon-2013-report

effect on the economy remains balanced, but not negative despite having consensus on the decline in tourism, foreign investment, and other economic indicators.[478]

Figure-5.7: Main financial flows linked to refugees in Lebanon, 2016 (US$ millions)



Source: *Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASyR)* (2017), Beirut: UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP, p.7.

The above figure clearly showed the balancing impact on the Lebanese economy due to the aid and grants along with the expenditure done by the refugees to fulfil their basic necessities. In the form of aid funds, around US$1600 million, both in grants (US$1300 million) and loans (US$300 million) were received by Lebanon during 2011-2016. Further, about US$800 million were added to government revenues, mitigating the economic vulnerability of the already weak government in the same period. Even the total expenditure done by the Syrian refugees in the form of consumers, i.e. approximately US$1500 million during 2011-2016 equally tried to lessen the burden on the Lebanese economy.

[478]Chaaban, Jad (2017), "Should Lebanon get more funds for hosting refugees?", [Online: web] Accessed 10 Aug. 2016, URL: https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/04/lebanon-funds-hosting-refugees-170405082414586.html

Lebanese economy showed mixed effects about the impact of Syrian refugees. Undoubtedly massive influx of the Syrian refugees complicated the pre-existing economic challenges and labour market situation, including high unemployment rate, low wage bill and large informal markets, making the setting more difficult for the Lebanese nationals. In addition to the labour market, an enormous strain on resources, services and infrastructure witnessed due to the sudden increase in the population.

After analysing the nature of Lebanese economy as well as the implications of Syrian civil war including massive influx of Syrian refugees, it can be said that in 72 years of independence between 1943 and 2015, Lebanese economy faced two kinds of economies i.e. conflict management economy and conflict-recovery economy. For at least 26 years (1953, 1975 –1991, 2005 –2006, 2008, and 2010-Present) Lebanon was a 'conflict management economy' and for the rest of the time, a 'conflict-recovery economy'. "Lebanon's economy never grew to thrive, but to survive".[479]

4. Political Implications

The two political rival blocs, Hezbollah-dominated March 8 bloc and the Future Movement-led March 14 alliance were divided over the country's official position on the growing crisis in Syria. Due to division in internal politics and anticipation of political instability, Lebanon opted for the neutral stand about Syrian civil war and remained abstained from voting on resolutions targeting Syria both in regional (Arab League) and international settings (United Nations). For protecting its unity and stability, based on delicate internal power-sharing arrangements, it became indispensable for Lebanon to take a firm decision about distanced itself from the Syrian civil war. Therefore the Lebanese unity government under Prime Minister Najib Mikati composed of both factions (March 8 and March 14) adopted the 'policy of dissociation', formally known as 'Baabda Declaration' to maintain distance from Syrian civil war and keeping Lebanon officially away from taking sides in the crisis. However, intensification of the Syrian civil war created intense pressure towards the declaration, resulted in severe internal divisions.

[479]Felsch, Maximilian and Martin Wählisch (2016), *Lebanon and the Arab Uprisings: In the Eye of the Hurricane*, London: Routledge, p.122.

The repeated violations of the dissociation policy forced Prime Minister Mikati to resign in March 2013, leading to collapse of the Hezbollah-backed cabinet. The vacuum filled by the caretaker government which was not able to take any decision towards Syrian refugees. The extension of parliament term by 17 months in the absence of consensus on election law and holding parliamentary elections. On 14 February 2014, Prime Minister Tammam Salam finally formed a new cabinet; however, the seat of president remained vacant after Michel Suleiman stepped down in late May 2014. It was only in October 2016, Michel Aoun was elected as the new president of Lebanon. The office of president remained vacant for 29 months from May 2014 until October 31, 2016, since parliament was unable to obtain the majority required to elect a president. It witnessed the deepened political divisions created by the Syrian civil war. The latter paralysed the Lebanese government.[480] The absence of strategic decision-making characterised the initial attitude of the Lebanese government towards the early influx of Syrians. Their approach was considered as 'burying its head in the sand' and labelling Syrians as 'displaced' or 'defacto refugees' and denied to call them refugees..[481]

Initially in the form of 'Open Door Policy', Syrian refugees were allowed to enter Lebanon, but as their number crossed one million with passing time, a feeling of insecurity and fear emerged about Syrian refugees becoming the permanent reality. Since the majority of the Syrian refugees belong to the Sunni community would change the demographic balance against the interests of Christian and Shia political groups in Lebanon. The same scenario occurred in 1948 and 1967 in the form of a wave of Palestinian refugees. Many of the Palestinian refugees, along with their descendants, have become the permanent feature of Lebanon today.[482] The growing

[480]Knudsen, Are John (2017), "Syria's Refugees in Lebanon: Brothers, Burden, and Bone of Contention" in Rosita di Peri and Daniel Meier (eds.) *Lebanon facing the Arab Uprising: Constraints and Adaptation*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.139-140.

[481]Saghieh, N and Ghida Frangieh (2014), "The main features of Lebanon's policy towards Syrian refugees: from the ostrich policy to soft power", [Online: web] Accessed 15 July. 2016, URL: http://legal agenda.com/article.php?id=945

[482] Culbertson, Shelly et al. (2016), *Rethinking Coordination of Services to Refugees in Urban Areas: Managing the Crisis in Jordan and Lebanon*, California: RAND Corporation, pp. 28-29.

presence of Syrian refugees created fear among the Free Patriotic Movement (FPM)[483] due to Sunni sect of these Syrian refugees.[484]

It impacted the Lebanese politics and creating pressure for reordering of national politics as well as relations with Syria. For many, Lebanon suffers from political instability due to its unique political system based on confessionalism. In this situation, the presence of Syrian refugees pushes for the re-examination of the weakness of the Lebanese state. [485] Syrian refugees who burden the public services led to emerging sectarian tensions. Therefore, the Syrian refugee crisis provides a critical case study for reconsidering the nature of the Lebanese state as well as the political system. [486]

The relevance of sectarian breakdown of the government in Lebanon can be witnessed through the rights of refugees in general and Syrian refugees in particular. The role of Hezbollah in the Syrian civil war made the situation more complicated. Despite its relatively small presence of Hezbollah in the Parliament, it supported the Syrian regime, impacted the treatment of Syrian refugees. It created demographic imbalances, which led to sectarian tensions and increase the risks of cross-border attacks and insurgent warfare in the country.[487] (See table 5.2)

Regarding encampment, the initially partisan nature of the response to Syrian refugees witnessed Hezbollah successfully pressurised the Najib Mikati government to refuse the installation of camps to avoid strain on the Bashar al Assad regime[488], resulted in the dispersal of the refugee community. In other words, citing the security reasons and shelter for radical groups, Hezbollah like Lebanese government rejected the establishment of the camps.

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[483]The Free Patriotic Movement (FPM) is a Lebanese political party, led by Gebran Bassil. It is the largest party in the Lebanese Parliament and the largest Christian party. Its parliamentary coalition, the Strong Lebanon Bloc has 29 out of the 128 seats in parliament.

[484] Betts, Alexander et al. (2017) *Local Politics and the Syrian Refugee Crisis Exploring Responses in Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan*, Oxford: Refugee studies centre, University of Oxford, p.15.

[485]Knudsen, Are John (2017), "Syria's Refugees in Lebanon: Brothers, Burden, and Bone of Contention" in Rosita di Peri and Daniel Meier (eds.) *Lebanon Facing The Arab Uprisings: Constraints and Adaptation,* London: Palgrave Macmillan, p.136.

[486]Ibid.

[487] Cited in Bidinger, Sarah et al. (2015), *Protecting Syrian Refugees: Laws, Policies, and Global Responsibility Sharing*, Boston: Boston University, p.30

[488]Naufal, Hala (2013), *Syrian Refugees in Lebanon: the Humanitarian Approach under Political Divisions*, San Domenico di Fiesole: European University Institute, p.7.

Table-5.2: Summary of Attacks in Lebanon Post-Syrian Civil War

Date	Area	Target	Method	Death	Injured
Oct 19, 2012	Achrafieh, West Beirut	Wissam Al Hassan, head of the intelligence branch of the ISF	Massive car bomb	8	128
July 9, 2013	Beir el-Abed, South Beirut	Popular street associated with Hezbollah	Car bomb	0	50
Aug 15, 2013	Roueiss, South Beirut	Hezbollah stronghold	Car bomb	27	300
Aug 23, 2013	Tripoli	Two mosques	Two car bombs	42	400
Nov 19, 2013	Suburb, South Beirut	Iranian Cultural Center	Car bomb and explosive motorcycle	22	146
Dec 3, 2013	Beirut	Hassan Lakkis, senior Hezbollah commander	Assassination by two gunmen	1	0
Dec 27, 2013	Downtown, Beirut	Former Minister Mohamad Chatah	Car bomb	6	70
Jan 2, 2014	Haret Hreik, South Beirut	Hezbollah Political Office	Car bomb	4	77
Jan 16, 2014	Hermel	Bustling neighborhood	Car bomb	5	42
Jan 21, 2014	Haret Hreik, South Beirut	Bustling street	Suicide bomber	4	46
Feb 1, 2014	Hermel	Petrol station	Car bomb	4	23
Feb 3, 2014	South Beirut	Van	Suicide bomber	0	2
Feb 19, 2014	Suburb, South Beirut	Iranian Cultural Center	Two car bombs	8	128
Feb 22, 2014	Hermel	Army Post	Car bomb	5	17
March 29, 2014	Arsal	Army soldiers	Car bomb	3	4
June 20, 2014	Dahr Al Baidar	Police checkpoint	Suicide bomber	1	32
June 24, 2014	Beirut	Military checkpoint	Car bomb	0	12
June 27, 2014	Beirut	Hotel	Suicide bomber	0	11
Aug 6, 2014	Tripoli	Army checkpoint	Homemade bomb	1	10
Sept 19, 2014	Arsal	Army	Bomb	2	3
Sept 20, 2014	Eastern Borders of Lebanon	Hezbollah checkpoint	Bomb	2	0
Nov 14, 2014	Arsal	Army	Bomb	0	3
Dec 3, 2014	Arsal	Army	Bomb	1	2
Jan 10, 2015	Tripoli	Café	Suicide bomber	9	30
Jan 26, 2015	Zagharta	Ghassan Ajaj, ISF intelligence officer	Gunman	1	0
March 2, 2015	North Lebanon	Bader Eid, brother of Alawite leader Ali Eid	Gunman	1	0
Nov 5, 2015	Arsal	Qalamoun Muslim Scholars Committee	Motorcycle bomb	5	15
Nov 6, 2015	Arsal	Army	Improvised explosive device	0	5
Nov 12, 2015	Bourj el-Barajmeh, South Beirut	Hezbollah stronghold	Two suicide bombers	43	240
				205	1796

Source: Cited in Cherri, Zeinab et al. (2016), "The Lebanese–Syrian crisis: impact of influx of Syrian refugees to an already weak state", *Risk Management and Healthcare Policy*, 9 (1): 165–172, p.170.

However, Sunni groups in Lebanon have had a more positive approach towards Syrian refugees. Critics questioned the intentions behind this positive attitude. They posed the question of whether the aim is a humanitarian one or if it is to help exiled rebels to operate within Lebanon. Further, the support of Sunni Lebanese groups took on a political and paramilitary character such as weapon smuggling or providing

sanctuaries for Syrian rebels. Undoubtedly the Syrian refugee crisis has reinforced the political division in the country, but the role and involvement of Hezbollah in the Syria civil war polarised the two blocs (March 8 and March 14) completely.[489]

Initial welcoming attitude towards Syrian refugees was transformed into a negative attitude as their numbers reached the saturation capacity of the Lebanese state. Soon they were considered as a political problem. The division of Lebanese sectarian factions based on pro- or anti-Assad sentiments also impacted the attitude towards the presence of Syrian refugees both in political circles as well as among the general public.[490] The presence of half a million (mostly Sunni) Palestinian refugees, one of the reasons for the emergence of the Lebanese Civil War (1975–1990) raised mixed responses towards Syrian refugees. The failure of the international community to solve the Palestinian refugee issue and leaving Lebanon to deal with the Palestinians as a de facto permanent reality is the reason behind this response. The presence of Palestinian refugees determined the measures and policies opted by the Lebanese government towards Syrian refugees to prevent the repetition of the Palestinian scenario. Therefore, considering the issue of Syrian refugees, a humanitarian problem only would overlook the political repercussions of their presence. The presence of Syria refugees changes the demographic balance by increasing the number of the Sunni Muslims and therefore infuriated the confessional polity, the keystone of Lebanese political system.[491] Deep political divisions were responsible behind the no-camp approach opted by the Lebanese authorities.[492] Sectarian tensions were not confined between Shia and Sunni Muslims. The massive presence of the Syrian refugees equally threatened the status of Christian and the Druze communities.[493]

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[489] Schöpfer, Liliane Alicia (2015), *Lebanon's challenged stability in the wake of the Syrian refugee crisis,* Global Refugee Studies, Denmark: Aalborg University, p.31.

[490]Vilet, Sam Van (2016), "Syrian refugees in Lebanon: coping with unpreceded challenges" in Maximilian Felsch and Martin Wählisch (eds.) *Lebanon and the Arab Uprisings: In the eye of hurricane,* London: Routledge, p.96.

[491] Ibid.96-97

[492]Knudsen, Are John (2017), "Syria's Refugees in Lebanon: Brothers, Burden, and Bone of Contention" in Rosita di Peri and Daniel Meier (eds.) *Lebanon Facing The Arab Uprisings: Constraints and Adaptation,* London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.138-139.

[493]Schöpfer, Liliane Alicia (2015), *Lebanon's challenged stability in the wake of the Syrian refugee crisis,* Global Refugee Studies, Denmark: Aalborg University, p.34

The perceptions about 'sleeping cells' among Syrian refugees became a major concern from the security perspective, as raised by the public official from the Ministry of Interior. Their numbers reaching more than 1 million in Lebanon and the Presidential elections in Syria impacted the attitude of both Lebanese authorities and the Lebanese nationals towards the presence of the Syrian refugees as argued by the officials associated with the Lebanese international humanitarian community. Though Syrian refugees were not directly involved in the armed resistance between pro-Syrian regime, groups or anti-regime groups; however, their presence in the border areas impacted the security situation. To contain the growing influence of the Salafist groups from Arsenal (North-East of Lebanon) towards Syria, Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) launched a military operation against them in August 2014. Furthermore, to regain control of an area from the growing influence of groups such as Jabhat al-Nusra and the Islamic State was the objective of LAF.[494] Salafist groups kidnapped at least 30 members of the LAF and the Internal Security Forces (ISF) during this operation. Even some of them were killed, and those who were alive remained in a captive state until Qatar facilitated a controversial prisoner swap deal between Lebanon and the kidnappers (Jabhat Al Nusra) in December 2015. On December 2, 2015, Jabhat Al Nusra freed 16 Lebanese soldiers and policemen in exchange for the release of 29 Islamists and their children.[495]

To deal with the Syrian refugee crisis, three main political narratives have emerged in Lebanon. For Christian political elite, the long term presence of Syrian refugees leads to demographic imbalances in favour of Muslims; as a result, the country will face the instability. The Sunni political elite have helped in aiding Syrian refugees but also has feared since many of the refugees holding Pro- Assad attitude, so should deal with the caution. The Shia political discourse has opted a selective attitude by welcoming few families into Shia dominated regions in the South.[496]

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[494]Dionigi, Filippo (2016), *The Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon: state fragility and social resilience*, London: London School of Economics and Political Science, p.16

[495]Bilal Y. Saab, "Lebanon's Deal with the Devil: The Prisoner Swap with Jabhat Al Nusra", [Online: web] Accessed 25 Oct. 2016, URL: https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/lebanon/2015-12-06/lebanons-deal-devil

[496]Geha, Carmen (2016), *The Syrian Refugee Crisis and Lebanon's Endemic Deadlocks: Trading Reform for Resilience*, Washington DC: Middle East Institute, p.2.

Effects on Lebanon's confessional composition: The second chapter has studied the detail about confessionalism and its importance in Lebanese politics. Consociationalism means power sharing for maintaining stability in the country, especially from the political perspective and when organised along religious lines, known as confessionalism. The Lebanese political system is based on this unique system of confessionalism. As mentioned above, three-quarters of the Syrian refugees belong to the Sunni sect. This demographic imbalance recalling the memory of the Palestinian refugee's influx after the 1947-48 Arab-Israeli War and 1967 Six Day War, events that sloped Lebanon's fragile confessional balance into civil war in 1975.[497] The Syrian refugee crisis considered "strikingly parallel to the period preceding the 1975-90 civil war".[498] Therefore, the presence of Syrian refugees is triggering the concerns about exacerbated confessional tensions. The change in demography is empowering the Lebanese Sunnis against the Shia dominance. [499]

The differences between the Palestinian and Syrian refugee crises have had two seemingly contradictory implications. First, the current Syrian refugee crisis has the potential to be more of an existential threat to the survival of the confessional political system in Lebanon. Second, the scale of this crisis has created short-term co-operation between the rival March 8 and March 14 coalitions that have the potential to circumvent this challenge. In other words, the magnitude of the Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon and the particular relationship between Lebanon and Syria has forced political elites to preserve the system rather than exploit the issue for political gain, moving it from a political to a national crisis. This represents both the severity of the current threat to confessional politics in Lebanon and the potential for its consolidation.[500] On the contrary, it is argued by scholars that the issue of Syrian refugees provided scope to every political group to utilise it according to their

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[497]Macqueen, Benjamin and Kylie Baxter (2014), "Refugees and Political Stability in Lebanon", *OrtadoğuEtütleri,* 6 (1): 9-29, p.11.

[498]Bahout, Joseph (2014), *Lebanon at the Brink: The Impact of the Syrian Civil War,* Waltham, Massachusetts**:** Crown Center for Middle East Studies, p. 5.

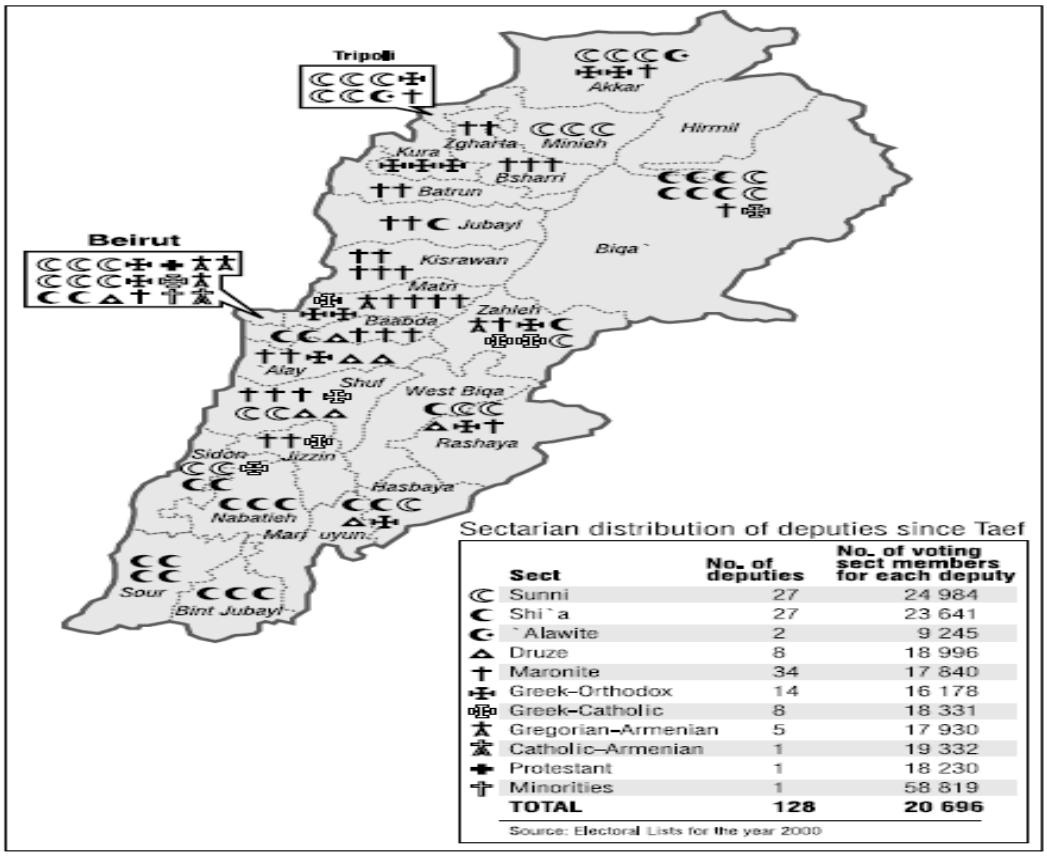
[499] Dettmer, Jamie (2013), *Demographic Change and Violence in Lebanon,* Washington DC: Middle East Institute, pp. 4-5.

[500]Macqueen, Benjamin and Kylie Baxter (2014), "Refugees and Political Stability in Lebanon", *OrtadoğuEtütleri,* 6 (1): 9-29, p.11; Kauri, Vidya (2014), "Lebanon parliament fails to elect president", *Al Jazeera,* [Online: web] Accessed 10 September 2016,URL:http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/04/lebanon-nominate-president-201442365922519100.html>

interests. It was observed that Christian and Druze politicians have been utilising the presence of Syrian refugees as fear among their constituencies.[501]

The multi-confessional electoral system in Lebanon that witnessed the change in the arrangement of seat allocation according to Taif Accord from 99 to 128, equally divided between two major communities, i.e. Christians and Muslims plays a vital role in linking the political instability and the presence of the Syrian refugees. Seeing this, the presence of Syrian refugees has exacerbated the confessional polity in Lebanon by creating demographic imbalances and a threat to the sectarian fabric of the state.

Figure-5.8: Sectarian Representation of Parliamentary Seats since Ta'if Agreement



Sectarian distribution of deputies since Taef

Sect	No. of deputies	No. of voting sect members for each deputy
Sunni	27	24 984
Shi`a	27	23 641
`Alawite	2	9 245
Druze	8	18 996
Maronite	34	17 840
Greek–Orthodox	14	16 178
Greek–Catholic	8	18 331
Gregorian–Armenian	5	17 930
Catholic–Armenian	1	19 332
Protestant	1	18 230
Minorities	1	58 819
TOTAL	**128**	**20 696**

Source: Electoral Lists for the year 2000

Source: Traboulsi, Fawwaz (2007), *A History of Modern Lebanon*, London: Pluto Press, p.241

[501]Knudsen, Are John (2017), "Syria's Refugees in Lebanon: Brothers, Burden, and Bone of Contention" in Rosita di Peri and Daniel Meier (eds.) *Lebanon Facing The Arab Uprisings: Constraints and Adaptation*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, p.139.

As shown in figure 5.8, the fixed allotment of the seats in districts where the composition of the population comprises of different sects and seats given to different factions makes the situation difficult and sometimes complicated. For example, the majority of the Syrian refugees took shelter in North Lebanon and Bekaa valley. The various villages in these areas dominated by Shia, Sunni and Christians majorly. Bekaa and Baalbek are dominated by Shia community mainly while Akkar, Tripoli in the north and Mount Lebanon dominated by Sunni Muslims and Christian community. North Lebanon consists of 28 seats including the seats allotted to Akkar district. These 28 seats, distributed between different sects, including Maronite Christian (9), Sunni (11), Shia (2), and Greek Orthodox (6). Similarly, Bekaa comprises of 23 seats, divided into Maronite Christian (3), Shia (8), Sunni (5), Greek Orthodox (2), Greek Catholic (3) and one seat each allotted to Gregorian Armenian and Druze.

The presence of Syrian refugees in massive numbers created problems for these areas from two perspectives. First, this has been already a marginalised area and their presence making the lives of both the communities difficult in the absence of resources and competition for jobs. Second, the critical concern is that their presence in large numbers has disturbed the demographic balance of the area since majority of the Syrian refugees belong to the Sunni sect and their growing numbers making the political arrangements fragile and bending towards the Sunni community. In the long term, their presence can force the change in the electoral law, or if Syrian refugees get any political or citizenship rights, it will force the existing political arrangements to get transformed according to the changing reality of sects and their population. As a result of the 1994 naturalisation decree, many Syrians acquired Lebanese citizenship. Therefore, many existing Syrian refugees in Lebanon have Lebanese citizenship and carrying a Lebanese passport. It makes the situation more difficult, especially from the political perspective since the inclusion of these refugees in the political setup is not far. Their presence has started changing the traditional secular fabric of Shia, Christian and Druze neighbourhoods in particular and the Lebanese society in general.

Municipalities and local NGOs alone dealing with the Syrian refugee crisis in the absence of support provided by the centralised government. It has intensified traditional sectarian patronage networks leading to strengthening the sectarian

divide.[502] However, some municipal councils opted for strict measures such as curfews on Syrian refugees to prevent the spread of sectarian tensions. The presence of Sunni Syrian refugees became a matter of serious political concern seeing the sectarian nature of Lebanon's political system. There are different narratives for Syrian refugees from different sects such as Christians considered Syrian refugees as an existential threat, while they are perceived as a security threat by Shias. Lastly, for underprivileged Sunnis, Syrian refugees were seen as an economic threat. Their settlement in the already marginalised areas of North and Bekaa considered being the reason for considering them an economic threat.[503] The sectarian tensions were intensified in Lebanon due to an alliance between the Assad regime and Hezbollah. The clashes between anti-Assad Sunni groups and pro-Assad Alawites in Tripoli in 2013 and Sunni radicals against Lebanese security authorities in Sidon in summer 2013 are some of the examples of these sectarian clashes. In addition to this, the intermingling of anti-Assad Sunni refugees with Islamic State sympathizers against Hezbollah and the Lebanese Armed Forces in Arsal in August 2014 made the situation more intense and complicated. [504] In short, the violence in the Lebanese border villages, border violations, and cross-border shelling witnessed the spillover of Syrian civil war.[505]

The presence of the large refugee population was described as creating "a social and political ticking bomb, particularly in relation to the identity and existence of the Lebanese entity."[506] Therefore, the combination of economic and political considerations makes the prospects of improving the inclusion of Syrian refugees into main stream Lebanese society an even greater challenge.

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[502] UNDP and Mercy Corps (2015), *Stabilization and Resilience in Protracted, Politically Induced Emergencies: A Case Study Exploration of Lebanon*, Beirut: UNDP, pp.2-4.

[503]Geha, Carmen and JoumanaTalhouk (2018), *Politics and the Plight of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon*, Beirut: American University of Beirut, p.3

[504] Wieland, Carsten (2016), "Syrian- Lebanese Relations: the impossible dissociation" in Felsch, Maximilian, Martin Wählisch (eds.) *Lebanon and the Arab Uprisings: In the eye of the hurricane*, London: Routledge, p.176.

[505]Knudsen, Are John (2017), "Syria's Refugees in Lebanon: Brothers, Burden, and Bone of Contention" in Rosita di Peri and Daniel Meier (eds.) *Lebanon Facing The Arab Uprisings: Constraints and Adaptation*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, p.139.

[506]Toufic Kasbar (2014), "Syria War, Refugees Add to Lebanon's Economic Crisis," *Al-Monitor,* 15 May 2016, URL:https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/politics/2014/05/lebanon-syria-conflict-refugees-economy-challenges-state.html

Robert Rabil in his famous work *The Syrian Refugee Crisis in Lebanon: The Double Tragedy of Refugees and Impacted Host Communities* highlighted the link between the presence of the Syrian refugees and the threat of extremism and terrorism posed to Lebanon in the following statements:

> The Syrian crisis spilled over into Lebanon, Salaf-Jihadist organizations, led by the Islamic state (also known as ISIS) and al-Nusra front, waged a campaign of terror across Lebanon, implicating Palestinian and Syrian refugees. This has led to a dramatic shift in attitudes towards refugees on the popular and institutional levels, potentially leading to social conflict. Put simply, the refugee crisis has had a devastating effect on Lebanon, creating a new tragedy afflicting the vulnerable Lebanese and deepening the tragedy of Syrian and Palestinian refugees… Significantly, this double tragedy could cause not only social instability but also disruptive and deadly massive population movements. The Syrian refugee crisis has become a serious threat to regional and international peace and security, whose first victims are going to be a mass of vulnerable individuals across nationalities.[507]

5. Role of NGOs, Regional and International Organisations

In the light of high level humanitarian assistance provided in response to the Syrian crisis, measuring the economic impact of aid packages on the economies of host countries becomes essential. In its 2015 study of Lebanon, UNDP and UNHCR revealed the multiplier effect of the humanitarian aid for the local economy by proving the data for every US$1 spent on the humanitarian aid entering the local economy as US$1.6 in the form of the multiplier effect.[508] The total impact of the humanitarian aid expenditure on the total demand and the GDP of the pre-crisis Lebanese economy were represented by the multiplier effect. Therefore during 2011-2017, as per the data revealed in the LCRP 2017-2020, Lebanon received the humanitarian assistance of around US$1.25 billion, in reality injected about US$2.01 billion into the Lebanese economy showing the multiplier effect. As a result, a corresponding rise in demand complemented by an increase in supply emerged. Although the spillover effects of the Syrian crisis has put constraints on local resources and infrastructures, humanitarian aid packages has helped in mitigating some of its negative consequences by infusing financial resource into the budget of

[507]Rabil, Robert G. (2016), *The Syrian Refugee Crisis in Lebanon: The Double Tragedy of Refugees and Impacted Host Communities*, Maryland: Lexington Books, p.14.

[508]UNDP and UNHCR (2015) *Impact of humanitarian aid on the Lebanese economy*, Beirut: UNDP, pp.17-18.

governments.[509] The financial contribution by the Lebanese government out of their pocket towards Syrian refugees' humanitarian fund is negligible; however indirect contribution in the form of education, health, water etc. can be taken into the considerations. A UNDP-UNHCR report measuring the economic impact of humanitarian aid on the Lebanese economy between 2011 to mid-2014 revealed that 44 percent of the amount spent during this period was injected into the Lebanese economy in the form of direct cash to beneficiaries that were spent in the Lebanese market.[510]

Overall, the international community poured a total of US$1.26 billion into Lebanon to support refugees from Syria in 2016 alone. Undoubtedly positive impact of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon does not deny their negative implications. Over US$20 million in food allowances, for instance, is allocated every month by the World Food Program (WFP) to refugee families and vulnerable Lebanese via "cash-for-food" electronic cards. "These funds are then directly re-injected by the recipients into the Lebanese economy, in the form of food purchases at local stores. They can employ more people and enhance their businesses, "there is an abundance of food and the way [the WFP's] program has been designed counters the narrative [of there being food scarcity]". The WFP estimates that it has injected over US$900 million into the Lebanese economy since 2012.[511]

Various conferences have been held both in Arab region and European countries to raise financial assistance for meeting the needs of Syrian refugees. Till 2016, six conferences including three pledging conferences in Kuwait (2013, 2014, and 2015) took place for this purpose. London (2016), Dead Sea Forum (2015), Berlin Conference (2014) were three conferences were held apart from Kuwait conferences.[512]

The explicit involvement of the multiple UN agencies along with inter agency organisations can be witnessed in mitigating the Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon. The

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[509] Yassi, Nasser (2018), *101 Facts & Figures on the Syrian Refugee Crisis*, Beirut: Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs, American University of Beirut, p.106.

[510]Ibid.107.

[511]Ibid.

[512] Clough, Stephanie (2018), *The Donor-NGO Relationship and Humanitarian Assistance: Monitoring and Evaluation in the Syrian Refugee Response in Lebanon*, Beirut: Lebanon, p.43.

entire charge of coordination regarding refugee response lies with UNHCR. There are different UNHCR contributing in the sectors according to their expertise. The following table 5.3 shows the names of the agency and their expertise of work

Table-5.3: The Multiple UN Agencies Involved with Refugee Response and their Expertise of Work

Name of Agency	Expertise of Work
UNOCHA	Humanitarian Responses
UNICEF	Development Planning,
UNDP	Education
WFP	Food Assistance

In addition to these, other important UN agencies including UNESCO, IOM, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, UNOPS, UNFAO, ICRC, IFRC, ILO, UNRWA, UNSCOL, and UN Women (see Abbreviations' page for the elaborate form) were involved in the refugee response to help UNHCR to fufill its endeavours. Their role has been significant in managing coordination between international stakeholders and governments. Moreover, funds' mobilisation, implementing the programme by contracting with NGOs, distribution of aid through them are some of the vital function performed by these agencies. Additionally, to introduce innovative practices along with technical support to a different line, ministries comes under their activities. Further, lead policy discussions and addressing problems by engaging international expertise are some of the important work entitled to these UN agencies. [513]

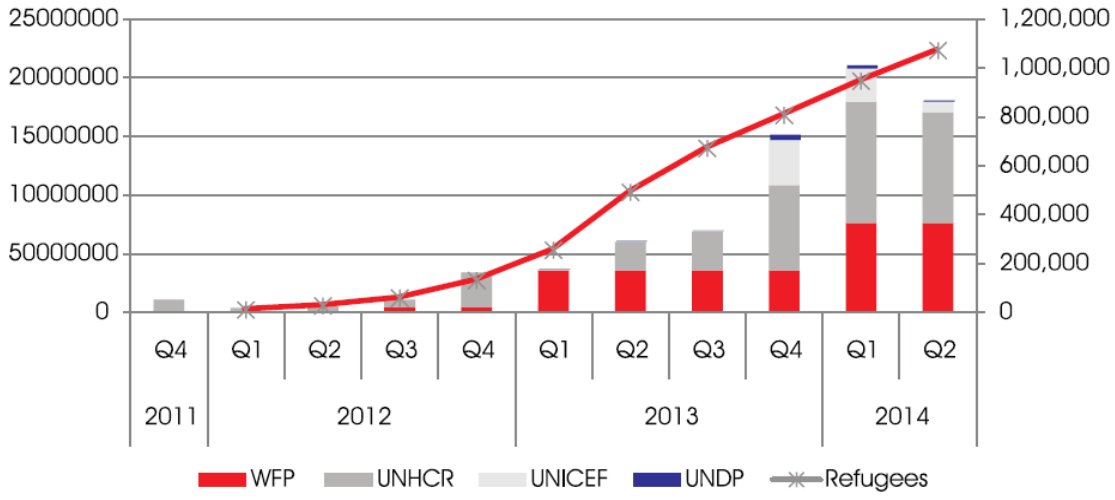
Around US$833 million (in grants) and US$ 241 million (in loans) were pledged by the international community to assist Lebanon during the London conference 'Supporting Syria and the Region' conference in February 2016. Furthermore, according to an estimate, a total of granting about US$ 1.3 billion received by Lebanon in 2016 that was 62 percent more than originally pledged. Even in the same year, Lebanon got US$ 250 million in the form of loans that was 4 percent above the pledged amount. In addition to all this, in the form of grants, loans and other concessional financings, an amount of about US$ 1.3 billion was committed by

[513] Culbertson, Shelly et al. (2016), *Rethinking Coordination of Services to Refugees in Urban Areas: Managing the Crisis in Jordan and Lebanon*, California: RAND Corporation, pp.29-31.

Lebanon. This included the grant of US$ 45 million, the first of its kind to Lebanon from Concessional Financing Facility (CFF)[514], administered by World Bank.[515]

The following figure 5.9 shows the close correlation between the increasing size of the refugee population and the amount of aid expenditure. The first organisation to intervene in terms of providing was UNHCR (starting in Q4 of 2011), that was followed by other agencies including WFP (in Q3 of 2012), UNICEF and UNDP at the beginning of 2013. However, it is important to note that the amount allocated to UNDP was only related to expenditure towards the Syrian crisis instead to the entirety for the agency's operations.[516] UNHCR played the role of important mediator in terms of facilitating funding from donor countries. All the funding coming to Lebanon passed through UNHCR which has been working with several international and local NGOs to deliver humanitarian assistance. This assistance was not confined to economic one but ranged from food, medical supplies, education, infrastructure, support to host communities for creating new jobs.

Figure-5.9: Comparison of Aid Expenditures (in US$) with the Total Number of Syrian Refugees



Source: UNDP/UNHCR (2015) *Impact of humanitarian aid on the Lebanese economy*, Beirut: UNDP, p.13.

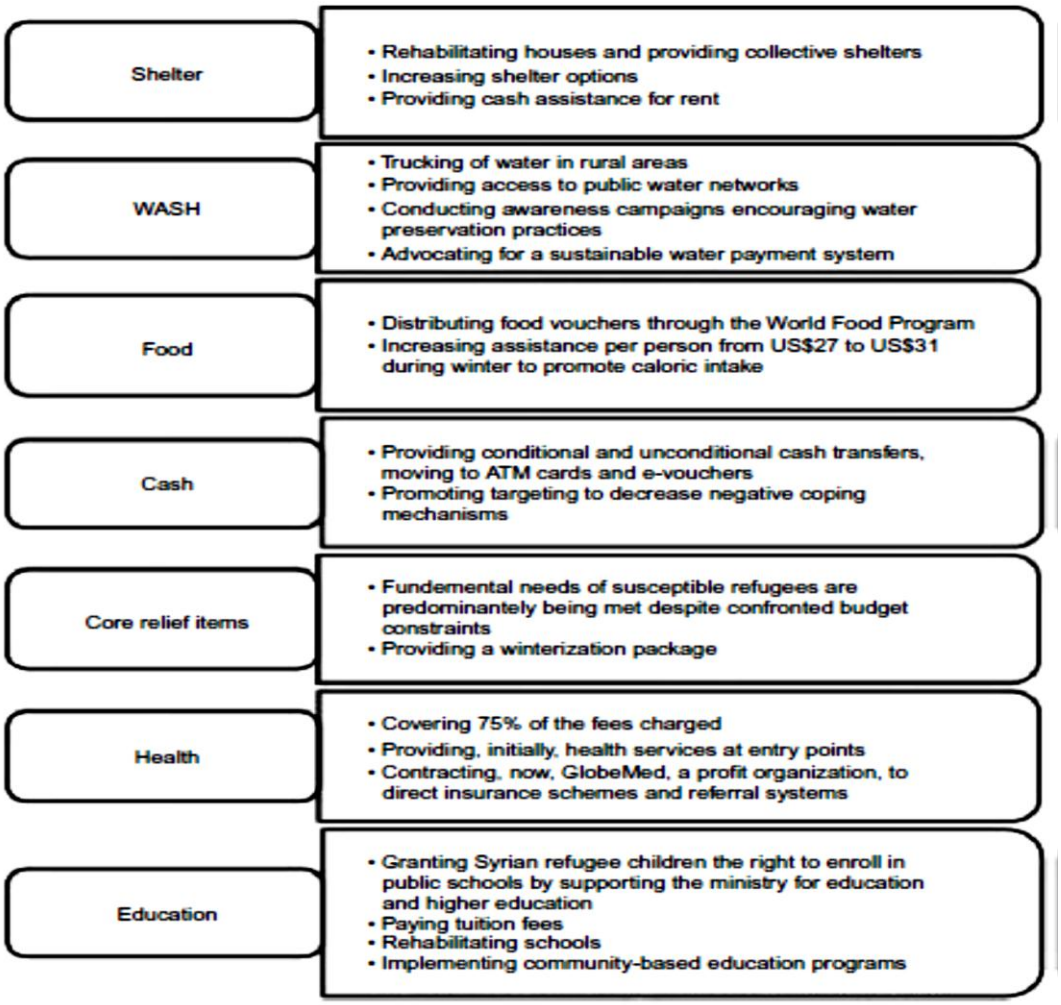
[514] Created in 2016, the CFF supports middle-income countries that have in the past been recipients of regular WB financing, but are 'currently experiencing unusual social and economic duress.

[515]Immenkamp, Beatrix (2017), *Syrian crisis: Impact on Lebanon*, Brussels: European Parliamentary Research Service, p.8.

[516] UNDP/UNHCR, (2015) *Impact of humanitarian aid on the Lebanese economy*, Beirut: UNDP, p.13.

UNHCR, in particular, "has been transformed from a humanitarian organisation to one that shares certain features of a state." This is because it has taken on responsibilities such as providing public services (e.g., access to shelter, food, water, health care, and education). It is important to note that UNHCR becomes responsible for the management of services in the weak or fragile states and government lacks the capacity to lead and other primary states escaped to intervene to resolve the issue.[517] The sector analysis of UNHCR administered humanitarian assistance is summarised in the figure given below.

Figure-5.10: Sector Analysis of UNHCR Administered Humanitarian Assistance.



Source: UNHCR (2015), *Independent Program Evaluation of UNHCR's Response to the Refugee Influx in Lebanon and Jordan*. Brussels: UNHCR, p.8.

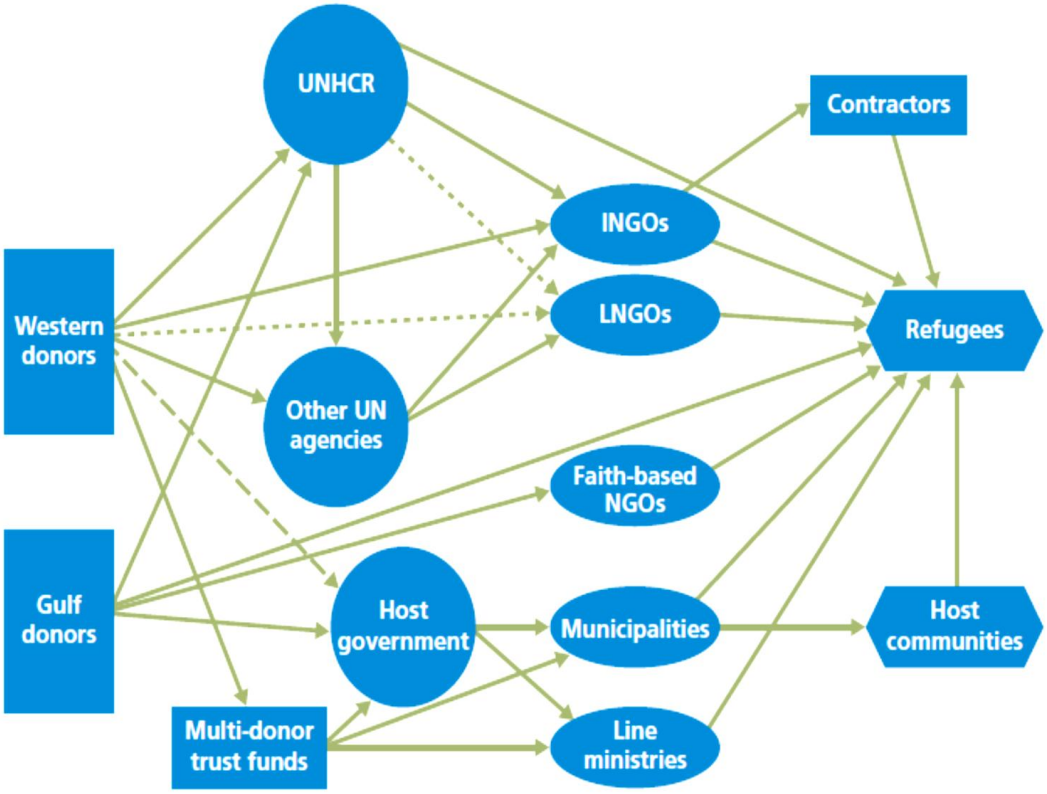
[517] Slaughter, Amy and Jeff Crisp (2009), *A Surrogate State?: The Role of UNHCR in Protracted Refugee Situations*, Geneva, Switzerland: Policy Development and Evaluation Service, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, p.2.

It becomes important to understand the three categories of funding, i.e. paid contribution, commitment and pledge for getting familiarity with the actual nature of the contribution made for dealing with the crisis. The payment or transfer of funds or in-kind goods from the donor towards the appealing agency term as 'Contribution' while creation of a contractual obligation between the donor and appealing agency regarding funding defined as 'Commitment'. This is the crucial stage in humanitarian financing since agencies cannot spend money and implement before a funding commitment is made. As soon as a commitment is reported to Financial Tracking Service (FTS) against a pledge, the amount in the pledge column is reduced accordingly. The third category consists of pledge, which is a non-binding announcement of an intended contribution or allocation by the donor. In this, the recipient organisation and response plan or project is not necessarily specified.[518]

Even increasing budget of the aid and associated costs became a significant concern since money before reaching the service providers; multiple entities witnessed the transfer of funds — half of the budget consumed in the operating expenses for UN agencies and other intermediaries. Figure 5.11 given below demonstrates that the flow of funds for the refugee response in Lebanon through multiple pathways. The funds flow from left to right from donors reached to the refugees and the host communities through UN agencies, host governments, and implementers such as NGOs, contractors, municipalities, and line ministries. The figure shows the flow of funds from the donor to UNHCR in the first stage; then another UN agency receives funds from UNHCR that eventually funds an NGO. Then this NGO contracts with other organisations. The overhead cost gets associated with each passing stage with a different organisation.

[518]Clough, Stephanie (2018), *The Donor-NGO Relationship and Humanitarian Assistance: Monitoring and Evaluation in the Syrian Refugee Response in Lebanon*, Beirut: Lebanon, p.44.

Figure-5.11: Multiple Channels of Fiscal and Aid Flows



NOTE: The dotted lines represent weaker links than the solid lines.
INGOs = international NGOs; LNGOs = local NGOs.

Source: Culbertson, Shelly et al. (2016), Rethinking Coordination of Services to Refugees in Urban Areas: Managing the Crisis in Jordan and Lebanon, California: RAND Corporation, p.46.

Since 2012, pledges over a billion dollars in the form of international support has been providing significant funding for the refugee response and to establish stability in Lebanon. The growing influx of Syrian refugees forced Lebanon to appeal for funding and coordinate with other entities for dealing with this humanitarian crisis. Therefore, the UNHCR launched first regional appeal of about US$84 million to address Syrian refugees needs by forming coordination with the tripartite committee of the HRC (Human Rights Council) and the MoSA (Ministry of Social Affairs), seven UN agencies, and 27 national and international NGOs and host governments in March 2012.[519] In September 2013, the International Support Group for Lebanon, chaired by the UN Secretary-General, brought together the permanent members of the

[519] UNHCR (2012), "UNHCR Warns of Funding Shortfall for Operations to Help Syrian Refugees", [Online: web] Accessed 25 October 2016, URL: http://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2012/4/4f91659a6/unhcr-warns-funding-shortfall-operations-help-syrian-refugees.html

UN Security Council plus Germany, Italy, the EU and the League of Arab States to provide international support for Lebanon.[520] In 2015 after six regional appeals, the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2015–2016 as part of the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan amounted to US$ 2.14 billion.[521]

Concerning humanitarian relief efforts, DAC donors (Development Assistance Committee) provided leading support. DAC is a thirty member development branch of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)[522], comprising mainly of wealthy, western, industrialised aid donors. However, the growing role and contribution of non- DAC donors (includes GCC countries), in the form of substantial amounts to humanitarian crises reinforce the finances of relief efforts.[523] It is argued that humanitarian aid is often considered as an instrument of western governments and the United Nations due to their historical ascendency over the debates about the direction and principles of aid.[524]

Table-5.4: Donor Funding by Year (in millions)

Donor	Year						
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total
DAC	75.1 (57%)	682.7 (78%)	712.1 (78%)	940 (81%)	935.9 (77%)	1,615.6 (84%)	4,961.4 (80%)
Non-DAC	18.6 (14%)	84.5 (10%)	64.3 (7%)	56.6 (5%)	13.9 (1%)	13.1 (1%)	251 (4%)
Other	38.6 (29%)	104.9 (12%)	134.4 (15%)	170.2 (15%)	263.8 (22%)	301.6 (16%)	1,013.5 (16%)
Total	132.3	872.1	910.8	1,167	1,213.6	1,930.3	6,225.9

Source: Clough, Stephanie (2018)**,** *The Donor-NGO Relationship and Humanitarian Assistance: Monitoring and Evaluation in the Syrian Refugee Response in Lebanon*, Beirut: American University of Beirut, p.46

[520] "European Union Cooperation with Lebanon," (2014), **[**Online: web] Accessed 5 September 2016, URL:http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/lebanon/eu_lebanon/tech_financial_cooperation/index_en.htm

[521]Vilet, Sam Van (2016), "Syrian refugees in Lebanon: coping with unpreceded challenges" in Maximilian Felsch and Martin Wählisch (eds.) *Lebanon and the Arab Uprisings: In the eye of hurricane,* London: Routledge, pp. 92-93.

[522]OECD was created in 1960 with 20 members, with an additional 15 countries joining since its inception, consists of advanced economies committed to a market economy and democracy. Members primarily represent the developed industrial economies of Europe, North America and Japan as well as some central European countries, Mexico and South Korea. There are a number of partner countries that participate in bodies within the OECD but are not members themselves.

[523] Clough, Stephanie (2018), *The Donor-NGO Relationship and Humanitarian Assistance: Monitoring and Evaluation in the Syrian Refugee Response in Lebanon*, Beirut: Lebanon, p.7

[524]Ibid.16

It was assessed that the majority of funding pledged by donors had been distributed. About 89 percent of contributions have been paid, compared with 11 percent in commitments and pledges. Approximately 80 percent of all contributions made by DAC donor while 4 percent came from non-DAC donors. Non-government donors, such as the UN contributed around 16 percent of the contributions (See table 5.4). US, European Commission, Germany and the United Kingdom account for 68 percent tops the list of DAC contributors. The non- DAC consists of 20 donors which topped by the Gulf States comprises of 94 percent of all non-DAC donor contributions. By contributing 72 percent (US$181 million), Kuwait beats all non-DAC donors. Qatar came next by providing US$28.4 million, followed by Saudi Arabia and UAE with US$16.8 million and US$9.7 million respectively. Russia and China became the two largest non-Gulf, non-DAC donors, by contributing US$6.5 million and US$4 million.[525]

Table-5.5: Required International Funding to Support Lebanon (in Million US$)

Year	Required Funding	Disbursed Funding	Funding Gap
2013	1,723	842	881
2014	1,515	795	720
2015	2,140	1,412	728
2016	1,759	390*	1,369
Total	7,137	3,439	3,698

Source: Lebanese government and the UN (2014), *Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) 2015-2016.*

Table 5.5 displays the funding gap emerged as the result of the difference between International funding required to support Lebanon and the funds disbursed. For example, in 2013, around 49 percent amount (US$842 million) out of US$1723 million were spent making the funding gap of approximately US$881 million (51%). In 2014, about 52 percent (US$795 million) funding was disbursed, creating a difference of around 48 percent in the form of US$720 million. The next year in 2015, the amount of the required funding increased to US$2140 million, out of which US$1412 million (66 %) was disbursed, leading to the gap of 34 percent. In 2016, just

[525] Clough, Stephanie (2018), *The Donor-NGO Relationship and Humanitarian Assistance: Monitoring and Evaluation in the Syrian Refugee Response in Lebanon*, Beirut: Lebanon, p.44

22 percent (US$390 million) of the required funding was paid, generating a deficit of about 78 percent.

UNHCR in its reports confirmed that Lebanon received around US$1.2 billion from donor countries in 2015 which was earlier consists of US$842 million in 2013-14 and US$795 million in 2014.[526] It was argued that the state of aid provision in the Lebanon crisis response was severely underfunded. Since 2012, the appeals funded an average of 48 percent. It was assessed that during 2011-2017, approximately US$6 billion given to Lebanon in the form of funding.[527]

UNHCR, along with local and international NGOs, played a crucial role in protecting and assisting Syrian refugees. Since UNHCR acts following its international mandate to protect and support refugees, it restricts the scope of support to these displaced people. In this situation, local and regional NGOs especially European and Nordic NGOs such as Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) played a critical role in helping Syrian refugees. Since many different local, regional, international and private NGOs have been working for providing economic assistance and humanitarian approach towards Syrian refugees, establishing coordination between them became tough and thus limited. Even on the governmental level, complaints of lack of coordination and clientelism have been observed. It was argued that the issue of Syrian refugees had become a political problem, and therefore, the attitude of Lebanese authorities towards them varies with the political sensitivities and the ethno-sectarian interests of the government actors.[528] Under the Regional Response Plan of UNHCR, around 54 NGOs operate in Lebanon to help Syrian refugee population.[529] The role of Lebanese civil society cannot be overlooked in providing community resilience. Various NGOs in collaboration with municipalities have been doing a remarkable job by providing humanitarian relief and socio-economic development at the local level. The strong commitment shown by the Lebanese NGOs and municipalities towards mitigating the

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[526]Charafeddine, Raed H. (2016), *The Impact of the Syrian Displacement Crisis on the Lebanese Economy*, Geneva: Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, p.8

[527] Cited in Clough, Stephanie (2018), *The Donor-NGO Relationship and Humanitarian Assistance: Monitoring and Evaluation in the Syrian Refugee Response in Lebanon*, Beirut: Lebanon, p.43.

[528]Vilet, Sam Van (2016), "Syrian refugees in Lebanon: coping with unpreceded challenges" in Maximilian Felsch and Martin Wählisch (eds.) *Lebanon and the Arab Uprisings: In the eye of hurricane*, London: Routledge, pp. 92-93.

[529] Cited in Bidinger, Sarah et al. (2015), *Protecting Syrian Refugees: Laws, Policies, and Global Responsibility Sharing*, Boston: Boston University, p.33

crisis and providing support for the services, including health and education to vulnerable communities across Lebanon is laudable.[530]

The international community consists of a long list to help Lebanon to mitigate the Syrian refugee crisis such as UNDP, the European Union (EU), DFID, and U.S.A.I.D. along with other specialised organisations such as Relief International, International Alert, and Mercy Corps. Their technical and financial support to municipalities and NGOs in the form of a variety of programs offering vocational training, economic integration, and conflict mitigation skills to refugees played a significant role.[531] The role played by EU in dealing with the refugee crisis was remarkable. Approximately €1.2 billion was allocated for alleviating the burden of Syrian refugees on Lebanon by 2016. The focus of the EU is not just confined to Syrian refugees but also towards improving the livelihood of the host communities, making the efforts of EU inclusive. For achieving it, under the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) for synchronising refugee relief with a strategy of stabilisation, a programme called 'Single Support Framework (2014–2016)' was initiated by EU.[532]

For supporting Lebanon to deal with the burden of Syrian refugees," "a 'Trust Fund' is created by the International Support Committee for Lebanon. Many meeting and conferences were held in which announcement was made regarding donations to help the country to deal with the crisis. However, these donations have remained insufficient in fulfilling the actual needs of the Syrian refugees. During the London conference in February 2016 support of more than US$550 million for Lebanon was announced by the donors including Germany, UK, Norway and Kuwait for 2016.[533] Furthermore, financial assistance, as announced by French President François Holland will reach 50 million euros in 2016 and 100 million euros over the next three years to

[530]Geha, Carmen (2016), *The Syrian Refugee Crisis and Lebanon's Endemic Deadlocks: Trading Reform for Resilience*, Washington DC: Middle East Institute, pp.2-3.

[531]Ibid.

[532]Fakhoury, Tamirace (2018), "Multi-level governance and migration politics in the Arab world: the case of Syria's displacement", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies,* 45 (8): 1310-1326, p.1315

[533]British Embassy, Beirut (2016), "London conference: US$550m for Lebanon this year", [Online: web] Accessed 5 March 2017, URL: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/london-conference-550m-for-lebanon-this-year

maintain security and stability in Lebanon.[534] Even the European Union agreed to increase its assistance to US$1.5 billion to support Lebanon, stated by Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

6. Role of League of Arab States, GCC and Islamic Charity Groups:

Though Arab League participated in cross-regional initiatives on refugee aid and joined EU in its efforts for conflict management and mitigation, their role in multi-level decision-making" has shown low-intensity. GCC followed the same suit as opted by League of Arab States (LAS). Regarding protection of the rights of Syrian refugees, an 'Arab Parliamentary vision' was announced by Arab League in 2016, showing its intentions to cooperate with various hosting states on the matter.[535] The Gulf countries provided huge financial assistance to Syrian refugees in Lebanon. Kuwait emerged as the largest donor by contributing around US$800 million since 2012, while around US$364 million was given by UAE. However, none of the GCC states has officially accepted a single Syrian refugee fleeing the war since 2011. The reasons were given that they did not officially recognise the legal concept of refugeehood. It was analysed that Syrian refugees are not an exception; the six Gulf monarchies are non-signatory to the international conventions on refugees and issues associated with it. Furthermore, it was argued that majority of the workforce in all the Gulf countries consist of foreign expatriates or migrants. For example, more than 85 per cent of the population in Qatar and UAE are foreign expatriates. The entire set up of population and other resource structure forced GCC states to opt for demographic protectionists policies with regard to Syrian refugees.[536] It was argued that Arab League and GCC did not play much role as needed from them as important regional organisations. Though they provided financial assistance for dealing with the crisis, but not provided shelter to Syrian refugees.

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[534] National News Agency (2016), "Hollande after meeting Salam: France's aid to refugees in Lebanon to reach 50 million Euros in 2016, 100 million Euros within 3 years",[Online: web] Accessed 22 April 2017, URL: http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/60093/nna-leb.gov.lb/en

[535]Fakhoury, Tamirace (2018), "Multi-level governance and migration politics in the Arab world: the case of Syria's displacement", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies,* 45 (8): 1310-1326, pp. 1316-1318.

[536] Kinninmont, Jane (2015), "Why Aren't Gulf Countries Taking in Syrian Refugees?" [Online: web] Accessed 20 Feb. 2017, URL: https://www.chathamhouse.org/expert/comment/why-aren-t-gulf-countries-taking-syrian-refugees#

The failure of the state in providing basic public goods and social services makes the role of private social welfare organisations significant. In this direction, the role of Islamic charities in Lebanon to deal with the Syrian refugee crisis remains significant. The Islamic tradition is having a long history of charity assistance and welfare, but it is considered to be "an integral component of ethnic and sectarian politics" in Lebanon.[537] The balance of power of government and parliament mirrored the division of the country into ethnic and religious groups. Lebanon, throughout its history, witnessed the failure of often-divided governments to ensure the functioning of the state structure. As a result, the strong presence of civil society got penetrated Lebanese society. Therefore, civil society groups took care of the needs of citizens whenever the Lebanese government showed incapability to fulfil the responsibilities of a state towards its citizens. Islamic charities have been an essential part of civil society.[538]

The financial limitations and political sensitivity made Lebanese HRC ineffective on the one hand and inaccessibility of certain areas by UNHCR, on the other hand, created gaps in economic and humanitarian assistance to Syrian refugees. Islamic charities filled that gap as the primary assistance provider for Syrian refugees. Islamic charities, a coalition of thirty groups, coordinated the assistance to Syrian refugees. Some of the Islamic charities such as Lebanese Zakat Fund of Dar el Fatwa (the Sunni Higher Islamic Council), Azhar mosque in Majdel-Anjar played a crucial role in providing financial and humanitarian assistance to the Syrian refugees. Gulf countries, including Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Qatar were the primary financial assistance provider that distributed through Future Movement networks.[539] Many considered this coalition group equally influential alike tripartite committee of the Lebanese MoSA, HRC and UNHCR, both in term of increasing the aid efforts by pressuring the Lebanese government and acting as a parallel assistance network besides committee as mentioned above.

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[537]Cammett, Melani and Sukriti Issar (2010), "Bricks and Mortar Clientelism: The Political Geography of Welfare in Lebanon," *World Politicism*, 62 (3): 381-421, p.381.

[538]Hasselbarth, Sarah (2014), *Islamic Charities in the Syrian Context in Jordan and Lebanon*, Beirut: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, p.26.

[539]Vilet, Sam Van (2016), "Syrian refugees in Lebanon: coping with unpreceded challenges" in Maximilian Felsch and Martin Wählisch (eds.) *Lebanon and the Arab Uprisings: In the eye of hurricane,* London: Routledge, p.93.

Earlier they were helping Syrian refugees individually since only a few came to Lebanon. But they started working collectively as the numbers were growing. In the city of Akkar, the first coalition (Ittilaf) of this kind was established. The reach of the coalition to more areas and more refugees, as well as coordination with different aid programmes, became possible through a common database and coordination mechanisms. Their role became more important since they were able to assist those who were not covered by the UN and its implementing partners. Unregistered refugees with UNHCR, Lebanese returnees, or those who regularly travel between Syria and Lebanon came under this category.

Due to their local presence, the charities were immediately able to spread their assistance to dispersed refugees across the country while the focus of the government and international agencies remained in North and the Bekaa Valley. Due to bureaucratic procedures, they took some time to adjust to the new situation. For dealing with the growing numbers of Syrian refugees, the coalition of Islamic charities created one unit called Ittihad (union), based in Beirut and covers all areas of Lebanon. Dar al-Fatwa, the highest religious authority in Lebanon coordinated with the local charities, apart from the two unions. All three associations follow the basis of Islamic charity principles and work through local charities. Two different channels based on the zakat system provides funding for the charities under Dar al-Fatwa in Lebanon. Either donor gives money to Dar al-Fatwa directly, and then latter distribute it throughout the charity network or local charities are given direct funding from donors. In the second situation, Dar al-Fatwa has no proper control over the expenditure of this money. This can be witnessed in Tripoli where local charities became independent due to decreasing control of Dar al-Fatwa on local charities. Even the president of the Islamic Development Bank Group signed five financing agreements (totalling US$373 million) with the Lebanese government for development projects concerning Syrian refugees.[540]

[540] World Bank (2016), "World Bank Group, United Nations, and Islamic Development Bank Pledge Support for Stability in Middle East and North Africa", [Online: web] Accessed 17 June 2016, URL: http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2016/03/24/world-bank-global-support stability-middle-east-north-africa

Conclusion

The Syrian refugee crisis has severely impacted Lebanon's economic and political situation. Though their presence weakens the economy, blaming Syrian refugees solely for their present financial situation is not justified. The Lebanese economy was already in a vulnerable condition before the rise of Syrian refugees; it just further deteriorated the case in the form of increasing unemployment, poverty, the decline in GDP growth, trade deficit and tourists arrival. The Lebanese economy was unable to provide employment even before the Syrian civil war broke out. The massive presence of Syrian refugees increased the unemployment rate among Lebanese nationals, particularly the population belonging to the low skilled category. There is a decline in the wage system since Syrian refugees started taking up jobs for lower wages leading to reduce the income of the Lebanese population, pushing them into extreme poverty. Undoubtedly, they added pressure to an already fragile economy, which was recovering out of the previous internal and external shocks. The weak public finances and critical infrastructure suffered severely as the result of their presence. However, the contribution of the Syrian refugees in the form of producers and consumers cannot be overlooked. Moreover, the aids and grants provided to Lebanon to assist Syrian refugees balance the negative implications due to the latter's presence. Every year from 2011-2016, UNHCR along with different national and international agencies injected assistance to Lebanese economy both in the form of loans and grants to help Syrian refugees.

The Syrian refugees in Lebanon also impacted the political stability of the country by changing the demographic reality due to the refugees overwhelmingly being Sunni Muslim. This resulted in the demand for the redistribution of power arrangements and hence exacerbated Lebanon's confessional politics. It has challenged the sectarian fabric of the country and therefore created social instability. This issue polarised the political parties in dealing with the crisis. Syrian refugees can pose a severe threat in the longer term as happened in the case of the Palestinian refugees by their becoming a permanent feature of the Lebanese society. The emergence of political deadlock in Lebanon occurred due to the involvement of Hezbollah in the Syrian civil war despite opting for the ‘Baabda Declaration’. This political instability impacted the policies towards Syrian refugees. As a result, no clear cut plans were chosen by the

government in initial years. This lack of systematic approach opened up spaces for the misuse of resources allocated for managing the Syrian refugees and associated issues to encourage political instability and to make the environment more insecure. It was only in 2014 that the government adopted a coherent policy to deal with the issue to prevent political and security fragility. "The refugee population has imposed huge costs on the host community, yet the politics of sectarianism has extracted gains. In a divided context, political elites have instrumentalised the issue of Syrian refugees for political gains both within Lebanon's domestic politics and the transnational context of the Syrian civil war. While the impacts of such an overwhelming refugee influx are severe, and the lessons of 1970-1975 are critical in viewing the current situation.

The issue of Syrian refugees has moved from a potential political crisis to a full-scale national crisis. The division of the Christian parties over this issue, but their compliance to the directives of the dominant partners in the March 8 and 14 coalitions is a clear example of this. Early entanglements with politicizing the refugee issue by both sides were evident, with March 8 taking a hard line against refugee settlement and March 14 seeking to harness their support. However, Hezbollah's securing of the key border area around Qusayr in 2013 and 2014, coupled with an effort to avoid alienating Christian allies has seen their temper. Future Movement has backed away from promoting political activism amongst the refugee community as it fears the emergence of unpredictable extremist groups in Lebanese territory as well as acceding to Christian demands to keep Lebanon at arm's length from the Syrian crisis. In short, the severity of the crisis and complexity of the Syrian refugee issue has led to a compromise, at least in the short term, amongst Lebanon's political factions. Lastly, the role of regional, national and international agencies including Islamic charities played an important role for supporting Lebanon in dealing with this massive rise of Syrian refugees. It was due to their support that Lebanon, a small country with a population of more than 4 million (before the crisis) showed the potential to bear the burden of the refugees in large numbers and despite witnessing political and economic vulnerabilities showed the strength to manage during this difficult phase.

Chapter-Six

Conclusion

In modern human history, the Syrian civil war will be recorded as one of the worst humanitarian crises causing millions of deaths. The civil war also forced millions to become refugees fleeing their homes to neighbouring countries. According to the United Nations and other humanitarian organisations, the scale of the catastrophe made children and women the worst victims of the crisis, and this continues to be the case. The study undertaken is an analysis of how the Syrian refugee crisis affected the Lebanese political system and its economic situation. There have been significant ramifications of this crisis from the gaze of many dimensions. However, this study primarily focusses on two factors: the economic and political implications of the Syrian refugees on Lebanon and secondly, the challenges faced by the Syrian refugees in Lebanon. This study also tried to uncover Lebanon's own challenges in dealing with the refugee crisis.

The Syrian crisis also has a larger international and regional dimension. The crisis has brought major instability to the West Asian region. On the global front, the Syrian crisis has become a theatre of major power politics involving US and Russia and on the regional context, the Syrian civil war has worsened the sectarian rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia. Lebanon has been the major centre of the political battleground. Historically, confessional power distribution system on ethnic and religious line has always undermined its polity, but growing refugee question will have a powerful impact in years to come, and therefore, the study had offered meaningful questions. The Syrian civil war and its consequences in the form of the refugee crisis have not only affected the regional instability for the entire West Asian region, but it has also reflected, how the external intervention and involvement of non- state actors transformed the civil war into a more complex and complicated situation.

In the aftermath of the worst humanitarian crisis emanating from the civil war in Syria, the refugees were fleeing to the neighbouring countries from Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, Egypt, and Iraq. However, Lebanon became one of the most affected countries due to the massive influx of Syrian refugees. The growing number of refugees have not only undermined its polity, but the social impact would further

create a long-time crisis in Lebanon both politically and economically, considering the different power centres existing in Lebanon particularly the role of Hezbollah would be significant in this changing dynamics.

Lebanon is a small country with an area of around 4,036 square miles. Lebanon has received more than one million Syrian refugees. Since this catastrophe has brought a serious legal aspect of refugee question particularly for Lebanon but amidst the crisis, Lebanon has already become the country with the highest per capita concentration of refugees worldwide. From the past experiences too, Lebanon has been a centre of refugees from many West Asian countries. Historically, Lebanon shares a formidable political and economic relation with Syria, and thus, it has made Lebanon a preferred destination for the Syrian refugees. However, their long presence and illegal entry have contributed economic and political fragility in Lebanon. The burden on public finances and public debt, declining GDP growth and tourists' arrival, increasing the trade deficit, mounting poverty and unemployment along with other social and economic infrastructure pushed the Lebanese economy into a crisis. In terms of political fragility, the presence of the Syrian refugees (the majority of them belong to the Sunni sect) has infuriated or exacerbated the confessional polity by posing a threat to the sectarian fabric and the existing power arrangements determined by the 1932 census and also from 1943 National Pact. The prevailing multi-confessional electoral system in Lebanon has witnessed an increase in the parliamentary seats from 99 to 128, in the aftermath of the 1989 Taif Accord. This accord was signed to end the Lebanese civil war and bringing back the political normalcy in Lebanon. The issue, however, has emerged as a concern due to the changing demographic balances, resulting in political instability. The polarisation of the Lebanese political parties on the issue of how to deal with the Syrian refugees coming to Lebanon has brought political instability undermining the already fractures system.

The presence of Palestinian refugees has already been a significant debate in Lebanon, which is also affecting Lebanese politics in determining the policies towards the Syrian refugees in Lebanon. Till March 2014, Lebanon opted for an open-door policy to allow Syrian refugees for entering Lebanon. However, seeing no end to the civil war and growing alarming numbers of the refugees forced the Lebanese government to opt for the coherent policy. In October 2014, Lebanon brought the ‘Refugee Policy Paper’ towards Syrian refugees analysing the implications from

political, economic and security aspects since Lebanese economy already burdened for being a host to million refugees even before the influx of Syrian refugees in the recent crisis. Since the Lebanese civil war has already posed significant economic and political challenges to Lebanese society, the scope for providing financial and humanitarian assistance to Syrian refugees have become a severe challenge.

In these circumstances, to mitigate the impact of the Syrian refugees, the role of international organisations like UNHCR and other UN agencies along with regional and international NGOs have played a significant role. Their policies on the refugee issue both on the grounds of the humanitarian and financial assistance contributed towards easing out the burden of the Lebanese government. However, the problem of financial requirements of the Syrian refugees prevailed there. On the issue of providing funds to Lebanon to bear the cost of a massive influx of refugees, the role of Gulf countries, the Arab League and Islamic charities have played a crucial role. Although, initially, Arab league did not reach for any comprehensive approach towards Syrian refugees, in 2016, this issue emerged as a central focus — the question of why Gulf States were reluctant to receive the refuges as Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey. The refusal to accept the flux of refugees was harboured in the garb of being a non- signatory to refugee conventions and secondly the fear of demographic imbalances which many Gulf states are already facing. Therefore, they offered financial assistance to bear the crisis to Syrian refugees in Lebanon in particular and for other countries in general. The vacuum created by the unavailability of government authorities to provide humanitarian and financial assistance to Syrian refugees filled by Islamic charities.

Already suffering from the prolonged presence of refugees, particularly the Palestinian refugees, the presence of Syrian refugees in huge numbers have made Lebanon economically fragile state. The burden on the resources and capacities of the Lebanese government is reminiscent of economic insecurities created by the fifteen long year's Lebanese civil war (1975-1990). Lebanon was in the process of rebuilding the country's infrastructure and reforming its economy post-civil war and Israel-Hezbollah war of 2006. However, the outbreak of the Syrian civil war and its spillover effect in the form of a massive influx of Syrian refugees crossing 1 million by 2016 forced the country to face the same economic vulnerabilities. The Syrian civil war in general and the presence of the Syrian refugees, in particular, has reversed the

recovering Lebanese economy. The shrinking service export, particularly the decline in inbound tourists, was linked to the prevailing insecurity at the border areas. In this scenario, the alarming presence of Syrian refugees, proved to be a major setback to the Lebanese economy since the latter is based primarily on service sectors including banking, tourism and insurance. As the numbers of the refugees were increasing, the tourist arrival witnessed the declining trend.

In 2016, when the Syria refugees crossed 1 million, it was hailed as a ‘gathering storm' complicating the situation and making the economic system more vulnerable to external shocks. Regional insecurity and uncertainty have impacted investor and consumer confidence in Lebanon, with declining economic growth. The sudden arrival of significant numbers of Syrian refugees has given rise to challenges in Lebanon's labour market. Their presence worsened already difficult labour market conditions, forced authorities to limit the possibilities for Syrians to engage in productive employment activities. Lebanon is plagued by one of its worst unemployment crises in history, compounded by domestic and regional political instability and a massive influx of refugees. It was observed that one in every five Lebanese is unemployed. This can be attributed firstly to shrinking work opportunities associated with weak economic growth and secondly competition for jobs between locals and the Syrian refugees.

On the other side of this crisis, it is also significant that Syrian refugees have provided a large pool of cheap labour for the Lebanese economy. The cheap supply of labour, however, has another problem as the majority of the Syrian refugees tend to be unskilled often found working informally in low productivity sectors that the Lebanese tend to avoid. Though the presence of Syrian refugees is affecting the employment situation, the impact is more prevalent in the low skilled category and informal sector. Undoubtedly, even before the crisis, the employment situation was not good either. However, the influx of Syrian refugees in large numbers intensified the situation. The issue of growing informal sector and the wage decline are the two important implications witnessed by the Lebanese market as a result of the presence of Syrian refugees.

The fiscal vulnerability of the Lebanese government aggravated due to the Syrian civil war considering the scale in which Lebanon received the number of refugees.

Further, the diversion of development programs on agriculture, waste management, water systems or other public infrastructure to emergency response programs for Syrian refugees complicated the situation for host communities. One of the significant findings of this study has been: despite the income of Lebanese families has remained the same or decreased, their family expenditures increased due to the influx of Syrian refugees. There is no doubt that Syrian refugees have become an economic burden both for Lebanon in general and host communities in particular. However, the impact of the Syrian civil war, in general, has caused enormous macro-economic challenges in Lebanon than the effect of Syrian refugees. In short, the Syrian civil war intensified the weaknesses of the Lebanese economy.

Lebanon played a significant role in protecting the Syrian refugees despite non-signatory to both the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol. However, past experiences with the Palestinian refugees have affected its practices and policies towards Syrian refugees. Lebanon opted the ‘no-camp' policy for Syrian refugees, resulting in no formal refugee camps for them. As a result of this policy, finding a shelter became challenging for them. Paying rent for the accommodation became the significant expenditure that is paid by savings that have been diminishing, cash assistance and borrowed money. As a result, Syrian refugees are trapped into large debts or falling for other negative coping strategies, including selling food rations and child labour to fulfil basic living costs that have become expensive. This policy adopted by Lebanese authorities has forced the Syrian refugees to reside in the informal settlements such as substandard houses, informal tented settlements, garages or unfinished buildings lacking minimal humanitarian standards. Their settlement in these locations became a challenge both from logistical and security perspective. Even introduction of complex regulations regarding valid residency permits and excessive visa fee complicated the question of shelter and security. Some of the areas near the country's border region are perceived as an insurgent base and facing the nascent spillover of the Syrian civil war

The political system of Lebanon based on confessionalism, referring to the allocation of political positions by ‘confessions' or religious sects. The influx of Syrian refugees in large numbers is changing the demographic balance of the country. Since the majority of the refugees belong to the Sunni community, there is a serious threat to the existing system considering the sectarianism in the region and the impact of the

rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran. It has threatened the sectarian balance of Lebanese society that eventually reflect the political reality. During this time, Lebanon was suffering both from political instability and policy paralysis. Since 2009, Lebanon has witnessed the collapse of its government twice in 2011 and 2013. There was a political vacuum for more than two years due to the presidential seat remaining vacant. Moreover, the Lebanese parliament extended its mandate several times. In these circumstances, a huge influx of Syrian refugees added complications to their already difficult political situation. The incidents of suicide bombing, clashes at the border along with political assassinations pulled Lebanon into the Syrian civil war and made the presence of Syrian refugees susceptible from the security perspective.

The role of Arab League, GCC, Islamic charities groups, and other regional, International organisations along with NGOs and INGOs (including Nordic and European NGOs) to help Lebanon to deal with the refugee crisis remained crucial in providing financial assistance. However, seeing the numbers, financial aid remained insufficient to fulfil the needs of all the refugees. Undoubtedly, they played a significant role in providing help in the form of humanitarian and financial assistance to both the Syrian refugees and the host communities. Various conferences, including Kuwait and London conferences, have been held both in the Arab region and European countries to raise the financial assistance for meeting the needs of Syrian refugees and lessen the burden on the hosting governments. Although the spillover effects of the Syrian civil war have put constraints on local resources and infrastructures, humanitarian aid packages have helped in mitigating some of its negative consequences by infusing financial support into the Lebanese economy. The already fragile Lebanese economy provided no scope for the Lebanese government to contribute towards the humanitarian assistance of Syrian refugees. They acted just a channel to distribute the financial and humanitarian assistance coming from the UN agencies and other national and international NGOs.

The broader implications for Lebanon are not just limited to domestic economic and political impact but there is undoubtedly a significant issue attached to this entire issue. The involvement of regional and great powers have made Lebanon as the centre of new political theatre. It is a country where a proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran can be witnessed explicitly. The political instability in Lebanon has demonstrated the demographic imbalances and changing sectarian reality. The presence of Syrian

refugees in Lebanon provided Saudi Arabia with a platform to demonstrate its power hegemony in the Lebanese politics in particular and the politics of the region in general. Saudi has its fear of growing Iranian influence in the region through the presence of Hezbollah. And therefore, Lebanon is an important region for Saudi Arabia to reduce Iranian influence. The entire Lebanese politics witnessed polarisation due to the Syrian civil war and Hezbollah's involvement in it. The two dominant groups, namely March 8 and March 14, determines the fall and rise of Lebanese politics, are divided and aligned with Iran and Saudi Arabia, respectively. Both groups have different opinions regarding the presence of the Syrian refugees. Hezbollah opted for humanitarian policy towards them; however, they simultaneously favoured the 'no camp' policy anticipating the repercussions for their prolonged presence. March 14 was showing sympathetic attitude towards them but equally doubtful for their presence since many of the Syrian refugees hold pro-Syrian regime attitude. Even this factor is posing a threat to Hezbollah also because of anti-Syrian regime attitude of many Syrian refugees. The refugee crisis has resurfaced the toxic form of sectarianism in the region. And therefore, it appears that the geopolitical dynamics of the Syrian civil has aggravated the proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran. These two important regional powers witnessed political, military and financial involvement in the Syrian civil war by supporting their alliance in order to demonstrate power equations in the region. The role of Hezbollah under the umbrella of Iran in the Syrian civil war made this proxy war more intense since it is playing a direct role in the Syrian civil war working as a proxy of Iran.

The research findings as has been analysed in the chapters substantiate the research questions and also validate the hypothesis of this study that *the influx of Syrian refugees apart from being a huge economic burden has also undermined Lebanon's fragile confessional polity*. The presence of Syrian refugees infuriated or exacerbated the political system by polarising the political parties on the issue of Syrian refugees. However, the long term presence of Syrian refugees with any political and citizenship rights in the future would certainly undermine the confessional political system in Lebanon. On the economic implications, the presence of Syrian refugees has largely contributed Lebanon's economic fragility, but the study finds that Syrian refugees shouldn't be held as a sole responsible factor in weakening the Lebanese economy. On the larger picture, the civil war in its entirety has impacted the Lebanese economy due

to its scale and secondly the location of Syria as a transit route to other GCC countries having economic relations affected the trade costs. The Lebanese economy was already in recovering phase in the aftermath of the horrible Lebanese civil war and Israel- Hezbollah war in 2006 that witnessed disastrous repercussions for the Lebanese economy. The beginning of the Syrian civil war and its negative externalities resulted in the decline of growth to around 1.7 per cent by 2016 that was around 8 percent on average before the outbreak of Syrian civil war. The GDP growth in the years 2011 and 2015 witnessed the worst growth of 0.9 per cent and 0.2 per cent respectively. The increase in demand for food and other items, increasing poverty and unemployment along with burden on the public finances and the public infrastructure (water, electricity, transport, health, education) certainly put the stress on the Lebanese economy.

On the political implications, the presence of Syrian refugees has further complicated the fragile confessional polity in Lebanon. The majority of the Syrian refugees belong to the Sunni sect providing the demand for the redistribution of the power arrangements as occurred in 1989 at Taif Accord to end the Lebanese civil war. Their presence already disturbed the demographic balances of Lebanon, and mainly the North and Bekaa since the majority of the refugees took shelter in these areas. Their presence generated tensions between Sunni- Shia and Sunni- Druze- Christian community in these areas as becoming a threat to the social and political fabric of the Lebanese society.

On the limitation of this undertaken research, it is identified that the lack of Arabic and French language have reduced the scope of the study considering the primary data. Most of the research literature including the UNHCR, UN, EU reports and other international and Nordic NGOs was available in English; however, some local and regional NGOs along with think thanks published their reports and findings in the Arabic Language. Further, some research articles analysing the nature of Lebanese state and society, particularly the history of Lebanon were available only in the French and Arabic language, and therefore, restricting the undertaken research. Furthermore, the fluctuations in the numbers of the refugees posed a serious limitation. Since the topic of the thesis is contemporary, no comprehensive research has been done, and therefore, less scope to verify data, and other statistics is available.

Furthermore, terms like Syrian refugees and refugees from Syria were used interchangeably despite implies the different meanings. 'Refugees from Syria' include Syrian refugees and Palestinian refugees both; however, 'Syrian refugees' are exclusively meant for them only. In this situation, a careful study was needed to look for the terms and analysing data accordingly. The last limitation dealt with the dearth of literature on statistics about economic implications focusing exclusively on Syrian refugees. Majorly the data and statistics are available for the overall impact of the Syrian civil war on the Lebanese economy, such as overall fiscal costs and burden on public finances. Further, more has been written on the political implications of the Syrian civil war on Lebanon and its politics than the presence of Syrian refugees and political instability in Lebanon. Undoubtedly, exacerbated confessional polity, political instability, security dimension and the demographic imbalances due to the presence of the Syrian refugees has been discussed in the available literature but needs more elaboration to analyse further in a comprehensive manner, providing scope for further research.

The field trip to Lebanon has proved to be fruitful and extremely helpful for this research. Seeing the country of your research is a different experience altogether. During this field trip, discussion and interviews with professors from different universities and UNHCR and inter-agency officials strengthened this work. Accessing and collecting research material from the libraries of AUB and LAU contributed largely in this PhD work. Apart from this, interaction with NGOs and visiting the refugees' settlements in Beirut, Tyre (Sour), Bekaa and witnessing the conditions in which the Syrian refugees including children live provided a different perspective to observe the situation from a more humane perspective. Interaction both with Syrians present in Lebanon as migrants before the Syrian civil war and Syrian refugees showed the difference in their situation and attitude.

It provided the opportunity for long discussions and interactions with Lebanese nationals belonging to different groups including Sunni, Shia, Druze, and Christians providing different narratives regarding the presence of the Syrian refugees and their implications on Lebanon from various dimensions including economic, political, social, and security. For some, Syrian refugees should go back to their country since Syria is bigger in size and the Syrian government should take care of their people. Even their opinions reflected a completely negative attitude towards Syrian refugees

since the latter is pressuring the labour market and creating the job competition. Additionally, the burden on public infrastructure, and disproportionate aid to Syrian refugees have formed the basis of the resentment towards the refugees. On the other hand, some Lebanese held a sympathetic attitude towards Syrian refugees by stating that no option is left for them but to live in these circumstances. Majority of the Lebanese hold similar opinions regarding the return of the Syrian refugees. In their opinion, less possibility is there since Lebanon provides them with more scope to earn their livelihood with good income compared to Syria and sending that money to their families in Syria. In short, the influx of Syrian refugees in huge numbers have hugely impacted Lebanon, as discussed through the chapters. Lebanon, being a small country has been already suffering from economic and political fragility, has witnessed an enormous burden for having a massive influx of Syrian refugees. Their presence with demographic imbalances has exacerbated the confessional polity and would certainly undermine the Lebanese political system in the future if some legitimisation to their presence would be provided.

The Syrian refugee crisis and its implications on Lebanon provide a lens to understand how the outbreak of the war was not limited to the political outcome, but it has involved many components of the regional situation. The heightened rivalry between Saudi and Iran, re-emergence of Russia in the West Asian region, and most importantly, the relative decline of US hegemony has allowed the humanitarian crisis to grow unchecked. This study has tried to fulfil the existing research gap both based on the qualitative and quantitative approach and further highlights the research limitation, thus offering further scope to understand the fall out of the civil war and refugee crisis on Lebanon. The study largely validates the hypothesis and argues that both political and economic implications, over a prolonged period, could affect the status quo in Lebanese polity and its society. The study also implicates the need for a careful approach in the current role of the humanitarian agency as the authenticity of the existing data would not reflect the ground reality, and therefore the study offers a meaningful argument that more research would validate the questions raised through this undertaken research. The Syrian refugee crisis has had a significant impact on Lebanon, and this work has tried to understand the political and economic dimensions through which it has materialised.

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