WAITING FOR YESTERDAY

WHAT FUTURE FOR SYRIAN REFUGEES?

Ronald Stade and Lana Khattab

MALMÖ UNIVERSITY

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

FGD	Focus group discussion
ILO	International Labor Organization
ISF	Internal Security Forces: the police force of Lebanon
KII	Key informant interview
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USD	US dollar; currency of the United States of America
VASyr	Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon

LIST OF ARABIC TERMS

'Amaan (أمان)	Safety; security
Aineidam al'amaan (انعدام الأمان)	Lack of security, unsafety
Az'ar (أزعر)	Yob; street boy; youth who behaves in an uncouth, aggressive, or antisocial way
'Ighatha (إغاثة)	"The relief," shorthand for the entire sector of aid organizations
Kafil (كفيل)	Sponsor, patron
Khatar (خطر)	Danger, risk
Mukhabarat (مخابرات)	Intelligence service, secret police
Muhafazah (محافظة)	Governorate, province
Nizam (نظام)	"System," state, regime
Rif (ريف)	Countryside outside an urban center
Shabiha (شبيحة)	Organized crime gangs and militias that are affiliated with the Syrian regime but operate outside the law
Shawish (شاويش)	Refugee camp supervisor ("sergeant")
Taghziih (تغزيه)	Nutrition
Wasta (وَاسِطَة)	Connections, favoritism, cronyism, pulling strings

CONTENTS

"We would return to Syria if everything was like before the war. We want that everything is like it was before. We had such a good life before."

Young woman, originally from Homs, now living in the Bekaa Valley and, by idealizing the past, turning nostalgia into a hope for the future

1. INTRODUCTION

The research project was funded by Riksbankens Jubileumsfond, the Swedish Foundation for Humanities and Social Sciences. The core research team consisted of Ronald Stade, Professor of Peace and Conflict Studies with specialization in Anthropology at Malmö University, Sweden, and Lana Khattab, MSc in Middle East Politics from SOAS, University of London. Two consultants, Lina Ashkar and Zeina Shoueib, were engaged as focus group moderators. The objective of the project was to identify security and protection concerns, as well as perspectives toward the future, shared by Syrian refugees in Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey.

For the project we were able to use data from a cross-sectoral baseline study that we conducted in 2017 on behalf of the country office of UNICEF in Lebanon (Malmö University and UNICEF 2017). The study was on the knowledge, attitudes, and practice among Lebanese and Palestinian and Syrian refugees in Lebanon with regard to each of UNICEF Lebanon's program areas. Data collection consisted of 7,000 hour-long household interviews (reaching 34,711 persons), 48 focus group discussions (FGDs), and 42 key informant interviews. For the current project, we conducted an additional 26 FGDs with, in all, 154 Syrian refugees in Lebanon. FGDs were always conducted separately with male and female respondents and with different age groups.[1]

Empirically, we wanted to find answers to three questions:

1. **Vernacular indicators of insecurity**: How do Syrian refugees in Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey define security risks, both in their host country and if they were to return to Syria?
2. **Communication for safety**: What information and information channels do Syrian refugees in Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey use to determine if the situation inside Syria is safe and secure?
3. **Qualitative intent data**: What hopes, intentions, and plans do Syrian refugees in Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey have for the future?

Analytically, we wanted to collate the empirical answers to these questions with the three durable solutions for refugees identified by UNHCR:[2]

---

[1] For a breakdown of the various FGDs, see Appendix 2. FGD Matrix.
[2] See http://www.unhcr.org/solutions.html.

The collation can be found at the end of this report (in 6. Conclusions). It serves the purpose of illustrating the challenges that remain to be overcome from the point of view of Syrian refugees. It is important to keep in mind that the overall purpose of our study and this report is to present the experiences, knowledge, attitudes, and intentions of Syrian refugees, even if this results in inconvenient truths becoming public.

2. METHODOLOGY

In the current study, we apply the familiar social scientific concepts of **micro** and **macro**, which have been used to define analytical levels, as well as methodological paradigms, and entire theoretical traditions. The best-known examples of the micro-macro distinction are micro- and macroeconomics and micro- and macrosociology. In both cases, the macro-approach relies on concepts derived from aggregation and abstraction such as "the market," "the state," "society," etc. The micro-approach, in contrast, focuses on individual actors, their interaction, and the social situations in which individuals and groups interact. The challenge that the micro-approach represents to the macro-approach is that concepts, units, and processes at the macro-level only ever manifest themselves in the real world through the actions and interactions of individuals and groups of individuals and in concrete, real-world social situations at the micro-level.

Our own approach is synthetic. We acknowledge that individual actors and groups of actors ought to be the units of study. But we also recognize that actors and groups of actors—and not just researchers—use macro-concepts like "the system," "the regime," "the UN," "the West," etc., and that such macro-concepts inform their understanding of their situation and the world, as well as their decisions and actions.[3] For example, the *nizam* ("the regime," "the system," etc.) might be an abstraction, but fear of, or alliance with, the nizam has real consequences in the lives of individuals and in the world. To analyze this process in the case of Syrian refugees, we collected empirical data in face-to-face discussions in focus groups and key informant interviews. The objective was to gather data on how Syrian refugees as individual actors collect information at the micro-level and use macro-concepts to arrive at decisions about their future, again at the micro-level.[4]

> Macro-concepts have real consequences at the micro-level

---

[3] In the social sciences, this is known as the Thomas theorem: "if men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences" (Thomas and Thomas 1928: 572). The theorem can be—and has been—extended to people defining abstract concepts as real and them being real in their consequences.

[4] A list of recurring macro-concepts can be found in Appendix 3.

For the 2017 UNICEF study, we used randomized sampling. For the additional data collection with 26 FGDs, we used purposive, theoretical sampling. We relied on our existing networks to contact volunteers who work with Syrian refugees or who are Syrian refugees themselves. We began by conducting FGDs with Syrian refugees in hard-to-reach areas of Lebanon. The reasoning behind this decision was that many, if not most, Syrian refugees have been overly exposed to foreigners—UN and NGO staff, surveyors, researchers, people sent out by the authorities, etc.—asking them about their situation and that they therefore might suffer from "survey fatigue." By targeting areas where many Syrian refugees live, but which, due to security and other concerns, are less frequently visited by foreigners, we hoped to find respondents who had not already become weary of discussing their circumstances and intentions. To acquire comparative data, we used a list of questions to semi-structure the FGDs (see Appendix 1). At the same time, we tried to interfere as little as possible with the flow of the discussion to capture, with minimal bias, what Syrian respondents consider to be important concerns.

The participants in our FGDs had fled from various regions of Syria (see the map on the next page). As can be seen from the below list, the cities of Homs and Damascus are overrepresented. This, however, corresponds quite well to earlier UNHCR statistics about the place of origin inside Syria of refugees in Lebanon,[5] with the possible exception of the number of Syrian refugees in Lebanon whose place of origin is Aleppo. The latter are somewhat underrepresented in our sample compared to UNHCR statistics from 2014.

Figure 1. FGD participants' (N=154) origins in Syria*

Aleppo	10	Homs	22
Rif Aleppo	3	Rif Homs	16
Baba Amr	5	Idleb	8
Rif Beit Jinn	3	Kobane	1
Damascus	20	Manbij	1
Rif Damascus	1	Qamishli	2
Rif Daraa	3	Qusair	11
Hama	1	Rif Qusair	5
Rif Hama	16	Raqqa	10
Hasakeh	4	Rif Talkalakh	8
		TOTAL	147

* 7 out of 154 FGD participants did not want to mention (or were not recorded as stating) their place of origin inside Syria.

We refrain from disclosing any information on the key informants with whom we conducted 20 interviews and, with some of whom we had continuous exchanges, in order to shield them from potential repercussions. All key informants talked on the precondition of confidentiality, "off the record," as it were. They were thus in a position to divulge information otherwise deemed too sensitive or controversial to be shared.

---

[5] See https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/59925
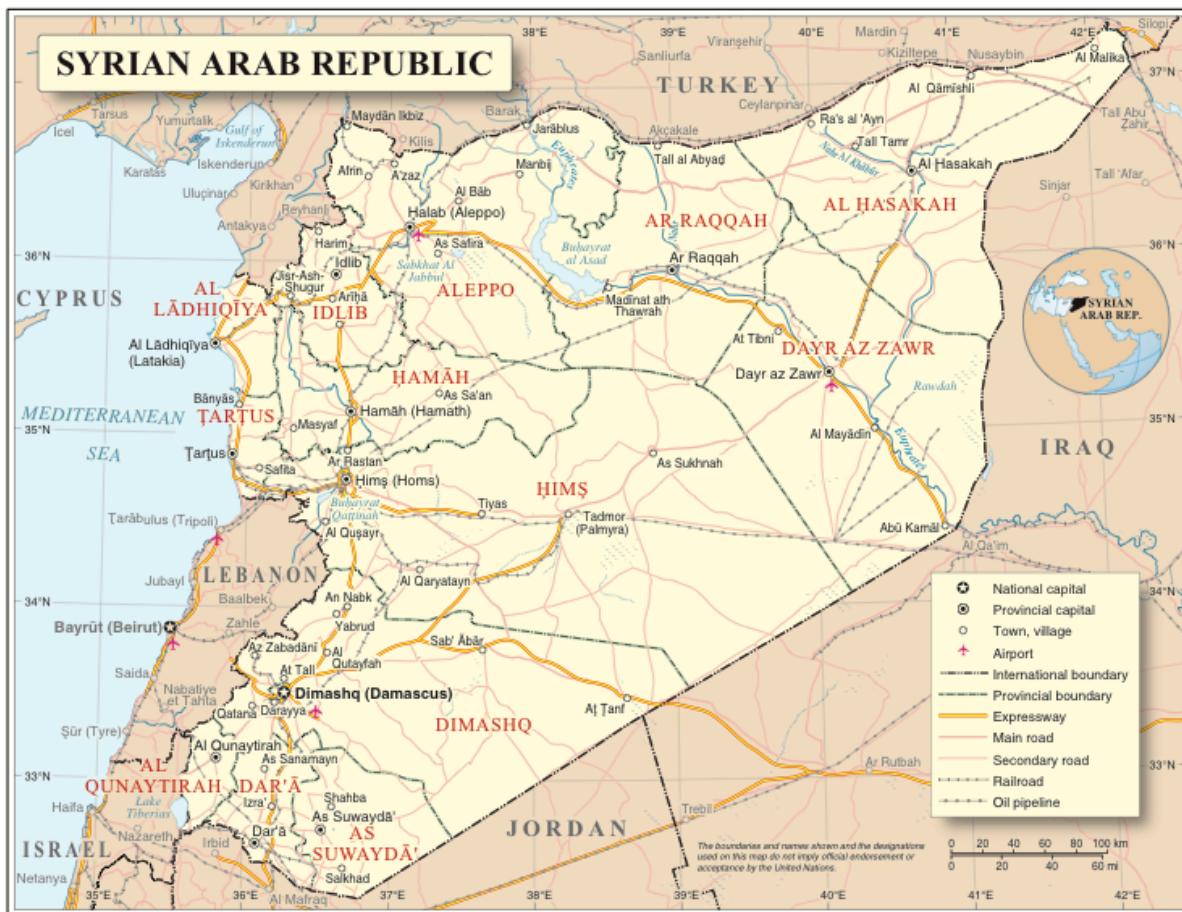
Map of the Syrian Arab Republic

3. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Our previous research has shown that Syrian refugees tend to mistrust authorities and outsiders. Therefore, we avoided asking them for written consent to participate in the study.[6] Instead, we introduced ourselves and provided verbal information about the purpose, objectives, financial support, institutional affiliation, responsible researcher and institution, and process of the research project. We invited questions on the given information, which we answered in each FGD until there were no more questions. At no point did we record the names of the FGD participants. In our field notes, we recorded the time and place of each FGD, the age and family status of each participant, and, in most cases, where in Syria they were from. The original and transcribed field notes can be accessed only by Ronald Stade and Lana Khattab. All and any data will be presented only in anonymized or aggregated form.

---

[6] For vulnerable populations like Syrian refugees, signing a document is perceived to be risky and potentially dangerous. For the same reason, we made no audio or video recordings.

4. SITUATION ANALYSIS[7]

In 2011, the violent crackdown on peaceful demonstrations in Syria soon escalated into a full-blown war, in which foreign money, equipment and troops, especially from Iran and Russia, have played a decisive role. Since the outbreak of the conflict, more than half of the country's population has been displaced. At least 6 million Syrian citizens crossed the border into neighboring countries like Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey. Already since the 1960s, hundreds of thousands of Syrian men had gone to these cross-border countries as seasonal and temporary workers. People in countries bordering Syria were therefore accustomed to Syrians living in their midst as labor migrants. Since 2011, however, the scale and character of the migration has changed dramatically. Not only did entire Syrian families, female-headed households, and unaccompanied children arrive in the cross-border countries, but they also did not leave again as the migrant workers used to.

4.1. WORK AND POVERTY

As many as 3.5 million Syrians now live in Turkey, which, at the time of writing, is the nation that hosts more refugees than any other country in the world. Relative to the size of the host population, however, it is Lebanon that has taken in more refugees than any other nation. Lebanon, which is smaller than either Jamaica, Kosovo, the Gambia, or Connecticut, had an estimated pre-war population of 4.2 million. With the addition of Syrian refugees, the population has swelled to around 6 million. This has put considerable strain on the provision of basic services like health care and education. In this regard, the situation is similar in Jordan and Turkey.[8]

The demand for publicly provided basic services among Syrian refugees is exceptionally high because most of them lack the means to pay for privately available services. In 2017, 76% of Syrian refugee households in Lebanon lived below the poverty line (VASyR 2017: 60). In Jordan, 93% of refugees living outside camps live below the poverty line (UNHCR 2017). In Turkey, exact measurements of poverty among Syrian refugees are more difficult to come by, but the second round of a comprehensive vulnerability monitoring exercise found that approximately half of Syrian refugee households must be considered poor (WFP 2018: 16).[9]

Refugees are likely to have exhausted any assets or savings they may have been able to bring with them from Syria. Therefore, they depend on income generating activities and assistance, including informal loans,[10] for their survival. More than half of working-age male Syrian refugees

---

[7] This situation analysis is based on a literature review, as well as data and material collected in 2017 and 2018.

[8] See, in particular, JIF 2018 and 3R 2017-2018: 34-39.

[9] In this report, a household is defined as poor if its income is below the MEB of 324 TL per capita per month. "The Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) represents the minimum monthly cost of the goods and services required for refugees to live a dignified life outside the camps" (WFP 2018: 16).

[10] Some 75% of Syrian refugee households in Lebanon borrowed money to buy food (VASyR 2017: 62) and 87% of them have an average debt of USD 798 (Yassin 2018: 45).

in Lebanon had employment in 2017 (VASyR 2017: 66), but, on average, they had work only 14 days per month, which gave them a monthly income of around USD 200 (ibid: 71). Syrian refugees in Lebanon are legally permitted to work in just three sectors: agriculture, construction, and environment (VASyR 2017: 65), all of which are low income sectors. Despite this restriction, a considerable percentage of Syrian men and women work in other sectors. For example, more than half of refugee households in Beirut work in the service sector (ibid: 73).

In Jordan, the government committed to issuing 200,000 work permits to Syrian refugees in the framework of the Jordan Compact.[11] This ambitious plan has fallen short of its goals, partly because not enough new jobs have been created, partly because the compact failed to integrate Syrian refugees' perspectives from the outset (ODI 2018). Furthermore, in Jordan, "restrictions in work sectors opened to foreigners exclude refugees from high-skilled and semi-skilled employment, leaving many to work in the informal market or remain unemployed" (JIF 2018: 9).

In Turkey, refugees tend to rely on informal, temporary employment as unskilled casual laborers, resulting in low, unstable income sources (FAO 2017: 4). The working conditions for Syrian refugees in Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey are poor and often hazardous (see Figures 2. and 3.). According to a 2014 ILO report, 92% of Syrian refugee laborers in Lebanon do not have a contract (ILO 2014: 29). Only 23% of them are paid a regular monthly salary; the rest are hired on an hourly, daily, weekly, or seasonal basis (ibid).

Figure 2. Percentage of Syrian workers in Lebanon who are exposed (either always or sometimes) to work-related hazards
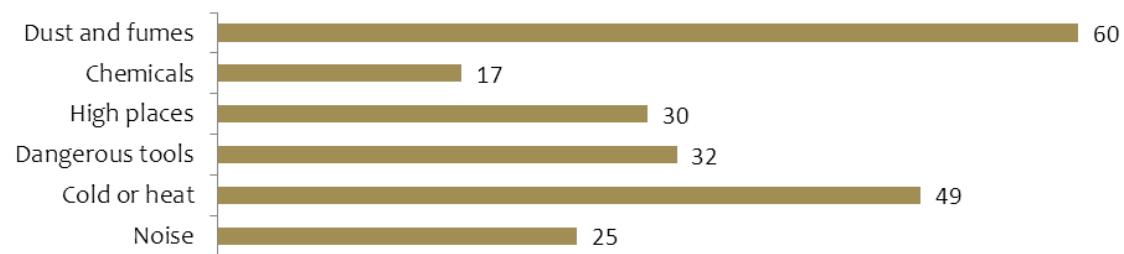
Source: ILO 2014: 32

---

[11] The Jordan Compact involved Jordan receiving preferential trade access to the EU, as well as financial support and investments. In return, the Government of Jordan committed to improving access to education and legal employment to Syrian refugees.

Figure 3. Percentage of Syrian workers in Lebanon who suffer from work-related issues

Work-related issue	Percentage
Verbal abuse	14
Late payment	24
Working without breaks or rest	34
Working for long hours	45
Nature of work is risky or hard	44
Low income	75
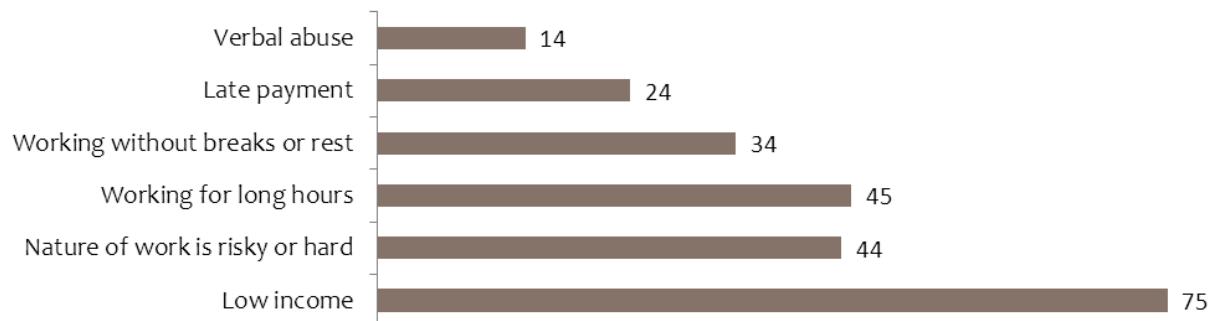
Source: ILO 2014: 32

Syrian refugee boys collecting scrap metal in Beirut

Considering that integration in the host community is one of the durable solutions that UNHCR envisions for refugees globally,[12] the unreliable and insecure integration of Syrian refugees in the labor market of Middle Eastern host societies presents a significant barrier. It is also a barrier to Syrian refugees achieving self-sufficiency. In addition, the fact that Syrian workers most often find employment in the informal sector is likely to have society-wide repercussions, for example with regard to wage dumping and worsening work conditions. In Turkey, the informal sector, in the period 1991-2015, accounted for 31.4% of GDP (IMF 2018: 54). The comparable figure for Lebanon is 31.6% and 17.4% for Jordan (ibid: 52). The actual size of Jordan's informal sector

---

[12] UNHCR refrains from promoting this as a durable solution in the Middle East.

might be larger, considering that, according to official statistics, only 38% of its population are economically active, which makes it the country with the lowest labor market participation rate in the world (JRP 2018: 28). Large-scale informal sectors limit the size and flow of public revenues, which, in turn, reduces the state's ability to provide basic public services. Common solutions include raising consumption taxes and governments and legislators facilitating the supply of privately available services. Both solutions widen existing economic inequalities, which, historically, has resulted in a decline of social cohesion (Larsen 2013 and Payne 2017). The deterioration of social cohesion, in turn, tends to affect immigrants and foreigners negatively (Pryor 2012).

4.2. RESIDENCE AND DOCUMENTATION

Syrian refugees in Lebanon live in small apartments, garages, unfinished concrete structures, informal tented settlements, refugee camps, etc. The situation in Jordan and Turkey is the same. In Jordan, the legal residence of Syrian refugees is in one of the country's refugee camps unless refugees are "bailed out" by a Jordanian sponsor (*kafil*, كفيل). Refugees living in camps with a valid work permit are permitted to leave the camp for up to one month and access available jobs throughout the country (JRP 2018: 28). Close to 80% of Syrian refugees in Jordan live outside the camps, many of them without valid permits and civil documentation. Since early 2015, all Syrian nationals, regardless of refugee status, need to register with the local police station to obtain biometric service cards from Jordan's Ministry of Interior (MOI cards).[13]

Informal tented settlement in the Bekaa Valley, Lebanon

Apartment building in Sultanbeyli, Istanbul, Turkey

---

[13] JIF 2018: 5.

Unofficial refugee camp in Rihaniyeh, northern Lebanon, 250 meters (850 feet) from the Al Kabir River that forms the border to Syria

To get an MOI card, refugees above the age of 12 must present a health certificate from the Ministry of Health, along with proof of residence (a lease agreement or residence document from UNHCR). A protection monitoring exercise in Mafraq showed that 50% of the surveyed Syrian refugees had no MOI cards (ICMC 2017: 10). But Syrian refugees lack not just MOI cards. 69% of surveyed Syrian refugees lacked marriage certificates, 17% did not have an Asylum Seeker Certificate (or UNHCR registration), 14% lacked birth certificates, and for 11%, death certificates had not been issued (ibid). The fact that there are so many missing marriage certificates appears to have two major causes: on the one hand, Syrian refugees often own a family book, which documents all marriages, births, and deaths and which in Syria could suffice as valid documentation; on the other hand, some refugees believe that there is no need to register their marriage with the court because it was performed by a sheikh (ibid: 12).

Of the Syrian refugees aged 15 and above who were surveyed for the 2017 Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon, 74% did not have legal residency (VASyR 2017: 13; the 2018 VASyR shows no significant change). A Lebanese residence permit costs USD 200 per year for each person aged 15 and older.[14] Most Syrian refugee households in Lebanon are unable to pay for the residence permits of its members. As a consequence, they have accumulated considerable debts for unpaid residence permits, which they are required to pay upon leaving Lebanon and which makes them "illegal aliens" in the eyes of the Lebanese law. Being "illegal" restricts the mobility of Syrian refugees because they are afraid of being detained at a checkpoint, roadblock, or during a raid. "Illegality" thus is another barrier to refugees escaping

---

[14] As of March 2017, Syrian refugees registered with UNHCR no longer have to pay for the permit. Since May 2015, however, the Government of Lebanon has prevented UNHCR from registering refugees, despite hundreds of thousands of refugees arriving after that date from Syria to Lebanon.

poverty and becoming self-sufficient. More precisely, poverty and "illegality" form a vicious circle as poverty prevents refugees from obtaining legal documents and the lack of legal documents sustains their poverty.

Although Syrian refugees have taken up residence in every part of Lebanon, certain settlement patterns can be distinguished.[15] Residential clusters, with larger groups of Syrian refugees living in close proximity to each other, are discouraged by the Lebanese government due to its experience with Palestinian refugee camps, which before long were controlled entirely and exclusively by armed Palestinian groups.[16] Nevertheless, such clusters can be observed in Sunni and Christian areas, whereas Hezbollah enforces the policy of preventing Syrian refugees from settling in clusters. In majority Christian areas, Syrian refugees are often confined to living outside or on the outskirts of the town or village. In Sunni-dominated areas, there seem to be fewer restrictions on where Syrian refugees can live.

poverty → "illegality" → poverty → "illegality" →
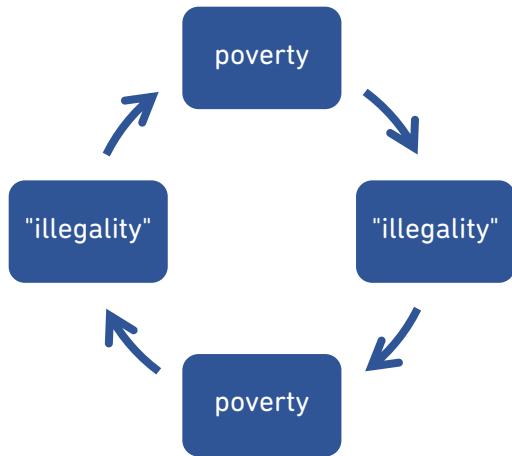
4.3. DOUBLE DISCRIMINATION

The designation "Syrian refugee," while practical as a shorthand, conceals some of the differences and inequalities both between individual Syrian refugees and between categories of refugees. Certain groups of Syrian refugees, for example, were already discriminated and marginalized before they were displaced. Some such groups are labelled "*Nawar*" (نور), an Arabic derogatory exonym for marginalized people. In the academic literature it is often claimed that the label "Nawar" designates actual ethnic groups:

> "In Syria the groups known as the Nawar include the Dom, mainly Sunni Turkmen, the Turkish-speaking and Sunni Abtal, the Quarnaqut-speaking Alban (kettle-cleaners), the Akrad and the Kaoliya." (Law 2014: 117)

This is misleading because, in Syria and neighboring countries, the epithet "Nawar" is used to stigmatize individuals and groups regardless of ethnic identification. An example of this is that both Lebanese and Syrian respondents we spoke to assumed that the women and children who are begging in the streets of Lebanese cities must be "Nawar" in the sense that they belong to Domari-speaking groups.[17] A 2015 report, however, shows that just 5% of surveyed children living and working on the streets in Lebanon were identified as Dom (ILO et al. 2015: 33).[18] Begging and other street work—like selling chewing gum, shining shoes, cleaning car windows,

---

[15] The source of these observations are key informant interviews.

[16] To this day, the Lebanese armed forces and police do not enter these camps.

[17] People usually don't differentiate between speakers of Domari and "Nawar," taking the former to be the "prototype" of the latter.

[18] In comparison, 10% were identified as Lebanese and 7% as Palestinian refugees from Lebanon.

etc.—are highly organized activities. "Organized criminal activity was observed to be a major facet of street child labour, both prior and subsequent to the Syrian refugee crisis" (ibid: 65). The organized criminal networks are often run by fathers (who might be Palestinian, Lebanese, Syrian, etc.) who send their children and wives to work in the streets (ibid). These men also decide to have more children in order to earn more money, which increases the risk of forced pregnancies. For Syrian refugees stigmatized as "Nawar" this means that they face double discrimination: They are frequently and mistakenly identified with activities like begging, street child labor, and crime, and they are scorned for this not just by fellow Syrians but also by the Lebanese.

4.4. EDUCATION

In Lebanon, 61% of children aged 6-11 years are enrolled in school (VASyR 2017: 32). This rate drops considerably for children aged 12-14 years: only 13% of them are enrolled in school (ibid). In particular, boys tend to drop out of school around the age of 14. The numbers for Syrian refugee children living in informal tented settlements are far worse: just 43% of them are enrolled in school (Malmö University and UNICEF 2017: 279). Several barriers to school enrolment could be extracted from the qualitative data of our 2017 KAP study (ibid):

- A lack of teaching space: Qualitative data indicate that when Syrian caregivers tried to enroll their children, they were not admitted because of overcrowding in Lebanese public schools
- Children not wanting to go to school: If collated with other quantitative and qualitative data from the KAP study, possible reasons for children not wanting to go to school include teachers using verbal and physical violence against children and occurrences of bullying in school
- Children dropping out of school to work: Levels of child labor varied across Lebanon's *muhafazat*. Most at risk are boys who are eager to assume adult responsibilities
- Preventive costs of education: For example, for transport, activities, stationary, etc.

Most Syrian refugee children in Lebanon are forced to attend the afternoon shift, which is usually taught by instructors who already have a regular teaching shift behind them and who therefore are known to be tired and lackadaisical. Not only is the poor quality of the "second shift" and of double-shift schools well known in Lebanon, but most Lebanese households that can afford it send their children to private schools because, more generally, public schools have a poor reputation in Lebanon.

The situation in Jordan is almost exactly the same as in Lebanon. 40% of school-age Syrian refugee children are not in school (JRP 2018: 18). The influx of Syrian refugee children nevertheless puts enormous pressure on Jordan's educational system, which is why 209 schools have adopted a double-shift system (ibid). This has not been enough to avert a decline in the overall quality of education in Jordan (ibid).[19] In Turkey, 40% of school-age Syrian refugee

---

[19] Just as in Lebanon, the double-shift system is likely to contribute to, rather than stave off, a decline in educational quality.

children remain out of school as well (Turkey 3RP 2018: 42). Just as in Lebanon and Jordan, the highest rates of school attendance are for Syrian refugee children in primary school and decrease dramatically for those in secondary school (ibid).

Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey:

40% of school-age

Syrian refugee children

do not attend school

4.5. GENDER

While boys usually drop out of school to work, girls might drop out of school to be married. 73% of Syrian respondents in our 2017 KAP study acknowledged that child marriage can have negative consequences (Malmö University and UNICEF 2017: 154). Nonetheless, in a recent study, 47% of surveyed married Syrian refugee women in Lebanon reported that they were married before the age of 18 (UNFPA 2017). The causes for the high frequency of child marriage among Syrian refugees can be analyzed at various levels:

Figure 4. Levels of analysis for causes of child marriage among Syrian refugees

Level I: Explanation given by Syrian respondents	Marriage provides *al sutra* (السترى; lit. "cover"), i.e. protection of the honor and integrity of the girl, which, in turn, protects the honor of the family. For poor families it also means one less mouth to feed.
Level II: Causes given in research reports*	Poverty and lack of education in combination with a perception of increased protection risks due to protracted conflict and displacement
Level III: Gender analysis	Prevailing gender norms routinize the sexual harassment of girls and women, who are thought to be helpless and therefore need to be protected by men

* See, e.g., Women's Refugee Commission 2016; UNFPA 2017; Mourtada, Schlecht, and DeJong 2017; Bartels et al. 2018.

Some Syrian respondents in the current study mentioned alternative reasons for girls getting married before adulthood. It was noted, for example, that because pre-marital sexual relationships, according to predominant norms, are not acceptable, teenagers sometimes rush into marriage to satisfy their desires. Another explanation was that, due to the war, there is a "shortage" of eligible men, which is why there is greater competition for suitable sons-in-law. One strategy to compete in this situation is to offer younger and younger girls in marriage.

Marriage prevents girls and women from attaining educational and professional goals. 93% of working-age Syrian refugee women in Lebanon do not work to generate income (VASyR 2017: 68). Under the Jordan Compact (see above), just 4% of all work permits have been issued to Syrian refugee women (JIF 2018: 9). In Turkey, only 14% Syrian refugee women are employed (Turkey 3RP 2018: 80). These figures are low even compared to the very low average female labor force participation in Arab countries, which is 27% (Tzannatos 2016: 6).

The underlying reason is widely shared gender norms about a separation of public and domestic spheres: Men are expected to leave the domestic sphere to earn money and provide for the household; women are expected to take care of the domestic sphere and perform all domestic chores. Society is thus separated into a largely male public sphere and a largely female domestic sphere, which results in a deeply gendered social order (Malmö University and UNICEF 2017: 274). The limited access to the public sphere afforded to women and girls produces the effect of rights of expression and self-determination being more limited for women and girls, which, in turn, limits their access to the public sphere.

5. SYRIAN REFUGEES IN THEIR OWN WORDS

When Syrian refugees talk about the future, they tend to include references to how things were before the war. The perspective is one of loss. "We wish we could go back to our houses and live like before," said a Syrian woman, who had already lived for six years in Lebanon. Another female Syrian participant in an FGD, gave a vivid illustration of the sense of loss: "I still have the key to my house in Syria, although I know that it has been razed to the ground." What has been lost in the war is not just buildings and other possessions, but social cohesion. Participants in all FGDs voiced their concern that nobody inside Syria could be trusted anymore, not even friends and relatives. The most frequently expressed wish by Syrian refugees of both genders and all ages was for things to go back to how they were before the war. Articulating this wish was usually followed by a sigh of resignation and the realization that this was hoping for the impossible.

5.1. VERNACULAR INDICATORS OF INSECURITY

Considering the often precarious and tense situations Syrian refugees find themselves in, they can be expected to recognize signs of insecurity. At the level of conceptual analysis, it is possible to differentiate between two types of indicators of insecurity (*khatar*, خطر): *proximate indicators* like physical abuse and verbal harassment; and *structural indicators* like poverty and "illegality." This differentiation is akin to that of the micro-macro distinction in that proximate indicators can be found in the microcosm of concrete situations and immediate experience, whereas structural indicators are the result of abstraction and aggregation. The two types of indicators are causally linked: it is the poverty and "illegality" of Syrian refugees that emboldens Lebanese to physically and verbally abuse and harass them.

In what follows, vernacular (or bottom-up) indicators of insecurity will be gleaned from the qualitative data that had been gathered for this study. They will be listed at the end of each section and summarized at the end of this report, in *7. Conclusions*. From the sections *Communication for safety* and *Qualitative intent data* emerge further vernacular indicators of insecurity. There exists a processual link between the sections on communication and intentions and that on the indicators:

INDICATORS

COMMUNICATION

INTENTIONS

5.1.1. Lack of legal protection

> Lebanese boys harass us and humiliate us in the street, and we can only ignore them. There is no law to turn to, because we entered Lebanon illegally and have no papers.
>
> *Older man, originally from Rif Homs*

> Here we fear the street boys (*az'ar*, أزعر). As a Syrian man I cannot protect my own sister from harassment by a Lebanese. You can even see the Lebanese ISF officer standing next to the street boys, talking with them. Even they [the police] cannot stop them.
>
> *Man, originally from Rif Aleppo*

> Every time something gets stolen, like a car or a TV, we don't go out, because everybody thinks that a Syrian must have done it.
>
> *A woman, originally from Homs*

> I got taken one night by armed men. They asked me what I was doing here in Lebanon and why I am not going back to Syria to fight. I was questioned and beaten. If you are educated, you are more of a target for humiliation.
>
> *Former university student in his twenties, originally from Idlib*

> Some men called up my brother-in-law and offered him some work. He went to the agreed-upon place and at the right time but instead the men tied him up and beat him for four hours. They broke his nose. They accused him of being with ISIS or Nusra.
>
> *Woman, originally from Daraa*

Random acts of harassment and abuse are proximate indicators of insecurity that point to structural causes, the most important of which is the lack of legal protection. Because many, if not most, Syrian refugees lack legal documents, they feel vulnerable and not entitled to receiving protection from the authorities of the host society or they have negative experiences from having had to do with the police and/or security forces of the host country. Not having access to legal protection from assault and battery (and other forms of violence) is also perceived as a vernacular indicator of insecurity.

> At eight at night, men, who probably belong to some Shi'a political movement, came into my home and demanded to check my phone, to see my papers and asked me questions about my family and myself. Even in my own home I don't feel safe.
>
> *Young man, originally from Hasakeh*

In areas and regions inside Lebanon that are controlled by Hezbollah, Syrian refugees have to fill in a detailed survey questionnaire once a year. Sometimes men, who say they belong to Hezbollah, raid workplaces and "confiscate" any cash Syrian refugees might have on them. The security forces of the Government of Lebanon also conduct raids.

> The soldiers come in the winter at five in the morning. They take the men out of the tents and make them stand in a row. They check the names of everyone in the camp. They want to scare us.
>
> *Older man, originally from Rif Homs*

> We came to Lebanon for safety, but instead we also face insecurity here. Soldiers also here break our doors open and come into our homes. But in Syria, the difference is that soldiers come in and rape girls, humiliate the men and often take or kill them.
>
> *Middle-age man, originally from Rif Homs*

5.1.2. Lack of freedom of movement

The greatest protection risk for Syrian refugees are permanent checkpoints and random roadblock.

Every day we are afraid that we will be taken to prison at the checkpoints.

Middle-age man, originally from Rif Homs

When the men's phones are switched off, we know that they have been detained at a checkpoint, and that they will not be home for at least three days.

Older woman, originally from Quseir

At a checkpoint in the southern Shia suburbs of Beirut, they confiscated my papers. I have been trying to get them back for three years! No one can help me when I call the UN hotline.

Older woman, originally from Ghouta

The soldiers tell me to renew my papers after they release me from detention. They provide me with a paper that allows me to move around freely for 15 days, so that I can go to General Security and renew my papers. But they know that I can't renew them. It's impossible.

Young man, originally from Rif Homs

Newly released Syrian refugees in possession of this document use it to cross checkpoints inside Lebanon. In Syria, the insecurity represented by checkpoints and roadblocks is far greater. Being checked by armed men in Syria can be a matter of life and death.

Every checkpoint is different inside Syria. There is a checkpoint every 20 meters and we do not know who is manning them.

Young woman, originally from Hasakeh

My brother still lives in Rif Homs. He has a farm outside of his village and took the mini bus to check on it. At a checkpoint of the Syrian regime, they checked all the IDs and arrested all the men in the bus. My brother is registered in village X (stated on his ID), but he lived all his life in village Y. All the men in the bus were from village X. The soldiers brought all the men into an abandoned storage room of a factory. My brother pleaded for several hours until they believed him and let him go. He does not know what happened to the other men.

A man in his 50s, originally from Rif Homs

My brother-in-law in Syria went to visit his relatives in another village. He passed the checkpoint in and he was assured that everything is fine for him. Two days later he passed through the same checkpoint and he was taken aside. He was forcibly conscripted and 28 days later he died in Deir ez-Zor.

Woman in her 30s, originally from Ghouta

Caucasian soldiers from Russia at Dar al-Kabirah checkpoint, northern Homs, Syria
(Photo credit: Liveuamap)

Several Syrian refugees told stories about successfully bribing Syrian troops manning checkpoints.

> I had to do surgery, which in Lebanon would cost USD 1,600. I went back to Aleppo and did it there for free. The travel cost me USD 200. I was able to go through because my registered birth year is four years before I was actually born, so on paper I am 17, not 21. I saw that things are sort of back to normal in Aleppo, but the marks of war are everywhere. What struck me was all the foreign soldiers, from Russia, Iran, and Hezbollah. Everywhere. I had a small piece of paper signed by the Syrian border guard [holds up a small handwritten piece of paper torn from a bigger sheet of paper], which said that I can pass through all checkpoints in Aleppo. I paid 5,000 Syrian lira [approximately USD 100] for it and it worked!
>
> *Young man, originally from Aleppo*

5.1.3. Lack of self-sufficiency

Not being able to move around freely must be considered an indicator of insecurity, both in the host societies and in Syria. Another indicator is the lack of self-sufficiency.

> Even if you were poor in Syria, you were never as poor as here in Lebanon.
>
> *Young woman, originally from Ghouta*

The Lebanese tell us that they are hosting us. But, in fact, we pay for all the services ourselves. We pay rent, we pay for medical treatment and get exploited working for them.

Young man, originally from Rif Hama

Lebanese collect our money by pretending to be "the relief" [*'iighatha*; إغاثة] and get all our personal information. We received a text message from an international organization that some people may come over and pretend that they are us. Be careful. UN also sends such texts: someone could pretend to be us.

Young man, originally from Rif Homs

Someone else was using my *taghzieh* card [تغزييه; card issued by the UN to buy essentials] for three years. I am a widow and have three small children to feed. I used to go to the UN to complain but they would always tell me, 'you are registered, your card is active'. But I did not have the card! A lawyer from an NGO heard my case in our camp and followed up for me. It turned out that a Lebanese man was using my card. The lawyer arranged a meeting with him and he apologized to me and explained how he was struggling to feed his family of five. I could not but forgive him. But it makes a huge difference now that I finally got hold of my card.

Middle-age woman, originally from Rif Aleppo

Taxi drivers can demand more money from Syrians in their car when they get to the checkpoint.

Older man, originally from Homs

The UN does not focus on the needs of refugees. I have seen how the UN pays USD 10,000 for a workshop while people are picking food out of the garbage.

Syrian volunteer in one of Lebanon's Palestinian refugee camps

Vernacular indicators of insecurity*

1. Lack of legal protection
2. Lack of freedom of movement
3. Lack of self-sufficiency

*The complete list of indicators can be found at the end of this report, in 7. Conclusions.

5.1.4. Gender

One aspect of insecurity, that is sometimes overlooked, concerns prevailing gender norms. Because male Syrian refugees are the primary targets of controls, women are often tasked with leaving the domestic sphere to run errands. In other words, the restrictions on Syrian men's movement have the unforeseen consequence of empowering women.

In Lebanon we have more freedom.

Woman in her 30s, originally from Homs

Women are the new men.

Middle-age woman, originally from Qamishli

When asked, however, female FGD respondents believed that, once they were back in Syria, the old gender order would be restored because of prevailing social norms.

5.2. COMMUNICATION FOR SAFETY

5.2.1. Lack of trust

Syrian refugees use all available media to collect information about what is going on inside Syria. They watch different television channels, surf the Internet, communicate through social media, etc. Because of a general sense of mistrust, they adopt a critical perspective toward the sources of information.

We know when the news is lying. There are no more secrets with social media. If we hear that the "terrorists" or "armed groups" attacked this area, we know it is a lie, because the opposition groups don't have the right weapons to reach these areas in the first place.

A man, originally from Homs

I watch [pro-Syrian government] Addounia TV and whatever they proclaim, I turn the information around. If they say that "terrorist groups" attacked this or that town, I know that most likely it was the Syrian army that did it.

A woman, originally from Damascus

The TV stations that Syrian respondents say they watch are Al Jadeed (Lebanese), Al Jazeera (Qatari), Al Arabiya (Emirati), and Al Hadath (Emirati). All respondents, however, also report that they watch Addounia TV, which sides with the Government of Syria and which none of the respondents trusts.

5.2.2. Lack of freedom of speech

Any electronic communication across the border occurs in the shadow of surveillance by the Syrian intelligence services. Some refugees hope to evade this surveillance by using a SIM-card from a Syrian mobile telecommunication provider.

> **Because we live close to the border, we have Syrian mobile phone numbers.**
>
> *Young woman, originally from Homs*

Not only the intelligence services in Syria present a danger. The intelligence services of the host countries might as well.

> **We are scared about what we say here in Lebanon. Sure, we are in another country. But it is a country that is friendly with the Syrian regime.**
>
> *Young woman, originally from Idlib*

> **In Lebanon, I received a phone call from a woman working with the intelligence branch of the army. She knew a lot of details about my family and me. After this phone call, I stopped talking in detail with my family over the phone.**
>
> *Widow in her 40s, originally from Homs*

> **My father accidentally clicked the like button on an ISIS video while he was on my Facebook. I received a phone call from the Lebanese *mukhabarat* [intelligence service] asking me to bring my phone and come to see them. I went and explained that it was a mistake. When they didn't believe me, I told them that my brother is in the Syrian army. It turned out that one of the intelligence officers knew my brother. He even showed me pictures of him. I hadn't seen my brother in years.**
>
> *Young man, originally from Rif Aleppo*

Communication with friends, relatives, and contacts inside Syria is considered perilous because it puts those living in Syria at risk. Asking people who are in Syria direct questions about the current situation and likely developments is dangerous for those who are supposed to give an answer. Whatever they say can be turned against them. People inside Syria therefore avoid answering such questions and either change the topic or hang up, or they invent codes:

> "It is raining" = There is shelling
> "There is a lot of dust" = From shelling and the debris
> "It's very hot" = There is heated fighting
> "There is a wedding next door" = There are clashes
> "He went to his aunt's house" = He was imprisoned by Syrian authorities
> "Everyone is getting ready" = We/they are getting ready to leave Syria

WhatsApp and Facebook are the most commonly used media by Syrians on both sides of the border. But there are also other means of communication. Cars and trucks cross the border between Syria and Lebanon and the drivers can be paid to bring messages and news. Syrian refugee women may be able to Syria and back. By doing so, they risk sexual harassment, not least from men in uniform. Women develop methods to be left alone:

> **Women who go back to Syria even put dirt on themselves and don't wash for several days to smell very bad, so that the soldiers will stay away from them.**
>
> *Older man, originally from Homs*

<div style="border:1px solid #000; background:#cef2f2; padding:1em;">

Vernacular indicators of insecurity*

4. Lack of trust
5. Lack of freedom of speech

</div>

*The complete list of indicators can be found at the end of this report, in 7. Conclusions.

5.3. QUALITATIVE INTENT DATA

For Syrian refugees, the question of whether or not to return to Syria is complex. It is informed by experiences of leaving Syria, knowledge gathered about the current situation in Syria, the protection risks in their host community, assessments of future risks, and, in some cases, firmly held political beliefs.

5.3.1. Lack of safety and security in Syria

> **Leaving Syria was traumatic. We walked from six in the evening to six in the morning. The men walked ahead, in case there would be shooting. They were armed to defend us. Women and children walked in the back. We had to force our way out of Syria, because we were attacked by regime forces and Alawite villages told on us. There was some shooting.**
>
> *Young man, originally from a mountainous area in Rif Homs*

> **I received news that my husband died. I didn't even wait to see him or bury him. I grabbed my children, got into a cab and came to Lebanon.**
>
> *Middle-age woman, originally from Homs*

> **My brother told me to hand a man, whom I did not know, some money. I would meet him at an agreed point and time in the street. It was safer for me to go out than for my brother, because I am a woman and I seem less suspicious. A regime soldier spotted me and took me to the station. They interrogated me and asked me to confirm stories of what Salafis do to**

women and children. They were horrific stories and I said that this was not the case, as far as I knew. They treated me badly and beat me. Then they received notice that they had been bribed (by my brother). Suddenly their attitude shifted 180 degrees and they apologized to me. One soldier gave me his number, in case I need any help later on.

Older woman, originally from Quseir

My brother-in-law disappeared for seven months. His relatives were called to pick up his ID at the security branch. Then they disappeared themselves.

Woman in her 30s, originally from Rif Hama

My sister and I sat in a taxi next to each other when they stopped us and arrested her. I didn't dare to say that she is my sister, or they would have arrested me too.

Young woman, originally from Homs

The threat of violence is an obvious indicator of insecurity and of the need for protection.

My son was five years old when the war started, and he would wet himself every time a rocket hit a building. One day, our balcony was hit. This was the tipping point for me. I was too afraid to lose my children. We came to Lebanon. Now, we cannot return to Syria because two of my sons are now old enough to be conscripted.

Woman in her 30s, originally from Quneitra

The UN works with the General Security in Lebanon and the General Security works with the Syrian regime.

Man in his 40s, originally from Damascus

5.3.2. Lack of social cohesion in Syria

The very person who used to provide us with patrol and food when we were under siege in Baba Amr was a secret spy for the regime. Who can we trust anymore?

A woman, originally from Baba Amr

The question, "Who can we trust anymore?", has profound consequences for the intentions of Syrian refugees. The universally shared and deep mistrust means that any official guarantee given—*even if it is given or underwritten by international organizations*—will be met with profound skepticism. Moreover, Syrian refugees know all too well that the war has dissolved the social cohesion in their home community.

How can we live next to those who betrayed us and killed us? There will not be social life like before.

Older man, originally from Homs

Nothing is like it was before. People have changed, cities have changed, everything has changed. You cannot recognize any of the people.

Woman in her late 20s, originally from Aleppo

Syria is turning into Lebanon [that is, it is becoming just as sectarian].

Young woman, originally from Damascus

Families that stayed in the village are taking the homes of those who left and sell them and make money. Soldiers and fighters bring their families and sit in abandoned homes and use the land. Don't even think that there is a way to get these people out.

Woman, originally from Rif Qusair

If my family tells me it is now safe to return to Syria I would not believe them. They might be forced to say this because of the regime.

Man in his 40s, originally from Homs

The pervasive mistrust among Syrian refugees provides fertile ground for conspiracy theories of all sorts:

There was a video on YouTube of Assad going into Ghouta in a simple Mazda car, right behind three Red Cross cars. Why did Assad do that? To show everyone that he is in control of the aid organizations.

Older man, originally from Homs

Doctors give men vaccines before they leave prison and then they die shortly after.

Young woman, originally from Homs

5.3.3. Institutional barriers

The generalized lack of trust and dissolution of social cohesion inside Syria are major barriers to return as a durable solution. There are also institutional barriers to return:

I got married in Lebanon and my children were born here. If I go to Syria with them, I have nothing to prove that they are my children and I cannot go to the Syrian embassy to register them.

Man in his 20s, originally from Rif Hama

Even if one would want to leave Lebanon, to do so legally means paying a lot of money for past years' residency. Once in Syria, one would need to sign a declaration that one won't leave in the next 5 years.

Woman in her 30s, originally from Idlib

5.3.4. Lack of accurate information about destinations for resettlement

Some FGD respondents had been offered resettlement in Europe and North America. While a few were in the process of being resettled, others refused to be resettled because they were worried that they would "lose" their children.

> **The UN told us that our daughters will have to take off their hijab. They will go to mixed schools. And they will have to participate in mixed swimming lessons.**
>> *Two middle-age women, originally from Homs, one of whom was offered resettlement in Germany and the other in Canada. Both refused to go.*

> **Syrians are losing their children. Syria is losing its children. Our traditions, culture and religion are at risk of being lost.**
>> *Older woman, originally from Qusair*

> **In Europe, they take away your children if you discipline them. They also accept sex before marriage.**
>> *Woman in her 30s, originally from Homs*

It must be pointed out that these comments and reactions are not typical of Syrian refugees, most of whom are likely to accept resettlement as a durable solution. The above quotes serve to highlight the importance of providing accurate and unambiguous information about the new host country to which refugees have the opportunity to be resettled.

<div style="border:1px solid #000;background:#cff;">

Vernacular indicators of insecurity*

6. Lack of safety and security in Syria
7. Lack of social cohesion in Syria
8. Institutional barriers
9. Lack of accurate information about destinations for resettlement

</div>

* The complete list of indicators can be found at the end of this report, in 7. Conclusions.

6. CONCLUSIONS

From the situation analysis and the comments by Syrian respondents it is possible to extract a list of vernacular indicators. These indicators are both proximate and structural, that is, they are both (a) immediate and experience-near at the micro-level and (b) informed by communicative concepts and knowledge at the macro-level.

<div style="border: 1px solid; background: #d0f5f5; padding: 1em;">

<u>Vernacular indicators of insecurity (compl list)</u>:

1. Lack of legal protection
2. Lack of freedom of movement
3. Lack of self-sufficiency
4. Lack of trust
5. Lack of freedom of speech
6. Lack of safety and security in Syria
7. Lack of social cohesion in Syria
8. Institutional barriers
9. Lack of accurate information about destinations for resettlement

</div>

The next step is to collate this list of vernacular indicators of insecurity with the three durable solutions for refugees as defined by UNHCR:

<div style="border: 1px solid; background: #d0f5f5; padding: 1em;">

<u>Durable solutions</u>

- **Voluntary repatriation** in safety and dignity
- **Resettlement** to another country
- **Integration** in the host community

</div>

For programmatic purposes and from the point of view of Syrian refugees, vernacular indicators of insecurity represent barriers to durable solutions. To illustrate, it is possible to draw up the following matrix:

Figure 5. Collation of vernacular indicators of insecurity and durable solutions

TYPE OF DURABLE SOLUTION	BARRIERS TO DURABLE SOLUTIONS
Repatriation	- Lack of trust - Lack of freedom of speech - Lack of safety and security in Syria

	• Lack of social cohesion in Syria
Resettlement	• Lack of trust • Lack of accurate information about destinations for resettlement
Integration	• Lack of legal protection • Lack of freedom of movement • Lack of self-sufficiency • Lack of trust

In previous studies,[20] Syrian respondents overwhelmingly declared that they do not intend to return to Syria in the next 12 months. According to these studies, the major concerns for Syrian refugees when deciding on return include safety and security in Syria, livelihood opportunities, and adequate housing (UNHCR 2018b: 10). Reasons to return to Syria include the improvement in the security situation, family reunification, and having livelihood opportunities in Syria (ibid: 9).

Among the minority of Syrian respondents who express a wish to return to Syria within 12 months, the lack of information on the security situation in the intended area of return is a primary concern (ibid: 12). The lack of freedom of speech obstructs accurate information to be exchanged. As could be seen in many quotes in this report, Syrian refugees rely largely on macro-concepts and second-hand information to make sense of the security situation in Syria. At the same time, they know very well that any decision they make on the basis of the information that is available to them could be a matter of life and death.

A solution to the information needs of refugees could be "go-and-see" visits in Syria under the supervision of, and organized by, UNHCR. The improvement of the safety and security situation in all parts of Syria is another desideratum. Finally, the building of trust and restoration of social cohesion may be the most fundamental of all issues in finding durable solutions for Syrian refugees. An open question is whether the current governments in Syria, and in the countries bordering Syria, are able to instill trust and build social cohesion among Syrian refugees and among Syrian people more generally.

---

[20] See, in particular, UNHCR 2018a and 2018b and Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 2018. Most recently, 24% of Syrian respondents in a survey conducted in Jordan said that they would never be able to return to Syria.

REFERENCES

Bartels, Susan Andrea, et al. 2018. Making sense of child, early and forced marriage among Syrian refugee girls: a mixed methods study in Lebanon. *British Medical Journal Global Health* 3(1): e000509.

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. 2018. *Unheard voices: What Syrian refugees need to return home*, Maha Yahya, with Jean Kassir and Khalil el-Hariri. Beirut. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

FAO. 2017. *Turkey: Syrian refugee resilience plan, 2017-2018*. Ankara: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

ICMC. 2017. *Undocumented, unseen, and at risk: The situation of Syrian refugees lacking civil and legal documentation in Jordan*. Geneva: International Catholic Migration Committee.

ILO. 2014. *Assessment of the impact of Syrian refugees in Lebanon and their employment profile, 2013*. Beirut: ILO Regional Office for Arab States.

ILO et al. 2015. *Children living and working on the streets in Lebanon: Profile and magnitude*. Beirut: ILO, UNICEF, Save the Children and Republic of Lebanon Ministry of Labour.

IMF. 2018. Shadow economies around the world: What did we learn over the last 20 years? IMF Working Paper /18/17. Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund.

Larsen, Christian Albrekt. 2013. *The rise and fall of social cohesion: The construction and de-construction of social trust in the US, UK, Sweden and Denmark*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Law, Ian. 2014. *Mediterranean racisms: Connections and complexities in the racialization of the Mediterranean region*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Malmö University and UNICEF. 2017. *Cross-sectoral formative research: Knowledge, attitude and practice study*. Beirut: UNICEF Lebanon. Available at https://www.unicef.org/lebanon/KAP_Study_12-01-2018_FINAL.pdf

Mourtada, Rima, Jennifer Schlecht, and Jocelyn DeJong. 2017. A qualitative study exploring child marriage practices among Syrian conflict-affected populations in Lebanon. *Conflict and Health* 11(1 Supplement): 53-65.

ODI. 2018. *The Jordan Compact: Lessons learnt and implications for future refugee compacts*. London: Overseas Development Institute.

Payne, Keith. 2017. *The broken ladder: How inequality affects the way we think, live, and die*. New York: Viking Press.

Pryor, Frederic. 2012. The impact of income inequality on values and attitudes. *Journal of Socio-Economics* 41(5): 615–22.

Turkey 3RP. 2018. *Regional refugee and resilience plan: Turkey 2018-2019*. Ankara: UNHCR.

Tzannatos, Zafiris. 2016. *Effects of gender inequality in employment and pay in Jordan, Lebanon and the Occupied Palestinian Territory: Three questions answered*. Geneva: ILO.

UNFPA. 2017. New study finds child marriage rising among most vulnerable Syrian refugees. Available at https://www.unfpa.org/news/new-study-finds-child-marriage-rising-among-most-vulnerable-syrian-refugees

UNHCR. 2017. Jordan: Operational update, January 2017. Available at https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/UNHCR%20Jordan%20Operational%20Update%20January%202017%20FINAL.pdf

UNHCR. 2018a. *A longing to go home, in safety and dignity: Intentions and perceptions of Syrian refugees in Lebanon about their future*. Beirut: UNHCR Lebanon.

UNHCR. 2018b. *Fourth regional survey on Syrian refugees' perceptions and intentions on return to Syria (RPIS)*. Amman: UNHCR MENA Bureau.

VASyR. 2017. *Vulnerabity Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon*. Beirut: UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP.

WFP. 2018. *Refugees in Turkey: Comprehensive Vulnerability Monitoring Exercise (Round 2)*. Ankara: World Food Program.

Women's Refugee Commission. 2016. *A girl no more: The changing norms of child marriage in conflict*. New York: Women's Refugee Commission.

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

APPENDIX 1. FGD TEMPLATE

Semi-structured question template for the FGDs of the current study:

1. **Welcome**
   a. Presentation of the researchers and moderators
   b. Information about the project and that participants can stop participating at any point without having to give a reason
   c. Invitation to ask questions about the project
   d. Obtaining verbal informed consent from the participants

2. **Background data**
   a. Have you been in Lebanon a long time? [Length of stay in Lebanon]
   b. Do you live with your family or other relatives? [Household composition]
   c. How do you live here in Lebanon? [Living arrangement; e.g. tent, garage, apartment, unfinished building, etc.]

3. **Indicators of security in host community**
   a. Do you feel safe where you live? [What makes you feel safe or not safe?] Do you feel safe outside your home? [E.g. on the road, in other areas than the one you live in, etc.] [What makes you feel safe or not safe?]
   b. Do you know what is going on in your area? [How do you hear about things?]
   c. Is there anyone you trust because he or she knows what is going on? [Could include sources of information like media outlets, websites, *shaweesh*, community/religious leader, etc.]

4. **Indicators of security inside Syria**
   a. What about Syria? Do you know what is going on in the part of Syria where you come from?
   b. Is it safe in the area of Syria that you come from? What is it that makes it safe or unsafe?
   c. How do you analyze (*tahlil*; تحليل) all the information that comes out of Syria?
   d. Do you know people who moved back to Syria? How did it work out for them?
   e. Will it be safe for Syrians to go back in the future? Under what circumstances would it be safe for Syrians to go back?

5. **Intentions**
   a. Is there anything that has changed for the better since you came to Lebanon?
   b. What do you hope for in your own life and in the life of your children?

APPENDIX 2. FGD MATRIX

FGD	DATE	TARGET GROUP	LOCATION	*
1	26 March 2018	Young women	Akkar (concrete shell)	6
2	26 March 2018	Older women	Akkar (concrete shell)	7
3	29 March 2018	Young men	Bekaa (NGO center)	4
4	29 March 2018	Young women	Bekaa (collective shelter)	6
5	30 March 2018	Older men	Akkar (garage)	7
6	8 April 2018	Younger men	Akkar (apartment)	6
7	8 April 2018	Older women	Akkar (garage)	7
8	12 April 2018	Older men	Bekaa (tent)	6
9	12 April 2018	Younger women	Bekaa (tent)	8
10	13 April 2018	Widows	Akkar (tent)	4
11	13 April 2018	Older men	Akkar (tent)	4
12	19 April 2018	Older women	Baalbek (NGO center)	7
13	19 April 2018	Younger men	Baalbek (NGO center)	6
14	20 April 2018	Younger men (educated)	Mount Lebanon (tent)	4
15	22 April 2018	Younger women	Akkar (concrete shell)	6
16	22 April 2018	Younger men	Akkar (concrete shell)	9
17	24 April 2018	Older women	Mount Lebanon (NGO center)	8
18	24 April 2018	Younger women (coaches)	Mount Lebanon (NGO center)	4
19	30 April 2018	Younger men	Bekaa (NGO center)	5
20	30 April 2018	Younger women	Bekaa (NGO center)	6
21	3 May 2018	Younger women	Bekaa (NGO center)	7
22	3 May 2018	Older men	Bekaa (NGO center)	4
23	8 May 2018	Older women	Mount Lebanon (NGO center)	7
24	8 May 2018	Older men	Mount Lebanon (NGO center)	4
25	9 May 2018	Older/younger women	Beirut (NGO center)	9
26	9 May 2018	Older men	Beirut (NGO center)	6
			TOTAL	157

* Number of participants

APPENDIX 3. MACRO-CONCEPTS

List of the most frequently used macro-concepts by FGD respondents:

'Amaan (أمان)	Safety; security
Bitaqat al-huia (بطاقة الهوية)	National ID card
Harb (حرب)	War
'Ighatha (إغاثة)	'The relief', shorthand for the entire sector of aid organisation
Mukhabarat (مخابرات)	Intelligence service, secret police
Nisa' (نساء)	Women
Nizam (نظام)	'System', state, regime
Rijal (رجال)	Men
Wasta (وَاسِطَة)	Connections, favoritism, cronyism, pulling strings