



Search for Common Ground’s “Conflict Analysis and Power Dynamics – Lebanon” Study

Implemented in Akkar, the North, Mount Lebanon, Central and West Bekaa, Baalbeck-Hermel and Beirut

RESEARCH REPORT JULY 2020

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Abbreviations

CSO	Civil Society Organization
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
INGO	International Non-governmental Organization
IS	Informal Settlement
ITS	Informal Tented Settlement
KII	Key Informant Interview
LAF	Lebanese Armed Forces
LCRP	Lebanon Crisis Response Plan
LFHLCs	Labour Force and Household Living Conditions Survey
LBP	Lebanese Pound
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
Search	Search for Common Ground
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees
VASyR	Vulnerability Assessment for Syrian Refugees

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Executive Summary

This report draws together a nationwide analysis of conflict and power dynamics in Lebanon. It aims at facilitating a better understanding of the triggers that cause tensions both within host communities and between host communities and refugees, as well as identifying key connectors and sources of resilience at the community-based level. The findings and recommendations will inform a project implemented by Search for Common Ground, “Fostering Social Stability Through Strategic Communications,” which aims at the cultivation of positive dialogues and narratives between and across communities, and the shifting of perceptions towards greater trust and respect.

The geographical spectrum of the analysis focuses on key hotspot communities in the governorates of Akkar, North, Mount Lebanon, Central and West Bekaa, and Baalbek-Hermel. These key communities that have been selected for the purpose of this research are: Halba, Tripoli, Beddaoui, Aley, Aramoun, Deir al Amar, Beit Chabeb, Jounieh, Zahle, Majdal Anjar, Baalbeck, Fakiha and Beirut City. The choice of these locations was driven by the objective to maintain a balance between urban and rural communities, high refugee populations, high socio-economic vulnerability, participation of the population in nationwide protests (largely in the months following October 2019), and levels of tensions and opportunities for resilience and peace.

The study is based upon an inclusive (sex/age) and mixed methods research approach that has been applied through the use of both quantitative (surveys) and qualitative (semi-structured key informant/individual interviews and focus group discussions) data collection methodologies, as well as a desk review of existing literature and documentation on conflict dynamics in Lebanon. The study is informed by the opinions and reflections of multiple stakeholders, including refugee and host communities, civil society actors, youth committee members, municipality representatives, local activists/media influencers, and refugee representatives/*shawishes*.

The study finds that the economic dimensions of and in conflict are increasingly relevant, if not paramount, to any peacebuilding programming within the country. High rates of unemployment and perceived competition over this, as well as education, healthcare, and service provision, are common to each of the areas targeted and are seen to be significantly fuelling tensions both within and across communities, particularly host-refugee relations. That said, context-driven dividing lines and tensions can be found within different areas, which interplay with economic tensions but also bring in specific triggers of tension linked to the realities of each community – including components such as religion/sectarianism, history and political affiliations.

Within this context of developing tension, the majority of all participants involved in the study were unable to identify local peacebuilders and conflict resolution mechanisms. Those that can be identified were often perceived as partisan, politicised and/or inaccessible to all groups, particularly non-Lebanese and those without strong socio-economic standing in their communities. Please note that data collection and analysis for this study took place before the outbreak of Covid-19 in Lebanon. The following findings and linked recommendations are listed below.

Key Findings and Recommendations:

1. The **economic dimensions of and in conflict** were cited by all of participants in the qualitative findings but were especially highlighted in Halba and Tripoli.

Participants suggested that the economic crisis in Lebanon is affecting inter- and intra-communal relations including between: refugees and host communities; the government and citizens; political parties and opponents / previous supporters; local authorities and inhabitants; and men and women (particularly within the home).

Recommendations: Factor misinformation about the economy (and its causes) into trainings on communication. Wherever possible, community-based projects should be linked to collaborative skill-building activities, relevant to the market or local developmental/infrastructural needs, in order to address and show understanding of the priorities of beneficiaries and incentivise participation. Where appropriate and conflict sensitive, programming should work alongside municipalities and local authorities in order to utilise existing networks of trust or to build trust.

2. Different areas cited very **different triggers of tensions** within the community.

This includes economic tensions, host/refugee tensions, political tensions, and religious/sectarian tensions. Violence is seen as a solution by a substantial number of the population, particularly in Baalbeck-Hermel and Mount Lebanon.

Most common types of conflict and /or tensions per area:

Baalbeck-Hermel: High levels of political/clan-based divisions with propensity for violence and nepotism.

Central and West Bekaa: Substantial divisions but lower levels of inter-/intra- communal tensions; increasing political/economic tensions.

Akkar: Few divisions but high sense of conflict & host/refugee tensions caused by economic struggles.

The North: Political divisions and fights over power; host/refugee tensions escalated by economic hardship.

Mount Lebanon: Religious/political divisions and fights over power; connected to historical factors.

Beirut: Religious/political divisions and fights over power; connected to economic tensions and historical factors.

Recommendations: Programmes should be tailored to the locations where peacebuilding is most needed. The findings suggest these locations to be: Tripoli, Halba, Baalbeck, Fakiha, Beirut, Jounieh and Aley/Aramoun. Host and refugee tensions should be addressed through interactive projects based on the needs of local communities – e.g. low-cost, quick infrastructural developments. These projects could be conducted alongside municipalities, and include initiatives such as the creation of security mechanisms/councils that are inclusive of the community's demographics - different groups and persons, but especially the most vulnerable (women, refugees, persons with specific needs, among others). Religious/sectarian tensions could be addressed through the building of spaces for dialogue and reconciliation work about the past and present, as well as creative or artistic displays of memory and advocacy initiatives to tackle divides and allow competing narratives of conflict to sit more easily alongside each other. Issues of violence and nepotism could be addressed through non-violent education training as well as de-weaponisation campaigns alongside local communities.

All projects, where possible, should be linked or designed in consideration of economic issues. They should build upon area-specific connectors – for example, mediation mechanisms already in place, existing councils/committees, and relationships with authorities and local CSOs. These activities should utilise lessons learnt and successes from different areas, such as indicators of more positive host/refugee relations in Majdal Anjar and Zahle due to greater interaction and the existence of peacebuilding mechanisms. This would benefit from further research, stakeholder/peacebuilding mapping, and making contact with identified peacebuilding figures and experts in this area.

3. The majority of all participants are unable to identify local peacebuilders or conflict resolution mechanisms.

This is particularly the case in Mount Lebanon and Beirut. Many of those who could identify local peacebuilders cited issues of untrustworthiness, particularly regarding access, *wasta*, and impartiality. Also identified is a dynamic of exclusion, whereby Syrian participants (especially women) have limited access to peacebuilding figures. Some key figures do exist, such as religious leaders, local authorities (including the mayor), civil society actors, women, and youth.

Recommendations: Collaborate with existing respected and neutral peacebuilders and peacebuilding structures to the extent possible, with the aim of making them more inclusive and accessible. Trusted figures vary by area, but include religious leaders and municipal staff as well as those not usually associated with peacebuilding, such as respected business owners. In the case of the latter, case-by-case assessment could be conducted as to the suitability and neutrality of such individuals, but where appropriate these figures could be trained by Search (champions) in project activities and mediatory roles in their local communities. These roles could be dual in terms of the individual's expertise; for example, in the case of business owners, peacebuilding projects could be aligned with local infrastructural or livelihoods training to also tackle the economic grievances of individuals.

Where inexistent or not neutral, new conflict resolution mechanisms should be created with the help of local champions, such as complaint systems, communication channels and local meetings in needed areas. These mechanisms should ensure accessibility (to all social groups and in particular vulnerable persons as mentioned above) and inclusivity (for example, sex-segregated meetings, conflict sensitivity in political discussions, neutral meeting places). They should also prioritise the inclusion of neglected conflict resolution actors, for example with youth-led and women-led mediation committees and projects.

4. Potential connectors include institutions and mechanisms at the local level.

There is an increasing tension between the state and its citizens, and perceptions of exclusion in decision-making is reducing this trust in the system and government further. However, there is greater **trust in local authorities**, which although limited in some areas and in fact decreasing (as shown by the UNDP perception surveys¹), is nonetheless visible and could be developed for more durable solutions and sustainability, as well as for addressing the issue of perceived weakness and neglect from certain municipal bodies. The ability to identify such connectors is more prominent in Central and West Bekaa and Baalbeck-Hermel than in Mount Lebanon and Beirut.

Recommendations: Given that correlation between areas with dissatisfaction with public services and prejudice against refugees can be seen throughout the findings, and that this prejudice often reflects itself through economic tensions, it is advised that project activities to ease these two issues are conjoined. For example, peacebuilders should work at alleviating the issues that lead to tensions, including trust in authorities and the provision of services. It is thus recommended that peacebuilders work with local authorities to the extent possible in all peacebuilding initiatives, to build trust in a range of services and the municipality's ability and inclination to do so. Those communities already with high trust in municipalities (for example, Tripoli) are more likely to respond to peacebuilding initiatives when they are institutionalised in trusted and strong local structures.

Activities here could include training municipal actors in communications, rumour, and information management, particularly on social media and around local news updates, as part of Search's rapid response component. Additional projects could include involving local authorities, as well as the space of the municipality, in dialogue and awareness workshops (for example, around gender roles), community-based infrastructural improvements, and in facilitating local meetings or security councils. These projects should be implemented in conjunction, however, with

¹ UNDP & ARK, Regular Perceptions Survey of Social Tensions Throughout Lebanon, Wave VI, August 2019

a variety of peacebuilders to avoid alienating certain groups and so as to be as inclusive as possible - for example, collaborating with municipalities, religious leaders, and CSOs who are already working closely with Syrian refugees. Where peacebuilders are unavailable, local champions should help to identify and train interested, connected, and motivated individuals within these societies to take on roles of local conflict mediation.

5. There is a **diversity of communication methods** already in use, which vary in their purpose and between groups. **Disinformation and discriminatory rhetoric** broadcasted across social media applications and news channels are seen as fuelling prejudice.

WhatsApp, Facebook, and Television are the most popular forms of communication. There are a variety of uses for different mechanisms: news about local conflicts, protests, and security matters; community information including religious, school, and healthcare updates; and logistical information about topics ranging from roadblocks to weather. WhatsApp is used considerably less by Syrian refugees. The majority of participants believe news (especially television) is not accurate and that it has been escalating tension, especially in relation to economic tensions, protest clashes, and hostility between refugees and host communities.

Recommendations: It is recommended to target misinformation and fake news within these structures. This could be achieved through training municipality members and local actors to lead awareness-raising sessions and seminars. Another suggestion is to build local-to-regional networks with key trusted administrators in order to spread accurate and useful community-based information (e.g. roadblocks, organisation of events, updates on security incidents). The mandate of the channel or messaging component should be clear and transparent, and updates disseminated should be quick, factual, practical, and neutral in order to keep a distance from news channels perceived by community members as politically influenced and opinionated and thus avoid contributing to further conflict around communication tools and content. A variety of communication tools should be used to avoid exclusion and reach all age groups, nationalities, genders, and religions. For example, social media channels and SMS messaging by local authorities to inform the public, but also traditional means of communication that involve physical integration, such as town meetings, should be facilitated.

6. Gender roles are changing, but unevenly and out of step with **changing gender norms**.

Respondents report perceptions of change in the roles of men and women in the late three to five years, with the most change in women's roles noted in the North (particularly Beddaoui) and Mount Lebanon and the least change in Akkar and Baalbeck. Lebanese women note far greater change than non-Lebanese. Respondents point towards female positions within the recent protests as well as their sometimes de-escalatory attitudes in conflict. However, women suggest that where change is occurring in terms of entrance into public and working life, this is often borne out of economic necessity rather than changing or progressive understandings of gender. Respondents also refer to growing marital disputes and confusion or feelings of shame and demasculinisation around changing roles.

Recommendations: Peacebuilding initiatives should focus on education and awareness around women's political, legal, economic, and cultural rights in order to facilitate what is appearing to be an unsteady transition to greater forms of gender equality. Particular efforts should focus on Akkar and Baalbeck-Hermel (especially Baalbeck). Components in these areas could focus on involving women as key leaders in peacebuilding programming in order to contribute to their empowerment in decision-making mechanisms as well as to utilise widespread perceptions of female mediatory skills.

1. Background Information

Introduction

Lebanon and Syria share intricate and complex historical ties that span the social, economic, and political spheres. Though there is a long history of Syrian presence and migration in Lebanon, Syrian refugees started arriving in large numbers at the outbreak of the Syrian War in 2011. Lebanon hosts the largest number of Syrian refugees per capita in the world. By 2013, the number of Syrian refugees living in Lebanon had begun to mount, reaching over one million Syrian men, women, and children by current estimates. These influxes exacerbate pre-existing tensions in a country which is also hosting up to 475,075 Palestinian refugees, many of which since 1948.²

High levels of inward migration are added to a country already struggling with a weak economy, a complex socio-political system, and a fragile internal history with divides visible across sectarian and religious lines. Lebanon is home to eighteen sects, including but not limited to Maronite, Shia, Sunni, and Druze, discord between which resulted in fifteen years of civil war between 1975 and 1990. An attempt to re-stabilise society in 1989, the Taif Accord enshrined in the Constitution this confessional basis of power sharing; fears over sectarian imbalances and cross-sectarian hostilities continue to this day.

On October 17, 2019, as a reaction to the Lebanese government announcing new tax measures, protesters from different religious and socioeconomic backgrounds went to the streets across the country accusing the political leadership of corruption and calling for reforms. The slogan of the movement, “all of them means all of them,” is a reference to key ruling figures who have dominated the Lebanese political scene for decades. The frustration of Lebanese citizens with the political elite has been accumulating for decades, escalating more recently over electricity and water shortages, as well as the failure to manage the country's waste and economic crises. On October 29, 2019, Prime Minister Saad Hariri announced his resignation.

Support for the protests is seen by many as unprecedented in Lebanon given its cross-sectarian nature and wide geographical, decentralised scope, with key protests taking place not only in the capital but also in locations as diverse as Tripoli, Zahle, Nabatieh, and Saida.³ Those involved span different age groups, genders, religions, and political affiliations. Nonetheless, following several weeks of peaceful protests, some clashes erupted, raising fears that some groups may turn to violence in an attempt to break up the protest movement in mid-November, displaying the political and sectarian divisions that protesters say they want to put an end to.

As of mid-February 2020, a new government has been formed, headed by former professor Hassan Diab and consisting of twenty new ministers (including six women). The decision is unsatisfactory for many protesting, who view the new faces as a smokescreen to hide continuity with the old political elite, instead of the technocratic cabinet of impartial experts that was demanded. Sporadic protests and roadblocks were still taking place as of March 2020 throughout the country, as its citizens and inhabitants continue to struggle with a deepening financial crisis.

Within this context, Search for Common Ground in Lebanon (Search) is currently implementing a project with an aim to promote social stability amongst and between host communities and refugees, as well as intra-community dynamics, in areas such as Akkar, North, Mount Lebanon, Central and West Bekaa, Baalbek-Hermel, and Beirut. Specifically, the 21-month project has the following strategic objectives:

- To cultivate collaborative and positive dialogues and narratives amongst and between host communities and refugees in target communities across Lebanon

² UNRWA, [Lebanon: Where We Work](#), 1 January 2019

³ Beirut Today, [Reclaiming Public Space During the Revolution: How We Are Reconnecting With Lebanese Cities](#), 20 November 2019

- To shift public perceptions towards greater trust and respect amongst and between host communities and refugees in target communities across Lebanon.

Upon its completion, the project is expected to have achieved that women, girls, men and boys, elderlies, and people with special needs from refugee and host communities have increased opportunities for and awareness of collaboration and positive interaction through dialogue and joint activities. Moreover, the target communities will have increased positive perceptions of the 'other' through access to positive social discourse and joint opportunities. In addition to refugees and host community members, the project is also targeting a broad range of stakeholders including municipalities, local influencers, bloggers, media influencers, various ministries, and the peacebuilding community at large.

As such, this study aims to inform this project by conducting a thorough analysis of conflict and power dynamics at the national and the local level. Further objectives and a complete methodology can be found in the following section.

2. Methodology

Research Objectives

The commissioned study has undertaken a systematic analysis of conflict and power dynamics at the national and the local level, to improve Search's understanding about underlying causes of tensions between communities, and in so doing, inform Search's implementation plan to increase its relevance, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability. The research tackles issues concerning historical, political, socio-economic, and cultural factors that directly affect existing or possible future conflicts and how they unfold. To do this, the study has focused on trends in conflict and power dynamics at the community level between various stakeholders and has explored possible opportunities to contribute towards conflict transformation.

The specific objectives of the study are defined as follows:

1. Analyse conflict and power dynamics amongst and between host communities and refugees
2. Understand triggers that cause tension within Lebanese host communities, including between Syrian refugees and host communities
3. Understand resilience factors, connectors, and dividers, with a focus on connectors which allow people to collaborate despite differences
4. Identify any key influencers, possible champions, and connectors in each community
5. Analyse the conflict in order to see where Search is most likely to make a change (identify entry points)
6. Identify key conflict sensitivities and challenges (national and community-specific) to guide project and ensure 'do no harm' principles
7. Provide overall recommendations for the project implementation and specific guidance for the rapid response component of the project.

Data Collection and Analysis

The methodology was designed using Search's principles as a marker. As such, an inclusive (sex/age) and mixed methods research approach was applied through the use of both quantitative (surveys) and qualitative (semi-structured key informant/individual interviews and focus group discussions) data collection methodologies. The combination of these diverse data collection instruments has:

- Made triangulation possible by enabling comparison between findings from different sources
- Provided depth to survey findings by answering why and how questions, which quantitative data is normally not able to explain on its own
- Increased the validity and reliability of the data through verification of findings obtained through multiple sources; and
- Provided a nuanced understanding about the local context and dynamics between various stakeholders by enabling a comparison between findings obtained through different tools.

This research project was undertaken between December 16, 2019 and May 20, 2020. To achieve the objectives of Search's conflict analysis study, the following data collection approaches were used:

Desk-based review

The research started with a thorough desk-based review of key project documents such as the adaptations proposal, logical framework, project delivery plan, work plan and other project documents as available. In addition, a literature review of secondary sources including research papers was also reviewed. The review of these documents informed the research by:

- Providing contextual information about the project and its planned implementation
- Improving the consultants understanding about the project's overarching assumptions and rationale (theory of change)

- Identifying cross-cutting factors and key actors
- Identifying key issues and key target areas that need further analysis
- Facilitating the triangulation and cross-checking of primary and secondary data.

Quantitative community surveys

Quantitative surveys were administered face-to-face with a total of 1,096 randomly selected community members in 13 target locations. The sample is broken down by status (host/non-Lebanese and refugee), sex and age, as can be seen in the below figures. The surveys were administered face-to-face at the household level or in public places, such as the streets or shops. This sample size provided a margin of error of less than 5% at a confidence level of 95% at the national level. The survey questions were designed to collect quantifiable data related to the study's relevant research questions.

To administer the surveys efficiently, a mobile data collection app (KoBoToolbox) was used throughout, and the answers of the survey participants were tapped into a mobile phone and uploaded to a server on a daily basis. This allowed the consultant team to track progress and check the quality of submitted surveys in real-time.

The communities included in the scope of this study were selected based on the following four criteria, determined from the desk review:

1. The objective to maintain a balance between urban and rural communities
2. A high refugee population
3. High socio-economic vulnerability (as per the “Most Vulnerable Localities in Lebanon” map of 2015⁴)
4. Participation of population in recent protests
5. Levels of tensions and opportunities for resilience and peace, as indicated by UNDP tensions monitoring system

These criteria have already informed broader champion area selection.⁵

⁴ UNHCR, Most Vulnerable Localities in Lebanon, March 2015

⁵ Any area changes or adaptations are listed within the Limitations section.

Figure 1: Map of surveyed communities

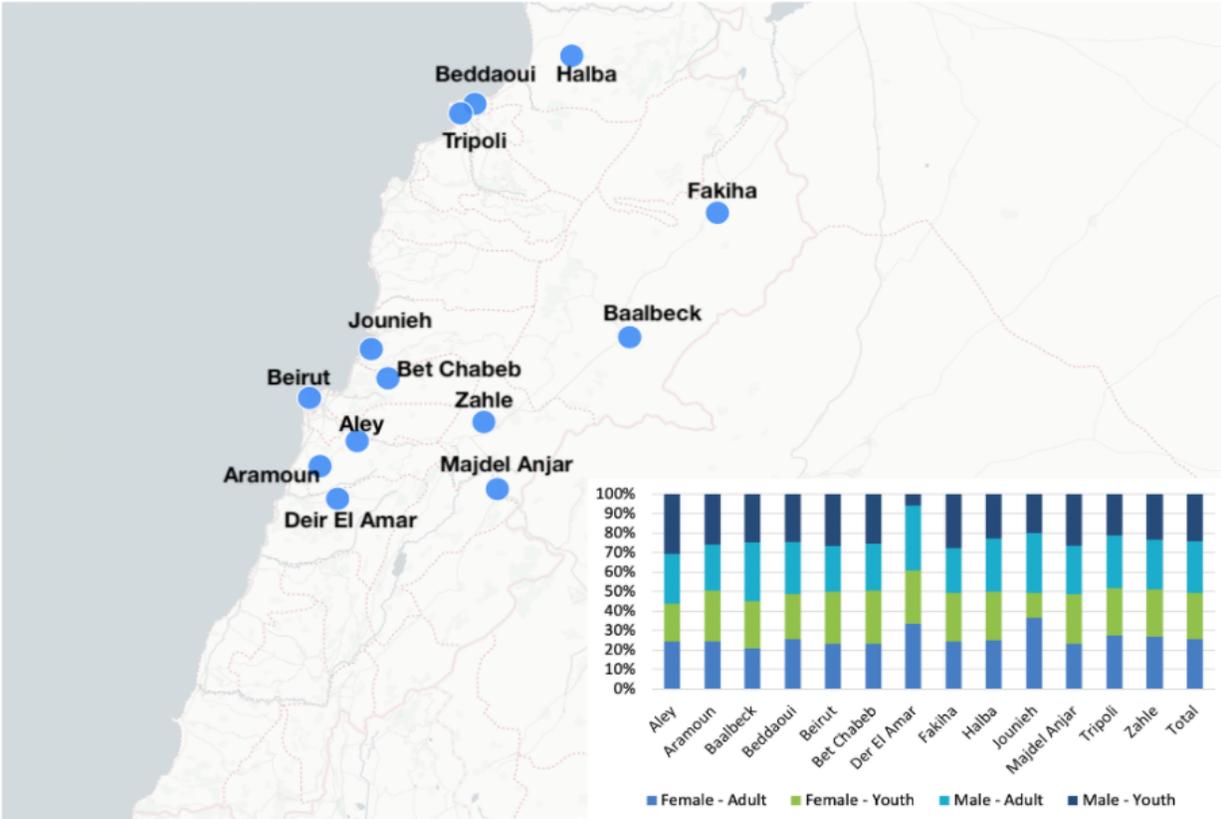
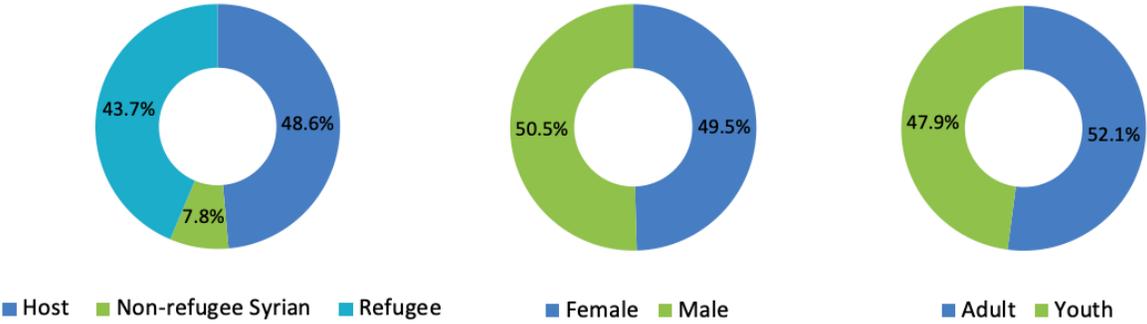


Figure 2: Survey sample by status, sex and age group

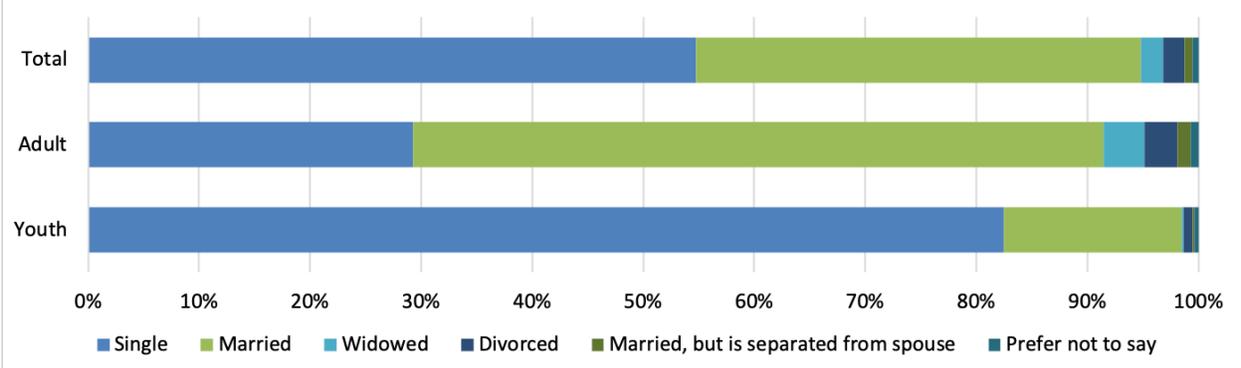


Women and female youth comprise 49.5% of the total sample. With regard to the representation of the two age categories (adults and youth), close to 48% of the sample includes youth in the age group 15-25, whereas the remaining adult sample (ages 26 and above) account for around 52% of the sample. Further, 48.6% of the survey participants are in the category of Lebanese host community members, 43.7% are refugees (Syrian and Palestinian), and 7.8% are non-refugee Syrian nationals (see Annex 2 for additional details related to the sampling).

The majority of survey participants (54.8%) are single, 40% are married and a small proportion of the sample are divorced (1.9%), separated from spouse (0.7%), or widowed (2%). The largest share of single respondents is in the

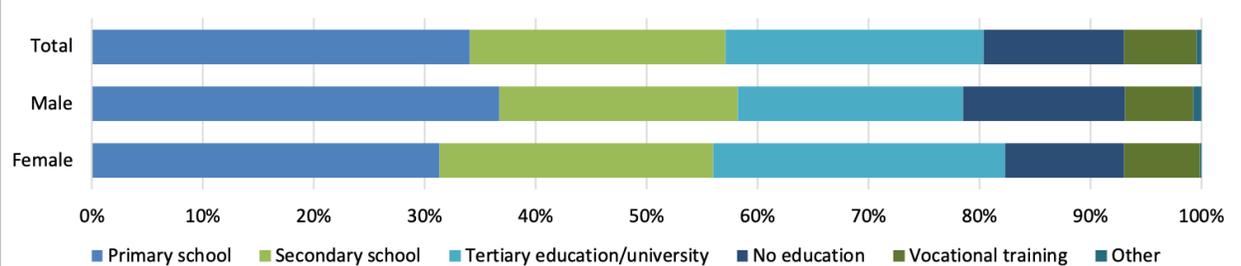
age group 15-25 (75.1% of all singles), followed by the age group 26-35 (19.7%). In contrast, the majority of respondents who are married are in the age groups 25-34 (42.9%) and 35-44 (28.4%).

Figure 3: Marital status by age category



Regarding education levels, roughly one third (34%) of the sample stated that they have completed primary school. The majority of respondents have completed their secondary (23.1%) or tertiary education (23%). Respondents with no education comprise 12.7% of the total sample. Interestingly, the proportion of females with secondary and tertiary education is somewhat higher than males.

Figure 4: Highest level of education completed



Focus group discussions (FGDs)

Exigo conducted a total of 16 FGDs with the refugee and host community members to gather individual and collective perceptions, opinions, and experiences regarding the research questions. The FGD guides (see Annex 5) include 25 open discussion questions.

Whenever possible, the FGDs were audio recorded with prior consent from the participants so that the group discussions could be transcribed in detail at a later stage. The audio recordings were complemented with the notes taken by the note-takers, who observed the discussion and wrote down the responses as well as the observed group dynamics during the discussions. The FGDs were facilitated in sex-segregated groups, as shown in Table 2.

Table 1: Number of focus group discussions conducted per community

Ref.	Area	Community	Female		Male		Total
			Host Community Members	Refugees	Host Community Members	Refugees	
1	Akkar	Halba			1		1

2	North	Tripoli	1			1	2
		Beddaoui		1			1
3	Mount Lebanon	Jounieh	1				1
		Beit Chabeb	1			1	2
		Aley				1	1
4	Central & West Bekaa	Zahle		1	1		2
		Majdal Anjar	1			1	2
5	Baalbeck-Hermel	Baalbeck			1		1
		Fakiha	1			1	2
6	Beirut	Beirut City			1		1
Total			5	2	4	5	16

Semi-structured key informant interviews (KIIs)

The research was informed by KIIs that consisted of open-ended questions to explore why and how questions and to obtain in-depth information to sufficiently address the research questions of the conflict analysis. KIIs were conducted with a range of stakeholders such as civil society organizations, local activists and media influencers, municipality representatives, refugee representatives/elders and youth committee representatives (see Table 2). KIIs consisted of 6 female interviewees and 21 male interviewees; there were no participants with special needs. Participants were not asked for their age; however, the group consisted of a mixture of youth and adults. Key informants were targeted and identified based on their field of expertise, position, and willingness to participate and share their knowledge for the purpose of this research.

To ensure confidentiality, all KIIs were conducted in privacy and were tape-recorded with prior consent from the respondents. In situations where the respondents did not wish to be recorded, the field researcher took detailed notes only.

Table 2: Number of KIIs conducted per community

Area	Community	CSOs	Local activists/ media influencers	Municipality representatives	Refugee representatives /elders	Youth committees	Total
Akkar	Halba	1	1	1	1	1	5
North	Tripoli	1		1			2
	Beddaoui					1	1
Mount Lebanon	Aley	1				1	2
	Beit Chabeb				1		1
	Jounieh		1	1			2
Central & West Bekaa	Zahle	1	1	1		1	4
	Majdal Anjar			1	1		2
Baalbeck- Hermel	Baalbeck	1	1	1		1	4
	Fakiha				1		1
Beirut	Beirut City	1	1			1	3
Total		6	5	6	4	6	27

Field team composition

Exigo manages a network of trained and experienced survey enumerators and field researchers in all targeted areas. These enumerators and qualitative interviewers are individuals from the local communities across various governorates in Lebanon. Through this network, Exigo was able to recruit field teams on short notice and reach diverse groups and stakeholders. By working with individuals from the areas where data was being collected, Exigo was able to reach communities that are difficult to access. In addition, Exigo's field teams consisted of both male and female field researchers and enumerators.

After the recruitment process and prior to data collection, enumerators attended a one-day training held in Beirut on the following topics: information about the study, its objectives and methodological approach; field logistics; a detailed review of the data collection tools/practice; ethical considerations; child protection; data confidentiality; as well as conflict sensitivity (see Training Agenda in Annex 6). Two additional training sessions were also organised in the areas for the enumerators who could not reach Beirut. The field researchers in charge of facilitating the FGDs and conducting the KIIs were trained individually.

The field teams were grouped and deployed in each of the preselected areas that were included in the geographic scope of the study. As a rule, prior to launching fieldwork, all data collection tools were tested to pre-identify any potential concerns. For this research, a field coordinator was in charge of supervising and coordinating a team of 24 enumerators who were responsible for conducting the surveys. The enumerator teams were sex-balanced and deployed in pairs with 2 enumerators per location. A team of 5 field researchers conducted the KIIs and facilitated the FGDs along with note takers.

Data analysis

Excel was used as the primary tool for the analysis of the quantitative survey data. The data was analysed through cross tabulations to provide statistical information about perceptions, and to identify patterns and relationships between the different variables, which are displayed in the report in the form of figures. As part of the analysis plan, a matrix was created on Excel displaying key research questions in a joint display approach, disaggregated by community. Quantitative and qualitative data was entered side by side, ensuring that data was adequately integrated and covered all research questions. This method also enabled the emergence of themes and additional information captured in this report.

The analytical framework of the research is guided by the Strategic Conflict Assessment (DFID)⁶ methodology. As such, the structure adopted for the report consists of three main elements, namely: Structures, Actors/Key Stakeholders and Dynamics. Alongside the content and structure of the key research questions provided by Search,⁷ each of these components guided both the data collection tools and collection and allowed for the creation of a clear analysis road-map to guide data analysis and presentation.

While each of the three are distinct themes, they emerged from data as frequently overlapping and holistic, the way in which all interact with each other aid allowing for a systematic assessment of conflict in Lebanon. Coherence and complementarity can thus be seen across the report, with an analysis of structures providing a contextual foundation on which key stakeholders interact and through which the dynamics and capacities for both peace and conflict play out.

⁶ DFID (Department for International Development, UK), Conducting Conflict Assessments: Guidance Notes, 2002

⁷ See ToR in Annex 6

Limitations and Challenges

Key informant interviews

- **Challenges in conducting interviews with elders/shawish in two locations, Beddaoui and Beirut.** In Beddaoui, two individuals were identified as *shawishes*/elders by the team of field researchers and focal points in the area. One of them was detained at the time of the data collection, and it was not deemed secured by the Exigo Logistics and Security manager to conduct an interview with the second identified individual. In Beddaoui, no other individuals were identified by FGD participants as elders or *shawishes* they turn to in cases of tension or conflict resolution in the area. In Beirut, following several attempts to reach out to the Syrian refugee community during the qualitative data collection process, no representative of the refugee community in Beirut could be identified.
- **Interview with Beirut municipality.** A meeting request was filled at the Beirut municipality to conduct an interview with a representative. The meeting was granted with the governor of Beirut municipality, judge Ziad Chbeb on February 7. During the meeting which could not be conducted in a private setting, and when introducing the project and questionnaire, it was deemed more appropriate by the municipality to reschedule the interview, in order to ensure a more private environment to conduct the interview.
- **Challenges in reaching out to local activists at the time of the data collection process.** The team of field researchers found it particularly challenging during the data collection process to reach out to youth influencers who were not available during the time of the qualitative data collection which coincided with protest movements. As such, it was not feasible during the timeline allocated to the data collection process to conduct the interview with a local activist in the North area.

Focus group discussions

- During the identification process of FGD participants, two categories turned out to be particularly difficult to gather: **Lebanese men and female Syrian refugees, in both Beirut and Aley.** Despite several attempts and means of gathering these target groups (through local networks, as well as through Exigo's database contacts reached over the phone), the FGDs planned in Aley with a group of female Syrian refugees was cancelled, as participants very rapidly did not wish to continue discussing the topics, even individually in the form of an interview. In Beirut, Exigo's field teams visited households, and spoke to several female Syrian refugees who all declined the invitation to participate in a discussion on this topic. The main challenge faced to gather Lebanese male respondents to the FGDs in Aley and Beirut was due to the potential risk of tensions that could arise from the discussion, which led to some last-minute cancellations from participants who had initially confirmed their interest in sharing their views and perspectives. These challenges have limited the extent to which the opinions and experiences of Lebanese men and female Syrian refugees can be analysed, and findings drawn from these areas; nonetheless, the challenges are findings in themselves, and the unwillingness of some groups to engage in dialogue is something that will be discussed throughout the report analysis. Quantitative data does also fill in some broader area-based understandings left out by the few gaps in qualitative data.
- Several FGDs had to be rescheduled various times, due to roadblocks by the protests and difficulties to access sites due to weather conditions, more specifically with the snow in the Bekaa valley. Due to several consecutive cancellations, some participants no longer wished to participate in the FGDs, and had to be replaced.

Surveys

- Enumerators reported that understandings of ‘ethnicity’, ‘ethnic divides,’ and ethnic disputes’ were mixed and inconclusive, with some respondents interpreting these along lines of nationality, others along religious/sect-based lines, and others with regards to identity in general. As a result of this confusion, results may be inaccurate regarding this topic. Given that percentages choosing this option in questions 69 and 70 were generally low, and that participants were able to select other multiple-choice options reflecting religious and political divisions and other tensions points from which clear analysis can be drawn, it was decided not to include figures regarding ethnicity in the report.

Logistics and security

- **Approval from municipalities.** When requesting approvals from each of the targeted areas to conduct surveys, Hazmieh, Hadath, and Baabda municipalities requested further details on both Exigo and Search, explaining that this process would take time. One of these municipalities also expressed some concerns, asking if Search had its headquarters in the United States. Taking into consideration the deadlines, and timeline to finalize the project, it was deemed more efficient to replace Baabda with Aramoun.
- **Incident in Halba.** On January 6, the first day of the quantitative data collection, an incident happened in Halba. As the enumerators were in an area close to a tent of the protest movement, and as they were closing the road, someone approached them and asked them what they were doing. The enumerators answered, as explained during the training and as per the script, that they were working for Exigo, commissioned by Search for Common Ground, conducting surveys. This person then interrupted the team and asked to repeat twice the name of the organisation. The enumerators did not have the time to continue explaining further (no "conflict analysis", nor "research" were mentioned). This person then went towards the tent, and inside for some time. Then, as this person came out of the tent, he started saying that Search is working towards peace with Israel and opening live on social media going towards the team. Exigo enumerators then decided to leave this area. The team of enumerators were then instructed not to mention Search when introducing themselves, unless the respondents ask for further details. It is also worth mentioning that some tensions occurred at the time of the data collection in Halba within the municipality, divided between supporters and non-supporters of the revolution. Due to the incident that occurred on the first day of data collection in this area, it was also agreed with Search to conduct surveys in surrounding areas.
- **The protests and calls for civil disobedience** on January 14, which led to the closure of roads, and security incidents in the areas targeted by the research delayed the data collection phase and made the qualitative data collection particularly challenging.

3. Findings

Structures

The analytical framework for this report begins with a structural overview to consider the institutions which may predispose a country or community to conflict, or else contribute to existing conflict. As per the DFID Conflict Assessment framework, a useful approach involves offering a contextual analysis before moving onto identifying key sources and tensions, and the connections between them.⁸ As such, within this section of the report, the following structures have been analysed in order to better understand the nature of conflict in Lebanon: political and religious; economic and social; and historical. While many of these components are nationwide and point to pervasive structural realities in Lebanon, others are decentralised, localised, and reflective of the specifics of certain areas, locations, and communities.

The findings show that participants across the board were consistent in highlighting the multifaceted nature of ‘conflict’ in their lives and the overlapping structures which contribute to such. The vast majority of qualitative interviewees pointed quickly to a deeply set economic struggle and structural inequalities, but answers were often nuanced and reflective of the political, social, and ideological dimensions: “Politics, economy, and religion are all intertwined in Lebanon to a degree where you cannot separate them.”⁹ Economic issues are linked frequently to the corruption and poor leadership of rulers, identity issues are tied to sects and religious affiliations, which are also tied in turn to representative government figures. A group of Lebanese men from Halba¹⁰ describe their own involvement in this dynamic: “Religion, in particular, and the diversity of sects are a major cause of conflict. Add these to poverty and the difficult economic situation that binds the causes of conflict with each other.” Thus, while the analysis throughout attempts to identify the specific tensions of individual contexts and communities (of which there is great variance), the research should be read, and programming be planned and implemented, with these complex relationships in mind.

After exploring the structural dimensions of religion, politics, socio-economy and history, the section analyses the ways in which such a framework interacts with societal divisions and contributes to conflict. The findings significantly show that while structures such as religious diversity within particular communities may lead to divisions, they do not always lead to conflict. Similarly, some of the communities, such as Akkar, show greater levels of conflict but report less division, attributing conflict to other structures such as economic struggles.

Political and religious dimensions

Discussion of politics, politicians, and policy has come across at every level of the research. Political divisions are cited by 42.5% of all survey participants and every FGD and in 22 out of 27 KIIs, references to political grievances (at either the local or national scale) can be seen.

Several Lebanese women who participated in the FGD in Jounieh¹¹ suggest that “it is the leaders who are responsible for conflict, not the people”, while male refugees from Majdal Anjar¹² state that “most of the differences, disputes, and conflicts were and are still caused due to political reasons, before they were even caused by religion”. These statements are seen as representative of the wider sample, with key stakeholders or ‘actors of conflict’ identified by FGD and KII participants including and/or focusing on specific political parties, leaders, and to a lesser extent protestors. While many note their dissatisfaction at the rule of political parties, in reference to both corruption and

⁸ DFID (Department for International Development, UK), [Conducting Conflict Assessments: Guidance Notes](#), 2002

⁹ Local activist from Beirut

¹⁰ Six men from Halba aged between 23 and 55 years old

¹¹ Seven Lebanese women aged between 29 and 70 years old

¹² Nine male refugees from Halba aged between 19 and 51 years old

inefficiency, participants also speak to the idea that people in Lebanon continue to follow them: “Lebanese people love to follow leaders and not thoughts.”¹³

The power dynamics involved in such decisions will be discussed in the following section, but it is clear that strong affiliation to a number of different political parties, often tied intrinsically to religious and sectarian identity, is a primary structure - or web of structures, interlinked with conflict - throughout the country. Especially in areas such as Beirut, the North, and Akkar, the desk review suggests some of these political dimensions stem from the division of the March 8 and March 14 alliances, a prolonged stalemate since the 2005 Cedar Revolution which pitted the pro-Syrian against those anti-Syrian.¹⁴ Nonetheless, the specific dynamic of this division is not something found widely discussed in this research’s quantitative or qualitative data, and politics in general tends to be framed by participants at the local level; when discussing national, wider-ranging political systems, it is done so largely in relation to the current protests/revolution - which will be discussed in the third section of this report.

The division of Lebanese society according to sects, religion, and political parties is, however, something that all participants refer to, including non-Lebanese interviewees: “Lebanon is not a country; nobody believes in it or belongs to it.”¹⁵ All but one FGD and 21 out of 27 KIIs discussed the sectarian/religious dimensions of conflict. More host community members in the qualitative research noted sectarian/religious tension in their communities, although all but one FGD with refugees observed this tension within Lebanon, albeit distancing this issue from their personal lived experiences. All the same, new political movements (including involvement at area-based and country-level protests) indicate that citizens across these areas are beginning to demand an alternative to sectarian and clientelist politics.

Many participants referring to politics also broach the issue of lower-level and localised politics, particularly family and clan-based tensions which often interplay with and are supported by national power dynamics and religious factions. This is particularly the case in Baalbeck-Hermel (and to a lesser extent in Akkar), where clan influence continues to dominate political, economic, cultural and security structures.¹⁶ A male social activist from Beirut states that “clans are a nation of their own,” and this is a sustained theme in many of the FGDs and KIIs in Fakiha, Baalbeck, and Halba. Residents in these locations describe how community members here tend to prioritise local political affiliation over country-level political allegiance.

Economic and social dimensions

Lebanon’s economic context provides fertile ground for accelerating tensions, culminating most recently in protests since October 2019 which, among other things, call the government to account for corruption and stolen funds, and demand fair tax, financial procedures, and a plan to tackle the deepening financial crisis.¹⁷ During the period of research, protestors have clashed more and more at the branches and ATMs of banks whose ‘treatment of customers have become a symbol of everyday indignity.’¹⁸ As summarised by academic Sune Haugbolle in *Foreign Policy*, ‘as the refugee crisis has only made clearer, the primary structural challenges to stability and security in Lebanon are now economic and ecological.’¹⁹ Indeed, the steep decline in economic prosperity in Lebanon is in itself a major challenge for building and maintaining peace, given the exacerbation of many of these pre-existing tensions.

¹³ KII with Zahle municipality representative

¹⁴ Lebanon Support, [Between Local Patronage Relationships and Securitization: The Conflict Context in the Bekaa Region](#), Conflict Analysis Report, January 2015

¹⁵ FGD with adult male Syrian participants in Tripoli

¹⁶ Asharq al-Awsat, [Exclusive: Lebanon’s Organized Crime, Militancy Hotbeds](#), 22 December 2018

¹⁷ Amnesty International, [Lebanon Protests Explained](#), 17 January 2020

¹⁸ International Crisis Group, [Pulling Lebanon Back from the Precipice](#), 22 January 2020

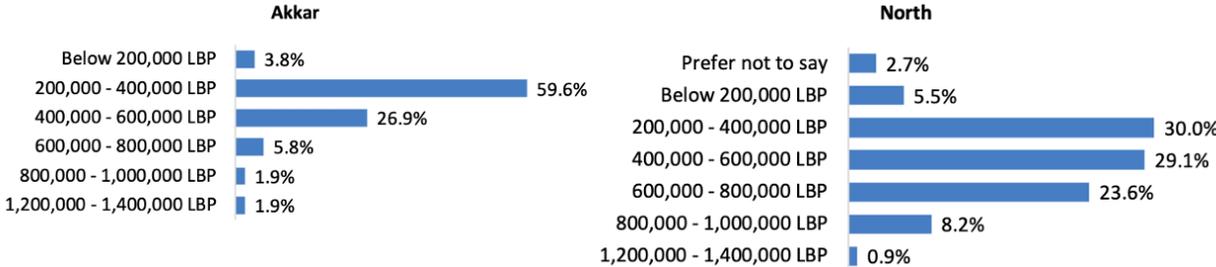
¹⁹ Sune Haugbolle, [Lebanon Is Facing an Economic and Environmental Disaster](#), *Foreign Policy*, 20 February 2019

As the most recent Labour Force and Household Living Conditions Survey (LFH LCS) finds, less than 50% of the working age population (15 years and over) were participating in the labour force between 2018 and 2019.²⁰ In this research, 13.1% of all survey respondents are unemployed and looking for opportunities; 2.7% of respondents are unemployed and not looking for opportunities; and 9.6% are involved in casual/day labour. Only 21.4% of all participants are employed full time, with 12.8% employed part time. Notably, there is only slight variation across unemployment levels in survey results between host and refugee communities, with 13.7% of the host community reporting unemployment (but looking for opportunities) in comparison to 14.1% of non-refugee Syrians, 12.0% of refugee Syrians, and 14.3% of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon (PRL). Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) report higher figures at 24.1%. These levels may correspond with the higher percentages in casual/day labour, whereby non-Lebanese individuals in particular have resorted to irregular and unregulated work. This is confirmed within qualitative findings and the desk review, which show that greater levels of vulnerability and deprivation within refugee communities have resulted in informal, insecure, and sometimes exploitative forms of low-skilled labour.²¹

Substantially more Lebanese are students (25.2% of survey respondents) than non-refugee Syrians (8.2%) and Syrian refugees (7.9%). No Palestinian Refugees from Syria (PRS) or Palestinian Refugees from Lebanon (PRL) report being a student. This again adds context to the relatively low levels of non-Lebanese unemployment, suggesting that greater levels of poverty and precarity have pushed individuals and families to seek different forms of labour instead of pursuing (higher) education. More disaggregation of education levels can be viewed below, as well as within the Area Profiles (Annex 1).

Figure 5: Monthly wages of respondents - Akkar and North

Question: *If employed, what is your monthly wage in Lebanese Pounds?*

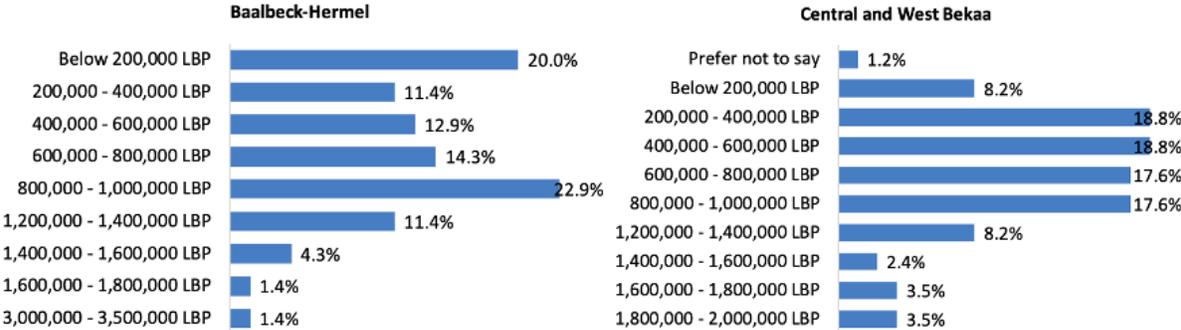


Survey results show salaries vary significantly across areas. **In Akkar**, 59.6% of respondents have a monthly wage of 200,000-400,000 LBP. Very few (9.6%) have a wage above 600,000 LBP. **In the North**, 82.7% of respondents earn between 200,000 LBP and 800,000 LBP, while only 9.1% earn above 800,000 LBP. In both the North and Akkar, there were few earning between 1,200,000 and 1,400,000 LBP (0.9% and 1.9%, respectively), and no respondents earning above that amount.

²⁰ International Labour Organisation, *Labour Force and Household Living Conditions Survey (LFH LCS): 2018–2019 Lebanon*, 2019
²¹ UNDP, *The Burden of Scarce Opportunities: The Social Stability Context in Central and West Bekaa: Conflict Analysis Report*, March 2017

Figure 6: Monthly wages of respondents - Baalbeck-Hermel and Central and West Bekaa

Question: *If employed, what is your monthly wage in Lebanese Pounds?*

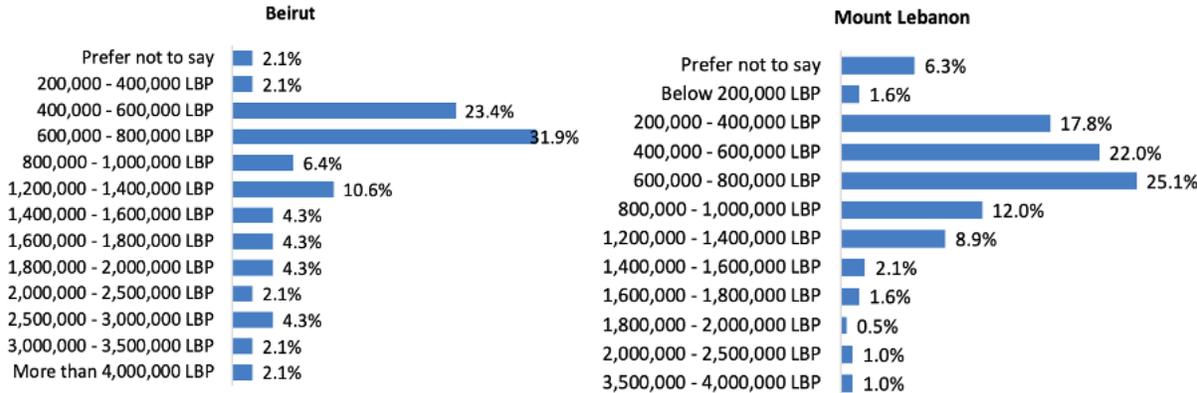


In **Baalbeck-Hermel** there is greater variance between high wages and low wages and thus perhaps greater levels of inequality, as is also noted in the qualitative data. While 41.4% earn over 800,000 LBP in a month, 20.0% also earn below 200,000 LBP. In **Central and West Bekaa**, monthly wages appear to be more varied across all of the tranches, but with the most earning between 200,000 and 1,000,000 LBP (72.8%). 8.2% earn below 200,000 LBP and there are small percentages earning in the tranches between 1,200,000 and 2,000,000 LBP.

In Mount Lebanon and Beirut there are greater percentages than other areas in the higher tranches. In **Mount Lebanon**, 59.1% earn between 400,000 and 1,000,000 LBP, with 15.1% earning over that amount. There are, however, 17.8% earning between 200,000 and 400,000 LBP, and qualitative findings show higher reports of unemployment in this area. In **Beirut**, only 2.1% earn between 200,000 and 400,000 LBP, and there are no respondents earning less than 200,000 LBP. There are more earning a monthly wage of 400,000 to 800,000 LBP (55.3%) and 34.1% earning more than 1,200,000 LBP, and 2.1% above 4,000,000 LBP.

Figure 7: Monthly wages of respondents - Beirut and Mount Lebanon

Question: *If employed, what is your monthly wage in Lebanese Pounds?*



These findings correspond with the qualitative data, which shows that the greatest levels of economic precarity, and tensions arising from this, are found in the North (particularly Tripoli) and in Akkar. While FGD participants do note the prevalence of *wasta* and nepotism, increasing perceptions of inequality, and individual injustice, economic hardship and marginalisation in these areas are seen as relatively homogenous and common to all. In comparison, qualitative research in Baalbeck-Hermel correlates with the quantitative findings in describing high levels of inequality within society and polarity between the poor and the rich, fuelled and maintained by engrained systems of clientelism and patronage. While economic disparity and hardship can also be seen in Central and West Bekaa,

with varied levels of wealth existing and perceived across society, financial hardship appears in less prevalent and dividing terms than in other areas. In Mount Lebanon and Beirut, rates of unemployment do remain high and some reference is made to tension points as a result of these hardships; however, in general, less economic vulnerability is noted throughout the qualitative findings, and as such tensions stem here mostly from alternative factors, as will be discussed in the following section.

Economic discussions characterise a significant proportion of the FGDs and KIIs held with Lebanese, Syrian, and Palestinian participants. All 16 FGDs conducted include at least a single reference towards economic issues, such as tensions or dissatisfaction over unemployment levels, with most interlinking other grievances (for example, host-refugee relations, or the effects of sectarianism) with personal and community financial issues. There is slightly higher coverage of the topic seen among the host community groups than among refugees, indicating that economic issues may be more divisive among the host community despite, in general, higher levels of vulnerability, lower wages, and greater unemployment found among refugee populations. Tensions that stem from perceptions of economic competition are mostly directed at the refugee population from host community members, rather than the other way around. There is no significant variation between male and female groups in this regard, suggesting that economic tensions are seen to affect individuals and groups regardless of sex. 21 out of 27 KIIs conducted included references to Lebanon’s economic issues, too, with the greatest coverage of the topic found in Akkar and the North.

Conflict is at times directly attributed to economic hardship: “conflict means no job opportunities, instability, and security and safety problems.”²² At other times, citizens perceive the economic crisis and increased prices to be caused by the recent protests and growing unrest. Some participants appear motivated for change and are inspired by the recent protests. All participants spoken with, however, are fearful for the future and struggle to find hope that, financially, things might improve. While survey results show significant support for the recent protests at 43.2% overall, high levels of neutrality (37.1%) and uncertainty (8.6%) are also demonstrated. This is seen also in FGDs and KIIs across the board, where participants discuss the slowing momentum for the revolution, a lack of willingness for change demonstrated by the government, and instead expect the onset of greater economic hardship ahead. A male youth committee representative from Halba states simply that “the situation is greater than us.” Fear for security and future wellbeing seems to stem largely from the country’s financial predicament, and how this is playing out at a national, local, and individual level - in terms of both individual and familial wellbeing and increasing community and family-based tensions.

Therefore, it can be seen that weak, imbalanced, and/or inaccessible economic structures in Lebanon are building the foundations for an increased sense of injustice and marginalisation. This is leading to greater community-based tensions, as anger is directed against different groups and stakeholders. Aside from increased family tensions and anger targeted at the government and local service providers, the research shows, in line with Zinc Network’s quantitative findings from November 2019²³, as well as Wave VI of UNDP and ARK’s Regular Perception Surveys²⁴, that societal tensions between host and refugee communities are being increasingly exasperated by the economic situation and dissatisfaction at public services. As employment for the Lebanese working age population reaches less than 50 percent²⁵, one of the most cited perceptions of competition is jobs, along with medical care, cash assistance, and education. Multiple participants in Zahle, Baalbeck and Aley note that access to dollars, for instance, has become a major dividing point which is leading to direct clashes between refugees and host community members, for example in queues to ATMs.

At the same time, refugees themselves are at particular risk during the economic downfall. According to the 2019 Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASyR) report, Syrian refugees are becoming increasingly

²² Adult refugee males in Tripoli

²³ Zinc Network, [Impact of Syrian Refugee Crisis on Lebanon: Quantitative Research](#), November 2019

²⁴ UNDP & ARK, [Regular Perceptions Survey of Social Tensions Throughout Lebanon](#), Wave VI, August 2019

²⁵ International Labour Organisation, [Labour Force and Household Living Conditions Survey \(LFHLCs\): 2018–2019 Lebanon](#), 2019

economically vulnerable, only one third of refugees have a regular job, and more households are resorting to crisis livelihood-related coping strategies.²⁶ The Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) 2019 Update also reports that 28.5% of Lebanese live below the poverty line, of which 470,000 are children. More than 69% of displaced Syrians are living below the poverty line, along with 65% of Palestinian refugees from Lebanon and 89% of Palestinian refugees from Syria, who are one of the most vulnerable groups in the region.²⁷ These struggles are reflected in conversations with Syrian and Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, who report unprecedented levels of financial hardship and the societal, familial, and even marital tensions these bring with them.

In terms of social relations and the role of gender in Lebanon, national legislation, including the penal code and personal status codes, is widely seen by the human rights community as discriminatory against women. Lebanese women continue to be unable to pass their nationality onto their children.²⁸ Given that there Lebanon has no civil code covering issues such as divorce, property rights, or care of children, separate religious laws govern personal status issues, none of which guarantee basic rights. Domestic violence, including marital rape, remains a major concern.²⁹ While lobbying efforts are being made by women’s rights activists, progression is slow and unsteady.

Legislative and state-sanctioned discrimination extends to the economic sphere. The LFHLCs also found that among women of working age, the labour force participation rate was 29.3%. Similarly, in this research, 33.3% of female survey respondents are housewives and not working, most common in Baalbeck-Hermel and least common in Beirut. Almost twice the number of women earn between 200,000 and 400,000 LBP (30.6%) than men (18.1%) and, in general, female survey respondents earn more in the lower salary tranches than men do. The survey findings also show a greater proportion of Syrian refugee women are housewives and not working (23.0%) than in the host population (12.4%), something also highlighted in FGD discussions with Syrian and Palestinian women who note slower rates of progression with regards to gender roles in their communities.

It is this economic aspect of gender relations that is most discussed by qualitative research participants. The disruption of traditional gender roles by economic need is a key finding here, whereby participants - particularly in Baalbeck-Hermel, the North, and Akkar - explain that the need for women to contribute to household earnings has pushed women out of the home and into work. This change is at times viewed in negative terms, a concern mostly shared by male Syrian participants and those living in more traditional and conservative areas (such as Baalbeck-Hermel, Akkar, and the North). These participants note implications at the family level, including feelings of shame, demasculinisation, and marital tension. This movement in gender dynamics (in this case, since 2011) is explained further within a 2015 conflict analysis of Beirut by Lebanon Support:

Such gendered shifts can be experienced as turbulent for both men and women. A representative from International Alert argued that what is occurring is a shift in gender roles, and not necessarily in gender norms. This shift increases feelings of vulnerability and insecurity for men who feel they can no longer adhere to their social role and provide for their families, and for women who also experience added responsibilities and anxiety in a new environment.³⁰

A sense of gendered labour competition is also cited by male participants in Tripoli and Majdal Anjar. Using similar rhetoric as usually reserved for Syrian refugees, a male social activist from Tripoli, for example, suggests that women in this area are working more than men because they accept lower salaries. With young men sitting more at home, unemployed and unoccupied, he notes, family violence and marital arguments are on the rise. The majority of participants, nonetheless, welcome changes in the professional and home life of women, in particular noting their integration into educational structures, decision-making processes, and public life.

²⁶ UNHCR, UNICEF & WFP, *Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASyR)*, 2019

²⁷ UNHCR & the Government of Lebanon, *Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2017-2020*, 2019 update

²⁸ Middle East Institute, *Women and women’s rights are central to Lebanon’s protest movement*, 5 November 2019

²⁹ Human Rights Watch, *Lebanon: 5 Steps to Improve Women’s Rights*, 8 March 2018

³⁰ Lebanon Support, *Between Local Patronage Relationships and Securitization: The Conflict Context in the Bekaa Region*, Conflict Analysis Report, January 2015

Historical dimensions

Qualitative findings highlight that perceptions of conflict are frequently underlined by ongoing historical and generational tensions. These can be categorised into the following themes:

1) Historical marginalisation and neglect

Conflict also finds its source in an ongoing sense of neglect from both the government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in isolated and rural areas, generally far from the capital (namely the North, Akkar, and Baalbeck-Hermel), and largely in economic terms. As described during an FGD with Lebanese men from Halba³¹: “The cause of tension is that the state has abandoned the people. The issue of tension is not new. We are always in a state of tension.”

According to OCHA, as of October 2018, ‘Northern Lebanon – made up of the North and Akkar Governorates – is one of the country’s most deprived regions, with severe poverty. Out of a population of 1.164 million people, 532,000 live in poverty: 341,000 deprived Lebanese, over 140,000 Syrian refugees, 51,000 Palestine refugees.’³² Akkar in particular is seen as one of the most deprived regions in Lebanon, with the highest overall poverty rates in the country.³³

An entrenched perception of historical neglect and marginalisation is mainly reported in Halba, where FGD and KII participants cite limited support from the public and private sector, as well as civil society. Given its remote location and distance from the capital, much of this neglect has been ongoing since Lebanese independence, when focus on central governorates led to unequal growth in peripheral areas. Revival of the country’s infrastructure in post-war years involved very little investment in Akkar. A lack of provisions, public services, and adequate schools continues to this day, with any limited assistance provided by political figures since Syrian withdrawal generally limited to certain areas of interest only.³⁴

Researchers involved in analysis of Tripoli and Akkar have noted that past and ongoing feelings of abandonment have pushed these societies to feel increasingly distrustful of multiple stakeholders, including governmental and non-governmental actors.³⁵ Fieldwork incidents in Halba within this research (as noted above) may also have been influenced by this dynamic. Such a prevalence of scepticism and mistrust could create barriers for organisations implementing peacebuilding activities in these areas, potentially leading to challenges in gaining trust and acceptance from beneficiaries and instead impairing conflict sensitivity principles of ‘do no harm’ by contributing further to perceptions of unhelpful interference. Activities in such areas would benefit from taking a low-key, slow and long-term stance, collaborating with and utilising local actors as the leading faces or champions in projects there. Area-specific findings of respected local figures can be found in the final section.

2) Memories of the civil war and sectarian struggles

Sectarian divisions and tensions, particularly in Beirut and Mount Lebanon, cannot be viewed without an understanding of the historical context. Mount Lebanon has a long history of sectarian conflict, particularly among Druze and Christian groups; this goes as far back as the civil war in 1860, sparking again during the civil war from 1975 onwards and particularly during the ‘Mountain War’ of 1983. FGDs and KIIs show that memories of the more recent civil war and sectarian struggles are particularly prominent in Aramoun and Aley, which were major sites of civil strife and militia fighting during these years. Instances of sectarian conflict occur to this day, with intra-tensions

³¹ Six Lebanese men from Halba aged between 23 and 55 years old

³² OCHA, *Lebanon: North and Akkar Governorates Profile*, October 2018

³³ Aicha Mouchref, *Forgotten Akkar: Socio-Economic Reality of the Akkar Region*, Mada Association, January 2008

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.; Estella Carpi, *Prisms of Political Violence, ‘Jihads’ and Survival in Lebanon’s Tripoli*, Lebanon Support, 1 December 2015

within sects also visible.³⁶ A lack of dialogue mechanisms and opportunities to reflect on the events and outcomes of the civil war years is cited by KII participants from the area, particularly in Aley:

It is historical – I was born during the civil war and nobody after the war finished said anything. They just told us that we are in peace, they didn't ask us how much we suffered. There is no programme for dealing with the past, we just jumped. We were simply told: "We are in peace now and we will continue from here." But the memories of the people and their suffering are used daily during the elections. They don't want to solve history, there is no one history - the story from my perspective during the civil war is different from that of other people. We didn't sit together as groups or as a people, our fathers were fighting. We don't have something solid in order to understand lessons learned.³⁷

There has also been a recent history of armed fighting in the North of Lebanon, notably the 2007 battle in Nahr el Bared camp between non-state actors and the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF). According to OCHA, 'Long-standing politico-sectarian tensions between the Alawite and Sunni communities were exacerbated by the Syrian crisis and tore apart Tripoli's neighbourhoods of Jabal Mohsen (Alawite) and Bab al Tabbaneh (Sunni) from 2008 to 2015, killing 200 people and injuring more than 2,000.' The same source notes that the security situation in the region has since largely stabilised with the help of the Lebanese Armed Forces, with only occasional instances of insecurity.³⁸ Fears over sectarian imbalance between Sunni and Shia have also dominated tensions over the years, seen as exacerbated by the influx of largely Sunni Syrian refugees. Nonetheless, these topics go unmentioned by all FGD and KII participants in Tripoli or Beddaoui, who note in general a society without divisions, suggesting that ongoing antagonism is largely confined to small, localised pockets of infighting and crime, as opposed to society at large.

In general, results find that those areas not heavily involved in the civil war or past sectarian battles are less divided across the Lebanese community. For example, while 32.5% of survey respondents in Mount Lebanon observe religious/sectarian divides in their community, the same figure in Central and West Bekaa is only 8.1%. According to UNDP, 'During the 1975-1990 war in Lebanon [...] the majority of the villages of the Central and West Bekaa did not witness major fighting possibly because of sectarian homogeneity, which means there is no enduring residual antagonism.'³⁹ The same can be seen in the nearby Baalbeck-Hermel governorate.

3) Ongoing sense of ancestral obligations in clan/family-based dynamics

While memories of the civil war do not seem to affect Baalbeck-Hermel and Central and West Bekaa to the same extent as in other areas of the country, other historically based dynamics are at play. A history of marginalisation and state neglect in the area, as in many rural regions in Lebanon, has proved fertile ground for a focus here on tribal and familial allegiances, often interlinked with physical violence and crime such as cannabis farming and drug trafficking. The FGD and KII findings show that clan-based alliances are rooted in the past with ongoing obligations shared from ancestral connections:

The clans carry their conflicts and hatred from one generation to another, their traditions affect them very much. There are some clans in conflict with other clans since their great grandparents, 100 or 200 years ago. [...] The reasons [for the existence of] clans are revenge and honour. One member of a clan might have been killed 200 years ago by another clan, and they are still fighting over this. For example, we are both from the same clan, even if we have around 300 grandfathers between us, but we still are from the same clan. Therefore, if something happens to him, it is my duty to avenge him. [...] Baalbeck doesn't change.⁴⁰

According to a conflict analysis report of the Bekaa by Lebanon Support in 2015, 'Tribal and familial allegiance is possibly stronger in the Bekaa than in any other region of Lebanon and has been most evident in recent months in

³⁶ The Arab Weekly, Mount Lebanon shoot-out triggers fears of intra-Druze strife, 6 July 2019

³⁷ Male CSO representative from Aley

³⁸ OCHA, Lebanon: North and Akkar Governorates Profile, October 2018

³⁹ UNDP, The Burden of Scarce Opportunities: The Social Stability Context in Central and West Bekaa: Conflict Analysis Report, March 2017

⁴⁰ Five men aged between 19 and 47 years old in Baalbeck, with two clan members

the cases of retaliatory kidnappings and road blockings that took place across various regions. [...] Examples of families that have been involved in security incidents in the past few months include the Hujeiri and Fleiti Sunni families of Aarsal, the Shiite Al-Masri and Zaiter, and the Bedouin tribe Arab el-Weiss. In addition, many smuggling and drug trafficking networks, a major source of income in the Bekaa, are dependent on such networks for their operation.' The same report does also note, however, that 'many of the young vigilante groups are emerging from within these families and tribes, and fortunately when identified, easily succumb to family pressure to put a halt to their vigilante activities.'⁴¹ In this sense, it appears that family ties and pressure can be strong determiners of conflict or peace.

As explored in a study by Mada Association on Akkar, similar dynamics can be viewed here, something also referenced in FGDs and KIIs from the area.⁴² The prevalence of such power structures stem, it is explained, from the continuation of old feudal families who then became the politicians representing the area, and are especially prone to flourishing in areas neglected historically and under-invested in by the state.

4) Memories of Lebanese-Syrian interrelations

Memories of Syrian occupation and the hardships and wrongdoings associated with these times continue to contribute to hostilities with refugee populations, particularly in areas of the country affected by Syrian occupation between 1975 and 2005. Conflict within Akkar and Tripoli cannot be understood without this troubled socio-political and historical backdrop, areas in which Syrian troops are remembered through atrocities such as torture, imprisonment, massacres, urbicide, and sexual violence carried out at their hands. During this period, economic development was stifled and neighbourhoods such as Bab al-Tabbaneh were destroyed without ever being fully reconstructed. Estella Carpi describes North Lebanon's Sunni citizens as 'socially the "losers" of the Lebanese civil war,' whereby consequent Syrian occupation under the Pax Syriana stifled development and prevented inhabitants from enjoying the support and protection of national or local political actors.⁴³

According to Carpi, this experience - still fresh in the minds of many (mostly Sunni) citizens of the North - fosters not only antagonism with the new influx of Syrian refugees, but also a strong sense of disaffection towards the state and other welfare organisations. "The Lebanese people were deeply wronged at the time of the Syrian army's presence and still cannot forget."⁴⁴

More recent history in Baalbeck-Hermel has witnessed more palpable links to the current conflict in Syria, with fighting at times spilling over into the Hermel region and pockets of ISIS territory held up to 2017. Some studies note that this experience has fuelled fear over the presence of some Syrian refugees in the area and increased stereotyping along the lines of terrorism tropes.⁴⁵ On the other hand, many participants in Baalbeck-Hermel and Central and West Bekaa note increased resilience and social stability between refugees and the host community as a result of the history with Syria. The Bekaa region has long been an area of geostrategic importance as it contains the main border crossing to Syria and the Damascus highway, the international route from Beirut to Damascus. While referencing increased tensions and competition over employment opportunities, most FGD and KII participants point towards a long history of working, trade, and family ties with Syrian refugees and migrant populations:

Here we cannot talk about historical tension because the Syrian borders are very close. Lebanese and Syrians always used to come and go. There is a long history of friendship among many Syrian and Lebanese in this area. Many Lebanese

⁴¹ Lebanon Support, Between Local Patronage Relationships and Securitization: The Conflict Context in the Bekaa Region, Conflict Analysis Report, January 2015

⁴² Aicha Mouchref, Forgotten Akkar: Socio-Economic Reality of the Akkar Region, Mada Association, January 2008

⁴³ Estella Carpi, Prisms of Political Violence, 'Jihads' and Survival in Lebanon's Tripoli, Lebanon Support, 1 December 2015

⁴⁴ Two adult Lebanese men from an FGD in Beirut

⁴⁵ Aicha Mouchref, Forgotten Akkar: Socio-Economic Reality of the Akkar Region, Mada Association, January 2008

*people in this area had lands in Syria and used to live there. We came here because we know the people and we are friends. This friendship has existed since the '80s and we are still friends. We have relatives here.*⁴⁶

A notable contrast from other research which suggests Syrian-Lebanese marriage is increasingly seen as a divider⁴⁷, a high number of FGD participants in these areas also consider marriage between Lebanese and Syrians as a key connector between communities:

While it is impossible to replicate historical connections, it is suggested in this sense that time and interaction, as well as shared cultural components, are key connectors between refugees and the host community. Although hostilities remain with Palestinian refugees, survey and qualitative respondents suggest slightly improved relations between themselves and Lebanese than between Lebanese and Syrian, explained largely through the increased tolerance and coexistence that comes with prolonged acquaintance and adaptation.

Continuity and ruptures

Some participants directly observe that these memories and past experiences continue to influence their interactions with other groups in society. According to adult refugee men from Tripoli, an environment of conflict is, to a certain extent, inevitable: “in Lebanon, conflict always exists: old, new, political conflict, religious conflict, regional conflict.” Others, however, refer to the emergence of new conflicts, or refute claims of cyclical or ongoing conflicts:

*No, these conflicts are not dragging on since our grandparents. There were better days before. Sectarianism was not present. It started ten years ago here in this area. We used to live altogether, there was compassion, we used to live with the Shiite Muslim. There were a few clashes, of course, but not that violent.*⁴⁸

For these women, a worrying new emergence of high levels of physical violence within conflict can be seen emerging in Baalbeck-Hermel, along sectarian lines that did not exist so starkly before. While a common trope in conflict can be the romanticisation of relations in the past, it is nonetheless clear from all FGDs and KIIs in this area (and also some from Akkar and Aley) that an increasing propensity for violence in the face of division can be observed at the present moment. This will be discussed in the following section.

The current moment in Lebanon, however, is for some of the participants - primarily those involved in the protests - a chance at turning a new page in the nation’s history, whether in terms of breaking sectarian divides, pushing back against the political elite, or bringing about a new and inclusive society for all. For one female local activist in Zahle, the new generation is severing ties with the “old mindset” and “fixing what our parents could not.” This is a thread of hope that has been seen woven throughout many of the interactions with Lebanese, Syrian, and Palestinian communities.

Dividing lines and perceptions of conflict

The below subsections (‘Dividing lines’ and ‘Local tensions and conflict’) have been ordered so as to best draw out dividers, triggers of tension, and incidences of conflict within each community.⁴⁹ Results have found that most participants differentiate between divisions and tensions, with some areas showing few divisions but multiple

⁴⁶ Five male Syrians aged between 19 and 27 years old in Fakiha

⁴⁷ UNDP & ARK, Regular Perceptions Survey of Social Tensions Throughout Lebanon, Wave VI, August 2019

⁴⁸ Ten Lebanese women aged between 21 and 57 years old from Fakiha

⁴⁹ Connectors and peacebuilding efforts can be found in the ‘Dynamics’ section (3). Analysis of interaction and dis/satisfaction with formal structures such as local municipalities, service providers, and the wider Lebanese political/justice system is explored through the lens of exclusion/inclusion in the third section.

perceptions of tensions as leading to conflict (for example, in Akkar), and other areas showing multiple divisions but fewer instances of tensions or conflict (for example, in Central and West Bekaa). Other communities do, however, observe multiple divisions in society through which tensions and conflict do play out (for example, in Mount Lebanon, or Baalbeck-Hermel). Local conflict and tensions may be understood as the way in which actors *perceive* local, and to a certain extent, everyday tensions, as well as any ensuing conflict.

Dividers

When asked about divisions at the community level, the **majority of participants (42.5%) say that there are political divisions within society**; Lebanese participants (54.7%) believe this more than Syrian refugees (31.3%), and non-refugee Syrians (29.4%), and Palestinian refugees from Syria (7.1%), and across all nationalities, slightly more women (46.6%) than men (39.1%).

Figure 8: Perceptions about divisions at community level by status

Question: In your opinion, can divisions along religious or political lines be seen between groups in your community? Check all that apply.

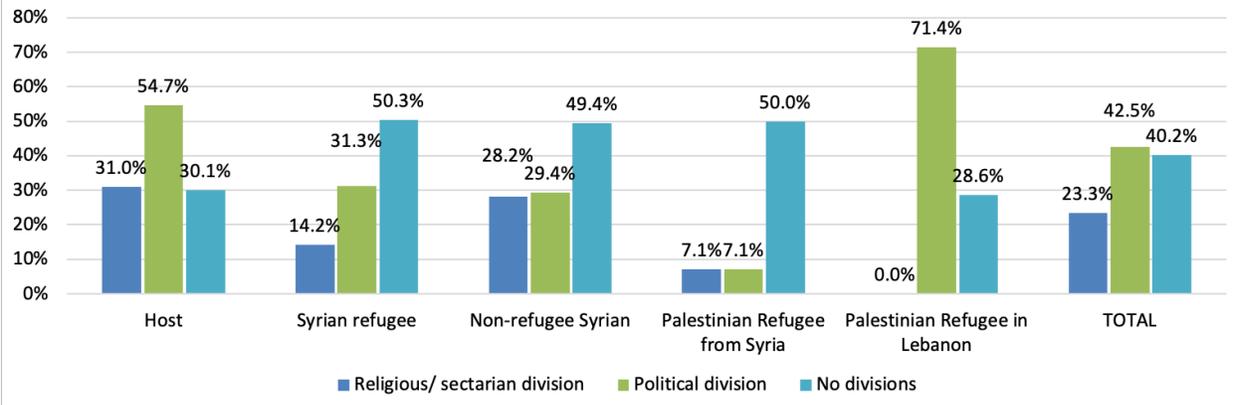


Table 3: Percentage of respondents who stated “Yes, political” by status, sex, and age group

Question: In your opinion, can divisions along religious or political lines be seen between groups in your community? Check all that apply.

Status	Female	Male	Youth (Ages 15-25)	Adults (Ages 26 and above)	Total
Host	60.1%	49.4%	57.3%	52.5%	54.7%
Syrian Refugee	32.8%	29.7%	29.8%	32.8%	31.3%
Non-refugee Syrian	22.9%	34.0%	34.1%	24.4%	29.4%
Palestinian Refugee from Syria ⁵⁰	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	7.1%
Palestinian Refugee in Lebanon ⁵¹	83.3%	0.0%	50.0%	100.0%	71.4%
Total	46.0%	39.1%	43.0%	42.0%	42.5%

As can be seen from the above table, significantly higher percentages of the host population - across both age group and sex - view divisions along political lines between groups in their communities more than Syrian refugee and non-refugee Syrians. This may be related to a qualitative finding which shows that in general the Syrians spoken with are reluctant to discuss political topics or acknowledge the relevance or benefit of politics to their lives. Many give

⁵⁰ Total PRS sample includes 14 respondents: 3 female and 11 male / 4 youth and 10 adults.

⁵¹ Total PRL sample includes 7 respondents: 6 female and 1 male / 4 youth and 3 adults.

explanations in both the quantitative and qualitative studies along the lines of “we do not like to interfere,” suggesting most choose to maintain a low profile and avoid contentious subjects that may further complicate their lives. Equally, given that the question was framed around understandings of the respondents’ own communities, there is potentially a sign of fewer religious or political divisions seen or acted upon by the Syrian community itself, within Lebanon. Intra-Syrian relations and networks are developed in more detail below.

Across most nationalities (with the exception of non-refugee Syrians), women tend to view political divisions more acutely than men. Divisions are seen in general slightly more by adults than youth (with the exception, again, for non-refugee Syrians), which may be due to longer lived experiences and more memories of past divisions.

Around a quarter of **respondents (23.4%) select religious/sectarian divisions**. Lebanese respondents in general note these religious/sectarian divisions (31.0%) more than Syrian refugees (14.2%), and narrowly more than non-refugee Syrians (28.2%). This is likely due to the more homogenous religious affiliations of (mostly Sunni) Syrian refugees, their choice of residence often in areas which share religious identities, as well the absence of civil war memories. The latter point may also apply to youth, who, in the host community, perceive there to be less religious/sectarian divisions than adults.

Table 4: Percentage of respondents who stated “Yes, religious/sectarian” by status, sex and age group

Question: In your opinion, can divisions along religious or political lines be seen between groups in your community? Check all that apply.

Area	Female	Male	Youth (Ages 15-25)	Adults (Ages 26 and above)	Total
Host	27.0%	34.9%	28.6%	33.1%	31.0%
Syrian Refugee	13.2%	15.3%	12.4%	15.9%	14.2%
Non-refugee Syrian	25.7%	30.0%	29.5%	26.8%	28.2%
Palestinian Refugee from Syria	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	7.1%
Palestinian Refugee in Lebanon	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Total	20.8%	25.9%	21.3%	25.2%	23.4%

Significantly, **40.2% of participants believe that there are no divisions at the community level in Lebanon** - this is the belief more of Syrian refugees (at 50.3%), non-refugee Syrians (at 49.4%), and Palestinian refugees from Syria (at 50.0%), than of Lebanese (at 30.1%) and Palestinian refugees in Lebanon (at 28.6%). As will be discussed in the following section, this contrast is likely a result of a tendency of Syrian participants to downplay conflict/divisions so as not to create further social issues for themselves, as well as the sense of unity within their own communities to which most Syrian refugees in FGDs make reference.

Table 5: Percentage of respondents who stated “No, there are no divisions” by status, sex and age group

Question: In your opinion, can divisions along religious or political lines be seen between groups in your community? Check all that apply.

Status	Female	Male	Youth (Ages 15-25)	Adults (Ages 26 and above)	Total
Host	27.4%	32.7%	27.8%	32.0%	30.1%
Syrian Refugee	53.6%	46.8%	52.4%	48.3%	50.3%
Non-refugee Syrian	57.1%	44.0%	38.6%	61.0%	49.4%
Palestinian Refugee from Syria	0.0%	63.6%	75.0%	40.6%	50.0%
Palestinian Refugee in Lebanon	16.7%	100%	50.0%	0.0%	28.6%
Total	40.3%	40.1%	39.8%	40.6%	40.2%

The following table disaggregates those who observe political divides by area, sex, and age group. It illustrates that political divisions are most seen in Beirut and Baalbek-Hermel and the least so in Akkar. Further area-specific analysis

is found below the tables. Male adults in Beirut, followed by male youth in Baalbeck-Hermel, perceive this category of divisions the most.

Table 6: Percentage of respondents who stated “Yes, political” by area, sex and age group

Question: In your opinion, can divisions along religious or political lines be seen between groups in your community? Check all that apply.

Area	Female	Male	Youth (Ages 15-25)	Adults (Ages 26 and above)	Total
Akkar	6.8%	15.9%	9.5%	13.0%	11.4%
North	39.8%	24.0%	37.8%	26.9%	32.0%
Beirut	53.3%	71.1%	56.3%	69.0%	62.2%
Mount Lebanon	47.3%	39.2%	39.1%	46.6%	43.2%
Baalbeck-Hermel	55.1%	59.3%	63.1%	51.3%	57.3%
Central and West Bekaa	57.6%	31.2%	45.7%	43.0%	44.3%
Total	46.0%	39.1%	42.0%	43.0%	42.5%

The table below shows the disaggregation of respondents who observe religious/sectarian lines between groups in their communities, by area, sex, and age group. Religious divisions are seen most clearly in Beirut, Baalbeck-Hermel and Mount Lebanon, with far lower percentages in Akkar, Central and West Bekaa and the North. The group with the highest perceptions of religious divisions are male adults in Beirut.

Table 7: Percentage of respondents who stated “Yes, religious/sectarian” by area, sex and age group

Question: In your opinion, can divisions along religious or political lines be seen between groups in your community? Check all that apply.

Area	Female	Male	Youth (Ages 15-25)	Adults (Ages 26 and above)	Total
Akkar	9.1%	9.1%	7.1%	10.9%	9.1%
North	2.0%	6.3%	3.3%	4.8%	4.2%
Beirut	28.9%	68.9%	45.8%	52.4%	48.9%
Mount Lebanon	29.0%	33.9%	28.4%	34.0%	31.5%
Baalbeck-Hermel	48.7%	29.1%	32.1%	45.0%	38.4%
Central and West Bekaa	2.2%	14.0%	9.8%	6.5%	8.1%
Total	20.8%	25.9%	21.3%	25.2%	23.4%

The table underneath, displaying those respondents who perceive there to be no divisions between groups in their communities, show the figures to be greatest in the North and in Akkar, with the lowest percentages visible in Baalbeck-Hermel - in particular male youth here.

Table 8: Percentage of respondents who stated “No, there are no divisions” by area, sex and age group

Question: In your opinion, can divisions along religious or political lines be seen between groups in your community? Check all that apply.

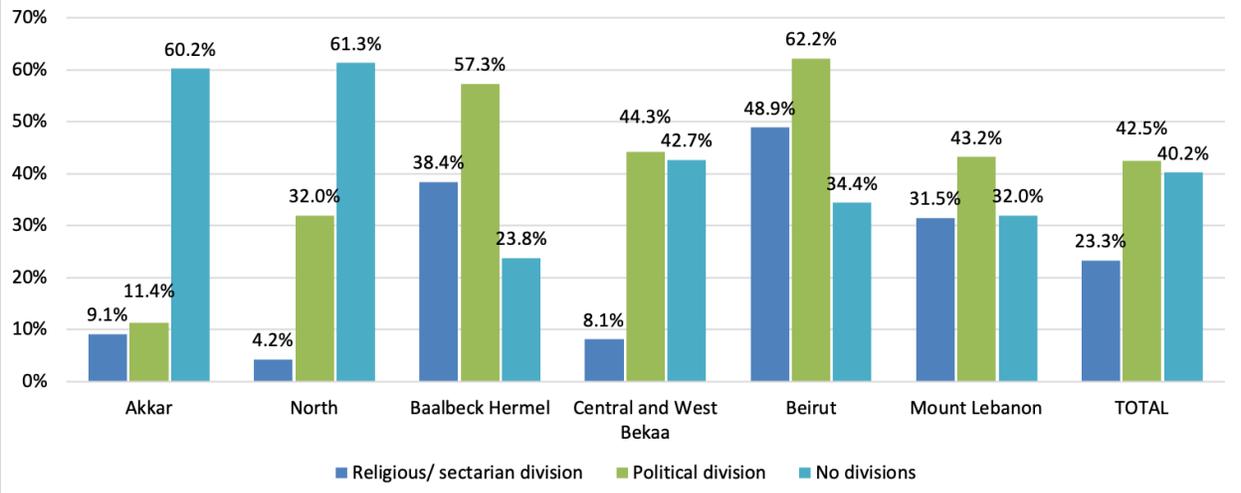
Area	Female	Male	Youth (Ages 15-25)	Adults (Ages 26 and above)	Total
Akkar	59.1%	61.4%	61.9%	58.7%	60.2%
North	58.2%	64.6%	57.8%	64.4%	61.3%
Beirut	46.7%	22.2%	41.7%	26.2%	34.4%
Mount Lebanon	33.3%	30.7%	33.7%	30.6%	32.0%
Baalbeck-Hermel	25.6%	22.1%	20.2%	27.5%	23.8%
Central and West Bekaa	35.9%	49.5%	40.2%	45.2%	42.7%

Total	40.3%	40.1%	39.8%	40.6%	40.2%
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The qualitative data adds further insight, with participants introducing new dividing lines (for example, economic) and at times blurring together the separate categories. The Area Profiles (Annex 1) provide further area and location disaggregation of findings.

Figure 9: Perceptions about divisions at community level by area

Question: In your opinion, can divisions along religious or political lines be seen between groups in your community? Check all that apply.



Overall, **economic issues** across all areas are perceived as straining relations in society; these are largely viewed in tandem with political and/or religious divisions, often suggesting that political divides have been stretched apart more than ever by a lack of basic necessities and financial struggles. Many participants in the previous survey question chose more than one option and expressed the opinion that elements such as religion/politics/economy are complex and must be viewed jointly. Nonetheless, the dominant and area-specific divisions can be viewed within these interlinkages. In Mount Lebanon and Beirut, the key divisions dominating people’s perceptions of conflict are sectarian and religious in nature. In both these areas, this goes hand in hand with high perceptions of political divisions. In Beirut in particular, the high percentage of political divisions may well align also with high levels of protest and conflict with the state, rather than merely divisions between political parties and supporters. This may also account for the relatively high levels of political divisions cited in the North, despite also high levels of ‘no division.’

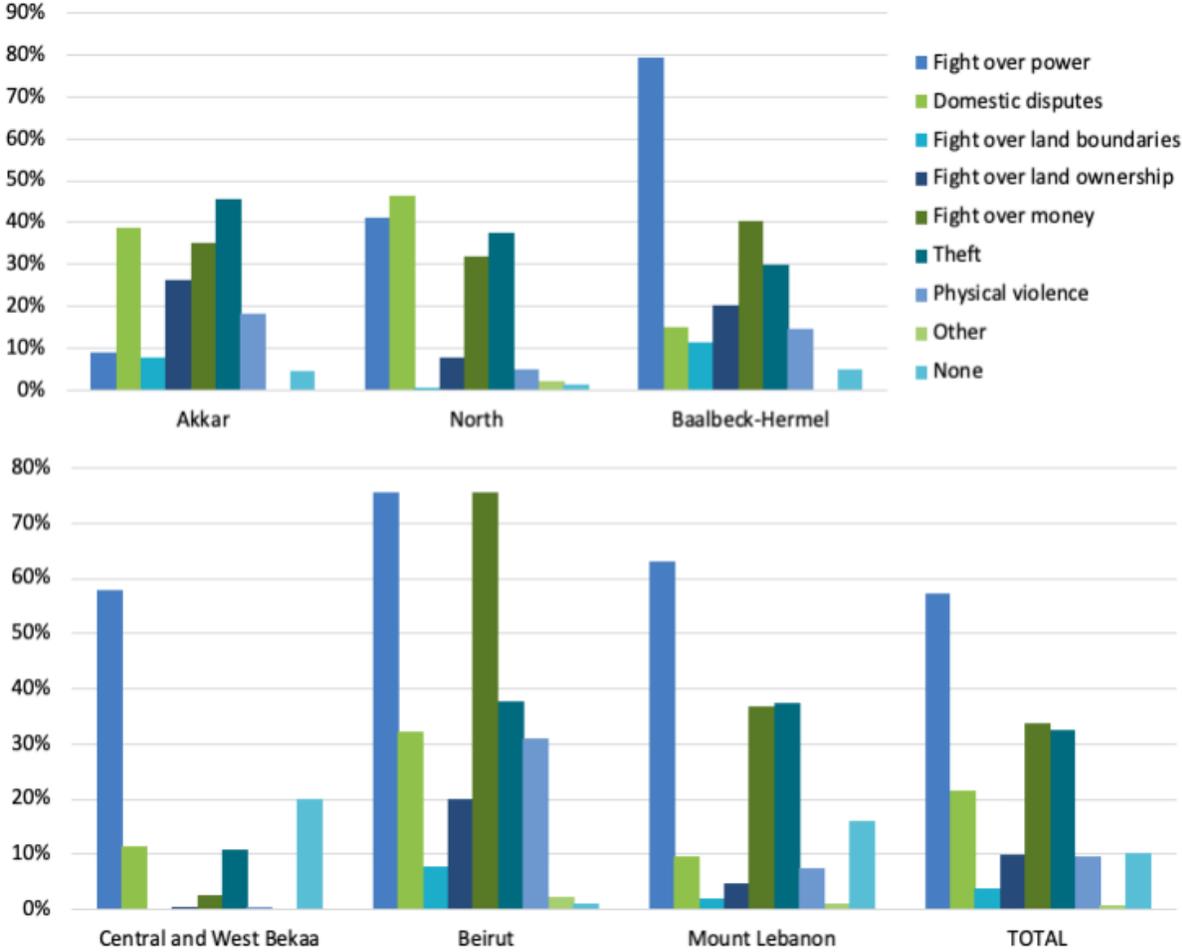
In the North and in Akkar, perceptions of existing divisions are generally low, but tensions are seen to emerge nonetheless through economic hardships. Tripoli as a key site of protest may also account for the relatively high levels of political divisions, despite participants also perceiving there to be ‘no divisions.’ Central and West Bekaa report substantial political divisions, but qualitative findings suggest that these divisions generally do not escalate into tensions. Baalbeck-Hermel reports high political and relatively high religious divisions, which qualitative findings suggest play out in the form of tensions and conflict among clans and family networks.

Local tensions and conflict

At the community level, main disputes include fights over power (57.4% of all disputes). This is considerably variable between different areas of Lebanon; while many in Baalbek-Hermel (79.3%) and Beirut (75.6%) observe this conflict, only 9.1% do in Akkar, reflecting contrasts in power dynamics within the country and supporting the notion that power in Lebanon is particularly related to politics, and specifically political division. Considerably lower dynamics of

power in Akkar may correspond here with the low levels of divisions reported in the same area. 62.9% percent of participants in Mount Lebanon note this form of conflict; 57.8% in Central and West Bekaa; and 41.2% in the North.

Figure 10: Perceptions of main disputes by area
 Question: What are the main disputes happening here?



Often, areas which have greater fights over power also report observing high levels of fights in public places or in the street. In Baalbeck-Hermel, these even take place in official locations, such as municipality buildings or police stations. This link may suggest that occasionally conflicts related to power are a public rather than private affair, related also to the demonstration of power through conflict. Lebanese women taking part in an FGD in Baalbeck⁵² touch on this issue, suggesting that shows over power (through violence) are aimed at extending beyond the street even into the national/international arena:

Conflicts here are always violent, and there are always conflicts before Baalbeck International Festival, [the clans] do it on purpose to scare people and to jeopardize the festival. They want to ruin the reputation of Baalbeck for being a touristic place. We don't know why they are doing this.

⁵² Three Lebanese women aged between 18 and 51 years old

Fights over money, and fights over theft are relatively common in all areas (at 33.8% and 32.5%, respectively) except for Central and West Bekaa, which has considerably lower percentages of respondents choosing these particular disputes (2.7% and 10.8%, respectively). That these are higher in areas which report greater levels of economic deprivation and economic tensions suggest that these are some of the conflicts and/or coping mechanisms arising from these issues. Perceptions of local conflict in each area remain relatively similar across nationality and status, although it is important to note that the question addressed observations of conflict as opposed to personal experiences.

Thus it can be seen that structural components in Lebanon, including strained religious, political, socio-economic backdrops and multiple societal divisions within these structures, are contributing at many levels to local tensions and conflicts, including fights over power and money. There is some clear correlation between divisive structures and the onset of conflict, such as political divisions aligning with increased fights over power (for example, in Baalbeck-Hermel) and fights over money escalated by struggling economic structures in areas such as Akkar.

Actors and Key Stakeholders

This section explores perceptions of one another and analyses the ways in which key actors and stakeholders perceive each other and interact among conflict and through the structures and divisions as explored above. This follows the second component of DFID’s Conflict Assessment framework which highlights the relevance of an actor-oriented analysis in exploring the ways in which ‘shorter term incentives and interests [...] often cause latent conflict to become open conflict.’⁵³

As such, the section presents firstly a broad key stakeholder analysis before zooming in on the power dynamics involved within such relationships, focusing on key aspects such as: the way in which division may be used as a tool; the existence of patronage and clientelism networks; the hierarchies of power and ensuing reliance; instances of fear and silencing surrounding the relationships between different actors; and an emerging propensity for violence seen throughout the findings.

Secondly, the analysis moves to broader collective groups in Lebanese society and the way in which such communities interact with and think of each other. Here, the report looks at intra-Lebanese relations and the ways in which divisions and commonalities abound across them. Then, the report zooms into findings on inter-community relations (largely host-refugee) and sources of tension but also instances of support and coexistence. As a third point, the report notes findings on intra-refugee (largely Syrian) relations and recommends further research into this network.

Thirdly, the section looks at two key demographics within the component of ‘actors’, providing a detailed exploration of gender (women) and age (youth), both of which are found to play into instances and perceptions of both conflict and peacebuilding within Lebanon.

This mid-section lays a foundation for a discussion of conflict dynamics in the report’s final section.⁵⁴

Perceptions of one another

This subsection begins with a stakeholder analysis of the actors who engage in the aforementioned structural divisions and emerging tensions/conflict, before moving onto specific group-based relations..

Primary and secondary stakeholders

The following groups are based largely on the inputs of participants in FGDs and KIIs in all areas targeted in the country. They are recognised as the main actors taking part in conflict, whether directly or indirectly, or in the production or alleviation of tensions/conflicts. Some of the stakeholders identified are specific to local contexts and realities; others have a national or even regional presence.

1. Politicians and parties at the national level

These actors tend to be identified first by FGD and KII participants across all areas, as they give a broad view of conflict in Lebanon before scaling down to their own communities. The immediate link, however, suggests that (national level) politics and political decisions are closely and quickly associated with conflict. As summarised through the opinion of one youth committee member in Halba: “Parties divide society, not sects.”

⁵³ DFID (Department for International Development, UK), [Conducting Conflict Assessments: Guidance Notes](#), 2002

⁵⁴ Readers may refer to Area Profiles (Annex 1) for further area disaggregation.

“Sectarian political forces,” their alliances (such as the March 14 and March 18 blocks) and external actors or donors were referred to by various qualitative research participants as “actors of conflict.”⁵⁵ Some relate their incidences of conflict directly to these larger actors, particularly through the experience of the nationwide protests, but a key divider cited by many FGD and KII participants is the incitement of conflict through political speeches and the media, often targeted at increasing antagonism between refugee and host communities. Syrian refugee women in Zahle implicate the broadcasted rhetoric of Hezbollah, Gibran Bassil, and Nabih Berri in this dynamic, speeches aimed at promoting the tensions in Lebanon. The ‘securitisation’ of the Syrian refugee issue is reflected in literature too, whereby ‘politicians and the media have long propagated the framing of Syrian de facto refugees as a security threat.’⁵⁶ This process of securitisation, a report by Lebanon Support explains, ‘is not a mere discursive one and has been backed by government policy’ such as evictions, curfews, documentation restraints, and enforced immobility for Syrian refugees.⁵⁷

In this sense, political actors are seen as direct instigators of conflict, both among Lebanese and between Lebanese and non-Lebanese. The fact that this tactic of division is both noted and critiqued by many of the Lebanese participants, however, indicates that intended dividers do not always succeed. Awareness of misinformation channelled to different societal groups is something that will be discussed further, but it is relevant to note here as a potential source of resilience.

2. Political leaders and influential parties at the local level

Many participants relate their perceptions of actors in conflicts to the political dynamics taking place at their local level. All women in an FGD in Zahle, for instance, determined Hezbollah and the Future Movement as both the main conflicting parties and the key actors of conflict. Actors such as these are viewed across all areas in terms of the support they leverage from their community, as well as their role in fights over power and competition for personal influence. According to Lebanese women from Jounieh⁵⁸, for example: “Their interests are to keep people busy fighting among each other and benefit from the chaos caused, to steal or reach higher positions. The leaders boast about their abilities to develop the country, but actually they do very little, they only want to get to the higher position. They are achieving their personal goals, but they do not work for the betterment of people.”

While some FGD participants are critical of this dynamic, others note that it is pervasive and forever propped up by the support of those who follow political parties. A male municipality representative from Jounieh laments such an entrenched system of clientelism:

Even the people taking part in the revolution would tell you at the end of the day: “you cannot touch my leader”, and this revolution was supposed to be neutral. We live in a vicious circle. We are deeply ingrained in political parties and their leaders. We cannot live without following a leader of a specific political party.

Thus, political leaders and influential parties at the local level are viewed as primary stakeholders, with the most to gain from a cyclic pattern of conflict that is (often inadvertently) propped up by local community members.

3. Local bodies/individuals of authority - including municipality staff, mayors, and mukhtars

As described within a report by Lebanon Support on conflict dynamics in the Bekaa, ‘Municipalities do not present a unified actor and their contribution to the conflict dynamics varies depending on the power and political allegiance of their members.’ The variety of ways in which community members perceive and interact with local authorities such as municipalities is something viewed throughout the quantitative and qualitative data.

⁵⁵ Female municipality representative from Halba; Refugees in Majdal Anjar - nine men between 19 and 15 years old.

⁵⁶ Bassem Chit and Mohamad Ali Nayel, *Understanding racism against Syrian refugees in Lebanon*, Lebanon Support, 28 October 2013

⁵⁷ Lebanon Support, *Between Local Patronage Relationships and Securitization: The Conflict Context in the Bekaa Region, Conflict Analysis Report*, January 2015

⁵⁸ Seven women aged between 29 and 70 years old

One local male activist from Beirut exemplifies this variance: “Municipalities either work on promoting conflict or reducing conflicts or are neutral depending on the village. Municipalities who have curfew on refugees will definitely increase tension and discrimination. If they say to the NGOs to come and work in the community and the municipality stays aside, they are acting as neutral parties. And the municipality decreases tension if they call for communication and the working as one for the betterment of the community.”

Therefore, municipality actors and those working at the level of local authority are seen as actors of conflict, either in mediatory or provocative roles, depending on political affiliation and personal ideology. Further data on area-specific levels of satisfaction with local authorities, including service provision and ability to access decision-making platforms, is disaggregated in the following section.

4. Clans and family-based/tribal networks

Power relations related to families and kinship still prevail, with one CSO representative from Halba stating that “there are many actors and influencers here, and they are related to the big families of Akkar, the families who have power and property. This influence is almost always used negatively – for example, powerful families can exploit the needs of disadvantaged people, [through controlling access to] jobs, medical services, public schools and official organisations. The advantage goes to people from the same background or those in good relations with the person who has power. They stay safe.”

To a greater extent, all FGDs and KIIs in Baalbeck-Hermel addressed specific actors involved in such local dynamics, listing local families such as the Mokdad, Jaafar and Zaayer families, and particularly the young men within them. The conflicts catalysed by the clans in this area are described not only through the unfair distribution of service provision but also through direct instances of violence and lawlessness, often for the sake of show.

Findings also show that clan activities in Baalbeck-Hermel are in interaction with another stakeholder, the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF), who in 2018 began implementing a strategy to address insecurity and lawlessness in the region, particularly in relation to armed groups and those involved in the drug trade.⁵⁹ Women in one FGD in Baalbeck describe the main conflict in the area as between the families and the army, the latter perceived as an unsuccessful force in mitigating violence: “There is a base for the army in their region. Whenever there is conflict, the army comes to reduce the tensions, but they are also being attacked by those families during these conflicts.”⁶⁰

UNDP’s report suggests, however, that family ties and influences can sometimes be utilised positively in terms of conflict mediation and prevention. This is seen to be more the case in Central and West Bekaa, than in Baalbeck-Hermel, however:

Many of the villages of the Bekaa have a long history of municipal action and a cultural heritage of mitigating conflict. Though families are not bound by tribal connections as in the north of Bekaa, strong ties still exist, and notables continue to exert moral pressure when crisis or conflict emerges and have played a positive role in mitigating conflict and preventing the negative implications of minor incidents.⁶¹

The report also notes that local level politics and affiliation, especially those within the wider Bekaa region and related to clan/family allegiance, can ‘remain strong enough to offset national political divides.’⁶² Thus while family-based networks and clan dynamics in locations such as Baalbeck and Fakiha are often both divisive and directly involved in instigating conflict, they also fracture the strength of wider-scale political polarization.

⁵⁹ Al Mashareq, New Baalbek, Hermel security plan in place, 29 June 2018

⁶⁰ Lebanese female FGD in Baalbeck - 3 women aged between 18 and 51 years old

⁶¹ UNDP, The Burden of Scarce Opportunities: The Social Stability Context in Central and West Bekaa: Conflict Analysis Report, March 2017

⁶² UNDP, The Burden of Scarce Opportunities: The Social Stability Context in Central and West Bekaa: Conflict Analysis Report, March 2017

5. UN, the international community, NGOs and CSOs/CBOs

NGOs are referred to only a few times through FGDs and KIIs. Most of these references indicate the positive experiences of participants in engaging with them. Civil society actors are also some of the main peacebuilders cited by survey and FGD participants. However, some qualitative references suggest that INGO actors and activities inadvertently contribute to conflict. For example, a CSO interviewee in Beirut reflects on the UN and the World Cash Assistance programme in Lebanon, whereby the visibility of the methods in which refugees receive dollars (i.e. at ATMs) within vulnerable Lebanese communities is directly leading to clashes and conflicts at the local level - as also noted by other participants in Zahle. For this interviewee, “this is non-conflict sensitive humanitarian assistance.” Noting that foreign aid was not a source for conflict at the current moment, “because we need the money,” it is suggested that it might well become one. Another CSO representative from Halba observed that all organisations have missions, but that those with political missions risked exacerbating tensions.

The role of NGOs was framed through the notion, also reflected in Zinc Network’s 2019 findings⁶³, that aid distributors unfairly favour Syrians: “I do not have any tensions with them, but I have an objection that the Syrian is ensured aid from international organizations such as medicine, heating, and education. I do not have a monthly stipend, but they have monthly payments from the UN.”⁶⁴ That this was not a primary divider cited, however, suggests alignment with the June 2019 ARK survey which reports that perceived competition/unfair distribution of aid has been reduced in recent months.⁶⁵ Programming should continue to include both Syrian and Lebanese equally so as to avoid the development/re-emergence of these perceptions.

At the same time, the UN was also mentioned as the most powerful influencer in mitigating conflict, particularly through their role in funding local municipalities. UN relations with governments and ministries, along with the available money and budget, is generally perceived to place them in a powerful position. Nonetheless, the position and power can still be manipulated: “municipalities make regulations against Syrians just to tell the UN that they need money; then they cancel the regulations once they receive it.”⁶⁶ This anecdote has been heard from many mayors, where there is a “lot of push against Syrians, then NGOs will bring money, make committees, and give provisions like 500 garbage bins.” Interestingly, this approach was not always criticised by interviewees, and at times is seen as the best strategy at a time of economic crisis and lack of service provision, a strategy that is also incentivising local authorities to include Syrians more, allow NGO projects to operate, and to observe that “Syrians are not only depleting resources, but also bringing much-needed assistance.”

This approach is critiqued in literature, however with one analysis from the Middle East Institute warning against the ‘severe unintended consequences’ of ‘incentivizing local authorities and communities to, at minimum, display grievances, and, even more dangerously, to encourage conflict, with the aim of attracting development funding.’ The author warns against understanding refugee-host relations solely through the lens of material realities.⁶⁷ In this sense, it is recommended that while peacebuilding programming should understand the economic lens of conflict, it should be implemented holistically in light of political/sectarian divisions - mechanisms to address these together are suggested in the recommendations section.

On the other hand, a UNDP conflict analysis from Central and West Bekaa in 2017 highlights Syrian CSOs as key stakeholders in the area:

⁶³ Zinc Network, [Impact of Syrian Refugee Crisis of Lebanon: Quantitative Research](#), November 2019

⁶⁴ FGD with Lebanese men in Halba, 6 men aged between 23 and 55 years old

⁶⁵ UNDP & ARK, [Regular Perceptions Survey of Social Tensions Throughout Lebanon](#), Wave V, June 2019

⁶⁶ KII with a CSO representative from Baalbeck

⁶⁷ Middle East Institute, [From Conflict-insensitive to Conflict-driven Aid: Responding to the Syrian Refugee Crisis in Lebanon](#), December 2019

They are closer to the refugee and local communities. Some of them, especially the Syrian NGOs, have managed to cut layers of corruption and deal directly with the refugees and the latter feel at ease with them. This is not to say that they are not perceived by some as corrupt and unfair in terms of aid distribution. Beneficiaries often do not know how to complain if a problem occurs or whether their complaint will be heard. Among the Lebanese civil society organisations, several are affiliated to a religious group or political party and thus are associated with a conflict side.⁶⁸

While the quantitative and qualitative findings of *this* research did not draw out conversation on the value of Syrian NGOs and CSOs, they may well have played a substantial role in building up the generally cohesive host-refugee relations that have been seen reported in the Central and West Bekaa region.

6. Protestors

According to the research findings, protestors also have a role in increasing conflict: “The revolutionaries [protestors] are the group that tends to proliferate the conflict by registering positions against the decisions and laws of the authority and its actions.”⁶⁹ The same participant acknowledges the multitude of actors and reasons for taking part in this dynamic, however:

These revolutionaries are provoked indirectly when the government raises the prices of all materials or cuts the gasoline in petrol stations to block the revolutionaries from reaching the squares and protest areas, with the aim to weaken the revolution and the reaching of the revolutionaries’ goals.

A youth committee representative from Beddaoui expresses the opinion that protestors are primarily the actors of conflict in Tripoli and Beirut through their engagement with formal and informal opposition: “There are no conflicts between political parties. In Tripoli, the conflicts are mainly between the protestors and Internal Security Forces. In Beirut, the conflicts are between the protestors, Hezbollah, and Amal followers.”

Indeed, while almost no FGD participants or KIs are critical of protestors - many in fact considering themselves along these lines or instead expressing their sympathy and solidarity with the shared cause - multiple interviewees (particularly in the North, Mount Lebanon and Central and West Bekaa) view them as actors of conflict nonetheless, citing multiple tensions, in frequent cases violent, that occur at their hands.

Rumours also abound about unknown actors within this conflict dynamic, as exemplified by the comments of a male youth committee member in Beddaoui: “There are intruders who came among the protestors, attacked the Internal Security Forces and the protestors and then ran away.” For this individual, the motives are unknown but certainly politicised: “We cannot really tell who they were, but they are definitely part of a political party.” Another CSO representative from Halba makes similar references to “invisible hands” employed by political parties to weaken and/or provoke protestors. These remarks reflect the fear of divisions/dividers and rumours that operate in times of (political) conflict; while these may refer to real occurrences of infiltration and spoilers rather than simply perceptions, programming in these societies linked to strategic communication and the spread of accurate information may reduce the anxieties escalated by unverified news of certain actors in conflict. Misinformation and conflict will be tackled in the following section of this report.

It is important to note here that many participants are reluctant to name, identify, or discuss actors of conflict, particularly those associated with and known at the community level. This is seen to a greater extent with Syrian participants in FGDs and KIs across all areas, with some refusing to discuss political issues and others hesitant to discuss the specifics of conflict, especially in relation to real actors and influential individuals. Lebanese participants in general are more willing and active in discussing power relations, either in relation to other Lebanese communities/community members or to political elites. However, while this was not widely observed during this

⁶⁸ UNDP, *The Burden of Scarce Opportunities: The Social Stability Context in Central and West Bekaa: Conflict Analysis Report*, March 2017

⁶⁹ FGD with Lebanese women in Majdal Anjar, 8 women aged between 18 and 51 years old

qualitative research, previous studies and reports do suggest that the sharing of ‘inside’ information or the voicing of unpopular opinions about clan/tribal dynamics is generally controversial and remains taboo in many societies where such structures dominate, such as in Baalbeck-Hermel.

As seen in the above analysis, political leaders at the local and national levels are generally seen as primary actors of conflict, although participants acknowledge the multifaceted nature of many conflicts in which multiple actors have a stake. A continual theme is the idea that politicians and those in power have the most gain from conflict, and thus although they also have the most influence on curbing tension, they often will not. The incentives and methods surrounding power dynamics and this maintenance of conflict across Lebanon and in specific areas are explored below.

Power dynamics

Acknowledgement of power dynamics were seen across all interactions with participants, whether in reference to political parties/leaders, different nationalities, or different areas. As previously analysed, high levels of ‘fights over power’ were referenced by survey respondents at an overall 57.4%, with highest levels seen in Baalbek-Hermel (79.3%), Beirut (75.6%), and Mount Lebanon (62.9%) but lower levels in areas such as Akkar (9.1%). Many FGD and KII participants were active in discussing the positions, interests, attitudes, methods, and objectives of stakeholders within their communities, particularly in relation to the personal interests (framed through the lens of money and control) of political figures in maintaining divisions and conflict in their constituencies at the expense of the well-being and coexistence of inhabitants.

Division as a tool

According to a UNDP report, ‘In some cases, national actors directly accentuate divisions to avoid a loss in control, as it was the case with Haouch el Harimi, a Sunni village in West Bekaa which was not allowed to hold municipal elections because of a fierce conflict between two of its large families.’⁷⁰ A similar case is reported by Lebanese women from Fakiha:

*This area is lacking the basic needs. We have not even had a municipality for 6 years; this affects us too. The government does not want to allow us to elect a new municipality. The previous municipality was a follower of one political party, and they did not want to pass it on to someone else.*⁷¹

Another CSO representative from Aley reflects upon a similar political tactic of electoral influence, referring to continued sectarian divides and past conflicts: “The memories of the people and their suffering are used daily during the elections.” In terms of the prevalence of sectarianism and sect leaders as influential actors in conflict, a female municipality representative from Halba explains that the dynamics of politics in Lebanon are such that power thrives on discord: “These [political] parties rely on sectarian incitement to maintain their presence and achieve their gains. Accordingly, alliances are created for the sake of controlling the state, and they are not intended to serve the country but to serve the interests of the leader of each sect or party.”

Patronage and clientelism networks

This power is maintained and brought about by patronage and clientelism: “The state of tension is mainly due to the variety of sects that exist and the tendency of each group to support a party that has its own sectarian character, in order to secure a favouritism or support of various kinds (to secure a job or medicine, or to get security protection, for example).”⁷² While some participants, including a group of Lebanese women from Tripoli, express disdain at

⁷⁰ UNDP, *The Burden of Scarce Opportunities: The Social Stability Context in Central and West Bekaa: Conflict Analysis Report*, March 2017

⁷¹ Ten women aged between 21 and 57 years old

⁷² Female municipality representative from Halba

those who benefit from a system of nepotism or *wasta*, others frame the dynamic in terms of an unequal system that often leaves no other option.

The need for informal protection and or security through patronage networks, particularly in the absence of effective systems of state protection, is something highlighted by actors across the findings. As Lebanon Support’s report on hybrid security in Lebanon explains in reference to three locations, including Aley, local political parties often ‘rely on community militias’ for protection and service provision in return for the constituency’s compliance ‘with their ethical and political code in the public space.’ Political parties thus ‘enjoy such legitimacy in their capacity as security providers, not as political actors.’⁷³

While this can play out positively in the forms of localised community empowerment and crisis management, the report also describes how reliance on such informal mechanisms is often entrenched within power dynamics that reproduce relations of control, exploitation, and dependency. Tensions are also fuelled by the exclusion of those without access to such structures. These dynamics are broadly discussed across the country by FGD and KII participants, but to a greater extent in Mount Lebanon (Aley), Akkar, the North (Tripoli), and Baalbeck-Hermel.

Hierarchical power and reliance

Participants explain their tolerance of others through an understanding of these hierarchical power structures: “Mainly, it is the strong against the weak, the armed parties against the non-armed, the educated people against the non-educated people. If you dare to talk and express your opinion, they answer with violence, you are not allowed to speak up. In Baalbeck-Hermel, it is the power of the strong against the weak.”⁷⁴

In this instance, a climate of fear and an absence of alternatives maintain unequal power dynamics and settings of conflict. Lebanese women from Tripoli also note how the demonstration of power through the creation of fear can not only disproportionately affect certain groups, as noted above, but also certain areas of the country.

If anything happens in Lebanon and any one of those politicians want to send a message, they use a Tripoli street, for example by sending some young and foolish people to drop a bomb between Jabal Mohsen and Tabbaneh, or into the Abou Ali river - or anything that can scare the people.

Such dynamics of power, findings have shown, are more offset and hierarchical between certain groups than others, notably between some host community members and refugees. According to the UNDP Qualitative Study on Social Relations in July 2019: “[T]he relationships between Syrians and Lebanese can be described as weak bridging social capital defined by unequal power relations (landlord, tenant; small business owner, employee). [...] The sponsorship system (kefala) polarizes relationships and Syrians in both Bekaa Valley IS and South Akkar IS specifically used the word ‘exploitation’ to describe these relations.”⁷⁵

A male CSO representative from Beirut describes this relationship of ‘reliance’: “Refugees are all reliant on a Lebanese person, they are part of a chain, a whole ecosystem of networks of reliability and dependence. We need to be studying vulnerability/social networks properly.” Previous research has explored the dynamics of exploitation in relation to refugee vulnerability. These are not seen to operate only from higher political structures, but in many aspects of daily life. The role of the *shawish*, as noted above, has been documented in studies and safeguarding cases as, in many instances, an exploitative figure who contributes to wider systems of patronage and obligation.⁷⁶

⁷³ Lebanon Support, *Crisis & Control: (In)Formal Hybrid Security in Lebanon*, 2016

⁷⁴ Ten women aged between 21 and 57 years old

⁷⁵ UNDP, *Qualitative Research on Social Tensions, Lebanon, Round 1*, Year 1, July 2019

⁷⁶ UNDP, *The Burden of Scarce Opportunities: The Social Stability Context in Central and West Bekaa: Conflict Analysis Report*, March 2017

However, in this research, discussions of power relations and exploitations, with reference to *shawishes* or indeed anyone, are notably absent from conversations with non-Lebanese participants.. Nonetheless, further tensions may arise from such unequal interactions. As a UNDP conflict analysis report from 2017 warns in relation to refugees ‘entrapped in patronage relationships’ of service and/or protection with Lebanese actors or more networked non-refugee Syrians, ‘such networks nurture Syrian refugees’ perceptions of being exploited by the host community, thereby making them more antagonistic towards it.’⁷⁷

Fear and silencing

Indeed, this absence may be attributed more to a general reluctance across Syrians and Palestinians to ‘complain’ or discuss conflict in general, fearing this might backfire against them. Most participants were hesitant and uncomfortable answering questions regarding Lebanese people, saying their opinion does not matter and that they do not want to get involved with other people’s business and conflicts. Most Syrian participants also agree that there are not any tensions because, as Syrians, they avoid provoking Lebanese people as they know they will not win any argument: “The only thing that can reduce tensions is Syrians ignoring all disrespectful comments and/or actions.” Similarly, a female youth committee representative from Baalbeck states that “in the surrounding areas, there are refugees but there are no conflicts between them and the Lebanese. The refugees don’t dare to cause any trouble.”

The above reflects on the element of fear and silencing involved within power dynamics, which is seen as particularly prominent across both host and refugee lives within Baalbeck-Hermel. While conflict at the hands of refugees has been seen to be relatively limited throughout this study, as the UNDP report alerts above, brewing fear and the growing involvement of refugee in networks of patronage and corruption may nonetheless be fostering an increased sense of disaffection and vulnerability among refugee communities, feeding greater divides and hostility across refugee-host lines outside of these relationships.

Propensity for violence

A variety of different methods are used by key actors to achieve objectives, as discussed above. This subsection will reflect on the propensity for violence across certain areas in Lebanon, interlinked throughout with power dynamics. As discussed between female FGD participants in Fakiha, the problem is “power, money, and weapons.” This experience of weapon-based violence is seen widely across the findings in Baalbeck-Hermel:

*There is nothing like a small problem between people, a slap on the face or the like, now they immediately fire a gun. This happened in the past 3 to 5 years here, it reached that level of violence. Every day we hear fire guns, yesterday we heard it. If someone dies, they start throwing bombs and firing guns.*⁷⁸

Many of the actors referenced above, in particular with links to family and clan-based actors, appear to achieve their objectives of power through violence. Nonetheless, the findings also show that violence is being used not only by the ‘powerful,’ such as political leaders and prominent ruling families, but also by the comparatively ‘powerless,’ those more vulnerable or with fewer opportunities, as a buffer against or reaction against real and perceived threats.

According to the ARK Recent Perception Surveys from August 2019, high levels of agreement were found for the following statement: ‘violence is sometimes necessary when your interests are being threatened’, particularly in the North, Akkar, Mount Lebanon, and Baalbeck-Hermel - in comparison to lower levels in Zahle, Bekaa, and Beirut.⁷⁹ This study finds very similar area-based propensity for violence, although with slight variation in terms of area.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ FGD with Lebanese female, 3 women aged between 18 and 21 years old

⁷⁹ UNDP & ARK, Regular Perceptions Survey of Social Tensions Throughout Lebanon, Wave VI, August 2019

In **Beirut**, for example, reports of ‘physical violence’ are the highest across all areas (31.1%). When survey participants are asked “If another person has called you a bad name (e.g. "stupid"), which of the following is closest to what you would do?”, 22.2% of participants in Beirut responded they would ‘fight with them.’ Survey results of ‘physical violence’ in **Mount Lebanon** (7.5%) are relatively low when compared to other areas and to qualitative findings from the same area. Disaggregation at the location level, however, shows that 11.3% of respondents from Aley report physical violence (the location in which the most discussion of violence is referenced in the qualitative data).

Only 14.6% of participants report physical violence in **Baalbeck-Hermel**, a relatively low number given the pervasiveness of this topic within qualitative findings. The lowest reports of physical violence are found in Central and West Bekaa, with only 0.5% of survey respondents reporting this form of local dispute.

Physical violence is also reported as relatively low in the North, with just 5.2% of participants observing physical violence as a form of conflict. On the other hand, in **Akkar**, physical violence is reported by 18.2% of survey participants, demonstrating the highest levels across the areas after Beirut, and almost double the amount of ‘fights over power’ (9.1%). Context indicates here that violent reactions and conflicts here may be linked less to power and more to economic deprivation, suggesting citizens in vulnerable settings are resorting to violence in times of hardship. This is not found to be true, however, for one of the most vulnerable groups, Syrian refugees - who report lower instances of violence in both qualitative and quantitative findings.

For some, violence could rather be seen as one of the only opportunities for change, with 13.3% of the survey respondents who view the Lebanese political system as corrupt also believing that violent protests are a justifiable means to end corruption, with male youth and adults stating this more than female youth and adults.

A Multiple participants describe the increasing prevalence of weapons in the home as a form of protection, including female Lebanese FGD participants from Fakiha:⁸⁰

We are not violent, but we have had enough. The protestors were on the streets and Hezbollah followers came along and started to hit us and threaten us with their weapons. You would say, “I want to have weapons, too.”

For this group of women, violence has become the answer with which to confront other threats of violence, given that alternative options for protection and/or responses of peace in the past have failed. The research findings suggest that violence is internalised into “the Lebanese mindset” and that it has become a natural way of a) dealing with tensions and b) creating tensions. For a male local activist from Beirut, “We use violence as the easiest way to reach what we want. If I want to park my car, why communicate with the other person if I can use violence, pull out my gun, and get my way faster?”

Propensity for violence is seen to be high in Beirut, Akkar, Baalbeck-Hermel and, to a certain extent, Mount Lebanon. In Aley and Beirut, violence is largely noted by participants as a behavioural issue which involves resorting to violence in frustrating circumstances (for example, traffic) when a variety of other coping mechanisms and responses could be used.

Intra-Lebanese relations

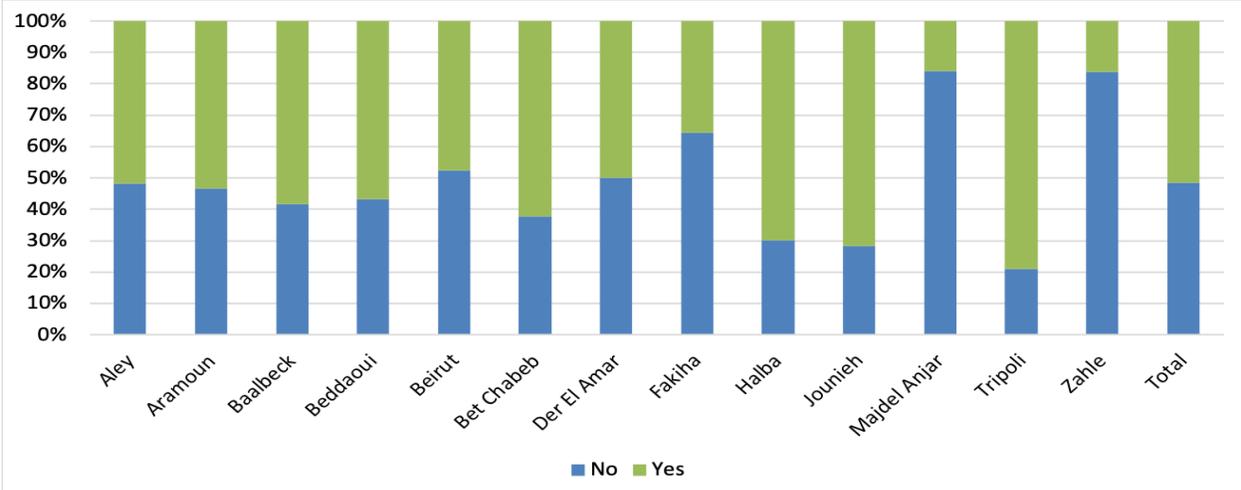
At a national level, **87.3%** of Lebanese participants from the survey research note that they have **friends from other backgrounds and religions** that they interact socially with. Only 68 (12.7%) out of 535 Lebanese respondents say they do *not* have friends or colleagues from different sectarian backgrounds that they interact with socially.

⁸⁰ Ten Lebanese women aged between 21 and 57 years old

Out of the Lebanese survey participants, 48.4% say their view about Lebanese from other sectarian backgrounds has *not changed since the protests*, whereas 51.6% say it *has*. For those who do not see a change, reasons from the survey are given such as: ‘the relationship was good from the beginning’; or ‘we’ve always been in mixed backgrounds’. Some, however, suggest instead that ‘we are still divided’; ‘beneath the surface things do not change, there are the same divisions’; ‘Lebanese do not mix a lot’; ‘each one is following their leader’; or ‘there is still the same bad mentality.’ **Central and West Bekaa** had the lowest rates of changed opinions with only 16.3% of participants noting change in Zahle and 16.0% in Majdal Anjar. Those asked to explain their view expressed a similar sense of unity as above, but one that spanned from before the revolution: ‘we are all Lebanese’; ‘all sects share the same demands’; and ‘we were living together, and we still will.’

Figure 11: Perceived change in views among Lebanese persons about other Lebanese people from different sectarian backgrounds by location

Question: Thinking back since the protests, has your view about the Lebanese from different sectarian backgrounds changed?



As can be seen on the above figure, Tripoli (79.1%), Halba (69.8%) and Jounieh (71.7%) are the locations that show the greatest percentages of participants who have changed views. Comments from these locations include statements suggesting that the new dynamics have positively altered their conceptions of sect and difference. Explanations are given from Halba, such as: ‘the revolution abolished sectarianism’ and ‘All of us now share the same political ideas and inclinations’. Some simply state that ‘I am not sectarian’ or ‘I do not like sectarianism’. From Tripoli, reasons are similarly given in direct relation to the protests: ‘we broke fear and barriers and moved past our sects for our motherland’; ‘we are now united, and our sect is Lebanon’; and ‘we overcame fears of one another.’ Others spoke of a newfound realisation that overcame divisions (‘we realised that there is no conflict between us’; ‘We realized that religion is not an obstacle for our unity’) and provided understanding of common interests (‘Demands united our fronts’; ‘The cause united us’). This is found also in Jounieh: ‘We are all deprived of our rights’ and ‘All people want to change and solve financial problems.’

Qualitative findings show similar lines of reasoning, with some participants declaring that the protests have transcended historical divisions across area, sect, religion, class, and political affiliation: “People are not being led by political parties anymore. When they all unite, they can stand strong and resist longer while together.”⁸¹ These findings show a heightened sense of unity and newly discovered appreciation of similarities and shared experiences with those from different religious/political affiliations. These findings show a heightened sense of unity and newly discovered appreciation of similarities and shared experiences with those from different religious/political affiliations, which may present an opportunity for peacebuilders to capitalise on trends already in motion and

⁸¹ Male youth committee representative from Beddaoui.

develop dialogue mechanisms that consolidate this perception of unity and understanding.

Another outlook suggests, however, with less optimism, that economic and social issues have simply trumped political issues for the current moment – shown by statements such as “conflicts are past us - now there is the economic situation”⁸² or “poverty is the largest sect.”⁸³

Nonetheless, the majority of FGD and KII participants bring up the issue of sectarianism in Lebanon when asked about dividing lines in society. When asked broadly to define tensions in Lebanon in the past few years, and more recently in the past few months, all but two (Beit Chabeb and Majdal Anjar) Lebanese FGDs are quick to mention sectarian conflict and the emotional and geographical effects of this. For some, declarations of unity and cohesion are premature:

The political marginalisation and the socio-economic marginalisation will lead to conflicts among groups. And those who boast about patriotism are foolish, this is far from becoming true. Lebanon is going to be more divided in a way we are not sure of. We are heading towards a worse socio-economic crisis. The more this crisis gets serious, the more we approach further divisions.”⁸⁴

The absence of the topic of sectarianism in discussions in Beit Chabeb and Majdal Anjar may suggest greater homogeneity in these areas. Indeed, others who say not to be affected by sectarian divisions also explain this along sectarian lines: “We don’t have any conflicts in our village *because* we are all from the same religious sect.”⁸⁵ And while participants from all Lebanese FGDs affirm that they have friends across sectarian, religious, and political divides - a notable finding - it is clear this relationship comes with unspoken conditions and sensitivities, primarily that political and religious differences are not discussed. Lebanese men from Halba⁸⁶, for example, agree that, although they have friends from different religions, “we do not talk about these differences so as not to stir sectarian trouble and to avoid capitalising on our differences.” While silence in this sense is seen widely as a form of pre-emptive conflict prevention, participants also speak of feelings of fear and distrust, entrenched into the Lebanese social tapestry without communication and dialogue to discuss differences and find commonalities.

Sectarian/religious divisions are more prominent in **Mount Lebanon and Beirut** than the rest of the targeted areas within Lebanon. As previously discussed, much of this stems from the past. Many of the participants refer to historical tensions and memories. For two Lebanese men from Beirut⁸⁷, “We have been living under the same crises for years, and the problem lies in transmitting them across generations without addressing them.” The same is true for a local male Beirut activist:

Every group sees Lebanon in its own different way, and there was never any discussion or any communication between all these groups to see where we are heading. What we always do is work short term and we never talked about the past. So, we are opening a new page without talking about older pages; the pages are actually accumulating - we are not opening a new page. We are putting the past aside. Because we have so many layers and levels, people don’t know where to start. The main issue is trust, people don’t trust one another, and they are not willing to make this investment.

Some isolated cases suggest that sectarianism may be developing outside of these areas, however. While most participants speak of the historical dimensions to division, as noted above, reflections on past dynamics are nuanced and others remember days in which communities were more diverse and accepting. Female Palestinian refugees from Beddaoui witness such a transition:

⁸² Lebanese FGD in Beit Chabeb - six women aged between 32 and 60 years old

⁸³ Lebanese FGD in Zahle - eight men aged between 25 and 55 years old

⁸⁴ Male municipality representative in Tripoli

⁸⁵ Six male refugees from Aramoun aged between 40 and 60 years old

⁸⁶ Six men aged between 23 and 55 years old

⁸⁷ Two men aged 26 and 29 years old

Here we didn't have this sectarianism, we used to have Christian neighbours and Shia, we used to be like relatives and more. But now it is worse: even in the same community you see that division not only between different regions. Now the Sunni cannot go to Dahiyeh, they are afraid to go there.[...] Even in Beddaoui or Tripoli, people are afraid to come here. And people in Tripoli are afraid to go to the Bekaa. For me, I am afraid to go to Beirut. I am afraid to go to the Shia Muslim areas.⁸⁸

Divisions and tensions *beyond sect or within sects* can also be identified across the findings. In the Baalbeck-Hermel region, conflict between clans and families, as well as between clans and the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF), is widely reported: “In Lebanon in general, sectarianism is a problem but not here in Baalbeck. There has never been a sectarian conflict between different religions and political parties, people live altogether, so what we mainly have are family conflicts.”⁸⁹

In Aley, interview findings suggest fighting between families and individual leaders within sects. Here, hostilities within the Druze community are referenced, with community members divided between the Progressive Socialist Party (headed by Walid Jumblatt) and the Lebanese Democratic Party (headed by Talal Arslan): “In Aley especially; for example, when the Jumblatt people are trying to prove a point, creating *maserah*, they would show up in different places just to show they are there. All sorts of problems that would happen in the street would happen between them [and the Arslan supporters].”⁹⁰ Pressure from families is reported, preventing individuals and particularly younger generations from talking to and integrating with members of opposing families who are “with them.”

Thus, inter-communal relations between Lebanese groups operate at a variety of intersecting levels: across sect, political affiliation, religion, and family and/or tribal allegiance. In Mount Lebanon and Beirut, sectarian divisions continue to prevail, but also fighting between political supporters within and across party lines can be seen. The protests and calls to unite have, to a certain extent, challenged these boundaries, and greater mixing and tolerance can be seen in locations such as Halba, Tripoli, and Jounieh. In Baalbeck-Hermel, divisions and tensions continue across both party lines and affiliation with family/clan-based networks, often taking on violent forms. It is suggested that differing peacebuilding approaches be taken for according to these different contexts.

Inter-community relations (host-refugee)

Social interactions across host-refugee divides

As per the ARK Wave V findings from June 2019, ‘More regular contact was positively correlated with other social stability outcomes, for example, for Lebanese, lower levels of prejudice, and for both Lebanese and Syrians, more positive assessments of the quality of relations between both communities.’ Despite this correlation, it reports that the level and quality of inter-communal contact has persistently declined in many areas of the country: ‘in many areas, this has been accompanied by worsening perceptions of the quality of relations between communities, a sentiment shared by both Lebanese and Syrians.’⁹¹

In this research, only **46.3% of Lebanese respondents say they have refugee friends or colleagues they interact with socially**. Only 41.8% of female respondents say they do, in comparison to the 50.6% of male respondents who say they do. Just over half (55.2%) of adults do not have refugee friends or colleagues, whereas very slightly less youth report this (52.0%).

⁸⁸ Nine women aged between 16 and 45 years old

⁸⁹ FGD with Lebanese men, five men aged between 22 and 31 years old

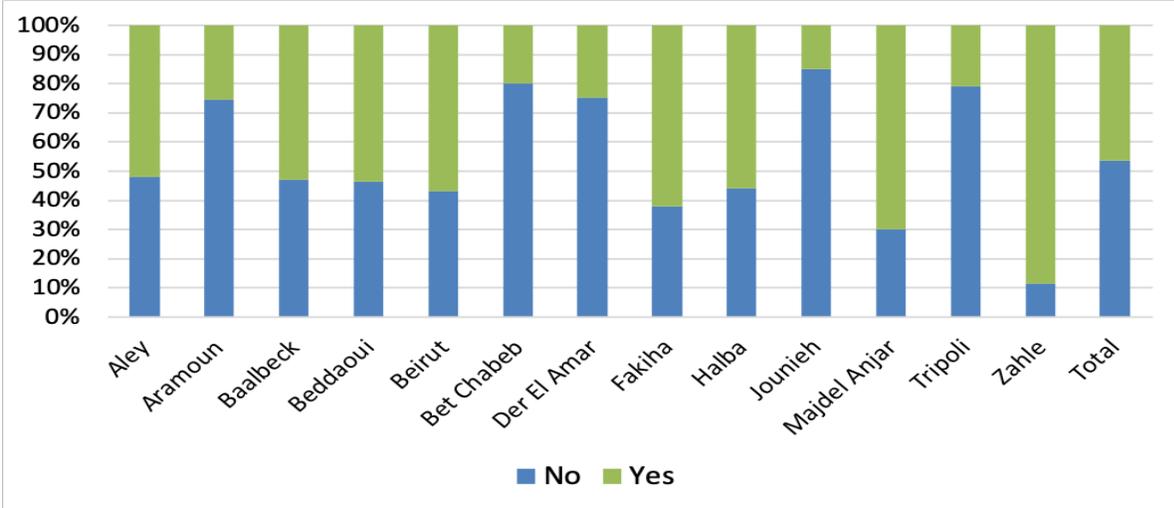
⁹⁰ Female youth committee member from Aley

⁹¹ UNDP & ARK, Regular Perceptions Survey of Social Tensions Throughout Lebanon, Wave V, June 2019

The area with by far the greatest percentage of participants who report having refugee friends or colleagues with whom they interact socially is Central and West Bekaa (78.5%).⁹² More middling figures can be found in Akkar, (55.8%), Beirut (56.8%) and Baalbeck-Hermel (58.0%). In the North, the figure is lower at 37.2%, and at only 24.6% in Mount Lebanon. In **Jounieh, Aramoun and Beit Chabeb**, it is likely that low figures of interaction also correspond with low densities of refugees in these areas.

As can be seen in the below chart, low levels of social interaction can be seen in the North, particularly in **Tripoli**. Out of those who answer negatively in Tripoli, the majority of explanations are centred around aspects of ‘distrust’ and ‘lack of common values’. Besides economic tensions, references to safety issues and hostile stereotyping can be seen reflected also in qualitative data. According to one adult Lebanese woman in Tripoli, “Syrian people don’t think about honour and dignity. They can kidnap any girl and rape her. Even the thefts increased.” A male CSO representative from Tripoli also discusses failures in peacebuilding initiatives in this location, particularly due to conceptions of cultural and traditional differences. He calls for the introduction of more sustainable and longer-lasting social cohesion programmes in order to work on inter-community relations.

Figure 12: Social interaction between the Lebanese host community members and refugees by location
 Question: *Do you have any refugee friends or colleagues that you interact with socially?*



Around half of Lebanese respondents (535) were asked the question: To what extent do you agree with the following statement: “I would be comfortable with **befriending and socialising with Syrian refugees** outside my home.” 33.6% agree, 33.6% are neutral, 15.0% strongly agree, 13.5% disagree and 4.3% strongly disagree.

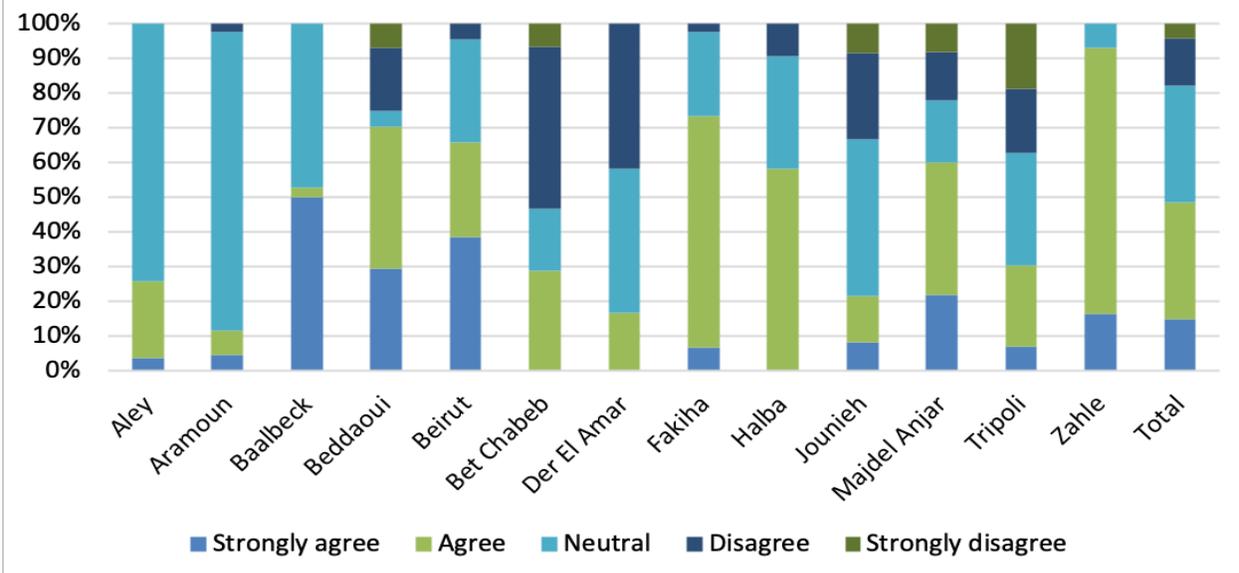
The area with the greatest percentage of those who agree or strongly agree is **Central and West Bekaa (75.3%)**, followed by Beirut (65.9%), Baalbeck-Hermel (64.2%), Akkar (58.1%) and the North (50.6%). In Mount Lebanon, only 17.1% agree and 4.3% strongly agree.

Of those who disagree - mostly from **Mount Lebanon and the North** - explanations are offered such as: ‘I do not like them’; ‘I am not comfortable with them’; ‘I do not trust them’; ‘I am not interested in them’; ‘they are dirty people’; or ‘they have a different mentality/culture’. One female adult participant from Hazmieh responds: ‘They have ruined their country, and they want to destroy our country, too’. In FGDs, Lebanese host community participants report

⁹² This is found in contrast to the findings of Zinc Network’s November 2019 study, which finds that participants in Central and West Bekaa are more likely to report low levels of interaction as well as empathy for refugees. This contrast may be partly attributed to timescale (later data collection period) as well location/religious affiliation – with the majority of participants surveyed in Central and West Bekaa from Sunni Muslim locations.

similar reasoning, some citing a lack of trust or shared values (women in Tripoli) and others reporting no opportunities for integration (for example, in Beit Chabeb).

Figure 13: Lebanese persons comfortable with befriending Syrian refugees by location
 Question: To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "I would be comfortable with befriending and socializing with Syrian refugees outside my home."



Lebanese respondents were also asked to what extent they agree with the following statement: "I would be comfortable with **befriending and socialising with Palestinian refugees** outside my home." 34.4% are neutral, 29.0% agree, 4.7% strongly agree, 13.3% disagree and 4.7% strongly disagree. Of those who agree, the majority are from Central and West Bekaa (34.2%) and Baalbeck-Hermel (21.9%). Of those who disagree, 64.8% are from Mount Lebanon. Of those who strongly disagree, 84.0% are from Mount Lebanon.

Slightly higher levels of agreement and strong agreement are found by Lebanese in terms of socialising with Syrians than Palestinians. The absence of discussion of Palestinians by Lebanese participants in FGDs and KIs may reflect less interaction with Palestinians, particularly considering many Palestinians in Lebanon are based in refugee camps in the South, an area outside the purview of this research. Nonetheless, some do express an alternative viewpoint, suggesting that integration and coexistence is, for now, higher between Palestinians and Lebanese, than between Lebanese and Syrians. As one Lebanese man from an FGD in Zahle⁹³ reflected: "The Palestinians are closer to us because they have been in our country for many years. I think that even the Syrians will become closer because I don't think that all the Syrian people will return to their country."

Non-Lebanese participants were asked the same question in reverse: To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "I would be comfortable with **befriending and socialising with a Lebanese person** outside my home." Out of these, 56.3% agree, 24.4% strongly agree, 17.5% are neutral, 1.2% disagree and only 0.5% strongly disagree.

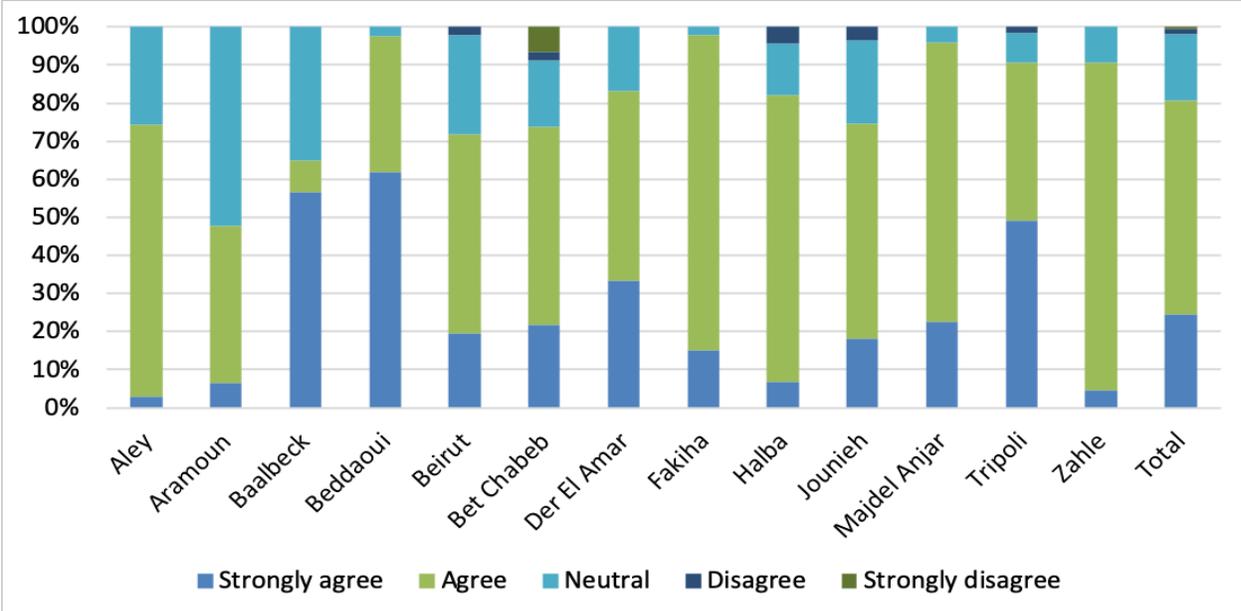
The areas with the greatest levels of those who agree or strongly agree are Central and West Bekaa (93.4%), and the North (90.5%). In Akkar, 82.3% agree/strongly agree and in Baalbeck-Hermel, 83.1% agree/strongly agree. The lowest figures can be found for agreement/strong agreement in Mount Lebanon (68.1%) and in Beirut (71.8%).

⁹³ Eight men aged between 25 and 55 years old

Of the few respondents who disagree or strongly disagree, the majority are from Mount Lebanon and Akkar. Some respondents expanded on their reasons. These include explanations such as ‘because they [the Lebanese] treat us badly’; ‘because they are racist’; or ‘because I do not like the Lebanese.’ However, even in these areas, very few actively disagree (3.2% in Mount Lebanon and 4.4% in Akkar), and most are instead neutral (28.7% and 13.3%, respectively). Similarly, in Beirut, while less agree with the question than in other areas, only 2.2% disagree, 26.1% remaining neutral instead. Across all the areas, only 0.5% strongly disagree, in comparison to 4.3% strong disagreement in the reverse from Lebanese toward Syrians. This reflects a theme of greater neutrality or passivity found in general across Syrian participants, who are less prone to extremes in opinions surrounding all conflict-related questions.

At the community level, the highest levels of willingness (from non-Lebanese persons) to interact are seen in **Fakiha and Zahle**, corresponding with similar findings of willingness from Lebanese in Central and West Bekaa in general.

Figure 14: Non-Lebanese persons comfortable with befriending Lebanese person by location
 Question: *To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "I would be comfortable with befriending and socialising with a Lebanese person outside my home."*



The qualitative data does suggest that refugees, in general and particularly in Tripoli, are aware of and affected by tensions: "There are many areas in Lebanon which are hostile to Syrians and closing in on them. Always we have conflict with Lebanese, because of the living situation and job opportunities. They don't want us in Lebanon"⁹⁴. Quantitative findings also imply that Lebanese are in some locations more reluctant to socialise with refugees/non-Lebanese than refugees/non-Lebanese are to socialise with Lebanese. From Lebanese participants, only 33.6% agree and 15.0% strongly agree that they would be comfortable socialising and befriending Syrians outside the home, and 29.0% agree and 4.7% strongly agree the same for Palestinians. In reverse, 56.3% of Syrians and Palestinians agree, and 24.4% strongly agree that they would feel comfortable socialising with or befriending Lebanese outside the home.

As can be seen in the above chart, the majority of non-Lebanese survey participants in Tripoli agree (41.5%) or strongly agree (49.2%) that they are willing and comfortable to befriend Lebanese people outside their home. When Lebanese are asked the question in reverse, only 23.3% agree and 7.0% strongly agree. The same pattern can be

⁹⁴ FGD for adult Syrian male refugees in Tripoli

identified in Beit Chabeb; where 52.2% non-Lebanese agree they would be comfortable to befriend Lebanese, only 28.9% Lebanese agree (with nobody strongly agreeing) that they would be comfortable themselves. Sentiments of distrust or unwillingness to socialise seem to stem, therefore, significantly more from Lebanese participants than from non-Lebanese.

Tensions leading to conflict

The 2019 VASyR assessment reports that ‘most refugee families rated their relationship with the host community as positive (54%) or neutral (41%) with few rating it as negative (5%). More than half of interviewed households did, however, cite possible reasons for community tensions, with 51% stating competition for jobs as one of the main drivers (compared to 38% in 2018). Other cited reasons remained at a similar prevalence from 2018, with the exception of job competition, which increased significantly over the last year.’ The qualitative research also finds that, while aware of economic and other tensions between themselves and the host community, most *non*-Lebanese participants report positive or neutral inter-communal relationships. For male refugees in Fakiha⁹⁵, although there have been economic and legal tensions, such as bans on Syrian motorcycles and working licenses, “this conflict is less than in other villages, there are friendships here between us.” This corroborates the quantitative findings, whereby very low numbers of non-Lebanese participants in Fakiha state they would not feel comfortable befriending Lebanese, and vice versa. The same group explains further:

Here we cannot talk about historical tension because the Syrian borders are very close. Lebanese and Syrians always used to come and go. [...] We have relatives here. We preferred to come here than to go to Beirut, we feel at ease here, we got used to it and we are happy we are here because it is a village and people are friendly, they ask about one another. [...] Every day, Lebanese and Syrians, we visit one another. We want to live our lives and we want to share with people our joy and our pain and we want to be next to them. We consider ourselves as one with the residents. We have been here since 2013, we know the village, we know everyone.

This explanation of positive host-refugee relations aligns with an analysis from UNDP in 2016 which states that ‘the Bekaa amongst all regions in Lebanon has been the most related to the Syrians in terms of economic activity and social relations and this partly explains the high density of refugees there. This familiarity does help refugees in facilitating their access to work, basic services, or protection.’ In this sense, connectors are seen through strong historical and family-based ties. In turn, such sources of resilience and support are leading to better livelihood opportunities for refugees, as well as economic collaboration with host communities. Reduction of tensions, therefore, is twofold - both in terms of cultural ties and economic opportunity.

Other findings are more neutral, suggesting, in line with the ARK Recent Perception Surveys⁹⁶, that - despite clear tensions - incidences of host-refugee conflict are limited in some areas, but interaction in general is also limited: “We mind our own business. [...] Our camp is away from the Lebanese houses; we live in peace. We go to work and come back home, that is it. We do not have any contact with others. We live together here at the camp as a family. [...] If we are respectful and they all respect us, there will be no conflicts. Wisdom and goodwill are very crucial to maintain peace among people. Every person by the way he acts can determine his fate.”⁹⁷

Similarly, in Mount Lebanon (Jounieh, Beit Chabeb and, to a certain extent, Aley) respondents report that issues with refugees are not central due to the low concentration of Syrians/Palestinians in their areas. In July 2019, OCHA estimated 390,000 Syrian refugees (20% of the local population) and 35,800 Palestinian refugees (2.0%) in Mount Lebanon, a high percentage but lower than most areas throughout Lebanon.⁹⁸ This corresponds with survey data, which shows the lowest levels of social interaction between host-refugee communities in Jounieh and Beit Chabeb.

⁹⁵ Five men aged between 19 and 27 years old

⁹⁶ UNDP & ARK, Regular Perceptions Survey of Social Tensions Throughout Lebanon, Wave VI, August 2019

⁹⁷ Male *shawish* from Fakiha

⁹⁸ OCHA, Lebanon: Mount Lebanon Governorate Profile, 21 June 2019

However, in some areas with high refugee populations and greater social interaction, such as Majdal Anjar and the rest of **Central and West Bekaa**, the findings in fact show a mostly positive relationship between refugees and host communities, limited largely to economic strife: “The relationship between the Lebanese and refugees in the region is good. We see that the Lebanese extend a helping hand to their Syrian brothers and consider them to be from the town, and so they must maintain the security and safety of the town just like the locals do. Many Syrians have rented houses near Lebanese homes; thus, they became neighbours. The reason behind this is their shared values and common environment.”⁹⁹ Some of the factors that are seen to contribute to peaceful coexistence - such as daily interaction, mutual support and responsibility for the security of the area, and an understanding of shared values - can be taken into account in peacebuilding projects in other areas.

Unlike in UNDP’s July 2019 study¹⁰⁰, it is found that host community members rarely focused on religious/cultural differences with Syrians or Palestinians. This is aligned with Zinc Network 2019 study, which also finds that symbolic threats or value dissimilarities are not mentioned in relation to refugee-host relations.¹⁰¹ Despite past research suggesting that Lebanese often fear the sectarian or demographic imbalance influxes of (mainly Sunni) Syrians bring to Lebanon, none of the Lebanese participants in this study refer to this tension specifically; sectarian concerns are largely confined to intra-Lebanese relations.

Instead, the majority of all cross-national hostilities are **justified on economic terms**, including but not limited to competition over jobs; perception of increased theft; strains on resources and local infrastructure; overloading of public services; and reception of aid and cash assistance. Qualitative findings shed light further on the reasonings behind inter-communal tensions, particularly from the perspective of the host community:

*When you go to the bank, they [Syrians] would be all rushing to the ATM machine and you can’t reach it. If the head of the branch would tell them to step aside to allow to Lebanese to withdraw money, they would tell him: we withdraw first and then them. They are at ease here as if it is their own country. You go to the supermarket; how much would you buy? But the refugees would fill 2 caddies, all kinds of cheese. They are receiving aid from abroad. Sometimes they would sell those products they buy.*¹⁰²

The same group goes on to maintain: “Anyway, we live a bit far from them and the refugees around us are friendly, so there are no conflicts, but we hear about conflicts happening around us.” Much of this seems to be repeated rhetoric, especially in areas such as Jounieh where FGD participants also say they have little conflict or even interaction with Syrians. However, it is clear also that such narratives, spread across different communication mechanisms and political accounts, have led - indirectly and directly - to conflict and even violence. Four independent interviewees (from Baalbeck, Zahle, Aley, and Beirut) bring up recent and recurrent incidences of host community members attacking Syrian refugees in queues to ATMs, particularly in Zahle and Aley, a direct effect of widespread rumours and consequence beliefs that non-Lebanese have significant access to cash assistance.

According to ARK’s June 2019 update: ‘Satisfaction with public services varied significantly by region, with for example, lesser satisfaction with all services in the North and Akkar and in the South and Nabatieh, relative to Beirut and Mount Lebanon. A majority of both Lebanese (93.1%) and Syrians (75.3%) agreed with the statement, ‘The presence of so many Syrian refugees in Lebanon today is placing too much strain on Lebanon’s resources, like water and electricity’.¹⁰³ The findings of this research correlate with such analysis. A female CSO representative from Halba explains how these tensions are more sensitive in disadvantaged areas such as Akkar:

⁹⁹ Municipality member from Majdal Anjar

¹⁰⁰ UNDP, *Qualitative Research on Social Tensions, Lebanon, Round 1, Year 1, July 2019*

¹⁰¹ Zinc Network, *Impact of Syrian Refugee Crisis on Lebanon: Quantitative Research*, November 2019

¹⁰² Three Lebanese women from Baalbeck aged between 18 and 51 years old

¹⁰³ UNDP & ARK, *Regular Perceptions Survey of Social Tensions Throughout Lebanon, Wave V, June 2019*

At the beginning of the Syrian crisis, there was sympathy between Lebanese and Syrians. But after four years, pressure on resources has increased, there are pressures on jobs – and so tensions are increasing. [...] If the economic crisis continues, the tension will increase.

While some interviewees suggest that attention towards and the official targeting of refugees (including calls for returns, evictions and curfews) have been overshadowed - both in the news and in practice - by the dominance of the economic crisis and the revolution, the findings largely show that the two have been grouped together. As a male CSO representative from Beirut describes: “Just because some inclusive protestors on television proclaim Lebanon to be open to all, this does not translate into practice.” On the contrary, the protests have been tied in some instances to increasingly nationalistic rhetoric, where refugees continue to be scapegoated as a significant part of the problem, alongside the political elite.¹⁰⁴ Anti-refugee demonstrations were held outside the EU Delegation to Lebanon on 29 November 2019, with many protesting Syrian integration and calling for further returns to Syria.¹⁰⁵

Non-Lebanese interviewees and FGD participants offer some acknowledgement of tensions and even rebuttal of offensive claims. Male refugees from Fakiha, who report largely positive relations, also discern the existence of such beliefs: “We are like a virus here. We are taking the food away from them. [...] The job opportunities depend on God's will; they cannot say we took the jobs away from them. We need to work. We have rent, we have kids. We are working just to survive and cover those expenses, not to save money.” A key pattern throughout the qualitative and quantitative data collection, however, has been the approach by Syrian refugees and non-refugees to minimise incidences of conflict. Instances of disagreements and direct conflict are mostly brought up by Lebanese interviewees (such as the ATM attacks), and Syrian complaints are largely confined to indirect tension or issues such as disrespect and a lack of neighbourly behaviour.

Repeated narratives of economic scapegoating, along with evidence that there is a lack of frequent social interaction between host and refugee communities, it is suggested that the importance of inter-communal **dialogue** would be particularly important here, along with **awareness campaigns on financial realities**. Given the worsening economic climate in the country, it is likely that such tensions rise in the coming months. Thus, awareness and support should be directed equally at both communities in order not to contribute to a well-established perception of unequal aid. The areas to be given the most consideration in improving host-refugee relations would be **the North** (largely Tripoli) and Akkar, given the dire economic situation here, and thus the heightened risk of host-refugee tensions as financial conditions worsen. Qualitative and quantitative data reflects an (increasingly) hostile dynamic but also the opportunity for communication channels and the building of trust.

Support networks across different nationalities

Refugees were asked the question as to what extent they agree with the following statement: “I would not hesitate to **ask someone who is Lebanese for help**, should I ever need it.” 59.2% agree and 17.8% strongly agree. 42.0% of those who strongly agree are from the North of Lebanon, whereas only 5.0% are from Beirut. When those who disagree or strongly disagree were asked why, answers varied from ‘I do not like approaching them for fear of them making fun of me’; ‘they do not help us’; ‘I would not ask a stranger’; ‘they would not agree to help’; ‘I would only ask relatives for help’; to ‘I do not ask anyone for help.’ One female Syrian respondent simply answered ‘dignity’.

In the qualitative findings, some scattered anecdotes of support across nationalities can, however, be found. For example, in Beit Chabeb, male refugees state that they are now “witnessing a higher level of humanity from the Lebanese people than before, regarding rent, for example.” Female Lebanese from the same location express similar sentiments: “Beit Chabeb is different from other villages, there is compassion. We care a lot, even for strangers and there is still the traditional village spirit.”

¹⁰⁴ The New Arab, [Refugees in Lebanon watch protests with hope and caution](#), 22 October 2019

¹⁰⁵ The Daily Star, [Protests against refugee integration, hate speech outside EU embassy](#), 29 November 2019

Lebanese were asked the above question in reverse: To what extent do you agree with the following statement: “I would not hesitate to **ask someone who is a refugee for help**, should I ever need it.” 32.5% are neutral, 29.3% agree, 19.6% disagree, 10.3% strongly agree and 8.2% strongly disagree. Out of those who disagree or strongly disagree, the majority are from **Mount Lebanon**. Out of those who agree or strongly agree, the majority are from **Baalbeck-Hermel** and **Central and West Bekaa**. Those Lebanese who disagree or strongly disagree give the following explanations: ‘I would ask a Lebanese person’; ‘they would not be able to help’; ‘because he is the one who needs help’; ‘I do not like them’; ‘the best is to ask help from relatives’; ‘I do not like to ask strangers’; ‘I solve problems myself’; ‘I do not trust them’; ‘they have nothing to do with my problems’; ‘we have nothing in common’; ‘we have no cooperation’; or ‘I am not asking for help from a refugee.’ One respondent said that ‘If they were the last person to help me, I would not ask them.’

As found in the Zinc Network data from November 2019, “There is strong disagreement with the idea that Syrian refugees enrich Lebanese society.”¹⁰⁶ Similarly, the data above suggests that Lebanese in general have low perceptions over the extent to which they believe Syrians can support or help them. The skewed responses in some ways reflect the power dynamics reflected on in the previous section, as well as the continuing patterns of distrust and suspicion towards non-Lebanese residents in Lebanon.

Intra-Syrian relations

In line with UNDP’s Qualitative Findings on Social Tensions¹⁰⁷, the qualitative findings shed light on the strength of refugee-refugee relationships and the support networks or ‘social capital’ this brings. Many of the Syrian groups talked to are insistent that they have experienced little to no conflict in their daily lives because their daily lives are largely spent with other Syrians. Although caution must be taken in viewing the concept of ‘no conflict’ at face value, considering the elements of fear and sensitivities that were observed in discussing such topics, comments around peaceful and supportive coexistence amongst refugees could be indicative of wider structures of social capital and resilience.

For example, male refugees in the Aramoun FGD¹⁰⁸ talk in depth about the hopes they hold for each other. They give examples of connectors such as their traditions and their common faith. Another important factor that helps them face conflict is the fight for their children’s safety and freedom from the Syrian regime that will force them to serve in the army. They say they come from different areas and that each man has a large family, but that they all felt like relatives over time, helping each other overcome tensions, lending each other money and food. The most influential factor is their customs and traditions followed by their hope of their children getting an education in Lebanon.

Gender and age

Gender roles in the community

The majority of respondents across the surveys (60.9%) say they **do not know whether there is a fair competition between all men and women** over available jobs in their communities. 18.2% say the competition is unfair, 16.6% say it is fair, and 4.4% prefer not to say. There is no significant deviation in the answers of men to women. That the majority of respondents were uncertain in either their views or in their perceptions of societal realities suggests that there is an important space to open up further dialogue surrounding gender roles.

Those who believe the competition is fair gave explanations such as: ‘men and women have the same efficiency’; ‘women and men have the same career levels’; ‘greater openness’; ‘they are both in the job market and have the same salaries’; ‘women are getting jobs in the ministry’; ‘there are equal levels of higher education’; ‘society has seen women equal to men’; and ‘women have proved their worth.’

¹⁰⁶ Zinc Network, *Impact of Syrian Refugee Crisis on Lebanon: Quantitative Research*, November 2019

¹⁰⁷ UNDP, *Qualitative Research on Social Tensions, Lebanon, Round 1*, Year 1, July 2019

¹⁰⁸ Six men aged between 40 and 60 years old

Those who believe the competition is unfair give explanations or examples such as: ‘the harassment of working women’; ‘many businesses do not accept women’; ‘men will not allow women to work’; ‘men work more’; ‘men get higher roles’; ‘misogyny’; ‘Syrian women do not find work’; or that ‘there is no economy to revitalize the role of women in labour.’ Other reasons include: ‘women cannot do what men do’; ‘female employment is secondary; men are essential in society’; ‘men are stronger’; ‘women cannot work at night’; and ‘women are not allowed due to their inability to do some difficult work’.

Some suggest that ‘in this country women find more work than men’ or that ‘there is no work for either parties.’ Others note that ‘power dominates all business opportunities which are based on favouritism’; and that there is ‘sectarian patronage’ or ‘*wasta*.’ Some respondents list ‘politics and religion’ as the cause of unfair job competition.

Over two-thirds of total respondents (67.1%) do not notice a change in women’s roles at home and in society in the last three to five years. The areas which observe the greatest changes are the **North** (39.7%), **Mount Lebanon** (35.5%) and **Beirut** (34.4%). In each of these areas, adults recognise change significantly more than youth, which is likely to be due to longer life experiences witnessing the transition of gender roles and norms, regardless of the time span offered in the survey question.

As can be seen from the below table, perceptions of change are significantly lower across all areas among non-Lebanese survey participants. However, our qualitative findings show that Syrian women, too, see changes in gender roles, although rather as the result of extenuating circumstances (their presence in Lebanon and/or their financial predicament) than any shifts in normative thinking. In an FGD with Syrian refugee females in Zahle¹⁰⁹, while one participant notes that Syrian women are now doing as the Lebanese females (“they are going to schools and working”), the other participants disagreed and spoke of the frequent male perception that women are “fragile and unable to withstand the harsh reality of Lebanese employers.” The reality of Syrian women working has, in this case, increased a sense of shame and thus contributed to marital and familial tension. Nonetheless, the women in this group are largely positive about the future. They attribute these changes to Lebanese people, who they view as “civilised and equal. There is no change in Syria [regarding gender roles], but in Lebanon - yes.”

Table 9: Perceived change in women’s roles at home and in society - % of respondents who said “yes”

Question: Thinking about the last 3 to 5 years, are you noticing a change in women’s roles at home and in society?

Area	Status			Sex		Age groups		Total per area
	Host Community (Lebanese)	Refugees (All)	Non-refugee Syrians	Female	Male	Youth (Ages 15-25)	Adults (Ages 26 and above)	
Akkar	33.3%	6.5%	N/A	20.5%	18.2%	26.2%	13.0%	19.3%
North	63.2%	22.9%	12.5%	39.8%	39.6%	34.4%	44.2%	39.7%
Beirut	62.8%	6.8%	0.0% ¹¹⁰	31.1%	37.8%	22.9%	47.6%	34.4%
Mount Lebanon	54.5%	13.0%	28.6%	41.9%	29.1%	31.4%	38.8%	35.5%
Baalbeck-Hermel	43.2%	13.7%	30.0%	30.8%	27.9%	26.2%	32.5%	29.3%
Central & West Bekaa	48.9%	9.3%	28.6% ¹¹¹	33.7%	25.8%	30.4%	29.0%	29.7%
Total per group	52.3%	13.0%	23.5%	35.9%	30.0%	29.7%	35.9%	32.9%

¹⁰⁹ Eight women aged between 30 and 50 years old

¹¹⁰ Two respondents (who replied “no”)

¹¹¹ Seven respondents

Survey participants thus do perceive an improvement with regard to women's changing roles. Their responses suggest that women are considered more visible in public (particularly with regards to 'demanding their rights), have increased access to work opportunities, and have increased their political participation.

A majority of (89.0%) total respondents do not notice a change in men’s roles at home and in society in the last three to five years. As can be seen in the below table, the most change comes from **Baalbeck-Hermel (18.3%), Beirut (15.6%), the North (11.3%), and Central and West Bekaa (13.0%)**. Similarly, to perceptions of changes in women’s roles, a low percentage is found in Akkar (6.8%). There is again distinct variation between refugees and the host community, with highest contrasts seen in Beirut and Baalbeck-Hermel, confirming again that shifts in gender roles inside and outside the home are not playing out equally across nationality. Mount Lebanon, interestingly, has low percentages (6.7%) noting change in men’s roles, significantly lower than those in the same area observing change in women’s roles; this perhaps suggests that women are taking on roles more associated with men (for example, work) without men taking on roles traditionally associated with women (for example, house work and childcare).

Table 10: Perceived change in men’s roles at home and in society - % of respondents who said “yes”
Question: Thinking about the last 3 to 5 years, are you noticing a change in men’s roles at home and in society?

Area	Status			Sex		Age groups		Total per area
	Host Community (Lebanese)	Refugees (All)	Non-refugee Syrians	Female	Male	Youth (Ages 15-25)	Adults (Ages 26 and above)	
Akkar	11.9%	2.2%	N/A	11.4%	2.3%	7.1%	6.5%	6.8%
North	21.8%	3.6%	0.0%	13.3%	9.4%	13.3%	9.6%	11.3%
Beirut	27.9%	2.3%	0.0%	15.6%	15.6%	2.1%	31.0%	15.6%
Mount Lebanon	8.0%	4.8%	7.1%	6.5%	6.9%	3.6%	9.2%	6.7%
Baalbeck-Hermel	28.4%	9.6%	0.0%	17.9%	18.6%	13.1%	23.8%	18.3%
Central & West Bekaa	20.7%	5.8%	0.0%	9.8%	16.1%	14.1%	11.8%	13.0%
Total per group	17.5%	5.0%	3.5%	11.0%	11.0%	8.8%	13.1%	11.0%

Of those who do notice a change in men’s roles, respondents often frame this response in relation to their attitudes towards women – for example, being fairer or more respectful towards women, acknowledging women in power, and becoming more involved with household chores or childcare. A limited number of respondents suggest a more negative transition, with greater responsibilities and pressure for men in Lebanon referenced.

Qualitative findings give further complexity to the varied gender roles in Lebanese society, in terms of realities and ideals. In contrast to the quantitative findings, almost all participants involved in the FGDs and KIIs notice a clear wave of change when it comes to female and male roles at home and in society. Most interviewees note, among other advances: greater opportunities for women in (further) education, more working women, and greater female representation in politics/parliament. According to a local male activist from Beirut: “It definitely changed, and it is changing every year. We can see how women are becoming more involved in the political arena. They are becoming more influential which is something positive for me.”

For Lebanese men from an FGD in Beirut¹¹², the situation is clearer cut and more negative, with entrenched patriarchal values at the social and structural/legal level and the frequent undervaluing of female potential. The participants here view with scepticism most attempts at involving women in public positions and decision-making capacities, suggesting instead that such moves are in effect paying no more than lip service to international obligations.

¹¹² Two men aged 26 and 29 years old

In areas such as the North, Baalbeck-Hermel, and Central and West Bekaa, as well as within discussions among non-Lebanese participants, opinions suggest either a slower rate of change and/or a reluctance to accept such adaptations. Nonetheless, tradition is being increasingly trumped by necessity, as is seen from the survey for changing roles for men (18.3%) and women (29.3%) in Baalbeck-Hermel. The following statement can be seen from a Lebanese male FGD in Baalbeck¹¹³:

Here in Baalbeck, the man has to be a real man or else he is no one. The role of women is to stay home and take care of her kids. [...] Here in the area we are a bit conventional, and in most Muslim communities, they value the reputation of women to a great extent. For example, a woman wouldn't like the hijab but because she lives in this community, they would look at her differently if she wouldn't wear the hijab. The woman who lives in the village is different from the woman who lives in the city. [...] Her role definitely changed in the past years. The bad economic situation forced women to find jobs and work to support their husbands. Even the most conservative people, they leaned towards this because they want to live properly.

Lebanese women from the same location¹¹⁴ express similar rates of change and mixed feelings:

Most of the time now, women are men and men are like women, but not our men. Many women take more control now but not all of them of course. Women have more roles and they work similarly to men - this is positive. But we would prefer if young people are working, they are staying home. The priority should be for young men, they need to work to get a house and get married. It is a pity they are staying home without jobs. But again, if the woman didn't help her husband, they cannot afford the living costs.

The participants also suggest that inequality extends beyond the home and workplace. When probed as to whether women receive access to decision-making and the justice system, the response from one participant from an FGD with Lebanese men from Baalbeck¹¹⁵ is: “No, definitely not and especially not here. There is a case here where one guy from a clan sexually abused a girl from a different clan. Although it was not the girl’s fault, her mother killed her to save the reputation of the clan. It was a horrible slaughter.” However, this is an isolated case and there is generally very little discussion across all FGDs and KIs of women’s rights outside of the economic sphere.

Moreover, while most participants, male and female, acknowledge that women in general are working more, this is explained in many cases more in terms of economic obligation than in terms of rights-based claims or shifts, gender norms, or even preference. Many of the Syrian men interviewed also express a sense of shame or tension at this new dynamic. One male refugee from Fakiha¹¹⁶ states that he is “willing to work day and night to save my sister from working in a shop.”

Other qualitative research participants observe that women in some cases now have greater opportunity than men when it comes to employment. A male CSO representative from Halba believes that INGO and public sector jobs increasingly prefer to hire female staff; three interviewees from Tripoli note that women have greater luck in social work, and also that they take lower wages than men so are becoming preferential for employers - contributing at the familial level to competition and even domestic violence. A local male activist from Baalbeck suggests female Syrian refugees have greater freedom of movement than their husbands, sons, or brothers, given that General Security do not ask for their legal papers as much.

Even those who welcomed gender equality hold certain reservations about the manner in which this is unfolding in Lebanon, such as the local male activist from Beirut who notes that: “This is creating a gap in raising children because the role of women changed. And some families found the balance difficult between work and raising children. That is why we should work on family planning to guide them on how to balance work and home life.”

¹¹³ Five men aged between 22 and 31 years old

¹¹⁴ Three women aged between 18 and 51 years old

¹¹⁵ Five men aged between 22 and 31 years old

¹¹⁶ Five men aged between 19 and 27 years old

Thus, while change seems to be occurring slowly, and in some areas rather than others, the findings show that this change is not always being accompanied by changes in behaviour and is instead, at times, contributing more to tension at the gendered level. Peacebuilding initiatives should focus on education and awareness around women’s political, legal and cultural (as well as economic) rights in order to facilitate what is appearing to be an unsteady transition to greater forms of gender equality. Particular efforts to this regard should be focused in Akkar.

Gender roles in tensions and conflict

Thinking about the **recent protests** that took place in Lebanon, **31.8% of respondents believe that women and men participate equally**. 53.3% say that they do not know. Only 6.3% believe men participate more, of which 60.9% are men and 39.1% women. 8.6% believe women participate more, of which 62.8% are women and 37.2% men. Of those who believe women and men participate equally, 48.1% are men and 51.9% women.

When asked why each participant believed what they did, some say that men and women participate equally because ‘the revolution is for all citizens’; ‘men and women are equal’; or that ‘they have the same pains’; ‘share the same demands’; or ‘have the same rights.’ Other explanations include: ‘because women have an important role in politics and giving an opinion’ and ‘a woman’s voice is as loud as a man’s voice.’

In Baalbeck-Hermel, reasons for believing women participate more are given, including: ‘Women became more effective,’ ‘The revolution is female, and she started the revolution’, ‘women are more enthusiastic than men’, or that ‘women are more courageous.’ In Beirut, respondents who believe women participate more generally framed their reasoning around a greater female struggle, with thus more to gain from the revolution than men: ‘because women are more wronged’, ‘because we have more causes to fight for, giving nationality to our kids, getting custody etc.’ and ‘because women are more oppressed in our society.’ In Akkar and Tripoli, reasons are cited for women not participating as much as men, such as: ‘women have house chores’; ‘Women are not allowed to stand out in society’; ‘The street is not for women, it is dangerous.’ One female Lebanese respondent from Akkar stated that ‘men have more time than women, the majority of them are unemployed.’

In line with the quantitative findings, no Syrian refugees, male or female, report any personal involvement in the protests. FGD and KII findings suggest overwhelmingly, however, that Lebanese women played a significant role in the protests throughout. Lebanese men in Zahle¹¹⁷ note that the protests have been called “the feminine revolution.” Host community men in Beirut affirm that “the role of the woman has evolved and become stronger, and this is confirmed by what we saw in the revolution.” This role is something that has been highly publicised in social media and media reports on the revolution, as a piece from the Middle East Institute describes:

Since the very beginning of the protests, women have been on the frontlines. One of the first viral moments that galvanized the movement was footage of a woman kicking an armed security guard who threatened to open fire on protesters. [...] The underlying reasons for doing so were to protect their male counterparts from violence by the army, defuse tensions, and maintain the non-violent nature of the protests.¹¹⁸

Some have seen that the protests have equalised male and female roles, who stand together with the same issues and hardships. For a municipality representative from Majdal Anjar, “They have the same role. We have seen that women, men, and youth have participated in the revolution in order to secure a better life for a nation that deserves to receive sacrifices and live.” Lebanese women from an FGD in Jounieh have a less enthusiastic outlook, in reference to: “The conflicts didn’t affect their roles but affected their daily lives. Similarly, they were fired from their jobs. Men and women are both being negatively affected by the conflicts.”

¹¹⁷ Eight men aged between 25 and 55 years old

¹¹⁸ Middle East Institute, [Women and women’s rights are central to Lebanon’s protest movement](#), 5 November 2019

In this sense, women and men are seen by most as being affected equally by conflicts; given that most are framing conflict here along economic lines, this seems largely due to a persistent theme that all are unified in their suffering, regardless of sex or sect. Although involvement in the protests is seen as higher among women by many FGD and KII respondents, this is not at large reflected in the quantitative findings, where the majority of respondents across all areas view roles as equal or do not know. A large proportion of the participants align with common themes of uncertainty and ambiguity surrounding both gender roles and the revolution.

An emerging theme throughout the FGDs and KIIs, however, is the **role of women as de-escalators in conflict**. For Lebanese women in Beit Chabeb, “Whenever a problem happens in the village, it is the woman who solves the problem and cools down the tension. She has her way.” A youth committee member from Beddaoui notes observing women standing between men and the army during the revolution, while a refugee representative from Fakiha asserts that “Women are better than men because they can handle more pressure. Women are also tender; they tend to curb conflicts. They are more affectionate than men.”

It should be noted, however, that this finding has a couple of interesting anomalies, particularly in Baalbeck-Hermel, where two independent sources view women as sometimes escalating tensions and conflicts at a local level:

Many studies show that women reduce tension. However, in Baalbeck we see that women often play the role of increasing tension. For example, if there is a problem between a family in Baalbeck, women would tell their sons to “go, fight, get revenge!”¹¹⁹

Similarly in **Aley**, findings highlight a similar observation, with women seen to be playing at times a role which is conducive to and support of violence: “Both men and women, around 70-80% of Lebanese people, were raised according to a violent culture and this is seen in the things we say - such as, at the moment, that ‘we will take our rights by our hands’. Both men and women use violence. But men will go and fight while the woman will support her sons to go and fight.”¹²⁰

As such, opinions about the role of women in conflict and political movements are generally mixed across and within areas, by both men and women. In **Akkar and Tripoli**, corresponding with more traditional views found about women in the community/the home, as well as lower percentages of respondents in these areas who believe both men and women’s roles are changing, women are frequently depoliticised by both qualitative and quantitative participants. In areas such as **Baalbeck-Hermel**, expressions of gender-related traditions and conservatism are most heard, but roles (particularly economic) seem to be changing nonetheless. Female roles in conflict interlink here with strong family influences in this area, as well as perceptions highlighted in KIIs that women may at times be escalating family-based conflict.

Youth

Youth, much like women, are often categorised by participants within the qualitative research between two opposing viewpoints: as de-escalators, the hope of the future, or as trouble-makers - particularly in relation to young men: “Young men are easily provoked; all they want is their rights and no one is responding to them.”¹²¹ Disillusioned and unemployed male youth are, for many respondents, obvious candidates for developing tension. In Baalbeck-Hermel, this can also be seen, with reports suggesting that young men are more likely to be involved in clan-based structures and fighting due to unemployment and a lack of other opportunities.¹²² Others suggest that this nature is more ingrained and identity-based, rather than reactive to hardship and disaffection:

¹¹⁹ Local male activist from Baalbeck

¹²⁰ Male CSO representative

¹²¹ CSO representative from Halba

¹²² Asharq al-Awsat, Exclusive: Lebanon’s Organized Crime, Militancy Hotbeds, 22 December 2018

People our age are still going after sectarian parties and mentality; emotionally, they are connected to this, they feel like they belong to it and must defend it. It is more emotional than logical, a sense of identity. For young men, it triggers this sense of manliness – to defend people, their land, honour. The concept has been planted in them even if it is not still there. Mainly it is the parents, as we don't know much about religion or history. Religion is connected to political parties, so people think they know.¹²³

While such comments are not in isolation, and survey results do at times show greater divisions or tensions perceived by youth, there is also a theme throughout the qualitative findings optimistic about the role youth can play in improving Lebanese society. Indeed, the majority of participants who discuss youth see them as part of a new, hopeful generation who rather benefit without the painful memories and judgements of their parents that continue to divide society:

Youth are the group that have the most potential – in Zahle or all over Lebanon. They can outgrow the old mindset and bring about a new, open mindset. They are different to the war generation and are affected in a different way by what they have lived. Effort and time should go into the youth.¹²⁴

Respondents also suggest that youth act as the best mediators for instances of conflict in their communities, in that they are able to bridge gaps and influence their peers to contribute to social cohesion. There is a wealth of literature and studies about the potential for young people to play a leading role in reducing conflict and stimulating social cohesion in local environments.¹²⁵ Empowering youth as peacebuilders is seen as an effective and sustainable approach that safeguards communities against the conflicts or even radicalisation that may emerge as a result of youth neglect.¹²⁶ Involving youth as key changemakers and the leaders of peacebuilding programmes is likely to be effective in easing increased perceptions among youth of marginalisation, particularly in locations with high unemployment or deprivation levels such as Aley, Halba, Tripoli and Baalbeck which are cited by many participants as one of the contributors to increased tensions at both the community and family level. In the North and Baalbeck-Hermel, for example, more youth observe political divisions than adults suggesting that particular effort should be given to connecting youth in dialogue and across different political affiliations.

On the other hand, a generational and memory-based divide means that, in some cases, youth are already building bridges and connecting in a way that their parents do not. In Mount Lebanon, for example, 39.1% of youth note political divisions in comparison to 46.6% of adults. In Beirut, too, 41.7% of youth note no division, in comparison to only 26.2% of adults. Youth in these two areas should thus be prioritised as leading peacebuilders, particularly given the high political/religious divisions and sectarian memories that prevail here.

¹²³ Youth committee member from Aley

¹²⁴ CSO representative from Zahle

¹²⁵ UNESCO, *Youth as Peacebuilders: Enhancing Youth Resilience and Building Peace*, 6 November 2019

¹²⁶ Search for Common Ground, *Better Together: A youth-led approach to peaceful coexistence in Lebanon, Conflict Perceptions and Baseline Assessment*, November 2014

Dynamics

This section brings together the above analysis of structures and stakeholders into an exploration of the way in which these topics are interplaying with the dynamics of peace and conflict. This follows the final section of the DFID framework, which suggests assessment of: longer term trends (such as whether tensions are increasing and decreasing); shorter term triggers (likely to escalate or cause the outbreak of conflict); and institutions or processes that may mitigate the tensions and conflicts as identified thus far.¹²⁷

Therefore this section first identifies the driving or escalatory factors of conflict, beyond the broader structures and conflicts which have already been discussed. These are considered in terms of exclusion/inclusion and dis/satisfaction with national and local-level structures, including those related to security/safety, service provision, decision-making mechanisms and political and justice systems. Findings suggest that these components may differ more substantially than broader or longer-term structures in terms of both timespan and geographical location¹²⁸; such triggers may be more mutable or fast-changing in the short-term. As such, these dynamics may be a priority or point of entry for both actors of conflict and peacebuilders; monitoring developments in the following dynamics is seen as particularly important here.

Gaps and strengths identified here go on to inform the following discussion on connectors and sources of resilience at a community-based level. This includes an analysis of capacities for peace (including existing attitudes and possibilities of local engagement) and infrastructures for peace (including exploration of peacebuilders and places conducive to interaction and co-existence).

Finally, the section draws together the strategic and communicative element of Search's project, by presenting findings on the dynamic of communication within conflict, and the way in which the dissemination of information can act as both a tool for escalating and de-escalating tensions.

Driving factors of conflict

Security and safety

A majority of all survey participants (85.1%) either agree or strongly agree that they **feel safe to walk alone in their neighbourhood during the day**. A slightly lower majority of 63.6% of all participants either agree or strongly agree that they **feel safe to walk alone in their neighbourhood after dark**.

Just under half (44.2%) of respondents believe that **in the future, security will improve**. Around a third (32.9%) say it will worsen, while 22.9% say it will stay the same. Percentages remain similar across nationality, with a slight variation between Lebanese (3.9% more of whom believe the situation will improve) than Syrian, who are more negative about the situation worsening (11.6% more than Lebanese). More female than male respondents believe that the security situation will worsen (54.6% and 45.4%, respectively).

Notably, safety and security are not seen as major dividers in survey results at current, but as a dynamic with the potential to escalate. Indeed, while physical insecurity was not a consistently major topic of conversation in the FGDs and KIIs, qualitative findings do suggest some heightened senses of threats and insecurity in Lebanon. A lack of safety across the findings is attributed to the Syrian presence:

¹²⁷ DFID (Department for International Development, UK), Conducting Conflict Assessments: Guidance Notes, 2002

¹²⁸ It is recommended to view the Area Profiles (Annex 1) for local-level disaggregation.

Nowadays, if my son goes to his work, I stay preoccupied all day until he returns. We have all become so scared. I used to be afraid only for my daughter but now I am afraid for both my daughter and my son. [...] Before the Syrian crisis? Of course, everything was better. We were sleeping and the door was open because of the security.¹²⁹

This sense of insecurity also is seen as contributing to further tensions as people look for “an alternative to government.” As aforementioned, such a dynamic can result in a pattern where “people feel they need protection and security and so will try to find security elsewhere - for example by having weapons in the home, or even finding a political party that can protect them.”¹³⁰

Discrimination and exclusion at the local level

Across the quantitative research, the vast majority of respondents (96.4%) say that they have **not been treated unfairly because of their religion** (96.4%), **political affiliation** (93.9%) or **sex** (93.2%) in the last 3 months. The results here are surprising given the wealth of information provided on divisions across political and religious lines, as well as multiple findings regarding inclusivity/exclusivity, but they may well be a result of the specific timescale or a general reluctance to discuss conflict without further probing and open discussion. Indeed, despite these findings, data throughout the rest of the qualitative and quantitative research suggests that elements of exclusion and prejudice are central in many elements of life in Lebanon. Discussions in FGDs, as previously analysed, reveal multiple occasions of unfair treatment based on sex, religion, and political affiliation. This subsection will thus explore how discrimination and perceptions of exclusions and marginalisation at the local level are contributing to tensions and, in some cases, conflict.

Access to public services and decision-making mechanisms

Just over half (54.4%) of all respondents also feel they do *not* have adequate access to essential public services, such as education and healthcare. Out of those who feel this way, 51.2% are Lebanese; 38.9% are Syrian refugees; 7.9% are non-refugee Syrians; and 1.8% are Palestinian refugees from Syria. This reflects previous analysis into perceptions of economic competition and anger at the ruling class, as well as dissatisfaction with local municipalities.

Around a third (31.8%) of all respondents agree that they are **able to access the mayor and/or the municipal council members** if they need to make a complaint or request their support. Another 33.4% are neutral; 23.2% disagree; 8.2% strongly agree; and 3.4% strongly disagree. Of those who agree, 64.2% are Lebanese.

Out of 1096 total respondents, 829 (75.6%) feel they are **not able to influence political processes and decisions** in their communities. Of those who feel they are not able, 53.3% are Syrian refugees; 34.4% Lebanese; 9.9% non-refugee Syrians; 1.6% Palestinian refugees from Syria; and 0.7% Palestinians from Lebanon.

Perceptions of support and trust at the local authority level are important for peacebuilding planning, given that they shed light on the extent to which municipality bodies can and should be worked with. Understanding also the perceptions in communities around fairness of service provision and access to decision-making mechanisms gives valuable insight into the relations both among host communities and between host and refugee communities, particularly when it comes to reasoning over competition and economic hardship. It is clear from the findings that views are mixed over the extent to which municipal bodies are effective in terms of service provision, support and accessibility, with many middling figures for agreement in the above statements and high levels of neutrality. However, as will be seen from the section below, support for local structures is notably higher than national structures, and while figures do show some disagreement, there is generally greater neutrality. Support is higher in Baalbeck-Hermel and Central and West Bekaa from both Syrians and Lebanese.

¹²⁹ Lebanese adult women from an FGD in Tripoli

¹³⁰ CSO representative from Aley

Discrimination and exclusion at the national level

Lebanese political and justice system

When asked about perceptions on the current Lebanese political system, **the majority of respondents across sex and age groups agree that the Lebanese political system is corrupt** (76.6%). 23.9% note it is unaccountable and 28.9% that it is unfair and benefits few. Almost no respondents consider the system transparent (2.8%), accountable (0.5%), fair (1.0%) or politically inclusive (2.9%).

Table 11: Perceptions on the current Lebanese political system - % of respondents by sex and age group
Question: Thinking about the country’s current challenges, how would you describe the current Lebanese political system? Check all that apply.

Response	Sex		Age group		Total
	Female	Male	Youth	Adults	
Corrupt	78.3%	75.0%	75.6%	77.6%	76.6%
Unaccountable	24.5%	23.3%	23.4%	24.3%	23.9%
Unfair/ benefits few	29.5%	28.4%	28.6%	29.2%	28.9%
Transparent	1.8%	3.8%	2.9%	2.8%	2.8%
Accountable	0.7%	0.4%	0.8%	0.4%	0.5%
Fair/ benefits many	1.5%	0.5%	1.1%	0.9%	1.0%
Politically inclusive	2.4%	3.4%	2.7%	3.2%	2.9%

Only 33.3% of all respondents disagree that there is a transparent and fair justice system in Lebanon, which they can access. 33.3% are neutral; 15.1% agree; 14.2% strongly disagree; and 3.9% strongly agree. No participants interviewed or partaking in FGDs agree that there is equal access to the justice system. As with access to other services and public provisions, this criticism is largely levelled at political elites and corrupt lawmakers. An Aley CSO representative suggests that the weakness of the government can be seen when “the one who acted violently will get out of jail directly, whereas others who did nothing will stay there for six months.” For Lebanese men in Halba¹³¹:

The world is full of favouritism. According to the law, citizens are equal before the judiciary, but the reality is different. The person who has the means or wasta is not held accountable like others, so we see that many people who don’t abide by the law and who have committed acts against the law have not been held accountable.

A CSO representative from Beirut similarly views the judicial system as one of the main mechanisms of exclusion and inequality:

Prosecutors and police do not play their role, and there are self-fulfilling results in investigations – the blame is always on Syrians, Egyptians, all vulnerable groups. Syrians are prosecuted without confessions. Law enforcement agencies are carrying out law and order in towns where they are part of the power dynamic. Prosecutors are not independent and instead serve the interest of the state.

The following table displays perceptions on the current Lebanese political system by area, indicating support or confidence is greater in Central and West Bekaa and Mount Lebanon than the rest of the country.¹³²

¹³¹ Six men aged between 23 and 55 years old
¹³² See Annex 1 (Area Profiles) for further area disaggregation.

Table 12: Perceptions on the current Lebanese political system - % of respondents by area

Question: Thinking about the country’s current challenges, how would you describe the current Lebanese political system? Check all that apply.

Area	Corrupt	Unaccountable	Unfair/ benefits few	Transparent	Accountable	Fair/ benefits many	Politically inclusive
Akkar	77.3%	19.3%	30.7%	1.1%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%
North	86.6%	26.8%	30.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Beirut	87.8%	51.1%	57.8%	0.0%	0.0%	2.2%	2.2%
Mount Lebanon	69.1%	21.1%	24.0%	6.1%	1.3%	1.9%	4.3%
Baalbeck-Hermel	84.1%	15.2%	22.0%	1.2%	0.0%	0.6%	1.2%
Central & West Bekaa	69.2%	23.2%	28.1%	2.7%	0.5%	0.0%	6.5%
Total	76.6%	23.9%	28.9%	2.8%	0.5%	1.0%	2.9%

Recent protests

Just under half of total respondents (43.2%) support the revolution/protests, 37.1% are neutral, and only 7.7% do not support them. There is little variance across age categories in support of the revolution, with 44.0% of female youth and 42.9% male youth supportive, in comparison to 40.8% of female adults and 44.9% of male adults. More female participants answer that they ‘do not know’ (11.8%) than male participants (5.4%).

Those who support the protests and have participated themselves list reasons such as corruption or a demand for change and a better country. Those who say no suggest reasons such as ‘not enough time’ or ‘not allowed by my family/husband.’ Many Syrian or Palestinian respondents who support the protests but did not participate in the protests stated reasons such as: ‘not my business’ or, simply, ‘I am a refugee.’

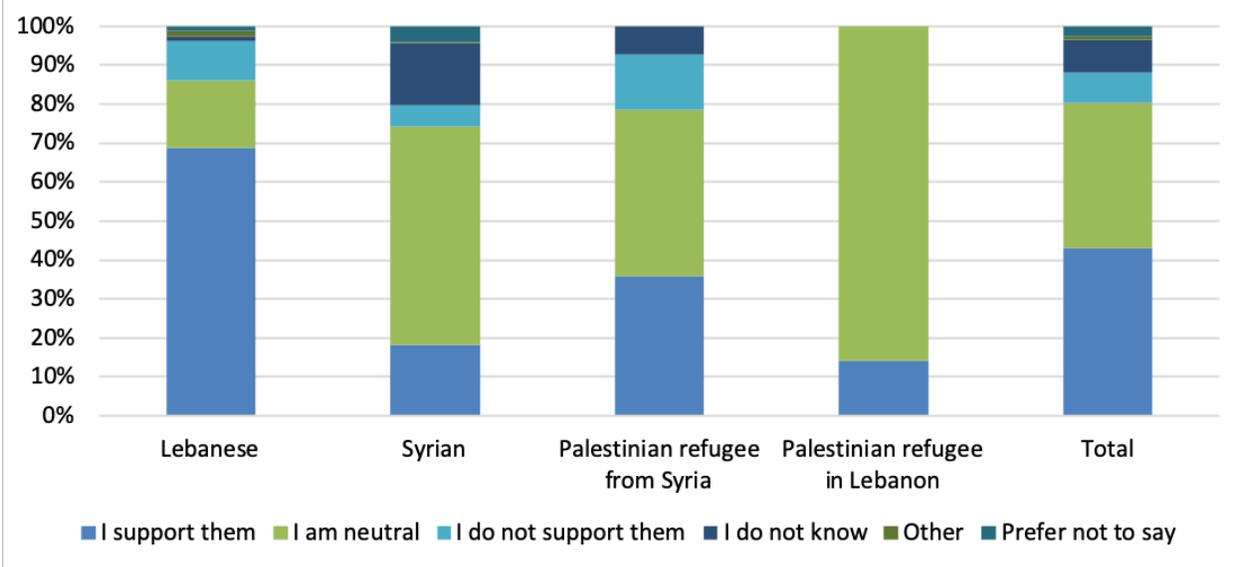
As can be seen from the below graph, levels of support for the protests are significantly higher among the host population (68.6%) than within non-Lebanese communities (22.8%), with generally higher levels of neutrality seen among the latter (60.2%). Qualitative findings also suggest that Palestinians and Syrians tend instead to make gestures of solidarity with the Lebanese protests, while hoping that the effects of the protests do not come at the expense of their economic and legal well-being. Many Syrians spoken with also make comparisons to the Syrian revolution and raise fears of similar consequences:

*There are no political conflicts here. We do not get involved in politics. We came here to escape politics. We came here to work, not to get in trouble.*¹³³

¹³³ Five male refugees from Fakiha (aged between 21 and 57 years old).

Figure 15: Views about the recent protests in Lebanon by nationality

Question: What is your view about the recent protests/revolution that have been taking place across Lebanon?



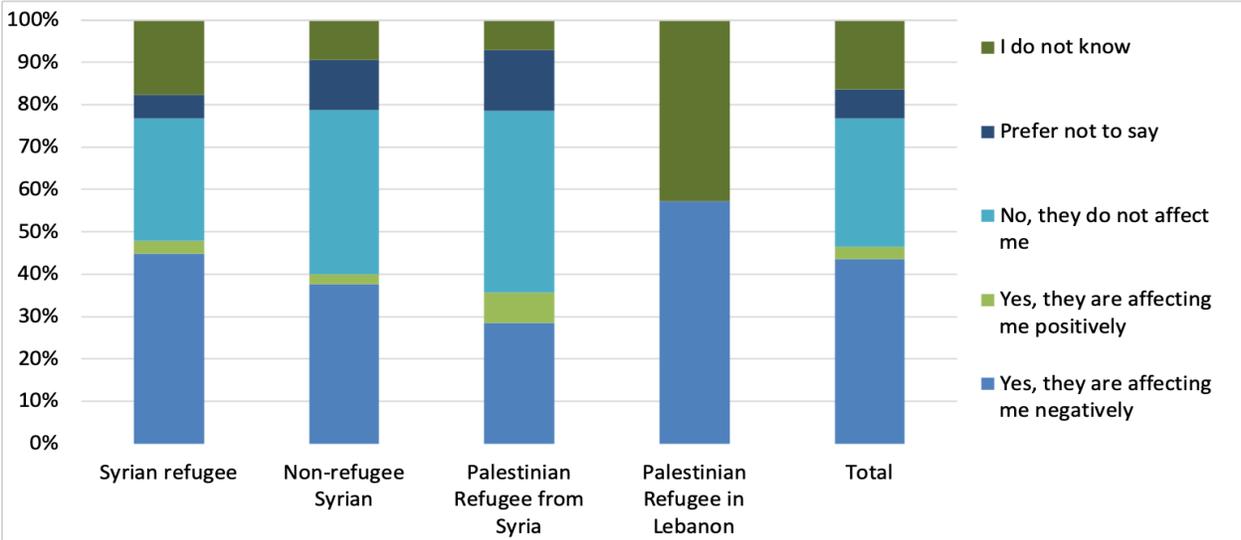
A majority of respondents (91.7%) believe that refugees are not welcome to participate in the protests/revolution. 91.5% of Lebanese believe this; 91.0% of Syrian refugees, 95.3% of non-refugee Syrians, 92.9% of Palestinian refugees from Syria, and 100.0% of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. While few respondents across all areas believe refugees are welcome to participate in the protests/revolution, but slightly greater levels can be seen in Baalbeck-Hermel (23.2%), Akkar (12.5%), and Beirut (13.3%), suggesting that there could be a higher level of political involvement among refugees in such areas.

In response to whether refugees should be welcome to participate in the protests/revolution, **85.3% respondents believe they should not be.** 88.9% of the host community believe this, while a significant 88.2% of non-refugee Syrians, 88.1% of Syrian refugees, 64.3% of PRS and 57.1% of PRL also do. The lowest levels of those who think refugees should be allowed to participate in the protests can be seen in the North (at just 6.7%), with only 4.6% of the host community agreeing and 7.0% of Syrian refugees.

Lebanese respondents who believe that refugees should be welcome to participate give reasons such as the need for greater support and numbers of people, or else that their belief that refugees hold the same demands and are experiencing the same suffering. Refugees who believe they have the right to participate give explanations such as: ‘because I live here’; ‘to support the Lebanese’; or ‘we share the same pain’. However, most Lebanese participants believe that refugees should *not* be welcome to participate because Lebanon is ‘not their country’ or this ‘is not their fight’. Others attribute their cause of suffering to the refugee presence: ‘they are the ones who are starving us’ or ‘they are the cause of our problems.’ Some Syrians were aware of these feelings and framed their own lack of involvement around this: ‘because they consider it us who caused the dollar crisis in Lebanon’; ‘they think it is not our right’; or ‘there is a rejection by society of the idea of our existence in Lebanon.’ Interestingly, many Syrians express similar answers to Lebanese respondents, such as ‘these protests are only for Lebanese people’ or ‘it is not our struggle’. A finding reflected in the qualitative studies also is a reluctance to engage in any form of conflict or political dispute, opting for a chance at a simpler life: ‘we came to Lebanon to live, not to protest.’

However, 43.5% of refugees also believe the **protests/revolution are affecting them negatively**; this corresponds with findings from the qualitative data, where refugees tend to either totally distance themselves from the protests, or instead mention the negative economic impact of the current crisis (in direct or indirect reference to the revolution).

Figure 16: Perceived impact of protests among refugees/non-Lebanese populations by status
Question: As a refugee/non-Lebanese living in Lebanon, do you feel that the protests/revolution are affecting you?



It can thus be seen that there is a growing state-citizen divide characterised by a population that has little faith in the Lebanese political system and largely disagrees that there is a fair justice system. Refugees overwhelmingly feel less represented and less included in national level political processes, but disillusionment levels are high across all nationalities. This is fuelling support for the revolution, which in some cases is taking on violent forms as a last hope.

Connectors and sources of resilience

While there are multiple, complex, and in some cases engrained dividing lines and resulting tensions and conflicts in society, the research has also found that communities and the intersecting layers of relationships within them have built sources of resilience and connectors that offer both hope and opportunities for capacity building. The following section explores capacities for peace (in terms of attitudes) and infrastructures for peace (in terms of people and places) as have been identified throughout the qualitative and quantitative analysis.

Capacities for peace

Attitudes

1. Some sense of unity and hope at the moment - prime opportunity

While recognising that claims of unity are not unanimous, it is suggested that programmes on social action and cohesion capitalise on and harness current trends of thinking that are a) questioning divides in society, particularly sectarianism and b) hopeful for a new future. New conversations, addressing past divides and calling for an overdue end to them, are already beginning in almost all levels of society - as seen from the qualitative data - breaking previous taboos and widening the possibility of having political conversations in a sensitive manner. Given that most political complaints seem to be increasingly normal, shared, and levelled at political elites/parties/systems, rather than communities or individuals, there seems to be a widening space for conflict sensitive discussion to happen at a local level.

2. The majority of participants are already anti-violence

When survey participants are asked “If another person has called you a bad name (e.g. "stupid"), which of the following is closest to what you would do?”, many more answer that they would choose ‘not to respond’ (55.8%) or that they would ‘talk with them to resolve the conflict’ (20.0%), rather than ‘fight with them’ (12.1%) or ‘yell at them’ (16.8%). While the percentages of those who would respond with verbal or physical aggression is significant, they are not overwhelming and suggest that peacebuilding initiatives could reduce these figures with conflict resolution and problem-solving training.

Similarly, in the FGDs and KIs, even those participants who speak widely of violence and weapon-culture suggest that those wielding guns and attempting to answer violence with violence are in the minority. It is anticipated that awareness and de-weaponisation campaigns would be well received by the majority of residents in locations such as Baalbeck, Fakiha, and Aley, who welcome the prospect of peace.

3. Many calls for communication and dialogue as way forward

Many interviewees and survey participants suggest, without prompting, the importance of dialogue and communication in easing tensions across and between communities. This is particularly the case in Mount Lebanon and among youth who appear keen to break away from the ongoing hostilities of the past. Male Lebanese FGD participants from Baalbeck¹³⁴ also highlight the importance of reforming long-held misinterpretations between groups and regions: “We do have freedom of speech here and liberty on the contrary of what people really think of Baalbeck. Sometimes you hear news about a region, and you would think it is too dangerous to go. But when you go there, you see that what you heard is not true, you feel safe, you can communicate with the people and they would be very hospitable”. According to a youth committee representative from Halba:

A solution can be reached through dialogue and discussion, and by giving up some things so that everyone can be united. There must be a constructive discussion between people and committees in order for us to work out issues and reach a solution. [...]. When I sit down with a Lebanese person, I tell him about the situation and explain to him my point of view and change his view. He thinks more deeply, not everyone is unjust. Not all Lebanese are bad, and not all Syrians are bad.

Qualitative data indicates that multiple networks of dialogue and interaction are already in operation throughout the country, in formal and informal structures, such as:

- Local youth committees that incorporate youth from different genders/backgrounds/religions/nationalities and train them in decision-making and collaboration with local authorities;
- Discussion of key societal issues (e.g. inclusion, gender rights, or local security) through the use of arts, theatre, dance, and other artistic expression;
- Quick impact community-based projects that improve infrastructure/public spaces while involving the opinions (whether in needs assessments or through the team structure) from demographically diverse groups;
- Social events organised by CSOs that span religious/political/nationality divides;
- Regular and informal discussions at the village level - which take place in the street, in square, in shops, in the home, and other locations.

Every CSO interviewee suggests that improved inter- and intra-community understanding and communication is key to mitigating tensions, which - as much of the data suggests - often stem from distrust or a lack of understanding. For example, one CSO representative in Halba suggested that this process is already working there:

¹³⁴ Five men aged between 22 and 31 years old

Lebanese and Syrians talking to each other mitigates tension. They need to find common ground, interests and problems - because they live in a common town and face the same problems, they have to talk with each other and find solutions. This works already, in three communities across Halba, where Syrian and Lebanese youth come together, become friends (and still are friends) and positively reflect these relations across the community.

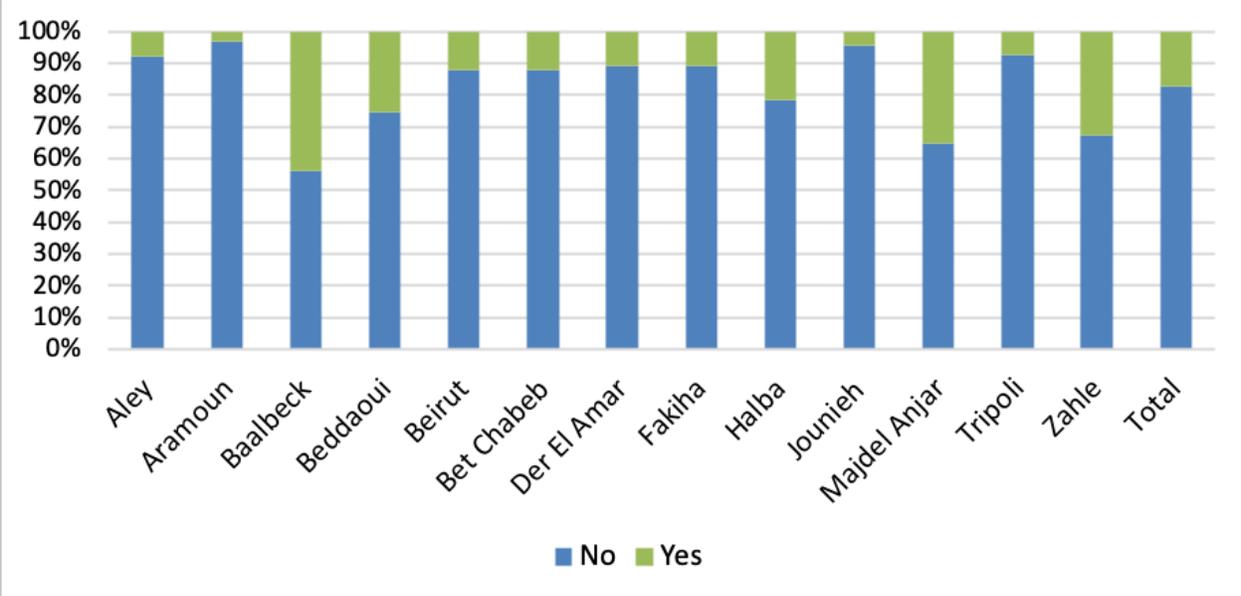
Peacebuilders implementing in the above areas thus have the opportunity to build on the successes and lessons learned from networks of dialogue already identified across areas and locations in Lebanon, particularly in cooperation with CSOs who have the system in place but are looking for support and capacity building. A special focus can be seen on youth as a key and effective part of the community action activities, particularly in terms of initiatives in dialogue and social media.

Infrastructures for peace

Peacebuilders

Only **17.4%** of all respondents say they have a public and/or high-profile individual in their area who promotes peaceful coexistence and positive relations between Lebanese and refugees. The majority of those who say that they do are from Baalbeck (43.8%), followed by Majdal Anjar (35.4%), Zahle (32.6%), Beddaoui (25.6%) and Halba (21.6%). In **Beirut, Tripoli, Jounieh, Aley, and Aramoun**, where previous analysis shows that different forms of conflict - particularly among refugees and host communities - are relatively high, only 7.1% of participants report knowing such a person. It is recommended that the former five locations are prioritized in terms of locating and training champions who can reach out to interested individuals in order to create greater networks of peacebuilders and individuals promoting host-refugee peace and peace among different Lebanese sects.

Figure 17: Availability of public/high profile individuals promoting peace by location
 Question: Do you have any public and/or high-profile individuals in your area that promote peaceful coexistence and positive relations between Lebanese and refugees?

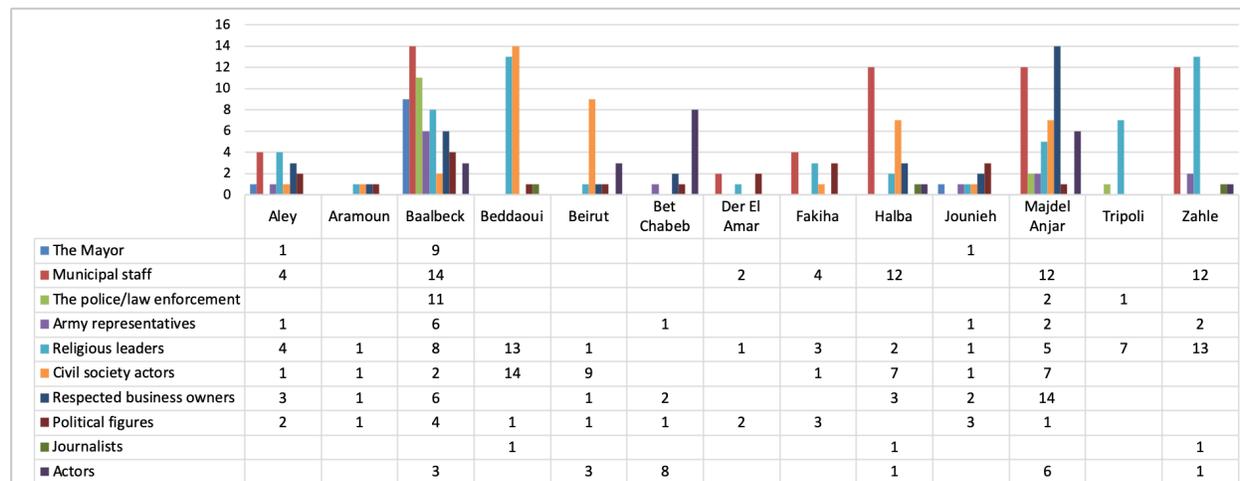


The most frequently mentioned public and/or high-profile individuals across all areas were **municipality staff** at 5.5% (out of the total survey population), **religious leaders** (at 5.3%) and **civil society actors** (at 3.9%). Only 0.3% (3 out of 1096 respondents) found journalists to have a role in promoting peace, 1.3% for the police/law enforcement, and 1.7% for political figures.

At the community level, **religious leaders** are popular in locations including: **Baalbeck, Tripoli, Beddaoui, Aley and Zahle**. **Municipality staff** are noted most highly in: **Baalbeck, Halba and Majdal Anjar**. **Civil society actors** are seen as promoters of peace in **Beirut and Beddaoui**.

Figure 18: Public/high profile individuals promoting peace by location

Question: Do you have any public and/or high-profile individuals in your area that promote peaceful coexistence and positive relations between Lebanese and refugees? If so, who are these individuals?



Other key figures pinpointed during FGDs and KIIs include: *shawishes* (for refugees), youth, women, and respected elders. Many participants, as also found in the survey data, state that they resolve disputes or tensions with a third person/mediator, a family member/friend, or simply by themselves. Some named key protestors or activists such as Rabiha Zein or Bilal Alawi as influencers of peace.

An interviewed *shawish* in Beit Chabeb reports that “The mayor here is a very kind person. He loves everybody and he is respected by everybody. Whenever there is a problem, we all go to him.” This finding can be seen in the host community, too:

*On the contrary of what some think in other places, the municipality affects us a lot, and it can affect us in a positive way. Since forever, we do not have one colour here, and we do not have extremist members, we have all political parties. And from the start, the chief of the municipality is not politicised. He plays the role of a peacemaker from the tiniest problem to the biggest one, he personally plays that role through rounds with the people.*¹³⁵

While some interviewees are positive about the successful roles of such peacebuilders, others are not so optimistic: “Even the religious people do not play a role in reducing conflicts. They are not able to do anything. They are being stopped whenever they try to. There are no results in reducing the conflicts. Because the situation is really hard, we are not able to come up with factors of peace and connectors. We need a miracle.”¹³⁶

In Baalbeck, a female Lebanese FGD suggests that the local politicisation of society and new structures of power have dissolved traditional methods of peacebuilding:

¹³⁵ 6 female Lebanese from Beit Chabeb – aged between 32 and 60 years old

¹³⁶ 7 female Lebanese from Jounieh – aged between 29 and 70 years old

No one can influence the other person when there is conflict. There are still people who try to play a role in reducing tension, but you feel they do not really have a say and others will not listen to them. Whenever there was a problem between two families in the past, the elderly people of the region had the role of the peacemaker. They would go to them to solve the issue. Now, no one plays this role. No one listens anymore. Even your kid doesn't listen to you sometimes. Before, there was respect to elderly people, now this respect is absent. Students don't respect their teachers anymore. In schools, they fear students from Mokdad family and Zaayer family, students avoid them, and teachers would avoid reprimanding them so as to not to get in trouble.¹³⁷

The findings make clear that dynamics of exclusion and inclusion are also entrenched within existing structures of peacebuilding and conflict resolution. Access to mediation often requires *wasta*, relations with influential figures, or a certain level of integration in local mechanisms - which many participants say they do not have. As one interviewee from Zahle states: “Parties who promote the tension are the same parties who reduce the tensions. They are playing a double role. The same party that is backing me up can be an agent of peace.” In Baalbeck, female Lebanese FGD participants simply state: “Here, money and power solve all the conflicts.”

For those that do have access to a ‘peacebuilding’ figure, many of the interviewees and FGD participants confirm that this form of resolution is by no means impartial or neutral, altering the outcome of solutions or limiting the problems that can be discussed and resolved: “if the conflict is political,” Lebanese women from Tripoli discuss, “nobody can help us”. Very few FGD or KII participants are able to identify neutral bodies, parties, groups, or individuals.

Table 13: Public/high profile individuals promoting peace by location - % of respondents by sex and status

Question: Do you have any public and/or high-profile individuals in your area that promote peaceful coexistence and positive relations between Lebanese and refugees? If so, who are these individuals?

Public/high profile individuals	Female	Male	Host (Lebanese)	Refugees (All)	Non-refugee Syrians	Total
The major	0.2% (1)	1.8% (10)	0.9% (5)	0.4% (2)	4.7% (4)	1.0% (11)
Municipal staff	5.0% (27)	6.0% (33)	8.1% (43)	3.3% (16)	1.2% (1)	5.5% (60)
The police/ law enforcement	0.7% (4)	1.8% (10)	2.1% (11)	0.6% (3)	0% (0)	1.3% (14)
Army representatives	0.7% (4)	1.6% (9)	2.3% (12)	0.2% (1)	0% (0)	1.2% (13)
Religious leaders	4.1% (22)	6.3% (35)	7.1% (38)	3.8% (18)	1.2% (1)	5.2% (57)
Civil society actors	2.0% (11)	5.8% (32)	4.9% (26)	3.6% (17)	0% (0)	3.9% (43)
Respected business owners	2.9% (16)	2.9% (16)	4.7% (25)	1.5% (7)	0% (0)	2.9% (32)
Political figures	1.3% (7)	2.0% (11)	2.4% (13)	3.8% (4)	1.2% (1)	1.6% (18)
Journalists	0.7% (4)	1.1% (6)	1.3% (7)	0.6% (3)	0% (0)	0.9% (10)
Actors	2.2% (12)	1.8% (10)	2.8% (15)	1.0% (5)	2.4% (2)	2.0% (22)

¹³⁷ 3 female Lebanese from Baalbeck – aged between 18 and 51

As can be seen from the above table, all peacebuilders (with the interesting exception of political figures) can be identified more by the host community than the refugee community, particularly municipal staff, and more by men than women (with the exception of actors and respected business owners), with Syrian women reporting the least knowledge. The majority of Syrian participants throughout the qualitative research also affirm that the infrastructures and individuals known for resolving conflict are not accessible to them, particularly those integrated within the local authorities. Such is the case for male refugees in Aramoun, who struggle to answer how or who resolves local conflicts. The facilitator in this FGD took the following observations:

They do not know anyone that helps reduce tensions. All participants agreed that there are not any institutions or organisations that can actually help them resolve conflicts. They said that the UN used to give them financial aid and that is not the case anymore. They were complaining about the level of difficulty they have in communicating with these supposed "helping" groups. They do not have any individual in their community who is known for mediation or problem-solving skills.

Patterns across qualitative and quantitative studies thus show that peacebuilding structures are weak, inexistent, or unknown, and that refugees have less access to, or are less aware of actors or practices of conflict resolution than Lebanese. It is recommended that Search and/or champions reach out to the peacebuilders who have been identified, avoiding political figures and any other partisan individuals, in order to explore the possibility of collaboration and capacity building. These should take into account the most popular figures in each area (as listed above). At the same time, for those areas which report particularly higher absences in peacebuilders (Mount Lebanon, the North, and Beirut), champions should reach out and recruit interested community members with values of tolerance and coexistence in order to start resolving this notable gap. In all cases, peacebuilders should form a collaborative network, rather than operating as individuals, in order to be more effective but particularly to ensure inclusivity of different groups, and avoid alienating those who do not identify with certain individuals (e.g. religious leaders of a particular faith, or municipal actors who are not perceived by all as trustworthy or representing their best interests).

Places

Over half (54.9%) of respondents say there are places where refugees and Lebanese can go and interact socially. Participants who report there *are* places give examples such as: ‘restaurants’; ‘coffee shops’; ‘playgrounds and parks’; ‘the mosque’; ‘religious spaces’; ‘municipalities’; ‘university’; ‘school’; ‘the workplace’; ‘souks’; or ‘associations.’ Others report that ‘they can meet almost anywhere’ or ‘wherever they want.’ Some specific explanations include: ‘I meet most of my friends in coffee shops, like Riwaq’; or ‘coffee shops at the entrance to Shatila.’

Levels of respondents noting there are places for integration are substantially lower in Mount Lebanon (40.3%) aligning also with lower levels of Lebanese respondents in Beit Chabeb, Deir al Amar, Jounieh and Aramoun reporting having refugee friends or colleagues that they interact with socially.

Those who believe that there are *not* such places for social interaction were also asked **whether they think there should be**. This question elicited a number of responses, such as: yes/no; ‘it is not necessary’; ‘it is not their right to participate in Lebanese affairs’; ‘they are not welcome’; ‘we do not have to talk to them’; ‘a waste of time’; ‘it will not work’; ‘nothing will change’; ‘yes, to communicate and share values’; ‘yes, to give us an opportunity to participate with them in meeting needs’; or ‘there are no projects sponsored by the municipality on this matter.’ Notably, in Mount Lebanon, a number of both host and refugee respondents who had answered that there were no places for interaction also noted that they should be, giving reasons such as: ‘it can help you understand the other’ or that ‘it would help to know more about them.’ While there were more negative comments too, suggesting either no need or desire to interact, this does suggest some potential for the provision of spaces and activities within Mount Lebanon that bring refugees and host community members together. Search should look into both venues and activities within these areas to do so.

Social, sustained and substantive interaction between opposing or divided groups, particularly host and refugee communities, has been seen to be one of the most important factors leading to greater tolerance, cohesion and coexistence in communities. This is seen consistently throughout the UNDP and ARK studies, as well as within this research, where greater interaction in areas such as Central and West Bekaa and Baalbeck-Hermel tend to correlate with reports of greater ties and unity. Nonetheless, when asked about whether there should be public spaces, the answers were mixed – suggesting that the provision of public space *alone* is not enough to encourage interaction. I

Information dissemination

Much of the above analysis discusses prevailing views about ‘opposing’ groups in society that are contributing to tensions and often conflict at the local and wider level. Prominent examples would include perceptions around the causes of economic hardship, unemployment, and poor service provision, the blame for which is frequently levelled at Syrian refugees. This section looks into the ways in which such rhetoric is spread, whether through social media, national television, or more traditional forms of communication - such as talking to neighbours, attending local meetings, and so on. The below analysis explores which forms of communication are most popular for which groups, which are contributing to tensions and why, and the extent to which communication methods can be improved in order to tackle the spread of misinformation and discriminatory narratives, and instead foster the dissemination of fruitful, useful, and peaceful information that supports (directly or indirectly) forms of peacebuilding in Lebanon.

Forms of information

Just over half (52.2%) of all respondents say that **television** is the communication tool they use the most to access information about incidents and/or events about the **protests/revolution**. Following this is **WhatsApp** (21.2%) and **Facebook** (20.1%). Only 10.1% of Syrian refugees, however, chose WhatsApp, preferring television (73.1%) or Facebook (14.9%) instead.

Over a third (39.7%) of all respondents say that **television** is the communication tool they use the most to access information about **tensions/conflict between groups in their communities**. Following this closely is **WhatsApp** (32.8%) and **Facebook** (20.3%). While 57.1% of refugees use television (in comparison to 25.8% WhatsApp and 12.7% Facebook), the host community finds WhatsApp the most popular communication tool here, at 38.2% in comparison to 27.8% for Facebook and 24.6% for television. Use of television is significantly higher in Akkar (67.0%) than the rest of the areas, where Facebook is only used by 5.7% of survey respondents to receive this type of information.

Across all areas, few participants are using other forms of social media such as Twitter (0.5% about local news and 0.9% about the revolution), although ‘other’ forms of media such as Instagram are noted about protest-related news. Notably, in the North 7.2% of respondents suggest they receive news about local events/incidences through personal channels of communication, including conversations with neighbours, ‘news on the streets’, and personal observations - this is also noted by the Zinc Network study from November 2019, which observes friends and family as the most trustworthy sources of information on specifically refugee issues. Interestingly, the study also finds that Facebook is the most common social media platform for information about refugees, across all ages and genders.¹³⁸

A group of female Palestinian refugees from Beddaoui¹³⁹ state that on “TV, we stayed hooked 24/7. We receive information on Facebook. And WhatsApp groups. We get information about roadblocks on WhatsApp. We get all the news on WhatsApp and it is fast.” However, many of the other non-Lebanese participants interviewed suggest more limited interaction. In Beit Chabeb, refugee males¹⁴⁰ say that “WhatsApp groups are with relatives only, we

¹³⁸ Zinc Network, [Impact of Syrian Refugee Crisis of Lebanon: Quantitative Research](#), November 2019

¹³⁹ 9 women aged between 16 and 42 years old

¹⁴⁰ 11 men aged between 21 and 72 years old

are not part of other WhatsApp groups.” Female refugees from Zahle also affirm they are not part of any WhatsApp group, and receive their news through television only.

The findings show that **WhatsApp is used more to communicate news on a local level** than on a national level, although it remains a popular and effective tool across both. Television remains the most popular communication tool for both information about the protests/revolution and information about tensions/conflict between groups in respondents’ communities. Both quantitative and qualitative findings suggest that communication by WhatsApp is used more or is **more accessible to Lebanese than non-Lebanese**.

As UNDP’s WhatsApp study shows, WhatsApp can be a more accessible, quick, and reliable form of communication, particularly given features such as voice notes which remove issues of illiteracy.¹⁴¹ However, this research shows that use of WhatsApp alone is not guaranteed reach or be inclusive of all different groups, and particularly those more vulnerable and inaccessible.

Perceptions of accuracy and interplay with conflict

Participants in the qualitative discussions from all backgrounds and areas raise concern over the accuracy or neutrality of such communication channels, suggesting that conflict and tensions are often increased by the spread of fake news that pits groups against each other. While Zinc’s data suggests that across the board, there is low agreement that too much negative information is being spread about refugees, the FGDs and KIs in this research suggest more nuance and understanding about the ways in which information can be distorted and harmful. For instance, Palestinian women from Beddaoui say that: “On TV, the news is sometimes falsified. You would hear one thing on MTV and something different on Al Jadeed TV. Al Jadeed TV doesn’t broadcast accurate information. Sometimes the news is a reason to ignite the conflict.”

Misinformation seems to be spread for multiple reasons; examples given include:

- False rumours concerning currency values in Lebanon, whereby people start to exchange money on mass - contributing to economic problems and increasing tensions;
- False or misleading SMSs, received particularly by refugees, regarding their legal status, papers, financial aid or immigration;
- Politicians censoring or tailoring news on television to their interests, for example saying that Syrians are the cause of the financial crisis.

Others suggest that it is easy to tell the fake from the real - for example, for host communities in Fakiha: “the village is small so there is no room to come up with false news; we hear the same news from different sources, so we will know whether it is true or not.” An FGD for male refugees in Aramoun suggests that they had “learned to recognize the fabricated information by learning from personal mistakes.” One man tells the personal story of paying an online website money thinking they would help him immigrate to Sweden, only ending up in more disappointment and with less money. Lebanese women from Tripoli state that “all the medias transfer the same news, so they are correct,” whereas another group from Jounieh affirms that “the information disseminated is true, but it might be a bit exaggerated.”

A UNDP conflict analysis of Akkar reported in August 2016 that ‘rumours and incitement by the media, as well as religious and political actors, burden what field research indicates to be weak social infrastructure and local conflict mitigation mechanisms.’¹⁴² Similarly, in this research, a CSO representative in Akkar gives the example of frequent social media posts describing unverified accounts of Syrian violence against Lebanese individuals, which only fuels anger and retaliation. ‘Hate speech’ or ‘fake news’ that appear particularly prominent are those that target Lebanese-Syrian relations and perpetuate xenophobic stereotypes. Examples given include:

¹⁴¹ UNDP, [Below the Surface: Results of a WhatsApp Study of Syrian Refugees and Host Communities in Lebanon](#), 7 February 2019

¹⁴² UNDP, [Local and Regional Entanglements: The Social Stability Context in Sahel Akkar: Conflict Analysis Report](#), August 2016

- Stories spread of a Syrian man killing a Lebanese girl, which saw directly linked tension and fights breaking out in Halba;
- News spread of a Syrian group attacking a family in their car and taking their money in Ali el Nahri (the participant describing this story went to the same road the next day, where local residents had heard of no such thing);
- Inaccurate and discriminatory theories shared on television regarding the theft incident with Nancy Ajram and the Syrian man shot by her husband;
- A Syrian Observer piece on a Syrian refugee killed by stones – a two sentence article with no reasons, no analysis, and no verification.

Many of these stories, participants observe, are unsubstantiated or disproved. While the key facts of other pieces may be true, the accompanying photographs, stories, language, or manner in which the tale is told is not necessarily accurate or fair: In this sense, a single misplaced or lost word can change a story: “Some news might say ‘she hit her’, but another news piece says, ‘she was *going* to hit her’, and changing that single word can impact the whole conflict and tension.”¹⁴³ Further discussion also reveals that the majority of participants do not know who created various pages and groups on which these messages are spread. In the case of WhatsApp groups, senders may be completely unknown, despite the fact that the information they broadcast is being read, spread, and acted upon by hundreds.

Multiple participants draw attention to the use of fear-mongering and incendiary speeches by politicians, broadcasted on television or spread via tweets. In other explanations, news is often explicitly biased and intended to stir unrest: “The information that is published about the conflict is that the conflict is sectarian in order to tip one group and political party against another. It is published through social media and TV institutions.”¹⁴⁴

Nonetheless, participants also consider that while the spread of news is not accurate, there are also positives in the way information is disseminated nowadays. For example, interviewees describe how youth committees use social media accounts to promote their community-based projects and spread positive, inclusive messages, and awareness. Lebanese women from Beit Chabeb describe a series of varied communication methods:

Bell ringing... we have thirteen churches, the bell rings when someone dies, when we hear the bell, we ask ourselves: “who do you think died in the village?” This is really something beautiful. Then there is social media. Facebook, WhatsApp groups, there are groups for churches on WhatsApp, they circulate the news. The municipality sends messages, or they post on Facebook. We have the schools who help send messages to the community if the municipality wants to reach the students. The religious congregations help also, and during Saturday and Sunday mass, they talk to people during the sermon. We also have people who still meet up in the village squares. There are the religious groups too, during meetings and by WhatsApp. The fastest way to spread news is when two women meet in a grocery store.

Another interviewee, a youth committee member in Beddaoui, gives the following example:

In Tripoli, we have the City Security Group (حراس المدينة). They are a group of volunteers who organise the activities of the revolution. They are very attentive to the clashes happening and they work very closely with the army. They try to collect some money from the protestors themselves if they need to do anything for the revolution. They pass around people present on the streets and collect what the people have to offer, even if minimal amounts. They manage WhatsApp groups, where people can send complaints and suggestions. And if there are any complaints, people come to them to solve their problems.

Instant messaging and social media in this instance are praised by participants, particularly those involved in protests and civil action, for its organisational capacity and real-time security updates, including information on whether demonstrations have turned violent, whether tear gas or water cannons are being used, etc. As a CSO representative

¹⁴³ Youth representative from Beirut

¹⁴⁴ Halba municipality representative

from Tripoli points out, social media - including Facebook and Instagram - is also one of the key ways activists social influencers - particularly related to the protests - reach and inspire their audiences.

In a similar vein, FGD and KII respondents in Tripoli discuss the ways in which other forms of everyday information can be transmitted speedily: from roadblocks and closures to weather updates. Multiple participants also refer to the existence of community/village Facebook pages or WhatsApp groups, where residents of local areas are able to share information, complaints, and local tips.

As such, it is clear that such methods of information dissemination can be useful and often critical sources - organising, integrating, and keeping participants informed and safe. On the other hand, however, information such as this can promote tension. As a youth committee representative from Beddaoui suggests: “When they know that the Internal Security Forces attacked the protestors, such news contributed to increased tension among people. Or when they found out about the attacks by Amal and Hezbollah on the protestors.” One older lady, a Palestinian from Beddaoui, also prefers not to be part of these groups: “I don’t even hear the news on TV, it makes me anxious. I would rather not hear anything, whenever I know that the conflicts are on, I have a nervous breakdown.” For these participants, endless tales of conflict produce both anxiety and further tensions. Likewise, a youth committee member from Aley details how successful and happy news stories are often overshadowed:

People only share the problems. Our municipality is actually working a lot on enhancing Aley, for example by solving traffic jams and fixing roads – none of the positive news is shown. My organisation also works on that as well; we pinpoint [on social media] specific places that are touristic or beautiful during our events – so that people know about these places and the history of Aley.

In a technological world where communication around events and incidents can be carried out instantly, where opinions can be posted online before they are properly formed, and where there is little opportunity for verification and accuracy to be ensured before stories become facts, social media is a hugely impactful platform for the spread of tensions and the catalysis of conflict. At the same time, new forms of communication can be a great force for the exchange of resources, for huge collective mobilisation, for low-cost and extensive advocacy campaigns, and for the spread of vital information that fosters social integration and interaction, as well as safety and security.

Such realities are greatly visible in the context of Lebanon, where conflicts between sects, nationalities, religions, political groups, as well between the state and the people, have found a platform to expand and develop - particularly on television, Facebook, and WhatsApp. As can be seen from the above analysis, the spread of such information - while it can be useful - is, in its current forms, contributing to discrimination and the spread of unsubstantiated information, for example about the economy, the protests, and the involvement of different political/religious groups within these topics. Rumour is at times leading to panic, confusion, and greater forms of discrimination along dividing lines in society.

There is, however, a space for change, given that almost all of the qualitative research participants are aware of a misinformation/tension-fuelling component to these media forms.

4. Conclusions

Conflict relations in Lebanon are as complex as the interrelating dynamics between politics, religion, sectarianism, and economic issues at large in the country. The diversity of Lebanese society, in both these aspects and across nationality, too - along with the addition of large numbers of vulnerable and economically deprived communities - adds further nuance. In some instances, historical tensions and painful memories seem to perpetuate intolerance across inter- and intra-community divides; at other times, areas have to cope with newly emerging conflicts and power dynamics. Hope and motivation for positive societal change, and the introduction of meaningful peace, however, are clear themes throughout the research - stemming from multiple levels and corners of society.

The report uses structures to define the conditions for and the nature of conflict. These are centred around political and religious dimensions; economic and social dimensions; and historical dimensions. The analysis finds that while all three categories are strongly interlinked, dominant structures emerge within each area. In Mount Lebanon and Beirut, divisions are found across sect and religious affiliation, as well as local party politics and informal securitisation mechanisms. In other areas, politics divisions identified are outside the sectarian frame. In Baalbeck-Hermel, for example, the often-violent dynamics of clan and family-based networks are contributing to conflict and insecurity. Political divisions and power dynamics prevail in the North, whereas in Akkar acute economic hardship is contributing to discord and augmented disaffection.

All such tensions are both a cause and symptom of a divisive historical backdrop, linked to civil war memories and struggles over sect and identity, political alliances and cleavages, ancestral obligations and feuds, Syrian occupation, and experiences of prolonged (economic) marginalisation and neglect. Histories of coexistence and shared cultures among host communities, and between host and refugee communities, serve as a potential buffer to growing antagonisms – this is seen as particularly the case in Central and West Bekaa and Baalbeck-Hermel.

Economic dimensions can be seen throughout, with deprivation and perceived and real lack of resources contributing widely to tensions. These tensions and conflicts abound in refugee discourse but are not limited to refugee-host community tensions; they are also found within relationships at the national level between State and citizen (culminating in a nationwide protest movement since October 2019), at the community level (resulting in increased perceptions and realities of competition and poor service provision) and the family level (causing marital disputes and shifts around gender roles).

Perceptions of conflicts and dividing lines stem from the prevailing structures and give valuable insight into intra-communal relations. It finds that divisions are not always leading to conflicts, and conflicts are not always emerging from divisions. For example, participants in Central and West Bekaa observe divisions across religion and politics but note that such divisions do not generally descend into conflicts. In Akkar and the North, few entrenched divisions are noted but relatively high levels of conflicts, arising from high levels of poverty, are seen throughout. In Baalbeck-Hermel, Beirut and Mount Lebanon, dividing lines in religion and politics (at national, local and clan-based levels) are contributing to frequent incidences of conflict and, at times, physical violence.

A variety of different key stakeholders involved in these conflicts were found throughout qualitative and quantitative data. These included: politicians and parties at the national level; political leaders and influential parties at the local level; local bodies and individuals of authority; clans and family-based/tribal networks; the UN, the international community, NGOs and CSOs/CBOs; and religious leaders, elders, *shawishes*, and sheikhs. Power dynamics were seen to proliferate across many of these actors and their supportive structures, at time creating, contributing to, or accelerating conflict and revealing an emerging propensity for violence among groups and individuals within Beirut, Mount Lebanon, and Baalbeck-Hermel. While non-Lebanese are seen to be bound up within similar configurations of patronage and power, there is a lower inclination for violence or conflict in non-Lebanese groups.

Discussions of gender norms and gender roles are integrated across the board in findings, yet valuable insights emerge with regard to the changing position of women in both public and private spheres, within the revolution, and within conflict in general.

Within a context of growing economic and political perturbation in Lebanon, refugees are at times finding themselves at the centre of scapegoating and discourses of blame. Symbolic threats and dissimilarities in cultures or values do not emerge in the findings, with hostility to refugees largely framed in contextual terms of economic competition across the country. Shared values are rather highlighted as key sources of resilience and connection, particularly in areas with historical relations and family links, as is the case in Central and West Bekaa and Baalbeck-Hermel. While interaction is noted, it seems that more substantive forms of contact between refugees and host communities are lacking, with host communities in general believing that Syrian refugees in particular have little to offer in terms of support or in community development.

Findings show the spread of misinformation and discriminatory rhetoric to be contributing to increased tensions, both between the host community and refugee population, but also with regard to false or misleading information surrounding economic news, the protests and revolution developments, security issues, among other things. The report finds that most participants are aware of the dangers of false information and also of the dangers regarding discriminatory rhetoric against societal groups, a potential source of resilience to maintain and develop. Social media and traditional forms of communication are also seen as connectors by many participants, proving a source of social integration, security/safety updates, and mobilisation around peaceful demonstrations.

An analysis of dynamics found that awareness of initiatives put in place to alleviate tensions, such as measures promoting intercommunal discourse, or conflict-management mechanisms, is low. The majority of participants are unaware across all areas and are generally disempowered or not motivated to take steps to address tensions. Existence or knowledge of such figures are lacking in Mount Lebanon and particularly Beirut. Accessibility to the structures that do exist is often selective or conditional, reflecting the dynamics of nepotism and exclusivity that run throughout much of Lebanon's socio-economic fabric.

Nonetheless, some reports of infrastructures and capacities for peace are found. Findings also suggest that it is an opportune moment in Lebanon for peacebuilding intervention, considering calls for unity and an overdue end to sectarianism are emerging as a cause and symptom of the revolution. Sources of resilience and connectors can also be seen across infrastructure such as youth committees and town meetings. Peacebuilding figures also do exist, and evidence for greater networks and knowledge of such are seen within Baalbeck-Hermel and Central and West Bekaa. Municipalities are seen to be at the forefront of local mitigation and, while levels of satisfaction towards such authorities are varied across areas, it is found that peacebuilding structures are more effective when integrated into existing social infrastructure and relationships of trust. Other public and/or high-profile individuals tasked with supporting coexistence in Lebanese societies include religious leaders, civil society actors, political leaders, police/law enforcement figures, and local business owners.

The report finds that the locations in most need of peacebuilding interventions are Beirut city, Aley/Aramoun, Jounieh, Baalbeck, Fakiha, Tripoli and Halba. Tensions and conflicts exist and are growing within Central and West Bekaa, but the report finds that peacebuilding mechanisms including accessible public or high-profile individuals who resolve conflicts between refugees and host community members, are both in place and working, with most reporting community resilience despite an increase of current tensions.

The above analysis provides entry points for peacebuilding initiatives, particularly in relation to Search's strategic communication planning. Recommendations are gathered below to assist in the future programming of Search for Common Ground, as well as suggestions that will be useful at the wider sectoral level.

5. Recommendations

This section gathers together the findings into concrete and project-oriented recommendations, in order to ensure that conflict resolution and peacebuilding interventions are conducted with context-driven, conflict sensitive, and inclusive priorities. Please see Annex 1 (Area Profiles) for further area-based recommendations.

1. Implement programming that focuses on context specificities:

Programmes should be tailored to the locations where peacebuilding is most needed. The findings suggest these locations to be: Tripoli, Halba, Baalbeck, Fakiha, Beirut, Jounieh, and Aley/Aramoun.

Host-refugee cohesion in the North, Akkar, and in Mount Lebanon

Combat distrust and misinformation through information campaigns (e.g. on economic realities and positive instances of local infrastructure improvement) and invest efforts in facilitating more interaction between host and refugee communities, including through projects that focus on low-cost but impactful infrastructural and/or developmental activities, joint skills-training that address market gaps, community-based councils that include Lebanese and non-Lebanese and foster collective responsibility and ownership over shared environments.

Given that high levels of interaction in Central and West Bekaa and, to a slightly lesser extent, Baalbeck-Hermel, correspond with reports of higher coexistence and friendship, particular efforts should be made to bring refugees and Lebanese together more frequently and more meaningfully. A lack of willingness to socially interact, mostly by Lebanese, would suggest that forms of interaction, at least at first, should be practical and activity/project-based rather than simply discursive.

It is also recommended that particular focus is given to the exploration of attitudes from the Lebanese community *towards* non-Lebanese community members, given that negative perceptions of Syrians (and, to a lesser extent, Palestinians) are seen throughout the research to be greater than negative perceptions of Lebanese. Activities focusing on mutual possibilities of support and networking across host-refugee divides would be beneficial here, particularly in exploring and raising awareness of the ways in which Syrians and Palestinians can *also* provide support, security, and friendship to Lebanese neighbours at the community-level. Addressing these issues could take multiple approaches, combining tackling misinformation around economic realities through social media based awareness campaigns, to direct community-improvement projects that bring Lebanese and Syrians together with common aims.

Another suggestion is the creation of shared security networks (both informal, community-based committees and social media-based communication channels) in order to increase feelings of security and thus decrease the tensions that come with perceptions of insecurity, as well as to bring together different groups, and particularly host and refugee community members, in joint structures of responsibility that place groups on equal footing and value the input of all. This will also address current prevalent perceptions that the host community cannot be supported by refugees, as well as recalibrating notions of threats and the 'Other' away from the negative stereotyping of refugees and towards common aims of community safety and security.

De-escalation of violence in Baalbeck-Hermel, Akkar and Mount Lebanon

Run awareness campaigns alongside local peacebuilders and municipalities, as well as conflict resolution trainings and informal education for community members, particularly youth.

In Mount Lebanon (and to a slightly lesser extent, Beirut), it is suggested that community-based trainings and workshops on conflict resolution, behavioural management and non-violent problem solving in everyday life would

be appropriate. Other dialogue-based mechanisms between segregated groups may address some of the divisions that could be contributing to violence.

In Akkar, an approach that addresses the core issues of creating the conditions for heightened physical violence may be necessary - thus combining any conflict resolution mechanisms with activities that ease economic destitution and raise awareness about the realities of economic competition.

In Baalbeck-Hermel, where findings show that violence is generally more structural, more comprehensive and sensitive programming will be necessary in order to encourage steps to bring about a process of de-weaponisation. Working with local actors such as municipality members and religious leaders will be essential here in gaining access. Given that many in this area report using violence to confront violence as a last resort, rather than habit or preferred method, activities should focus on aiding community members to find alternative conflict resolution and security measures. An example could be the creation of a community-based security council or team, as well as increased communication channels to really accurate messages about potential safety concerns.

Counter sectarian/religious divides in Mount Lebanon and Beirut

Introduce lacking structures, such as those for dialogue and collective memory sharing in order to facilitate reconciliation efforts and begin to reduce religious and sectarian divisions.

Search should focus programmatic effort in Beirut and Mount Lebanon, and in Aley and Aramoun in particular, given that tensions around sects and political parties (often playing out at family levels) tend to dominate here. Given the sensitivity of political affiliation here, it is recommended to avoid a political stance and work instead with local CSOs to increase their capacity as peacebuilders and mediators. Taking into account the prevalence of historical tensions and memories (particularly around civil war era conflicts), it is recommended that inter- and intra-group dialogue and memory sessions are established - responding to the call of several KII and FGD participants to break taboos surrounding the past.

A multi-faceted approach could be developed, where efforts at reconciliation and memory work can also take on more creative tones, such as theatrical groups tackling memories of war, and artistic/archival work detailing past (individual or group) memories and traumatic events, and the ways in which different communities can acknowledge, remember, and move past them. It may be worth looking into collaboration or partnership with local CSOs or NGOs who specialise in reconciliation and memory discussion.

2. A conflict sensitive engagement with the past:

Conflict sensitive peacebuilding efforts must engage with the past at the same time as responding to new conflicts. Long-standing conflict requires an additionally sensitive, long-term, and holistic, mixed approach to intervention in order to engage with different age groups and gradually change engrained behaviours and views. In some cases where conversations have already begun and taboos are breaking, the opportunity for creating dialogue mechanisms is rife. This would be particularly useful in Mount Lebanon (namely Aley) where participants note such structures are absent but needed. In locations such as Baalbeck-Hermel, addressing historical factors may be more sensitive and divisive, given that divisions and ensuing conflict seem to be firmly established in familial fabric, feelings of obligation - and, at times, pervasive fear of the consequences of speaking out or breaking from tradition. It would be worth in the latter area beginning peacebuilding components with low-key group activities, such as sport, arts and developmental community projects, rather than immediate dialogue sessions which may at first be poorly received at first.

Conflict sensitivity around reluctance or fear in talking out about conflict should be mainstreamed throughout peacebuilding and communication programmes, balancing the need to encourage dialogue with respect and

understanding of the limits and trepidations associated with talking and openness. This may be facilitated by small discussion groups, framed around safety, inclusivity, and confidentiality, taking place over a number of months in order to develop trust and confidence in exploring sensitive or controversial subjects. Other methods of non-direct or non-verbal communication that nonetheless foster social engagement and trust across divides could include artistic peacebuilding practices (communicating through languages of music, art, and theatre) as well as joint advocacy campaigns (communicating across society at large) to counter violence or misinformation, and practical/infrastructural/projects determined by the needs of individual communities (communicating through empowerment and action).

3. **A conflict sensitive approach to working with these communities must include an awareness that a priority for many individuals is economic well-being on a day to day basis rather than simply communication and/or coexistence with their neighbours.**

This is particularly the case in Halba and Tripoli, where economic struggles, senses of injustice, and perceptions of neglect are most acute. If possible, community-based actions should be multi-dimensional and include relevant skill-building activities that could indirectly help individuals become more competitive in the job market, for example. Given also that many hostilities are centred around economic struggles and competition, peacebuilding sessions should be created with a focus on raising awareness around economic realities and the benefits that different groups can bring to the communities as a whole.

At the same time, given that the majority of areas cite political divisions as one of the most present difficulties, it is advisable that Search takes a non-partisan approach and ensures different parties are represented by and included in any local level programming. It is recommended that peacebuilding initiatives avoid any affiliation with political actors, including ministries for the time being, given such sensitivities. While there are certainly uncertain perceptions over the level to which local authorities are neutral and effective at supporting their communities, it is recommended that projects work with local rather than national actors in order to develop trust here and contribute to the diffusion of the national predicament from the local level up (see Recommendation 6).

4. **Opportunities for peace: integrate youth and women to the largest possible extent throughout project planning and implementation.**

Evidence shows both groups have significant de-escalation capacities; involvement in decision-making at a local level will also reduce sentiments of marginalisation. While opinions on this are nuanced, as analysed in the body of the report, almost all participants seem to agree that women and youth have key roles in *either* curbing *or* escalating tension, and as such it is recommended that this perception of women and youth as strong societal influencers is utilised and taken into account in community-based actions and peacebuilding activities.

Given the nuanced findings surrounding gender roles, and the frequent reactions of confusion and uncertainty related to the ways in which traditional roles and responsibilities are changing, it is worth engaging in further exploration of this topic at the community level. This could take multiple forms and be integrated into other community action points - such as awareness sessions, career guidance, family planning advice, or rights campaigns - for both men and women. From a protection and women's rights standpoint, a number of women and men mention an increase in marital tension and domestic violence in their responses, sometimes in reference to evolving gender roles. While some research participants showed awareness of women's rights movements and organisations that are available, this knowledge seems limited. As such, it is recommended that Search work with female groups on their knowledge of and accessibility to support networks and legal mechanisms.

It is recommended that the inclusion of and focus on women is prioritised in Halba and Tripoli (where women are seen already as trusted sources of peacebuilding) and Baalbeck-Hermel (where women have the capacity to

influence peace), and in both places where ongoing traditions and conservatism are preventing gender norms from catching up with the changing gender roles.

There should be specific youth-focused trainings to strengthen local resilience and equip youth to exchange and communicate across social and cultural boundaries, encouraging this also within their communities and families. Meaningful leadership should be prioritised for youth, as well as engagement in civic processes and, where possible, collaborating in partnership with local authorities to enact and influence decision-making processes at the community levels. Specific actions could include the creation of youth organisations, networks or councils that span gender and nationality divides, or else working with local youth committees that already exist (for example, in Beirut). Activities within such structures could include youth-led national advocacy and media campaigns. Other project ideas would be community-based actions and needs assessments that work on the specific conflicts, divisions, and tensions that operate in different areas and between different groups in the country. The areas to particularly focus on would be: Aley, Halba, Tripoli and Baalbeck (where deprivation and/or high levels of unemployment are leading young men in particular to feel increasingly marginalised) as well as Beirut and the rest of Mount Lebanon where youth are seen by many as the key to leading society away from old sectarian divides.

5. Harnessing and supporting sources of resilience: use existing social media networks and influencers to work alongside local communities to combat disinformation, hate speech and stereotyping, across and between communities.

It is recommended that the Search project continues to work against disinformation as a way to mitigate tension. This could be achieved through building on the different dialogue mechanisms discussed by participants in the previous section, and through training community members to be able to assess and identify the accuracy of different types of information disseminated. Where possible, capacity building efforts should be invested in local municipalities to recognise fake news, respond to it, and train individuals in their communities to verify and send out accurate news updates.

Lebanese men from Zahle suggest that “the best way [of countering fake news] is to appoint a person we trust in every region and thus we can be sure of all the news”. Beirut FGD participants reiterate the need for a “a social system that enables us to know how to get the news, check it out and know its source and purpose”. Another method may also be working with municipalities, local influencers, community members and those with networks of accurate information (for example, about the protests or economic developments) to build and grow reliable information networks run by trusted participants or experts with specialised and context-driven information on key themes. It is suggested that Search works these individuals to lead a rapid response disinformation campaign to: a) tackle misinformation (about financial issues, protest news, understandings of different sects/nationalities) through social media campaigning; and b) contribute to a network of information sharing that is regulated by a local team of verifiers in each area. In this way, the practical implications of such forms of communication, as noted by many participants, can continue to function in a stable and accurate manner.

Such a network should cover multiple forms of communication tools in order to ensure that information can reach those who are sometimes excluded. The channels to simultaneously develop would be WhatsApp, television, Facebook, and traditional modes of communication, which enable face-to-face updates to be shared, such as town meetings. Representatives should also be selected by local champions in various key spots (such as refugee camps) in order to make sure that those without access to a telephone or internet connection, for example, are still receiving important updates. This is especially important within an economic and political context where situations are constantly changing and opportunities for confusion and anxiety are rife. Something to be considered also is the value of spreading ‘positive’, local information, with channels to report on local developments, improvements and success stories, as well as the peacebuilding initiatives of Search and its champions in general.

6. Encourage and work with existing resilience structures to make them inclusive and accessible to all, particularly for non-Lebanese and female community members.

Actors considered as most capable of dispute resolution:

- Municipality bodies, including mayors and mukhtars
- Local leaders, including religious leaders, sheikhs, and *shawishes*
- Local activists and influencers
- Local community-based organisations
- Civil society actors

Given that findings show these figures to be some of the most popular and effective inter-community dispute resolution actors in existence, as well offering a crucial sustainability component, community-based actions should be in collaboration or at least consultation with existing structures of community organisation. It is recommended that actors or ‘champions’ remain connected, to the extent possible in different contexts, to **municipalities and actors of local authority** in Baalbeck, Halba and Majdal Anjar; religious leaders in Baalbeck, Beddaoui, Aley and Zahle; and civil society actors in Beddaoui and Beirut. Champions in each area should start by contacting the suggested individuals and names given by community members who participated in the research.

Programming should focus on working with **local structures of conflict resolution**, in full awareness that such bodies are not always neutral, with the aim of opening these mechanisms up to vulnerable and under-reached communities. A key objective, however, should be to foster a social and municipal infrastructure which supports conflict mitigation locally and continually. In areas and locations where existing conflict resolution actors seem to be absent - in particular Beirut and Mount Lebanon - Search should work with local CSOs, including Syrian CSOs and/or those who work closely with Syrian refugees, and champions to identify such actors. A key recommendation would be to develop conflict resolution/mediation practices that are mutually useful to Lebanese and non-Lebanese, including - for example - a collaborative network of impartial influencers of peace who stem from different nationalities, genders, and religions, which has been a notable gap throughout the research findings.

It has also been that family ties can be harnessed to exert positive influence over areas and individuals. It is recommended that Search further explores initiatives and instances of **conflict resolution through such family methods** within the Bekaa, in order to consider the possibility of replicating influential structures in other parts of the country, for example in Mount Lebanon, Akkar and the North, where the importance of family influence is noted by FGD participants. Distance should be kept, however, from all divisive and politically charged group dynamics

The data collection tools were not centred on intra-Syrian relations, but it is suggested to explore these dynamics more - as they may provide useful entry points for harnessing strong community-based structures within and between refugee circles, including peacebuilding mechanisms and group support in addressing economic struggles. Much of the incentive for this ‘social capital’ seems to come from a place of mutual hardship and necessary collective resilience in the face of displacement and vulnerability. Given that financial difficulties in Lebanon are not exclusive to non-Lebanese groups and individuals, it would be worth assessing (for example, through needs assessments led and conducted by champions and local volunteers) the ways in which Lebanese can also help each other out, such as with support networks that organise second-hand collectives or donation initiatives for particularly vulnerable groups within communities.

7. Pre-empt increased conflict/violent propensities and mitigate likelihood of occurrence.

While programming should focus on context specific realities, as above, it should also be pre-emptive in addressing increasing tensions before they develop into conflicts. This is particularly important given the likelihood of further economic and political struggles to come. For example, while propensity for violence can be seen most clearly at the present time in Baalbeck-Hermel, and to a slightly lesser extent, in Mount Lebanon, violent tendencies as a coping

mechanism or reaction to marginalisation may begin to increase in other parts of the country, including the North and Akkar. Moreover, although the findings suggest that most forms of violence are surfacing from within the host community, increasing vulnerability of refugee populations may increase the likelihood of increased violence among those groups. Thus, programming in each area of the country should be holistic and implement conflict resolution trainings, run by local champions in conjunction with other relevant local actors, alongside peacebuilding dialogue sessions and those specific to areas (as noted above).

8. Share a condensed version of the study or Area Profiles with relevant local leaders and chosen champions.

It is likely that community members living in each of the study's locations will have greater ideas about the dynamics of conflict and the realistic methods of peacebuilding, as well as lessons learned and best practices. The study may well help bring to light further inspiration about feasible project components. It is thus suggested that a condensed version of the findings (or area-specific findings for representatives in each area) are disseminated among relevant local leaders (for example, those noted by respondents as 'peacebuilders' - religious leaders, municipal actors, civil society actors, for example) for further discussion, actionable recommendations, and a fully participatory and transparent way forward. The findings also show that refugee populations may be more willing to be connectors between host-refugee divides and it would be worth gaining their insight into how bridges between them may be built. It is suggested that the findings of these reports are shared with relevant leaders (for example, willing *shawishes*) to gather useful feedback.

6. Appendices

Annex 1: Area Profiles



Annex 2: Additional Tables on Survey Sample

Table 14: Survey sample by community, status, sex and age group

Ref.	Area	Community	Host Community/ Non-Refugee ¹⁴⁵ Females		Host Community/ Non-Refugee Males		Refugee Females		Refugee Males		Total (%)	Total (n)
			Youth 15-25	Adults 26+	Youth 15-25	Adults 26+	Youth 15-25	Adults 26+	Youth 15-25	Adults 26+		
1	Akkar	Halba	12.5%	12.5%	11.4%	11.4%	12.5%	12.5%	11.4%	15.9%	100%	88
2	North	Tripoli	14.8%	17.6%	13.0%	16.7%	9.3%	10.2%	8.3%	10.2%	100%	108
		Beddaoui	11.6%	12.8%	12.8%	14.0%	11.6%	12.8%	11.6%	12.8%	100%	86
3	Mount Lebanon	Aley	12.9%	12.9%	22.6%	21.0%	6.5%	11.3%	8.1%	4.8%	100%	62
		Aramoun	14.6%	13.5%	14.6%	12.4%	11.2%	11.2%	11.2%	11.2%	100%	89
		Beit Chabeb	15.4%	13.2%	13.2%	13.2%	12.1%	9.9%	12.1%	11.0%	100%	91
		Deir al Amar	27.8%	27.8%	5.6%	33.3%	0.0%	5.6%	0.0%	0.0%	100%	18
		Jounieh	2.6%	24.3%	12.2%	21.7%	10.4%	12.2%	7.8%	8.7%	100%	115
		Zahle	12.8%	12.8%	11.6%	11.6%	11.6%	14.0%	11.6%	14.0%	100%	86
4	West and Central Bekaa	Majdal Anjar	14.1%	13.1%	14.1%	16.2%	11.1%	10.1%	12.1%	9.1%	100%	99
		Baalbeck- Hermel	Baalbeck	13.7%	11.0%	19.2%	15.1%	11.0%	9.6%	5.5%	15.1%	100%
5		Fakiha	13.2%	13.2%	15.4%	11.0%	12.1%	11.0%	12.1%	12.1%	100%	91
6	Beirut	Beirut City	12.2%	12.2%	14.4%	12.2%	14.4%	11.1%	12.2%	11.1%	100%	90
Total			12.6%	14.7%	14.1%	15.1%	11.0%	11.2%	10.2%	11.1%	100%	1,096

Table 15: Survey sample by nationality

Nationality	Total
Lebanese	48.8%
Syrian	49.3%
Palestinian refugee from Syria	1.3%
Palestinian refugee in Lebanon	0.6%
Total	100%

Table 16: Survey sample by marital status and age group

Age group	Single	Married	Married, but separated from spouse	Prefer not to say	Divorced	Widowed
15-24	75.2%	19.0%	19.9%	12.5%	33.3%	9.1%
25-34	19.7%	42.9%	38.4%	37.5%	50.0%	9.1%
35-44	4.3%	28.6%	24.7%	12.5%	16.7%	27.3%
45-54	0.2%	9.5%	11.6%	37.5%	0.0%	22.7%
55-64	0.7%	0.0%	3.7%	0.0%	0.0%	18.2%

¹⁴⁵ Includes Syrian nationals living in Lebanon, who did not identify themselves as refugees.

65-74	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	0.0%	0.0%	13.6%
75-84	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total of status (all age groups)	54.8%	40.0%	0.7%	0.5%	1.9%	2.0%

Table 17: Survey sample by sex and highest level of education completed

Educational level	Female	Male	Total
Primary school	31.3%	36.7%	34.0%
Secondary school	24.7%	21.5%	23.1%
Tertiary education / university	26.3%	20.3%	23.3%
No education	10.7%	14.6%	12.7%
Vocational training	6.8%	6.1%	6.5%
Other	0.2%	0.7%	0.5%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Annex 3: Baseline Indicators

Indicator	Baseline value – Overall	Baseline value – by nationality	Baseline value – by sex	Baseline value – by age group	Baseline value – by area
% increase in empathy among targeted local communities. Desegregated by sex, nationality, location, age	47.4%	<p><u>Lebanese:</u> 41.9%</p> <p><u>Non-Lebanese:</u> 52.6%</p>	<p><u>Lebanese</u> Female: 39.8% Male: 43.9%</p> <p><u>Non-Lebanese</u> Female: 48.7% Male: 56.4</p>	<p><u>Lebanese</u> Youth: 46.4% Adults: 38.0%</p> <p><u>Non-Lebanese</u> Youth: 49.1% Adults: 56.0%</p>	<p><u>Akkar</u> Lebanese: 51.2% Non-Lebanese: 60.0%</p> <p><u>North</u> Lebanese: 42.5% Non-Lebanese: 74.8%</p> <p><u>Baalbeck-Hermel</u> Lebanese: 58.0% Non-Lebanese: 72.3%</p> <p><u>Central and West Bekaa</u> Lebanese: 69.9% Non-Lebanese: 45.7%</p> <p><u>Beirut</u> Lebanese: 59.1% Non-Lebanese: 19.6%</p> <p><u>Mount Lebanon</u> Lebanese: 14.4% Non-Lebanese: 41.0%</p>

Methodological note:

The baseline values for the indicator “% increase in empathy among targeted local communities. Desegregated by sex, nationality, location, age” was measured based on the following methods:

For Lebanese respondents: Count of total participants who provided a positive answer. A positive answer is defined as a minimum of 5 out of 7 questions (questions 30, 36, 37, 38, 40, 41 and 42 of the quantitative survey tool of the conflict analysis) being answered as follows:

- Question 30 - one or several of the two following answers are checked by respondents:
 - o Lebanese and refugees have many common social and cultural values
 - o Refugees are in need of assistance and the Lebanese should support them
 - o Refugees are misunderstood by the Lebanese
 - o My view of refugees has improved
- Question 36 - respondents state: “Strongly agree” or “Agree”
- Question 37 - respondents state: “Strongly agree” or “Agree”
- Question 38 - respondents state: “Strongly agree” or “Agree”
- Question 40 - respondents state: “Strongly agree” or “Agree”
- Question 41 - respondents state: “Strongly agree” or “Agree”
- Question 42 - respondents state: “Strongly agree” or “Agree”

For non-Lebanese respondents: Count of total participants who provided a positive answer to questions 29, 35 and 39. A positive answer is defined as all three questions being answered as follows:

- Question 29 - one or several of the two following answers are checked by respondents:
 - o Lebanese and refugees have many common social and cultural values
 - o The Lebanese have been welcoming and supportive of refugees
 - o My view of Lebanese people has improved
- Question 35 - respondents state: “Strongly agree” or “Agree”
- Question 39 - respondents state: “Strongly agree” or “Agree”

% of community members and key stakeholders who report a reduction of tensions in targeted geographies	26.2%	<p><u>Lebanese:</u> 37.8%</p> <p><u>Non-Lebanese:</u> 15.2%</p>	<p><u>Lebanese</u> Female: 36.0% Male: 39.5%</p> <p><u>Non-Lebanese</u> Female: 13.6% Male: 16.7%</p>	<p><u>Lebanese</u> Youth: 35.9% Adults: 39.5%</p> <p><u>Non-Lebanese</u> Youth: 14.1% Adults: 16.2%</p>	<p><u>Akkar</u> Lebanese: 37.2% Non-Lebanese: 13.3%</p> <p><u>North</u> Lebanese: 23.0% Non-Lebanese: 3.7%</p> <p><u>Baalbeck-Hermel</u> Lebanese: 39.5% Non-Lebanese: 28.9%</p> <p><u>Central and West Bekaa</u> Lebanese: 73.1% Non-Lebanese: 19.6%</p> <p><u>Beirut</u> Lebanese: 15.9% Non-Lebanese: 2.2%</p> <p><u>Mount Lebanon</u> Lebanese: 31.6% Non-Lebanese: 17.0%</p>
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Methodological note:

The baseline values for the indicator “% increase in empathy among targeted local communities. Desegregated by sex, nationality, location, age” was measured based on the following methods:

For Lebanese respondents: Count of total participants who provided a positive answer. A positive answer is defined as a minimum of 7 out of 14 questions (questions 51,52,53,54,55,58,62,63,64,67,68,69,70 and 71 of the quantitative survey tool of the conflict analysis) being answered positively.

For non-Lebanese respondents: Count of total participants who provided a positive answer. A positive answer is defined as a minimum of 7 out of 14 questions (questions 51,52,53,54,55,61,62,63,64,67,68,69,70 and 71 of the quantitative survey tool of the conflict analysis) being answered positively.

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Annex 5: Data Collection Tools

Quantitative Survey Questionnaire

Script to be read by enumerators before starting each survey:

Hello, my name is (enumerator’s name) and I work for Exigo Research & Communications. Exigo is an independent and impartial research organization which conducts social research and assessments to inform local and international organizations about the needs of communities. We are currently conducting research focusing on questions related to causes of tension within and between communities to find methods that may facilitate improved relations and cooperation between various groups in society. We would therefore like to ask you to participate in a survey. The survey should take approximately 20 minutes of your time. The information that you provide will remain confidential and no personal information that can identify you and your family will be collected. Do you have any questions (the enumerator should answer all questions they may have as relevant)? Please know that this is a voluntary process and that you may interrupt the survey and withdraw your consent at any time. May I ask for your permission to start the survey?

- Yes
- No
- If no, reason for refusal:

GENERAL	
1. Enumerator name:	
2. Date of interview:	
3. Area:	<input type="checkbox"/> Akkar <input type="checkbox"/> North <input type="checkbox"/> Mount Lebanon <input type="checkbox"/> Central and West Bekaa <input type="checkbox"/> Baalbek-Hermel <input type="checkbox"/> Beirut
4. Location:	<input type="checkbox"/> Beddaoui <input type="checkbox"/> Tripoli <input type="checkbox"/> Halba <input type="checkbox"/> Jounieh <input type="checkbox"/> Beit Chabeb <input type="checkbox"/> Beirut <input type="checkbox"/> Deir al Amar <input type="checkbox"/> Majdal Anjar <input type="checkbox"/> Baalbeck <input type="checkbox"/> Fakiha <input type="checkbox"/> Zahle <input type="checkbox"/> Baabda <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:
5. Name of neighbourhood:	
6. Place where survey was conducted ¹⁴⁶ :	<input type="checkbox"/> Household <input type="checkbox"/> Street <input type="checkbox"/> Shop <input type="checkbox"/> Cafe

¹⁴⁶ Enumerators will take into consideration each location as per its influence on the survey participants. This will be addressed during the training.

	<input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:
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Introduction to section (to be read by enumerator to the interviewee):

This section will focus on some simple facts about yourself, such as your age, education, occupation etc. It is useful for us to have this information, if it is ok with you, before we go onto other questions. It helps us compare the demographics between different participants. May we continue?

DEMOGRAPHICS	
7. What is the sex of the respondent?	<input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male
8. What is your date of birth?	
9. What is your marital status?	<input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Married, but is separated from spouse <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
10. What is your nationality?	<input type="checkbox"/> Lebanese <input type="checkbox"/> Palestinian Refugee from Syria <input type="checkbox"/> Palestinian Refugee in Lebanon <input type="checkbox"/> Syrian <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
- If Syrian, is the respondent a refugee?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
- If married, what is your husband's/wife's nationality?	<input type="checkbox"/> Lebanese <input type="checkbox"/> Palestinian refugee in Lebanon <input type="checkbox"/> Palestinian refugee from Syria <input type="checkbox"/> Syrian <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:
11. Do you have any children?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
- If yes, how many children do you have?	
- What are their ages (child one)?	
- What are their ages (child two)?	
- What are their ages (child three)?	
- What are their ages (child four)?	
- What are their ages (child five etc)?	
12. What is your current employment status?	<input type="checkbox"/> Employed full-time <input type="checkbox"/> Employed part-time <input type="checkbox"/> Self-employed - private business <input type="checkbox"/> Casual/day labour <input type="checkbox"/> Student <input type="checkbox"/> Housewife - not working <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed - looking for opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed - not looking for opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Retired <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:

	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
13. If employed, what is your monthly wage in Lebanese Pounds?	<input type="checkbox"/> Below 200,000 LBP <input type="checkbox"/> 200,000-400,000 LBP <input type="checkbox"/> 400,000-600,000 LBP <input type="checkbox"/> 600,000-800,000 LBP <input type="checkbox"/> 800,000-1,000,000 LBP <input type="checkbox"/> 1,200,000-1,400,000 LBP <input type="checkbox"/> 1,400,000-1,600,000 LBP <input type="checkbox"/> 1,600,000-1,800,000 LBP <input type="checkbox"/> 1,800,000-2,000,000 LBP <input type="checkbox"/> 2,000,000-2,500,000 LBP <input type="checkbox"/> 2,500,000-3,000,000 LBP <input type="checkbox"/> 3,000,000-3,500,000 LBP <input type="checkbox"/> 3,500,000-4,000,000 LBP <input type="checkbox"/> More than 4,000,000 LBP <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
- When did you receive your last salary? Please specify the month.	
14. If employed, what is your current occupation?	<input type="checkbox"/> Health sector <input type="checkbox"/> Education sector <input type="checkbox"/> Legal sector <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering and building <input type="checkbox"/> Hospitality/service sector (hotels, restaurants, transportation, tourism etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Homemaker (someone who manages the home) <input type="checkbox"/> Business, private sector <input type="checkbox"/> Software, computer <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Government and public administration. - If government/public administration, please specify: <input type="checkbox"/> Non-governmental organisation (NGO) / charity sector <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> Construction <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
15. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?	<input type="checkbox"/> No education <input type="checkbox"/> Primary school <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary school <input type="checkbox"/> Tertiary education/university <input type="checkbox"/> Vocational training <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:
16. What is your religious affiliation? <i>Please note that you may skip this question if you prefer to do so.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Sunni Muslim <input type="checkbox"/> Shia Muslim <input type="checkbox"/> Druze <input type="checkbox"/> Alawite Muslim <input type="checkbox"/> Maronite Christian <input type="checkbox"/> Greek Orthodox Christian

	<input type="checkbox"/> Greek Catholic Christian <input type="checkbox"/> Armenian Orthodox Christian <input type="checkbox"/> Armenian Catholic Christian <input type="checkbox"/> Syriac Orthodox Christian <input type="checkbox"/> Syriac Catholic Christian <input type="checkbox"/> Protestant Christian <input type="checkbox"/> Latin Catholic Christian <input type="checkbox"/> Coptic Christian <input type="checkbox"/> Jewish <input type="checkbox"/> Secular <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
17. Do you support a political party?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
- If yes, would you mind specifying which party? <i>Note to enumerator: Do not read out loud the names of all political parties, but tick of the party mentioned by the respondent.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Free Patriotic Movement (FPM) <input type="checkbox"/> Amal Movement <input type="checkbox"/> Hezbollah <input type="checkbox"/> Future Movement <input type="checkbox"/> Lebanese Forces <input type="checkbox"/> Kataeb <input type="checkbox"/> Marada <input type="checkbox"/> Progressive Socialist Party <input type="checkbox"/> National Liberal Party <input type="checkbox"/> SSNP <input type="checkbox"/> Tashnag <input type="checkbox"/> Majd Movement <input type="checkbox"/> Lebanese Democratic Party <input type="checkbox"/> Ba'ath <input type="checkbox"/> Tadamon <input type="checkbox"/> None of the above <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
- If no, what is your reason for not supporting a political party in Lebanon?	<input type="checkbox"/> There are no political parties that represent my views or interests <input type="checkbox"/> I am disillusioned by the current political system <input type="checkbox"/> I am not interested in politics <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
- If you are disillusioned or not interested by the current political system, can you explain why?	
18. Are you active in politics at the moment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
- If yes, how?	<input type="checkbox"/> I am engaged in/have a membership in a political party <input type="checkbox"/> I have participated as a candidate in past elections <input type="checkbox"/> I am an elected official <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:

Before asking the next questions, the enumerator should read out loud the following:

The next questions ask about difficulties you may have doing certain activities because of a HEALTH PROBLEM.

WASHINGTON GROUP QUESTIONS	
19. Do you have difficulty seeing, even if wearing glasses?	<input type="checkbox"/> No - no difficulty <input type="checkbox"/> Yes - some difficulty <input type="checkbox"/> Yes - a lot of difficulty <input type="checkbox"/> Cannot do at all
20. Do you have difficulty hearing, even if using a hearing aid?	<input type="checkbox"/> No - no difficulty <input type="checkbox"/> Yes - some difficulty <input type="checkbox"/> Yes - a lot of difficulty <input type="checkbox"/> Cannot do at all
21. Do you have difficulty walking or climbing steps?	<input type="checkbox"/> No - no difficulty <input type="checkbox"/> Yes - some difficulty <input type="checkbox"/> Yes - a lot of difficulty <input type="checkbox"/> Cannot do at all
22. Do you have difficulty remembering or concentrating?	<input type="checkbox"/> No - no difficulty <input type="checkbox"/> Yes - some difficulty <input type="checkbox"/> Yes - a lot of difficulty <input type="checkbox"/> Cannot do at all
23. Do you have difficulty (with self-care such as) washing all over or dressing?	<input type="checkbox"/> No - no difficulty <input type="checkbox"/> Yes - some difficulty <input type="checkbox"/> Yes - a lot of difficulty <input type="checkbox"/> Cannot do at all
24. Using your usual (customary) language, do you have difficulty communicating, for example understanding or being understood?	<input type="checkbox"/> No - no difficulty <input type="checkbox"/> Yes - some difficulty <input type="checkbox"/> Yes - a lot of difficulty <input type="checkbox"/> Cannot do at all

Introduction to section (to be read by enumerator to the interviewee):

This section will focus on you and your community. I will ask you some questions about groups of different people in your community and your interaction with each other. May I continue?

SOCIAL COHESION AND RESILIENCE	
25. What is your view about the recent protests/revolution that have been taking place across Lebanon?	<input type="checkbox"/> I support them <input type="checkbox"/> I do not support them <input type="checkbox"/> I am neutral <input type="checkbox"/> I do not know <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: <input type="checkbox"/> I prefer not to say
- If you support the protests/revolution, have you participated in the protests yourself?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
- Why yes/no?	
26. Do you think that refugees are welcome to participate in the protests/revolution?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
- If yes, why do you think this?	
- If no, why do you think they are not welcome to participate?	

27. Do you think it is right that refugees should be welcome to participate in the protests/revolution?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
- If yes, why do you think this?	
- If no, why do you think they should not be welcome to participate?	
<i>Question for non-Lebanese nationals (refugees) only</i> 28. As a refugee living in Lebanon, do you feel that the protests/revolution are affecting you?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, they are affecting me positively <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, they are affecting me negatively <input type="checkbox"/> No, it does not affect me <input type="checkbox"/> I do not know <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
- If yes, in what ways are they affecting you negatively or positively? Please give examples.	
<i>Question for non-Lebanese nationals (refugees) only</i> 29. Thinking back about the years/time you have lived in Lebanon as a refugee, has your view about the Lebanese changed over time?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
- If your view has remained the same/unchanged, what is your view about the Lebanese? Check all that apply.	<input type="checkbox"/> Lebanese and refugees have many common social and cultural values <input type="checkbox"/> The Lebanese have been welcoming and supportive of refugees <input type="checkbox"/> The Lebanese do not understand the situation of refugees <input type="checkbox"/> The Lebanese do not empathize with the situation of refugees <input type="checkbox"/> Refugees and Lebanese have very little in common <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
- If your view has changed, how has it changed? Select one option.	<input type="checkbox"/> My view of Lebanese people has improved <input type="checkbox"/> My view of Lebanese people has worsened
- Please explain how it has improved or worsened and what caused the change in your views.	
<i>Question for Lebanese nationals only</i> 30. Thinking back about the years since the Syrian conflict started, has your view about the refugees changed over time?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
- If your view has remained the same/unchanged, what is your view about the refugees in Lebanon? Check all that apply.	<input type="checkbox"/> The Lebanese and refugees have many common social and cultural values <input type="checkbox"/> Refugees are in need of assistance and the Lebanese should support them <input type="checkbox"/> Refugees are misunderstood by the Lebanese <input type="checkbox"/> Refugees and Lebanese have very little in common <input type="checkbox"/> Refugee presence causes social and economic problems <input type="checkbox"/> Refugees cause security concerns

	<input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
- If your view has changed, how has it changed? Select one option.	<input type="checkbox"/> My view of refugees has improved <input type="checkbox"/> My view of refugees has worsened
- Please explain how it has improved or worsened and what caused the change in your views.	
<i>Question for Lebanese nationals only</i> 31. Thinking back since the protests, has your view about the Lebanese from different sectarian backgrounds changed?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
- If yes, can you explain how?	
- If no, can you explain your current view?	
<i>Question for non-Lebanese nationals (refugees) only</i> 32. Do you have any Lebanese friends or colleagues that you interact with socially?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
- If no, why not?	
- If yes, could you give examples of how you interact with your Lebanese friends/colleagues?	
<i>Question for Lebanese nationals only</i> 33. Do you have any refugee friends or colleagues that you interact with socially?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
- If no, why not?	
- If yes, could you give examples of how you interact with your refugee friends/colleagues?	
34. Do you have any friends or colleagues from different sectarian backgrounds that you interact with socially?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
- If no, why not?	
- If yes, could you give examples of how you interact with these friends/colleagues?	
<i>Question for non-Lebanese nationals (refugees) only</i> 35. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: “I would be comfortable with befriending and socializing with a Lebanese person outside my home.”	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree
- If you disagree with this statement, please explain why.	
<i>Question for Lebanese nationals only</i> 36. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: “I would be comfortable with befriending and socializing with Syrian refugees outside my home.”	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree
- If you disagree with this statement, please	

explain why.	
<p><i>Question for Lebanese nationals only</i></p> <p>37. To what extent do you agree with the following statement:</p> <p>“I would be comfortable with befriending and socializing with Palestinian refugees outside my home.”</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree
- If you disagree with this statement, please explain why.	
<p><i>Question for Lebanese nationals only</i></p> <p>38. To what extent do you agree with the following statement:</p> <p>“I would be comfortable with befriending and socializing with Lebanese from different sectarian backgrounds outside my home.”</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree
- If you disagree with this statement, please explain why.	
<p><i>Question for non-Lebanese nationals (refugees) only</i></p> <p>39. To what extent do you agree with the following statement:</p> <p>“I would be comfortable with befriending and socializing with a Lebanese person and inviting them to my home.”</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree
- If you disagree with this statement, please explain why.	
<p><i>Question for Lebanese nationals only</i></p> <p>40. To what extent do you agree with the following statement:</p> <p>“I would be comfortable with befriending and socializing with Syrian refugees and inviting them to my home.”</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree
- If you disagree with this statement, please explain why.	
<p><i>Question for Lebanese nationals only</i></p> <p>41. To what extent do you agree with the following statement:</p> <p>“I would be comfortable with befriending and socializing with Palestinian refugees and inviting them to my home.”</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree
- If you disagree with this statement, please explain why.	
<p><i>Question for Lebanese nationals only</i></p> <p>42. To what extent do you agree with the following statement:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral

<p>“I would be comfortable with befriending and socializing with Lebanese from different sectarian backgrounds and inviting them to my home.”</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree
<p>- If you disagree with this statement, please explain why.</p>	
<p><i>Question for non-Lebanese nationals (refugees) only</i></p> <p>43. To what extent do you agree with the following statement:</p> <p>“I would not hesitate to ask someone who is Lebanese for help, should I ever need it.”</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree
<p>- If you disagree with this statement, please explain why.</p>	
<p><i>Question for Lebanese nationals only</i></p> <p>44. To what extent do you agree with the following statement:</p> <p>“I would not hesitate to ask someone who is a refugee for help, should I ever need it.”</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree
<p>- If you disagree with this statement, please explain why.</p>	
<p>45. Are there any places where refugees and the Lebanese can go and interact socially?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>- If yes, please explain where they could go to meet and socialize?</p>	
<p>- If no, do you think there should be?</p>	
<p>46. Do you have any public and/or high-profile individuals in your area that promote peaceful coexistence and positive relations between Lebanese and refugees?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>- If yes, who are these individuals? Check all that apply:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> The Mayor <input type="checkbox"/> Municipal staff <input type="checkbox"/> The police/law enforcement <input type="checkbox"/> Army representatives <input type="checkbox"/> Religious leaders <input type="checkbox"/> Civil society actors <input type="checkbox"/> Respected business owners <input type="checkbox"/> Political figures <input type="checkbox"/> Journalists <input type="checkbox"/> Actors <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:
<p>- If yes, would it be possible to mention their names and how we can contact them?</p>	
<p>47. In the last 3 months, have you been treated unfairly because of your religion?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>48. In the last 3 months, have you been treated</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes

unfairly because of your sex?	<input type="checkbox"/> No
49. In the last 3 months, have you been treated unfairly because of your political affiliation?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
50. If another person has called you a bad name (e.g. “stupid”), which of the following is closest to what you would do?	<input type="checkbox"/> Fight with them <input type="checkbox"/> Yell at them <input type="checkbox"/> Do not respond <input type="checkbox"/> Go to my parents or family member <input type="checkbox"/> Go to a friend <input type="checkbox"/> Go to the teachers or school officials <input type="checkbox"/> Go to the police <input type="checkbox"/> Go to the military <input type="checkbox"/> Talk with them to solve the conflict <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please explain:

Introduction to section (to be read by enumerator to the interviewee):

This section will focus on your sense of security within your community and your relationships with local figures of authority. It will also include what difficulties or challenges you sometimes come across and how you might resolve these. May I continue?

SECURITY AND CONFIDENCE	
51. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: “I am able to access the mayor and/or the municipal council members if I need to make a complaint or request their support.”	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree
52. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: “I think that there is a transparent and fair justice system in Lebanon, which I can access.”	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree
53. Do you feel that you are able to influence political processes and decisions in your community?	
- If yes, how?	
- If no, why not?	
- If no, how does your inability to influence decisions that affect you make you feel? Check all that apply.	<input type="checkbox"/> Indifferent <input type="checkbox"/> Neglected <input type="checkbox"/> Frustrated <input type="checkbox"/> Disappointed <input type="checkbox"/> Powerless <input type="checkbox"/> Angry/upset <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
54. Would you say that refugees in Lebanon have equal access to the justice system, in	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

comparison to the Lebanese population?	
- If no, why not?	
55. Do you feel that refugees in your community are able to participate in decision-making and influence decisions that are taken by your municipality?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
- If yes, how?	
- If no, why not?	
<i>Question for Lebanese nationals only</i> 56. If you ever found yourself in a conflict with another Lebanese person in your community, such as a neighbour, to whom would you go to help resolving the conflict? Check all that apply.	<input type="checkbox"/> An elder <input type="checkbox"/> A religious leader <input type="checkbox"/> Another neighbour <input type="checkbox"/> A trusted member of our community <input type="checkbox"/> The municipality <input type="checkbox"/> The police <input type="checkbox"/> The army <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
- If an elder, a religious leader, another neighbour or trusted member of the community, would it be possible to specify who these individuals are?	
<i>Question for Lebanese nationals only</i> 57. If you ever found yourself in a conflict with a refugee in your area to whom would you go to help resolving the conflict? Check all that apply.	<input type="checkbox"/> The Shawish <input type="checkbox"/> An elder <input type="checkbox"/> A religious leader <input type="checkbox"/> Another neighbour <input type="checkbox"/> A trusted member of our community <input type="checkbox"/> The municipality <input type="checkbox"/> The police <input type="checkbox"/> The army <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
- If the Shawish, an elder, a religious leader, another neighbour or trusted member of the community, would it be possible to specify who these individuals are?	
<i>Question for Lebanese nationals only</i> 58. Have you ever been in conflict with a refugee?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
- If yes, what was the conflict about?	
- If yes, how was it resolved?	
<i>Question for non-Lebanese nationals (refugees) only</i> 59. If you ever found yourself in a conflict with another refugee in your community, such as a neighbour, to whom would you go to help resolving the conflict? Check all that apply.	<input type="checkbox"/> The Shawish <input type="checkbox"/> An elder <input type="checkbox"/> A religious leader <input type="checkbox"/> Another neighbour <input type="checkbox"/> A trusted member of our community <input type="checkbox"/> The municipality <input type="checkbox"/> The police <input type="checkbox"/> The army <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:

	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
<p>- If an elder, a religious leader, another neighbour or trusted member of the community, would it be possible to specify who these individuals are?</p>	
<p><i>Question for non-Lebanese nationals (refugees) only</i> 60. If you ever found yourself in a conflict with a Lebanese person in your area to whom would you go to help resolving the conflict? Check all that apply.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> The Shawish <input type="checkbox"/> A religious leader <input type="checkbox"/> Another neighbour <input type="checkbox"/> A trusted member of our community <input type="checkbox"/> The municipality <input type="checkbox"/> The police <input type="checkbox"/> The army <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
<p>- If the Shawish, an elder, a religious leader, another neighbour or trusted member of the community, would it be possible to specify who these individuals are?</p>	
<p><i>Question for non-Lebanese nationals (refugees) only</i> 61. Have you ever been in conflict with a Lebanese person?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>- If yes, what was the conflict about?</p>	
<p>- If yes, how was it resolved?</p>	
<p>62. To what extent do you agree with the following statement? "I feel safe to walk alone in my neighbourhood during the day."</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree
<p>- If you disagree, can you explain why?</p>	
<p>63. To what extent do you agree with the following statement? "I feel safe to walk alone in my neighbourhood after dark."</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree
<p>- If you disagree, can you explain why?</p>	
<p>64. Thinking about the recent protests that are taking place in Lebanon, would you say that women and men participate equally?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, women and men participate equally <input type="checkbox"/> No, men participate more <input type="checkbox"/> No, women participate more <input type="checkbox"/> I do not know
<p>- Why do you think this is the case?</p>	
<p>65. Thinking about the last 3 to 5 years, are you noticing a change in women's roles at home and in society?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>- If yes, what kind of change do you notice?</p>	
<p>- In your view, what caused this change?</p>	
<p>66. Thinking about the last 3 to 5 years, are you noticing a change in men's roles at home and in society?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

- If yes, what kind of change do you notice?	
- In your view, what caused this change?	
67. Would you say that there is a fair competition between all men and women over available jobs in your community?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, the competition is fair <input type="checkbox"/> No, the competition is unfair <input type="checkbox"/> I do not know <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
- If fair, what is it that creates fair conditions in the labour market?	
- If unfair, what is it that creates unfair conditions in the labour market?	
68. Thinking about the country's current challenges, how would you describe the current Lebanese political system? Check all that apply.	<input type="checkbox"/> Corrupt <input type="checkbox"/> Unaccountable <input type="checkbox"/> Unfair / benefits a few <input type="checkbox"/> Politically exclusive <input type="checkbox"/> Transparent <input type="checkbox"/> Accountable <input type="checkbox"/> Fair / benefits many <input type="checkbox"/> Politically inclusive
- If corrupt, unaccountable, unfair or politically exclusive, what means are justifiable to end corruption and to change the political system? Check all that apply.	<input type="checkbox"/> Peaceful protests <input type="checkbox"/> Violent protests <input type="checkbox"/> Legal accountability <input type="checkbox"/> Civil disobedience <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:
69. In your opinion, can divisions along ethnic, religious or political lines be seen between groups in your community? Check all that apply. <i>Note to enumerators: please explain to the respondent that "divisions along religious, political and religious lines" refer to people who group themselves according to their ethnic identities, religion or political views, which can sometimes lead to social tensions and even violence.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, ethnic <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, religious/sectarian <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, political <input type="checkbox"/> No, there are no divisions <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:
- If you have noticed this type of division in your community, would you say that this causes any tensions between groups?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
- If yes, between which groups can you see such divisions/tensions?	
- If yes, can you give examples of tensions?	
70. What are the main disputes happening here?	<input type="checkbox"/> Fight over power <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic disputes <input type="checkbox"/> Fight over land boundaries <input type="checkbox"/> Fight over land ownership <input type="checkbox"/> Fight over money <input type="checkbox"/> Theft <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic disputes <input type="checkbox"/> Physical violence <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Other, specify:

71. Thinking about the future, would you say that security will improve, worsen, or stay the same?	<input type="checkbox"/> Improve <input type="checkbox"/> Same <input type="checkbox"/> Worsen
72. In which areas of your community do most conflicts or disagreements take place?	
73. In which locations within your community do most conflicts or disagreements take place?	<input type="checkbox"/> The home <input type="checkbox"/> The workplace <input type="checkbox"/> Public areas, e.g. cafes, shops, gym/sports areas <input type="checkbox"/> In the street <input type="checkbox"/> Official locations, e.g. the municipality, police station <input type="checkbox"/> School / university <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:

Introduction to section (to be read by enumerator to the interviewee):

This section will focus on your access to services and information within your community, including healthcare and education. I will ask you some questions about your feelings towards these. This will be the last section. May I continue?

ACCESS TO SERVICES AND INFORMATION	
74. Do you feel that you have adequate access to essential public services, such as education and healthcare?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
- If no, how does this make you feel?	<input type="checkbox"/> Indifferent <input type="checkbox"/> Neglected <input type="checkbox"/> Frustrated <input type="checkbox"/> Disappointed <input type="checkbox"/> Powerless <input type="checkbox"/> Angry/upset <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
- If no, what is it that prevents you from accessing essential public services, such as education and healthcare, in your view?	
75. Through what communication tool do you access information about incidents and conflicts that take place during the protests/revolution? Check all that apply	<input type="checkbox"/> TV <input type="checkbox"/> Newspapers <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Media alerts on phone <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook <input type="checkbox"/> WhatsApp <input type="checkbox"/> Twitter <input type="checkbox"/> Viber <input type="checkbox"/> Signal <input type="checkbox"/> Telegram <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:
- Which communication tool do you use the most to access information about incidents and/or events about the protests/revolution? Select one option.	<input type="checkbox"/> TV <input type="checkbox"/> Newspapers <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Media alerts on phone

	<input type="checkbox"/> Facebook <input type="checkbox"/> WhatsApp <input type="checkbox"/> Twitter <input type="checkbox"/> Viber <input type="checkbox"/> Signal <input type="checkbox"/> Telegram <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:
<p>76. Which communication tools do you use to access information about tensions/conflicts between groups in your communities?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> TV <input type="checkbox"/> Newspapers <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Media alerts on phone <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook <input type="checkbox"/> WhatsApp <input type="checkbox"/> Twitter <input type="checkbox"/> Viber <input type="checkbox"/> Signal <input type="checkbox"/> Telegram <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:
<p>- Which communication tool do you use the most to access information about tensions/conflicts between groups in your communities? Select one option.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> TV <input type="checkbox"/> Newspapers <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Media alerts on phone <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook <input type="checkbox"/> WhatsApp <input type="checkbox"/> Twitter <input type="checkbox"/> Viber <input type="checkbox"/> Signal <input type="checkbox"/> Telegram <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:
<p>77. Do you have any other comments you would like to share?</p>	

Focus group discussion guide

Date and Time																																		
Location (area, village/neighbourhood, rural/urban)																																		
Number of total participants (should be between 8-10)																																		
Sector	<input type="checkbox"/> General (community members) <input type="checkbox"/> Municipal staff <input type="checkbox"/> Health staff <input type="checkbox"/> Education staff <input type="checkbox"/> Lawyers/legal staff <input type="checkbox"/> Civil society actors																																	
Refugee/host	<input type="checkbox"/> Refugee <input type="checkbox"/> Host																																	
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Participant #</th> <th>Sex</th> <th>Age</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>7</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>8</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>9</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>10</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Participant #	Sex	Age	1	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female		2	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female		3	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female		4	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female		5	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female		6	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female		7	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female		8	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female		9	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female		10	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	
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10	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female																																	
Sex and Age composition of the group																																		
Number of participants with disabilities (please specify what type of disabilities for each participant)																																		
Facilitator name																																		
Co-facilitator/note taker name																																		

Consent request and Introduction

The facilitator will start with introducing himself/herself, the note taker, the purpose of the FGD and what the information will be used for. This information will be provided by reading a pre-written script to obtain informed consent from each individual in the group. The facilitator will then distribute a consent form to be signed by the participants. The facilitator will ask the group if they have any questions before getting started and do a round to allow each participant to introduce themselves to the group.

Script to be read by FGD facilitator:

Hello, my name is (facilitator's name) and this is my colleague (note taker's name). We work for Exigo Research & Communications. Exigo is an independent and impartial research organization which conducts social research and assessments to inform local and international organizations about the needs of communities. We are currently conducting research focusing on questions related to causes of tension between within and between communities to find methods that may facilitate improved relations and cooperation between various groups in society. I would, therefore, like to ask you some questions. Please know that there are no right or wrong answers and all of you should participate in an open discussion.

My colleague and I are completely independent and impartial in this research process. The information that you provide will remain confidential and no personal information that can identify you and your family will be collected. We will only use the information to inform the study. Do you have any questions (the facilitator should answer all questions they may have as relevant)? Please know that this is a voluntary process and that you may leave the discussion or withdraw your consent at any time. We would also like to ask your permission to audio record the discussion to not lose the information and to be able to take more detailed notes after the discussion. The recording will be deleted once a full transcription is made. May I ask for your permission to record and to start the discussion?

General rules/instructions will be shared with the participants:

- *Everyone should participate*
- *There is no right or wrong answer, and everyone should share their own thoughts/opinion freely*
- *Information provided in the focus group must be kept confidential*
- *Participants should focus on the group discussion and not have separate discussions on the side*
- *The discussion will last approximately 1 hour*

Questions:

Narratives & root causes of conflict

1. How would you define and describe the situation of tension between groups in Lebanon in the past few years and more recently in the past two months?
 - *Terminology: conflict, tensions, revolution, etc.*
 - *Support the group in identifying the various conflicts and tensions*
 - *Does historical tension / generational tension (thoughts of parents etc, memories of the war) still create new tension among Lebanese?*
 - *Also - whether participants think Lebanon is still geographical divided into different groups or whether integrated? Places they wouldn't feel comfortable going in Lebanon?*
2. In your opinion, and to the best of your knowledge, what are the main causes of the conflict / tension which you just described? (describe the type of conflict in the community)
 - *Make sure to include and distinguish between the situation since the onset of the Syrian conflict in 2011, and since October 2019*
 - *Select three main causes, differentiating between each conflict, i.e. the situation since 2011, and since October 2019*
3. What does conflict mean to you?
 - *Does conflict always have to be violent?*

Stakeholders of conflict

4. To the best of your knowledge, who are the conflicting parties? How are these parties composed/ who are the individuals that take part in the opposing parties? How do they perceive and interact with each other?
 - *Primary and secondary stakeholders*
 - *Groups, institutions, individuals*
5. What are the positions and interests of the conflicting groups? How do they achieve their goals?
6. Are any of the individuals or groups viewed as more powerful and influential than others? Why are they considered more powerful?

Information

7. How do you receive and share information on the conflict/tensions? In your opinion, how accurate is it? How can people recognize misinformation/fabricated information?

Factors of conflict (dividers)

8. In your opinion, what divides society in Lebanon? How can this lead to violence?
9. What actions or attitudes contribute to conflict/tensions? How and why?
 - *Where is conflict most likely to happen?*
 - *Are there particular times or events when conflict is more likely to occur?*
10. Whose actions or attitudes tend to promote conflict/tensions? How and why?
 - *Facilitator should use a flipchart to discuss tension factors*
 - *Link how key driving factors relate to each other*
 - *Which are the most/least influential?*

11. Are there any specific areas in Lebanon where you would not be comfortable going to? If so, which areas and why would you not be comfortable?
12. What issues/problems cause tensions or conflicts between different people in your community, if any?
 - *Examples of issues that may cause tensions: competition over work opportunities, lack of basic services, historical/generational tension etc.*
 - *How are the identified causes of tension/conflict connected, if at all? Do they have anything in common?*
13. Do you feel that Lebanese people have equal access to the justice system / decision-making? Why? How?

Peace factors (connectors)

14. Whose actions or attitudes tend to reduce the conflict/tensions? How and why? What influence do they have? How?
15. Whom do the parties view as neutral in the conflict? Why? What influence do they have? How?
16. What are the factors that connect people and help overcoming tensions and conflict between different people?
 - *Examples of connectors: Common faith, shared values, trade, family connections etc.*
 - *Facilitator should use a flipchart to discuss peace factors*
 - *Which are the most/least influential?*

Resilience

17. Who do you turn to for support in time of conflict/tensions? Are there any individuals in your community who are known for their mediation skills?
18. How does your community resolve conflicts between individuals, families and larger groups?
 - *Probe for conflict resolution methods used by individuals, families and larger groups at the community level to find out if conflicts at different levels are handled in different ways.*
19. *(If Lebanese) Do you have friends with different religions, political beliefs and backgrounds?*
 - *If yes, do you discuss these differences?*
 - *If no, why not?*
20. How is the relationship between refugees and the Lebanese in your area? Are there any tensions between them? What are the problems that cause the tensions? What are the things that can reduce tensions and increase peaceful relationships?
 - *Probe by mentioning the examples of common cultural norms and values, community recreational activities, joint projects that can benefit all etc.*

Gender and age: inclusion and exclusion

21. What are the different roles of men and women in your community?
22. Do women/men/youth have the same access to services and opportunities? Are there some people who are excluded? What is the result of this exclusion?
23. Do women/men/youth have the same access to decision making? What are barriers to this?

Changes in gender roles

24. How does the conflict/tensions that we have discussed so far affect, if at all, the roles of men and women in the society? Is it possible that conflict/tensions may affect women and men differently? Why/how? Can you provide examples?
25. Thinking of the past three to five years, are you noticing a difference in the roles and responsibilities of women outside the home?

Key informant interview guide

Date and Time	
Location (area, village/neighbourhood)	
Name of interviewee	
Title/ position	
Contact details	
Name of interviewer	

Script to be read by interviewer:

Hello, my name is (interviewer name). I work for Exigo Research & Communications. Exigo is an independent and impartial research organization which conducts social research and assessments to inform local and international organizations about the needs of communities. We are currently conducting research focusing on questions related to causes of tension within and between communities to find methods that may facilitate improved relations and cooperation between various groups in society. I would, therefore, like to ask you some questions.

Exigo is completely independent and impartial in this research process. The information that you provide will remain confidential and no personal information that can identify you will be collected. We will only use the information to inform the study. Do you have any questions (the interviewer should answer all questions the respondent may have)? Please know that this is a voluntary process and that you may withdraw your consent at any time. I would also like to ask your permission to audio record the interview to not lose the information and to be able to take more detailed notes after the interview. The recording will be deleted once a full transcription is made. May I ask for your permission to record and to start the interview?

Questions:

1. Can you please start by introducing yourself and your role in the community/organization?
2. How would you define and describe the situation of tension between groups in Lebanon in the past few years and more recently in the past two months?
3. In your opinion, what are the root causes of these tensions?
4. To the best of your knowledge, who are the conflicting parties? How are these parties composed/ who are the individuals that take part in the opposing parties? How do they perceive and interact with each other?
5. What are the positions and interests of the conflicting groups? How do they achieve their goals?
6. Are any of the individuals or groups viewed as more powerful and influential than others? Why are they considered more powerful?
7. What information is disseminated about the conflict? How is it disseminated?
8. In your opinion, what divides society in Lebanon? How can this lead to violence?
9. What actions or attitudes contribute to conflict/tensions? How and why? Which are the most influential? Which are mutable? What are the dynamics between the various causes, the strong and weak links??
10. Whose actions or attitudes tend to promote conflict/ tensions? How and why?
11. Whose actions or attitudes tend to reduce the conflict/tensions? How and why? What influence do they have? How?
12. Whom do the parties view as neutral in the conflict? Why? What influence do they have? How? What are the opportunities for building peace?

13. Who do community members turn to for support in time of conflict/tensions? Are there any individuals who are known for their mediation skills?
14. How do communities resolve conflicts between individuals, families and larger groups?
15. How is the relationship between refugees and the Lebanese in your area/areas targeted/represented by you/your organization? Are there any tensions between them? What are the problems that cause the tensions? What are the things that can reduce tensions and increase peaceful relationships?
16. What are the roles of women/men/youth in times of conflict? Do they differ? How and why?
17. How does the conflict/tensions that we have discussed so far affect, if at all, the roles of men and women in the society? Is it possible that conflict/tensions may affect women and men differently? Why/how? Can you provide examples?
18. Thinking of the past three to five years, are you noticing a difference in the roles and responsibilities of women outside the home?

Annex 6: Evaluation Terms of Reference (ToR)



Terms of Reference

Analysis of Conflict and Power Dynamics

Fostering Social Stability through Strategic Communications

Search for Common Ground (Search) is a non-governmental organization working to transform the way the world deals with conflict. We have acquired over 35 years of experience in peacebuilding and are based in over 30 countries around the world. Search first worked in Lebanon in 1996, addressing multiple issues arising within Lebanon's diverse society. In each project we seek to engage all stakeholders to work together to address shared challenges and develop joint solutions. We have led programmes around the world to help societies channel their differences away from adversarial approaches and towards collaborative solutions with activities that range from conflict mediation and peace education to stabilisation and women's empowerment.

Project information

The project aims *to* promote social stability amongst and between host communities and refugees in Lebanon and will be implemented over a period of 21 months. *It has* two specific objectives:

- SO1. Cultivate collaborative and positive dialogues and narratives amongst and between host communities and refugees in target communities across Lebanon;
- SO2. Shift public perceptions towards greater trust and respect amongst and between host communities and refugees in target communities across Lebanon;

Expected results

- Refugees and host community members have increased opportunities for and awareness of collaboration and positive interaction through dialogue and joint activities
- Refugee and host community members have increased positive perceptions of the 'other' through access to positive social discourse and joint opportunities

Target groups

The project will target a broad range of stakeholders including refugees, members of the host communities, municipalities, local influencers, bloggers, media influencers, Ministry of Interiors and Municipalities, Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Information and finally the peace building community at large.

Objectives of the Analysis

Search is seeking a consultant to conduct a nationwide analysis of conflict and power dynamics to understand triggers that cause tension between host communities and refugees, as part of a project that aims to promote social cohesion. The geographical spectrum will focus on key hotspot communities in the governorates of Akkar, North, Mount Lebanon, west and central Bekaa, and Baalbek-Hermel.

A conflict analysis is “a systematic study of the political, economic, social, historical, and cultural factors that directly influence the shape, dynamics and direction of existing or potential conflicts. It includes an analysis of conflict causes and dynamics as well as assessments of the profiles, motivations, objectives and resources of conflict protagonists.” The study will focus on the collection of quantitative and qualitative data to grasp trends in conflict and power dynamics at the community level, the stakeholders involved and their relationships, and the potential avenues for transforming the conflict.

The consultant will work closely with Search Lebanon team and Design, Monitoring & Evaluation Regional Specialist, MENA to ensure that all milestones are met. The consultant will also act as focal point on all issues including logistics and recruitment of local researchers and will sign off on the final papers in consultation with the Design, Monitoring & Evaluation Regional Specialist MENA, and with the final approval of the Lebanon Country Director.

Overall, the Analysis aims to:

- Analyse conflict and power dynamics between host communities and refugees;
- Understand triggers that cause tension within Lebanese communities and between Syrian refugees and host communities;
- Identify key influencers, and possible champions in each community;
- Analyse the conflict in order to see where Search is most likely to make a change (identify entry points);
- Provide overall recommendations for the project implementation and specific guidance for the rapid response component of the project.

Methodology and Approach

The Search approach to the study is grounded in the guiding principles of our work: participatory, culturally sensitive, committed to building capacity, affirming and positive while honest and productively critical, and valuing knowledge and approaches from within the context. Search and the hired consultant will agree upon a joint set of standards when negotiating the final contract of agreement. The below principles should be taken into account:

- Inclusiveness—the methodology should include a wide range of viewpoints, specifically gender and age-sensitivity when applicable.
- Mixed-method approaches—both qualitative and quantitative methods need to be present in the methodology.
- Rigor of evidence—gathered information needs to be reliable and transparent
- Ethics—the methodology needs to consider ethics in order to ensure that the evaluation is fully objective.

The sample size should be adequate and representative of the target groups. In addition, the study should employ both quantitative and qualitative participatory methods.

Indicative analysis questions

What is the nature of the conflict? Is it a primarily political, social, economic, cultural, ideological conflict?

What are the political / social/ cultural /economic / ideological dimensions?

What is the history of the conflict and how did it develop to this point in time?

What are the key dividing lines in the society? Which ones have the most potential to lead to violent conflict?

Who are the primary and secondary stakeholders in a conflict? What are their core positions and interests? Groups/ Institutions/ Individuals

Who are the potential influencers of peace? What level of influence do they have over the system?

What are the power relationships among these groups?

How are the major stakeholders pursuing their objectives?

What information is disseminated about the conflict? How is it disseminated?

What perceptions of the conflict and one another do the key stakeholders have? How are those perceptions formed?

What are the core narratives of the conflict? Are they competing or compatible? How are those narratives shaped?

Are they mutable?

What changes is the conflict producing on the roles of men and women?

What are the root causes of the conflict?

What are the key driving factors which contribute to conflict?

How do those key driving factors relate to each other? Which are the most influential? Which are mutable? What are the dynamics between the various causes, the strong and weak links?

What are the dynamics which create an environment conducive to violent conflict?

What are the prevailing attitudes which exist in the population that create conditions supportive of violence?

What are the opportunities for building peace?

What change in the conflict system do we want to cause?

Which short-term changes can have the longest lasting effect on the system?

In addition to the key questions above, the study will seek to provide data for the below (tentative) indicators:

- Level of acceptance of local community members towards refugees
- Current level of mutual trust between community members and refugees
- Level of exclusion and reported by refugees
- Level of perception of community members and refugees regarding their safety
- What is the current level of perception and tolerance of targeted host community members in relation to refugees?
- What is the current level of perception and tolerance of targeted refugee members in relation to host community members?

The analysis report will draw on the following sources:

- Desk study review: It is important to review project documents, logical framework and other relevant sources of data to complete the assessment.
- Key informant interviews: Interviews will be conducted to gather in depth information on key questions.
- Focus group discussions to gather in depth information regarding the key questions described above.
- Community Surveys: Surveys should be distributed to members of the community including men, women, and youth groups and others as appropriate to collect numerical information related to the study's key questions.

Expected deliverables

- **The inception report:** Within Ten days from signing the contract, the consultant should submit an Inception report, which clearly defines the evaluation methodology, such as clear outlines for the focus group discussions, KII questions, survey questionnaires and research timeline with specific deadlines for each deliverable. The inception report should also clearly explain the sampling methodology and sample size for the quantitative survey and a clear and logical number for the KIIs. The report will also include an evaluation matrix to ensure evidence -based findings and triangulation.

The full inception report and the data collection tools need formal approval from Search before starting the data collection in the field.

- **Training of enumerators;**
- **Supervision and participation in data collection;** Oversight of the data coding process;

- **A draft Analysis report** to be submitted within 10 days of completion of the data collection for review and comments from Search country team and the Design, Monitoring & Evaluation Regional Specialist, MENA. The review and feedback of the report could be more than one round depending on the quality of the report and the extent to which the comments and suggestions from the first round have been incorporated. The report will be reviewed by for Search staff and partners;
- **A Final Analysis Report** to be submitted after incorporating the comments of Search. The report should be written in English, 30 pages excluding annexes, consisting of:
 - Cover page, Search will provide sample cover sheet for reference
 - Table of contents, list of acronyms, abbreviations and list of tables and charts.
 - Executive summary of key findings and recommendations – 3-4 pages.
 - Background information and context analysis presented per key criteria with a brief description
 - Methodology with clear explanation of sampling and limitations, KIIs, participants’ selection and data analysis approach.
 - Research findings, analysis, with associated data presented, where appropriate in clear graphs or charts. The findings can include subsections for each research criterion.
 - Appendices should research instruments, list of interviewees. document consulted. Updated logical framework with measures for relevant indicators
 - Conclusion and Recommendations should be framed according to the data and research indicators

Once the draft is submitted and reviewed, Search may decide based on the quality of the draft whether the consultant may be required to revise the draft, working closely with Search DM&E manager as necessary.

The report should be submitted electronically in a MS – Word document. The consultant is responsible for English editing of the final report which should be well formatted. The report will be credited to the evaluator and potentially placed in the public domain at the decision of Search.

All handwritten and electronic transcripts of interviews and KIIs, hard copies of survey questionnaires, photographs taken during the assessment and any equipment received from Search for the purpose of the study should be submitted to Search. Furthermore, all information generated during the study will be the sole property of Search and is subject to submission to Search along with the final report, prior to the end of the contract.

- **PowerPoint presentation of findings and recommendations** to Search
- **Submission of the databases to Search**

The primary audience of the conflict analysis will be SFCG, its implementing partners and the peace building community at large. Recommendations should emerge from the study to inform the project and project activities.

Logistical Support

Search Lebanon will provide the consultant with logistical support through:

- Ensuring that the consultant receives key documents in a timely manner
- Arranging meetings with the project team and key staff

Search estimates the consultant would need between 35 to 40 working days to conclude the study. Timeline will be defined before the inception phase of the study.

Consultant’s Qualifications

Search Lebanon seeks an experienced Consultant with the following qualifications:

- Excellent written and spoken English skills required, including demonstrated ability in writing conflict analysis research and mapping of social stability issues and other information products, and fluency in Arabic
- At least 7 years of experience in research, and monitoring & evaluation of which a minimum of 5 years of related research experience, including both academic and project-oriented research
- Experience in developing and managing Focus Group Discussions, Interviews, and Surveys

- Experience in conflict transformation, gender studies and peacebuilding
- Ability to be flexible with time and work schedule while being culturally sensitive
- Attention to detail and ability to meet tight deadlines
- Capable of establishing and recruiting a network of local researchers who will assist in conducting the assessment and mapping
- Able to read, digest and accurately analyse large amounts of information, provide succinct summaries and explain the significance of that information

In addition, the consultant is required to respect the following Ethical Principles:

- *Comprehensive and systematic inquiry: Consultant should make the most of the existing information and full range of stakeholders available at the time of the review. Consultant should conduct systematic, data-based inquiries. He or she should communicate his or her methods and approaches accurately and in sufficient detail to allow others to understand, interpret and critique his or her work. He or she should make clear the limitations of the review and its results.*
- *Competence: Consultant should possess the abilities and skills and experience appropriate to undertake the tasks proposed and should practice within the limits of his or her professional training and competence.*
- *Honesty and integrity: Consultant should be transparent with the contractor/constituent about: any conflict of interest, any change made in the negotiated project plan and the reasons why those changes were made, any risk that certain procedures or activities produce misleading review information.*
- *Respect for people: Consultant respect the security, dignity and self-worth of the respondents, program participants. Consultant has the responsibility to be sensitive to and respect differences amongst participants in culture, religion, gender, disability, age and ethnicity.*

Applications

To apply, interested candidates (individuals, teams and firms) are requested to submit the following documents: 1) a technical proposal proposing a methodology for the analysis together with 2) a financial proposal for the completion of the aforementioned deliverables, as well as 3) the curriculum vitae for individuals who will be involved.

Note: Only two documents can be submitted, so the technical and financial proposals must be combined, along with a short cover letter.

Applications must be submitted to www.sfcg.org/employment/ before October 9th, 2019.

Annex 7: Training Curriculum

Objective of training: To learn the purpose of research and ensure the conduct of high-quality project specific data collection

Learning objectives:

1. Understand the objectives of the client’s project
2. Learn the research objectives
3. Get familiar with the data collection tools
4. Understand the geographic scope and sampling approach
5. Do’s and don’ts during fieldwork
6. Understand ethical standards: obtaining informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, do no harm, child protection and conflict sensitivity

Training Sessions

Morning Sessions: (3hrs)

Session 1: Introduction (45min)

The aim of the session is to provide a comprehensive presentation of the client, the project (objectives, target population, areas of implementation), and the research project (objectives, methodology, geographic scope)

Session 2: Data collection tools (60min)

During the session, the survey questionnaire is screened, and each question is reviewed and discussed with the team of enumerators.

Session 3: Ethical standards (30min) and Conflict sensitivity during data collection (45min)

The aim of the session is to ensure that all safeguarding principles are understood by the team and applied during fieldwork. The following topics are discussed: obtaining informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity and do no harm. The team of enumerators is asked during the session to read Exigo’ safeguarding policies, and to sign Exigo’s code of conduct.

Afternoon Sessions: (2hrs)

Session 4: Sampling Methods and Logistics (45min)

Presentation of the geographic scope and sampling of the data collection.
During this session, the groups of enumerators per area are confirmed and all logistical aspects discussed (transportation, schedule, timeline, emergency contacts, etc.)

Session 5: Do’s and don’ts during fieldwork – lessons learned (30 min)

Session 6: Test and group exercise (45 min)

During the session, the participants will each conduct a test on the devices.
Following the tests, a mock exercise conducted in pairs will allow to familiarize the team of enumerators with the questionnaire, and find gaps, if any, in the tool.