

AKTIS
STRATEGY

6 May 2016

Additional Analysis Report

Lebanon Host Communities Support Project

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1. Executive summary

In early 2016, following the fourth round of field research under the Lebanon Host Communities support project (LHSP), the Department for International Development (DFID) in coordination with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) commissioned Aktis Strategy (herein Aktis) to conduct additional analysis on findings from the LHSP research at the national, regional and municipal level. This involved disaggregating the data by demographic indicators, including gender, income level and confession.

The purpose of this analysis is to provide the Government of Lebanon, donors and policymakers with a granular understanding of the factors influencing perceptions around social stability, municipal legitimacy and refugees, and to suggest accompanying recommendations for the future direction of LHSP.

Overall, the findings identified that males, youth and low income respondents more often described stories involving tension within the community, as well as situations in which people felt powerless. They also referenced refugees more frequently than other respondents, particularly regarding jobs and employment. Although this varied by municipality and did not indicate widespread patterns of vulnerability, the clear frustration and anger expressed in these stories could provide fertile grounds for conflict if not addressed. Nonetheless, youth were also the group that most often encouraged dialogue in their stories despite growing negativity among other groups, reinforcing the importance of these youth in ensuring stability and encouraging mediation within communities.

Confession and income level had the biggest influence on perceptions of municipal legitimacy of all demographic indicators, demonstrating some fundamental differences in perception between Sunni and Shia as well as between low and high income groups.

Key findings from the analysis grouped around the three major research themes (social stability, refugees and municipal legitimacy) are presented below:

KEY FINDINGS

Social stability:

- The analysis did not reveal overarching causes of tension across municipalities that might escalate into conflict at a national or regional level. Localised pockets of tension appear to have formed among certain groups in the municipalities, particularly in r ajam Issa and Saadnayel;
- Overall, male and female respondents of all age groups and income levels felt powerless to influence change
- Males and low income group respondents discussed competition and situations where people defended their interests more often than other respondents;
- Despite increased competition, many respondents continued to encourage dialogue and attempt to resolve issues constructively. Youth are most likely to tell stories where dialogue is encouraged.



KEY FINDINGS

Refugees:

- Respondents are talking more about refugees, although they are only discussed in 20% of stories;
- Young males of low and middle income levels are the group most likely to talk most about refugees, particularly regarding jobs and employment;
- Females in the Bekaa feel increasingly insecure regarding the long-term stay of refugees in their communities.

KEY FINDINGS

Municipal legitimacy:

- Sunni respondents placed more trust in formal authorities than Shia, who turned to informal authorities such as family or political and religious groups;
- The number of Sunni respondents who no longer trust anyone to provide services has increased;
- Respondents in low income groups are generally less likely to trust the municipality to take the right action than respondents in middle and high income groups.

Based on the findings, the report makes a number of recommendations for LHSP, with a view both to enhancing the programme's design and focus and to strengthening accompanying research. Priority recommendations for LHSP and supporting donors are as follows:

- Increase engagement with programmes providing livelihood and employment generation projects to build links with LHSP and with municipal planning processes, with a view of further targeting assistance to at-risk groups and regions;
- Develop a programme or specialised component within LHSP in the Bekaa that focuses on women, to address increased feelings of powerlessness and insecurity;
- Empower youth to lead new initiatives in collaboration with municipalities and local leaders that focus on dialogue and finding local solutions to livelihood challenges;
- Engage young males who report feeling powerless through targeted activities designed to address and reduce feelings of exclusion that might otherwise lead to conflict;
- Conduct research in more religiously heterogeneous communities (e.g. communities where Shia and Sunni or larger Christian populations live together) in order to better understand the role of confession in determining perceptions of municipal legitimacy;
- Further examine the underlying factors that may be preventing Sunni respondents from trusting authorities to provide services;
- Ensure that LHSP frequently monitors locations and groups experiencing increased tension, such as Rajam Issa and Saadnayel;
- Increase the focus on young people and males in future research to better understand employment-related frustrations and further assess potential conflict drivers;
- Ensure that a sufficient number of refugees are included among future respondents so that their perceptions of stability, access to services and tensions within the community can be captured effectively.



2. Introduction

LHSP is a multi-donor programme aimed at increasing stability and building the capacity of communities affected by the Syrian crisis to address tensions, prevent conflict and ensure peaceful co-existence. On behalf of DFID, and in close collaboration with UNDP and MoSA, Aktis has conducted four rounds of field research for the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of DFID-funded interventions under LHSP. The research began in 2014 and originally covered three municipalities, Rajam Issa, Saadnayel and Sarafand, located in the North, Bekaa and South, respectively. The research was expanded in 2015 to include three additional municipalities, Sir Dinnieh, Ali El Nahri and Ghazieh, totalling six municipalities equally divided between the three regions.

The purpose of the research is to identify the impact of LHSP assistance on six selected municipalities with a large influx of Syrian refugees, and to determine the relationship between projects designed to reduce service delivery pressures in these communities and the level of social tension between Syrian refugees and the Lebanese host community. The research also evaluated the impact of projects on respondents' perceptions of the legitimacy of the municipal government. The findings from the most recent (fourth) round of research were shared with DFID, UNDP, and MoSA in April 2016.

2.1 Purpose of this report

This report aims to:

1. Disaggregate the findings of the third and fourth rounds of data collection by gender, age, confession, income level, educational background and employment status;
2. Identify whether any of these demographic indicators played a role in shaping answers to questions on stability and municipal legitimacy; and
3. In light of these findings, make programmatic and research-focused recommendations to inform future LHSP initiatives.

2.2 Summary of key findings

Results from the analysis indicate that age, gender and income level influenced perceptions on stability and municipal legitimacy. While findings varied by municipality, males, youth and low income respondents increasingly described stories where people competed and defended their interests. Low income group respondents in particular were less likely to trust the municipality to take the right action, and increasingly described situations in which people felt powerless. This growing frustration was particularly apparent in municipalities like Rajam Issa and Saadnayel. Despite negative findings, however, youth respondents were also the most likely to encourage dialogue, reinforcing the importance of engaging them constructively within the municipalities to encourage stability.

Although refugees remain a secondary topic of conversation for most respondents, more people are talking about them. Males and low income group respondents discussed refugees most frequently, particularly regarding jobs/employment. The frustration that this group feels could set the stage for more active conflict within the community, particularly in the Bekaa. Young females in particular felt increasingly insecure regarding the long-term stay of refugees in their communities. This perceived lack of safety could translate into greater restrictions on the movement and opportunities of women beyond the household.

Confession had the biggest influence on perceptions of municipal legitimacy. Sunni respondents placed more trust in formal authorities than Shia respondents, who turned to informal authorities such as family or political and religious groups to provide services. An increasing, and potentially alarming, number of Sunni respondents no longer trust anyone to provide services.



3. Methodology

The results of the first four rounds of LHSP research were presented to stakeholders in the Impact Evaluation Report of April 2016, which set out baseline findings and explored changes in responses following the implementation of selected DFID-funded projects under LHSP. The SenseMaker® data¹ collected by Aktis were broken-down by municipality and, when patterns were noted, disaggregated by relevant services. Aktis also isolated the stories that were most influenced by refugees in order to identify specific findings and patterns underlining perceptions around Syrian refugees.

In addition to the data displayed in these reports, Aktis collected attribute data,² as well as demographic data, including the age, gender, confession, income level, educational background and employment status of the respondents. By filtering this data through SenseMaker®, Aktis can further disaggregate the results to identify and display any differences in responses from different demographic groups of respondents.

3.1 Analysis approach

Initial disaggregation of findings

Aktis began the disaggregation analysis in April by identifying findings and patterns in the last round of research that could benefit from further exploration. The Aktis Statistician conducted correlation analysis to explore potential associations between demographic indicators, actors and responses in the research, identifying themes or areas for further exploration. Aktis also examined the distribution of data for each indicator and determined whether categories should be combined.

SenseMaker®Workshop

Following initial analysis, Aktis facilitated an interactive workshop with DFID and UNDP on 12 April 2016 to present and explore preliminary findings regarding service delivery, municipal legitimacy and social stability. Areas of particular interest to the participants were explored further, and participants reviewed and discussed many of the stories associated with these findings. This discussion then guided subsequent detailed analysis. In particular, Aktis was asked to examine in greater detail any findings related to (i) attribute questions regarding service delivery and trust, and (ii) the stories relating to community tensions, and (iii) the stories referencing Syrian refugees.

3.2 Integrity of results

Approximately 250 respondents were interviewed in each municipality during the last round of research. In order to ensure that the disaggregated results remain statistically significant at the municipal level, the additional analysis has been limited to two layers of disaggregation. In addition, where the size of the disaggregated sample was too small to be significant on its own, Aktis grouped categories within particular demographic indicators. The groupings are outlined below:

- Age: Respondents aged 18-20 were grouped with respondents aged 21-29;
- Education: Respondents were grouped into four categories:
 - Low level: “No formal education” was combined with “elementary”;
 - Intermediate: “Technical intermediate” was grouped with “intermediate”;
 - Secondary level: “Technical secondary” was grouped with “secondary”; and;
 - High level: “Technical advanced”, “undergraduate” and “graduate” were combined.



- Income: Respondents were classified in three categories:
 - Low income: Respondents who “can barely make ends meet” were grouped with respondents with “enough money for food and rent”;
 - Middle income: Respondents with “enough money for food, rent and clothes”; and
 - High income: Respondents with “enough money for durable purchases” were grouped with “enough money for holidays, cars and apartments”.
- Employment: Respondents were grouped into two categories:
 - Employed: Respondents who were in “low paid part-time or casual work” were grouped with “unpaid but full-time work”, “work that pays reasonably well” and “work that provides a high income”; and
 - Unemployed: Respondents who were “looking for paid work but unable to find any”.
- Confession: Since almost all respondents identified with a confession, those who answered “I do not identify with any group” and “I prefer not to answer” were grouped together for analysis.

It is important to note that location and confession are highly correlated in the LHSP research. Three of the six research locations are composed of mostly Shia respondents (Ghazieh, Ali El Nahri, and Sarafand), whereas the remaining three locations are made up of largely Sunni respondents (Saadnayel, Sir Dinnieh, Rajam Issa). In most communities, only a small number of respondents identified themselves as not being Sunni or Shia, which made it difficult to conduct further analysis on this group.

Findings on respondents

- Ages 50+ told more negative stories than youth;
- Young males told more strongly negative stories than young females;
- More older participants were in the low income group;
- Youth had the highest education levels; and
- More women than men were uneducated.

Interestingly, education level and income level were only weakly related. This indicates that in these municipalities, respondents with the highest incomes tend to work in trade or other areas where a secondary or university degree is not needed. It also indicates that respondents with higher education degrees may struggle to find jobs that match their educational background.



3.3 Methodology constraints

Two research constraints were identified during the design and implementation phase of the additional analysis. Whenever possible, mitigation measures were established to maximise the quality and depth of the analysis.

Regional limitations

This research examines whether demographic indicators influence responses across all six municipalities as well as within regions and municipalities. The findings identified at the “national” or “regional” level in the analysis do not claim to represent trends across the entire country or entire regions, but identify areas where further research across a broader range of communities might help determine whether such trends might exist.

“People in the Story”

Aktis has examined key demographic findings in each of the eight Triads used during the research. Five of the eight Triads³ ask respondent to identify how “people in the story” reacted. When disaggregating these questions, assumptions were not made that the people in the story have the same demographic background as the respondent. As such, we focus our findings from these Triads on whether particular types of respondents told stories in which people cooperated or felt powerless more often, for example, but we do not draw conclusions that the people described are from the same demographic groups as the respondent.



4. Key findings

4.1 Key findings by theme

The analysis in this section aims to answer the following questions:

- How did different groups of people view the municipality? How did they view the central government?
- Who described situations of instability or powerlessness most often? What does this mean for stability in the municipalities?
- Who talked about refugees, and what did they say?

4.1.1 Municipal legitimacy

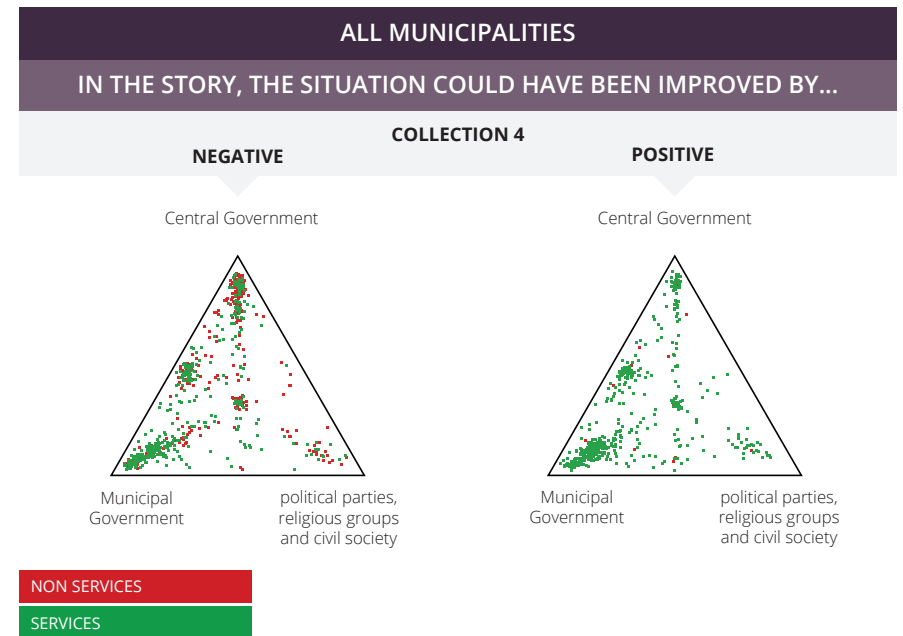
This section aims to determine whether the findings and patterns around municipal and central government legitimacy vary across regions, municipalities and different demographic groups. It focuses in particular on the following questions:

- Who could have improved the situation in the story?
- Who did people trust most to provide services?
- How did people perceive the municipality?
- What were people's perceptions around how the municipality could improve planning and delivery of services?

Who could have improved the situation in the story?

During the survey, respondents were asked to identify whether municipal government, the central government, political parties, religious groups or civil society is responsible for improving the situation in their story. The prior research analysed findings based on the services most often referenced in each municipality, so as to better understand which actors people felt could address the problems in their communities. This section examines general findings across all six municipalities as well as patterns among different demographic groups.

FIG. 1



As displayed in FIG.1, most of the respondents who attributed the responsibility to improve their situation to the central government told negative stories related to non-services⁴ – specifically jobs/employment. In contrast, respondents who looked to the municipal government described both positive and negative stories and those stories were almost exclusively about services.

Respondents typically did not expect their municipal government to address and resolve problems of employment. This indicates that they view these problems in the context of national socio-economic conditions rather than local ones. Consequently they believe that the central government is responsible for bolstering employment and livelihoods.



Moreover, as shown in section 4.1.3, the vast majority of the stories relating to jobs/employment were also about refugees. This indicates that respondents see the job shortage as a consequence of the Syrian refugee influx, a matter over which local government has no control since the national policy on refugees is set by the central government.

Views of who could have improved the situation in the stories did not vary significantly by gender, age, income or education level, or employment status at the national or regional level: respondents with very different demographic profiles tended to hold similar views on the municipality and the central government's respective responsibility to make improvements. However, some indicators, in particular gender and employment status, play a role at the municipal level, as discussed in section 4.2 Key findings by municipality.

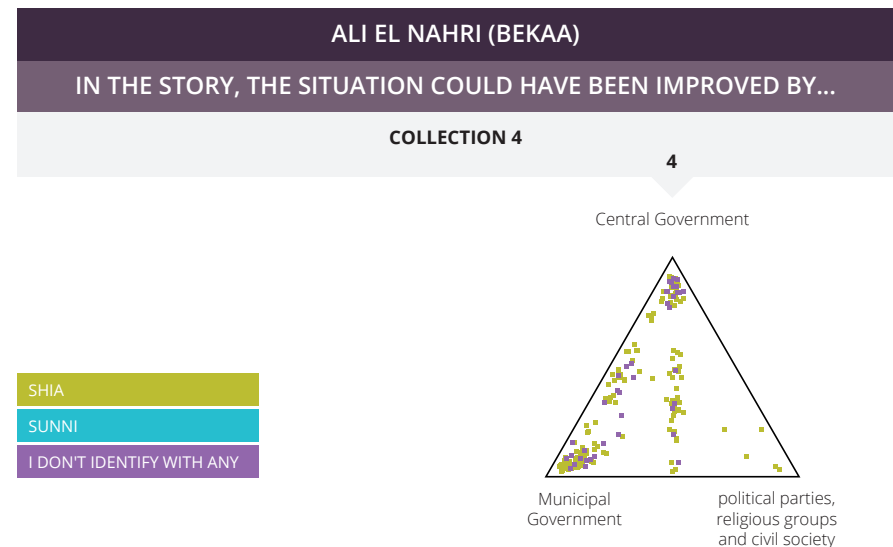
As FIG.2 illustrates, confession alone appears to be a strong factor influencing people's view of who could have improved the situation in their stories. Indeed, Sunni respondents were evenly divided between those who attribute responsibility to the central government, those who attribute responsibility to the municipal government and those who consider that the responsibility is shared. Meanwhile, the vast majority of Shia respondents identified the municipal government as the sole authority responsible for improving the situation in their stories. These results indicate that Shia respondents feel less represented by the central government, are skeptical that the central government represents their interests and are therefore more likely to look to the municipality, which represents the political party they belong to.

Notably, the results in Ali El Nahri, a predominantly Shia village in the Bekaa, reflect a polarisation between the municipal government and the central government and are therefore inconsistent with the overall finding amongst

FIG. 2



FIG. 3





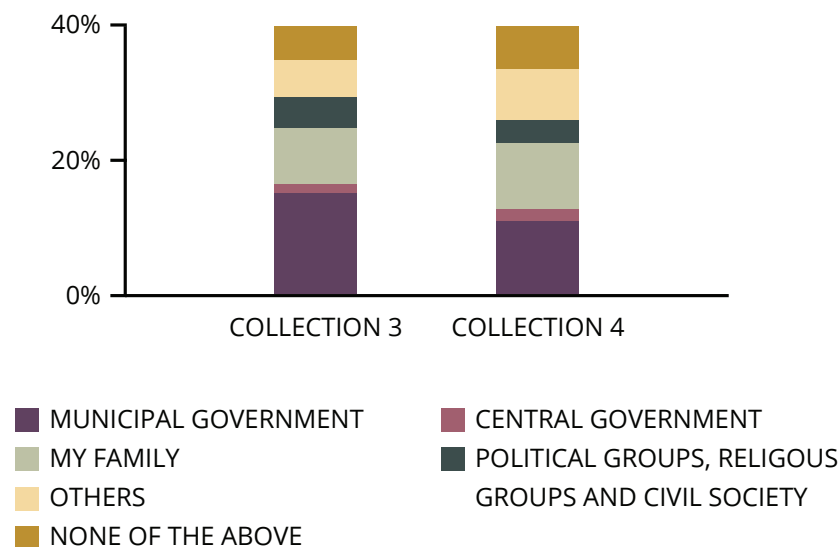
Shia respondents. Although this is only one location, it seems that the preference for local government over central government is a southern regional finding rather than a characteristic of Shia communities. More research and analysis on the political, demographic and social context in Ali El Nahri as well as other Shia municipalities in the Bekaa will be necessary for a better understanding of the role of confession in driving perceptions around municipal and government legitimacy.

The belief among respondents in the two Southern municipalities that the central government does not represent their interests and so will not improve their situation also reflects the Lebanese State's notorious failure to exercise effective governance in the South, even after the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from southern Lebanon in 2000.⁵ The two predominant political parties in the South, Hezbollah and Amal, have long filled this gap by playing a vital role in the health, education and social services sectors. Together, Hezbollah and Amal control the vast majority of the municipalities in the South. It is therefore not surprising that respondents in the two southern municipalities tend to look to local government rather than the central government.

Who do people trust to provide services in their community?

In addition to their perceptions of who is responsible for improving the situation in their stories, respondents were asked to identify who they trust most to provide services in their community. As noted in the LHSP Impact Evaluation Report, the municipal government continues to be the most trusted service provider. As FIG.4 reflects, however, the proportion of respondents who view the municipal government as the most trusted service provider has dropped from 37% to 29%, indicating declining trust in the municipality's ability to provide services. The central government continues to be the least trusted service provider by a large margin, even among respondents who viewed the central

FIG. 4
MOST TRUSTED SERVICE PROVIDERS IN COLLECTION 3 AND 4



government as responsible for improving the situation in their story. Thus, while respondents increasingly recognise the central government's responsibility, they still do not trust it to carry out its responsibility effectively. This increased awareness of the central government's responsibility also highlights its current limitations, further exacerbating negative perceptions.

Notably, the proportion of respondents who reported having no faith in any stakeholder, including their own family, to provide services in their communities increased from 14% to 18%, which could indicate growing frustration and declining social capital.



The declining trust in the municipality's ability to provide services coupled with the lack of faith in central government service provision and the growing feeling of distrust in any stakeholder when it comes to service provision, underscore the pressing need to enhance the delivery of services in all six municipalities and to reinforce both the municipal and the central government's abilities to deliver basic services such as water and electricity.

Ensuring that services are delivered in a transparent and equitable way, and addressing common misperceptions through effective communication, is also very important. Absent state services and marginalisation of this kind over the long term raises the risk of at-risk groups becoming alienated and of social tensions rising. These are fertile conditions for conflict entrepreneurs and religious and political groups to step in.

When examining findings regarding who people trust most to provide services, confession appears to be the only relevant influencing factor in terms of who people trust most to provide services. As seen in Fig.5, the majority of Sunni respondents view the municipal government as the most trusted service provider, whereas the majority of Shia respondents place that trust in their family.⁶ In fact, 32% of Shia respondents view their family as the most trusted service provider compared to only 14% of Sunni respondents. Shia respondents were also more likely to trust political groups, religious groups and civil society than Sunni respondents. Overall Sunni respondents tend to trust formal authorities such as the municipal government for service provision whereas Shia respondents tend to place that trust in informal authorities such as their family, or political and religious groups.

Interestingly, 20% of Sunni respondent reported having no faith in any stakeholder to deliver services in their community compared with only 12% of the Shia respondents. Other demographic indicators, including age and gender, did not play a role in shaping responses within this group of Sunni respondents. This area in particular should be carefully monitored, as growing hopelessness and lack of confidence in the state could, together with other factors, increase the vulnerability of marginalised groups to negative external influencers, as well as raise tensions locally.



How do people see the municipality?

Respondents who mentioned the municipality in their stories increasingly viewed the municipality as both able to take action and trusted to take the right action, indicating an enhanced perception of the municipality's ability to effect positive changes.

FIG.6 measures the strength of people's trust in the municipality based on the distance of their response from the "trusted to take the right action" corner in Triad 6. Respondents in the low income group were less likely to trust the municipality to take the right action than the respondents in middle and high income groups, indicating that respondents in the lowest income group feel marginalised by their municipality and do not trust it to act on their behalf. While none of the other demographic indicators are relevant across all six municipalities, age and gender play a role at the municipal level.

How do people think that the municipality could improve its planning and delivery of services?

As displayed in FIG.7 and FIG.8, respondents increasingly stated that in order to improve its planning and delivery of services, the municipality must make services available to more people and improve its communication with the community.

The results in the most recent round of research were largely similar across municipalities, specifically with respect to the need to improve communication within the community. Those perceptions were echoed by municipal representatives during the regional workshops who stressed that better communication is needed to raise awareness around the municipality's efforts to improve service delivery for all residents.

FIG. 5
MOST TRUSTED SERVICE PROVIDERS BY CONFESSION IN COLLECTION 4

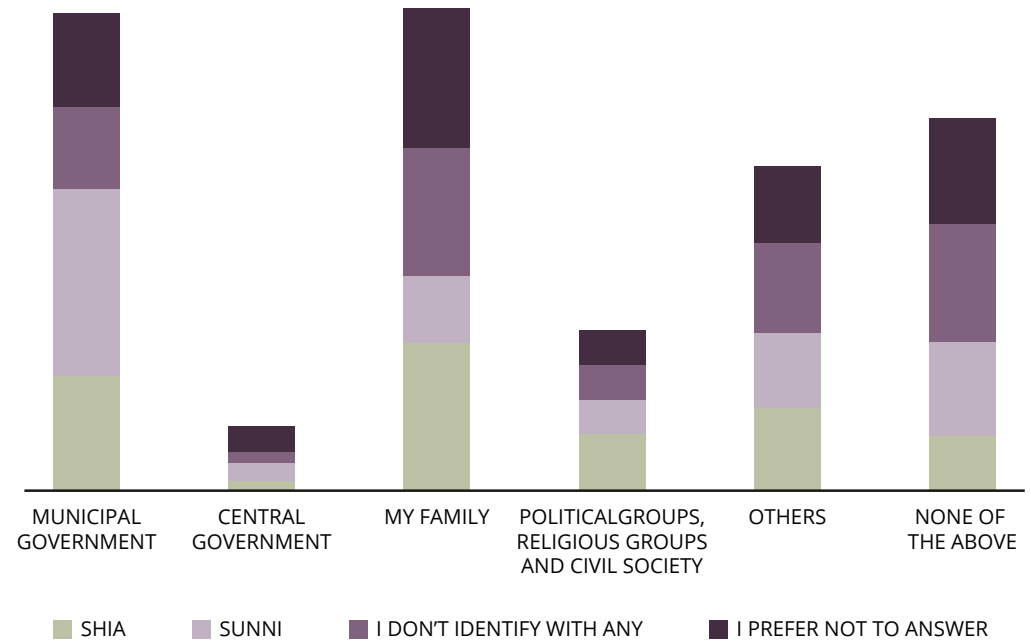
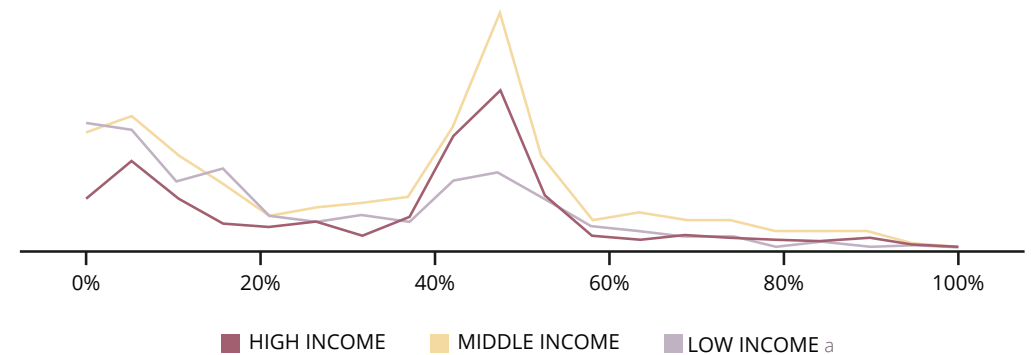


FIG. 6
MUNICIPALITY TRUSTED





The results from the last round of research were similar across demographic groups. While Sunni and Shia respondents had different views around who is most trusted to provide services in their community, they agreed that better allocation of services and better communication are needed to improve the planning and delivery of services at the municipal level.

The majority of respondents thought that services were allocated based on social groups, and not according to need or correctly.⁷

FIG. 7
MUNICIPAL IMPROVEMENTS BY COLLECTION

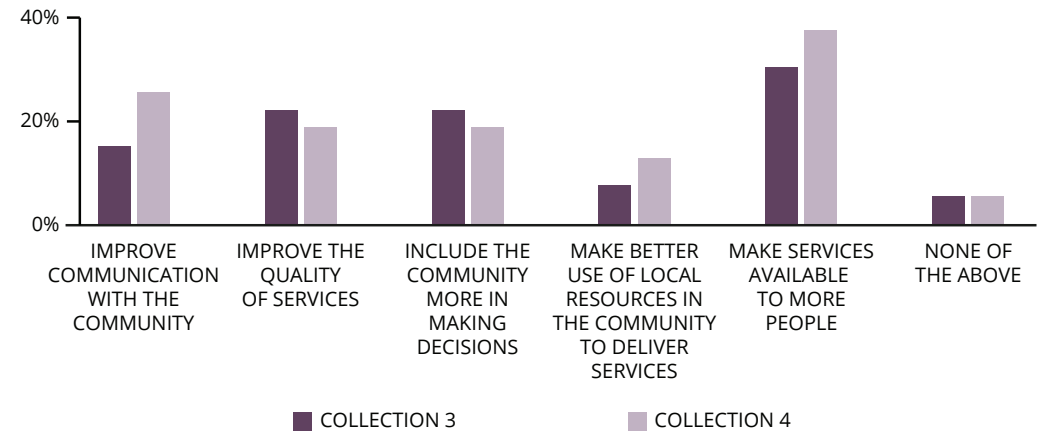
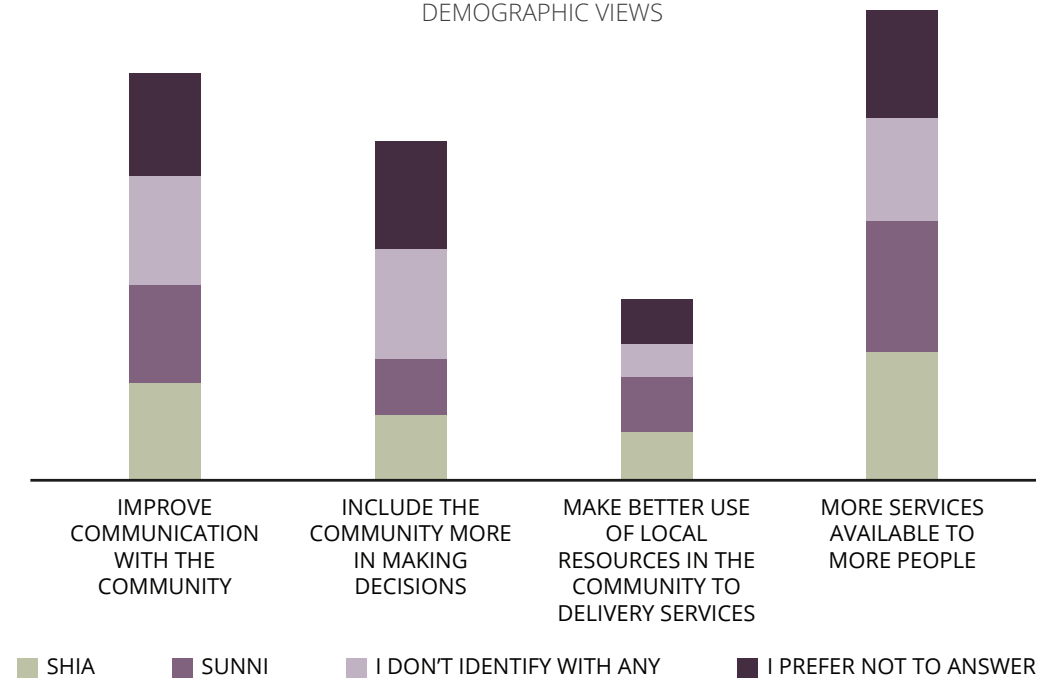


FIG. 8
DEMOGRAPHIC VIEWS





What does this mean?

Respondents increasingly identified the municipality as the entity responsible for improving service delivery. At the same time, however, the municipality is less trusted to provide services now, indicating that while people see it as being responsible for services, they do not trust municipalities to provide them. As previous research has shown, state failure of this kind over the long term creates a space for religious and political groups to step in and provide support, increasing instability and further exacerbating tensions.

Confession appears to have the strongest influence on perceptions of trust and service delivery in the six municipalities. Sunni respondents, in particular, placed more trust in formal authorities than Shia respondents, who turned to informal authorities such as family or political and religious groups to provide services. Political dynamics play a considerable role in these findings, which should be considered further in the next phase of LHSP research in order to help municipalities in the South build better relationships with residents.

An increasing - and concerning - number of Sunni respondents no longer trust anyone to provide services. The potential alienation of this population increases the susceptibility of this group to outside influences. Further research on this area would provide valuable insight into the best programmatic approach for reaching and engaging this group.

In addition to confession, income level also plays a role in perceptions of municipal legitimacy: respondents in low income groups are generally less likely to trust the municipality to take the right action than middle and high income groups, who often benefit from closer relationships with political leaders. This indicates increased feelings of marginalisation, which could be mitigated by engaging this group more strategically in municipal planning and service provision.



4.1.2 Social stability

This section looks at social dynamics across all six municipalities. It explores people's feelings of empowerment to influence change in their communities, the degrees of cooperation and competition amongst each other and the means to solve problems.

Ensuring that residents feel empowered to influence changes in their communities is important for creating an environment where residents can engage constructively with their municipality to bring about change instead of turning to more negative or isolating means in order to gain control. While people generally welcomed the changes that were happening, they did not feel in control, echoing the demand for increased participation.

Do people feel empowered?

Overall, most respondents felt powerless to influence changes in the last round of research. Very few felt in control of what was happening in their communities.

As shown in FIG.9, when looking at the different income groups, respondents belonging to the high income group described the fewest stories in which people felt powerless, compared to the lower and middle income groups. People in the higher income group instead welcomed the changes in the communities. This indicates that relative to the other income groups, people with higher income levels perceive themselves as benefiting from the recent changes in their communities, whereas those with lower economic status did not feel they were benefiting from recent changes and felt they could do little to influence their situation.

FIG. 9





Feelings of powerlessness or control do not appear to be affected by age. People of all age groups in all regions were distributed similarly across the Triad as shown in FIG.10. In other words, younger and older people feel equally powerless to influence change in their communities.

Overall, males and females also had a similar distribution over the Triad, so gender does not seem to play a role in determining feelings of powerlessness. the exception here were the two towns in the Bekaa region, where males told more stories where people felt powerless than women. As FIG.11 shows, the axis between feeling powerless and in control of what is happening is more populated by females than males. This may be due to the fact that males working outside the home are more affected by the economic situation and the influx of refugees into the job market, whereas women's livelihoods are less affected

"Syrian workers accept lower wages than we do and are taking our jobs. I have been unemployed for more than a year, and I am very upset."
Male, 50+, Ali El Nahri

FIG. 10





Prevailing attitudes in terms of tension

An overview of the results shows that people do not tell many stories involving a high degree of competition. In fact, FIG.12 shows that competition is the weakest type of relation that people talk about. Nonetheless, the cluster around the competition corner has increased since the last round of research, and must be watched carefully.

Gender does not seem to play a role in shaping people's position on this Triad with the exception of the northern towns, where more males described stories of competition than females. This is evident from FIG.13, which shows a clustering at the upper corner of the Triad among male respondents. This finding is examined further in the analysis of Rajam Issa and Sir Dinnieh.

'Syrian refugees are welcome here, but they are taking our jobs and earning more money than us. The municipality is not helping us fix this. My income decreased quite a bit and now I'm jobless. I spent the entire winter at home and there's nothing I can do about it.'
Male, 18-29, Ali El Nahri

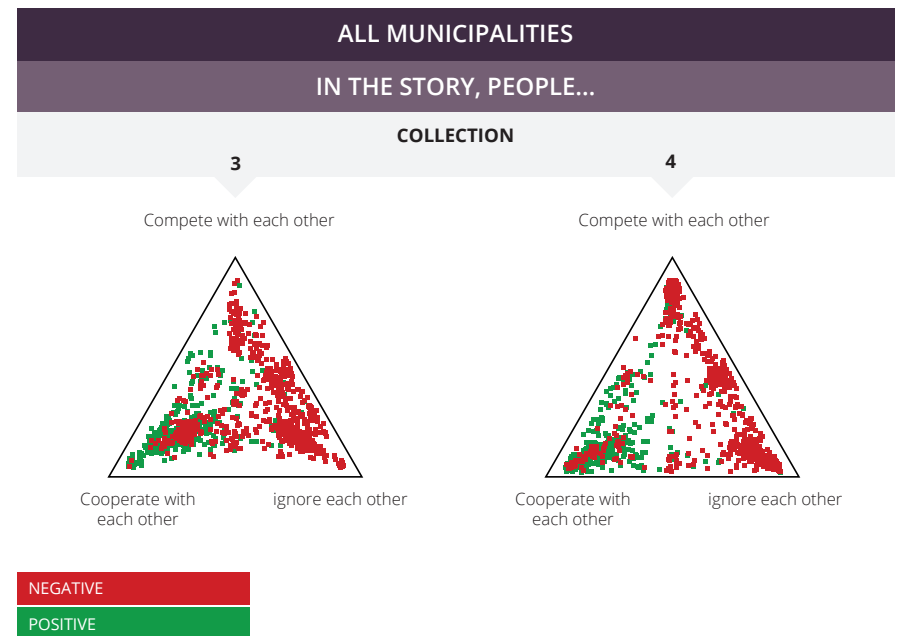
Age does not appear to influence responses in this Triad. People of all ages were distributed in the same way across the Triad. Similarly, income level did not play a role in determining people's responses in this Triad across all municipalities.

FIG. 11



MALE
FEMALE

FIG. 12





How are people dealing with the challenges they face?

In the final Triad of the research, respondents were asked how people in the story attempted to solve the problem described in the story: through encouraging dialogue, defending their interests or by waiting to see what happens.

The overall results disaggregated by income level (see FIG.14) show that people of higher income levels described situations in which people defended their interests less frequently, while low and middle income respondents were more likely to do so. Although middle income people respondents encouraged dialogue the most, the fact that these income groups also described situations in which people felt powerless appears to indicate growing feelings of vulnerability among these groups that could lead to conflict if not addressed.

Some interesting findings were observed in the towns of the Bekaa regarding stories about dialogue. Higher income group respondents in the towns of the Bekaa did not encourage dialogue as often as low and middle income respondents. As FIG.15 depicts, people belonging to the high income category instead described stories where people waited to see what happens, or, to a smaller extent, defended their interests. This could indicate feelings of disengagement among the higher income group, who do not feel like it is in their interests to support dialogue initiatives.

In the South however, it is the lowest income group that did not encourage dialogue, while the middle and high income groups were more clustered around the upper corner. FIG.16 illustrates this observation and shows that the main dynamic in the Southern towns is a rather passive one with people of all income groups mainly waiting to see what happens.

FIG. 13

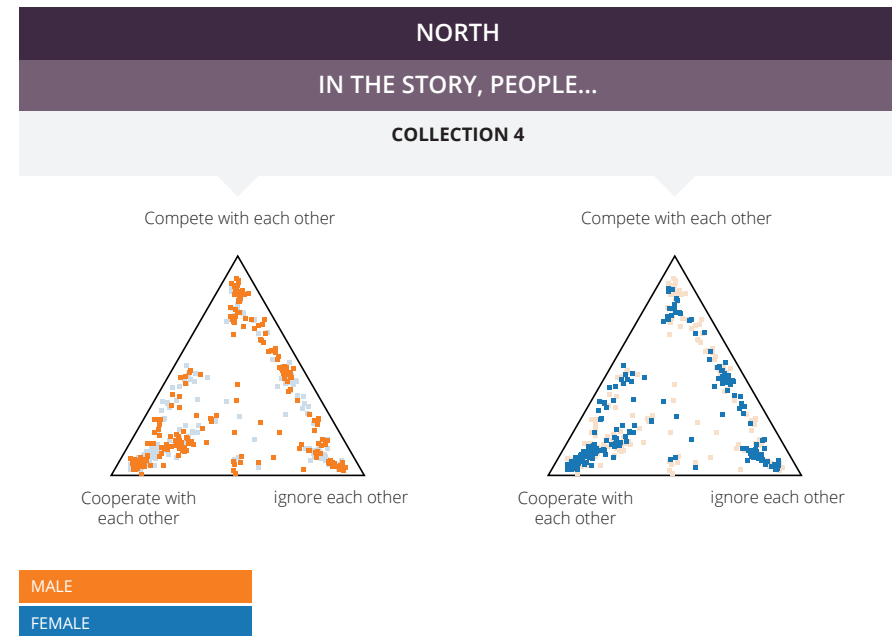




FIG. 14



FIG. 15

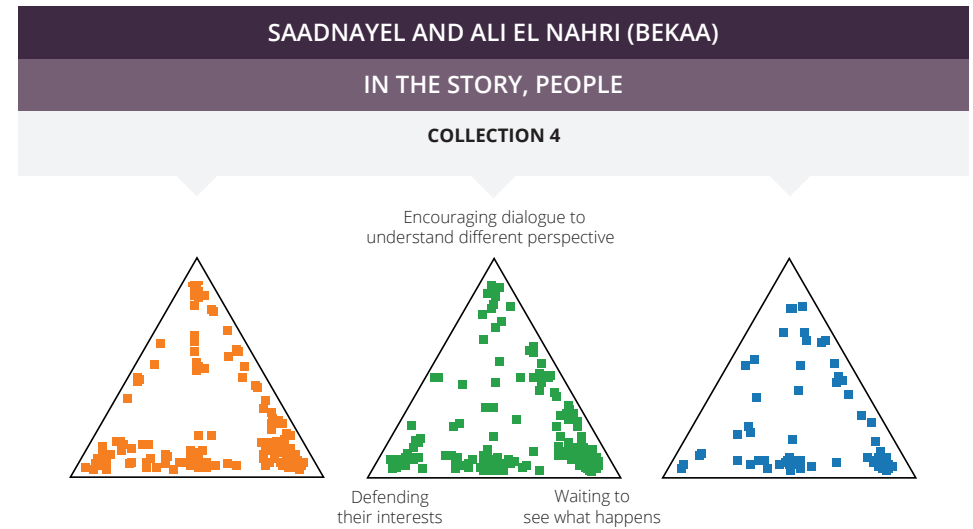
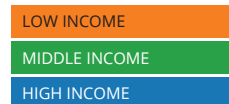
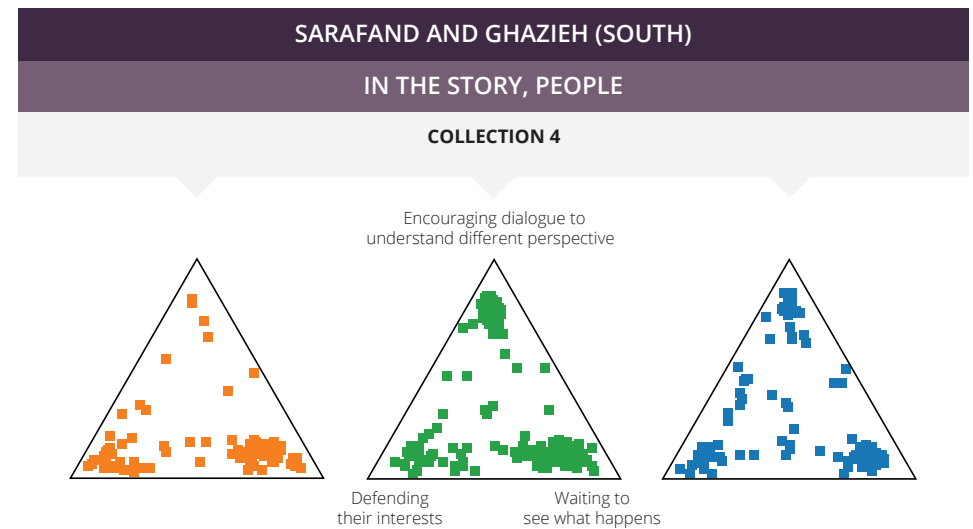


FIG. 16





What does this mean?

Ensuring that people feel empowered to influence changes in their communities is important for creating an environment where residents can engage constructively to bring about positive changes. In addition, feelings of powerlessness can lead to negative action by groups of people frustrated by their situation and determined to take matters into their own hands to “regain” power.

This analysis did not reveal the existence of an overarching demographic cause or causes of tension across all six municipalities that would likely escalate into violence at a national or regional level. Causes for tension should rather be studied at the municipal level, where specific localised pockets of tension may be forming among certain social groups.

Overall, males and females, poorer and wealthier, and members of all age groups felt equally powerless to influence change in their communities. They were also equally likely to describe stories involving competition. The way people are dealing with potential tensions differs between the regions, however, particularly among income groups. The relation between income level and the degree to which people encourage dialogue amongst each other, and the observation that middle income people tend to encourage dialogue the most, further asserts the need for interventions supporting people’s livelihoods.



4.1.3 Refugees

In previous reports, stories pertaining to refugees were only those that the respondents had identified as being “mainly about” refugees. Although other stories also mentioned refugees, respondents often perceived them as being mainly about other factors such as the government of Lebanon - which could have solved their problem with refugees - or the family, who was affected by the presence of refugees. To better understand who is talking about refugees in this report, we have analysed all stories where “refugees” or “Syrians” were mentioned. Therefore, the number of stories involving refugees is larger than in earlier analysis.

As FIG.17 shows, the proportion of respondents who told stories involving refugees increased from 14% in the last round of research to 20% in the most recent round. This is perhaps due to the fact that as time passes, the permanency of the refugee presence is becoming more of a reality to the host communities, increasing their concerns over the impact that this population will have longer-term on livelihoods and quality of life in the communities.

FIG.18 shows that these results vary considerably across regions and municipalities. Hardly any respondents in the South told stories referencing refugees. In fact, southern towns have the lowest number of refugees compared to the rest of the towns in the North and the Bekaa.⁸

While stories involving refugees were more prevalent in the North and the Bekaa, few respondents told stories involving refugees in Rajam Issa, despite the high ratio of Lebanese residents to Syrian refugees. Rajam Issa is directly bordering Syria, and the dynamics between Lebanese and Syrians are likely quite different from other towns due to its location.

FIG. 17
REFUGEES BY COLLECTION

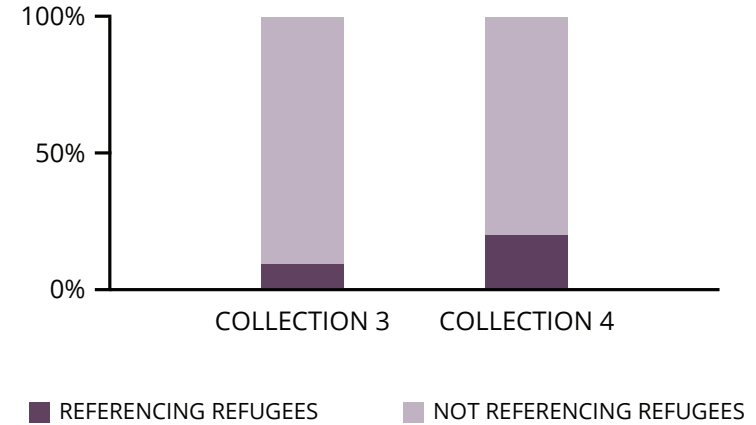
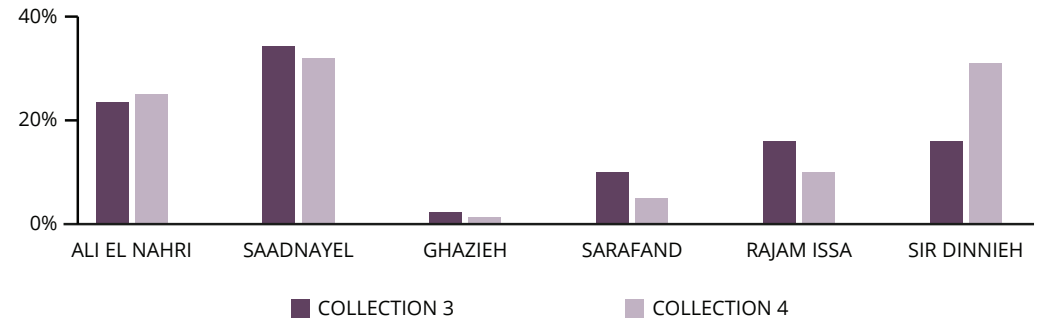


FIG. 18
DISTRIBUTION OF STORIES ABOUT REFUGEES BY MUNICIPALITY BY COLLECTION





Social interaction and integration between residents of Rajam Issa and Syrians has existed before the onset of the war in Syria, and so the influx of Syrians into the town has not had as much of an impact in the minds of people as in other towns.

Sir Dinnieh, however, witnessed a significant increase in stories involving refugees between the last two rounds of research, where the share of these stories almost doubled. In fact, the overall increase in stories involving refugees is almost entirely due to this increase in Sir Dinnieh. This observation is explored in section 4.2.2 Sir Dinnieh.

Who is talking about refugees?

As FIG.19 shows, male respondents mention refugees in their stories more frequently than females do.

"The jobs traditionally held Lebanese women are being taken by Syrian women. Even the employees of the municipality are Syrian and not Lebanese. We have limited access to work because the Syrians are taking over our jobs."
Female, 18-29, Rajam Issa

Younger people also talk more about refugees. FIG.20 shows that 38% of people who mentioned refugees in their stories in the most recent round of research were less than 30 years old, 25% were between 30 and 40 years of age and only 6% were more than 50 years old.

FIG. 19
REFUGEES STORIES BY GENDER

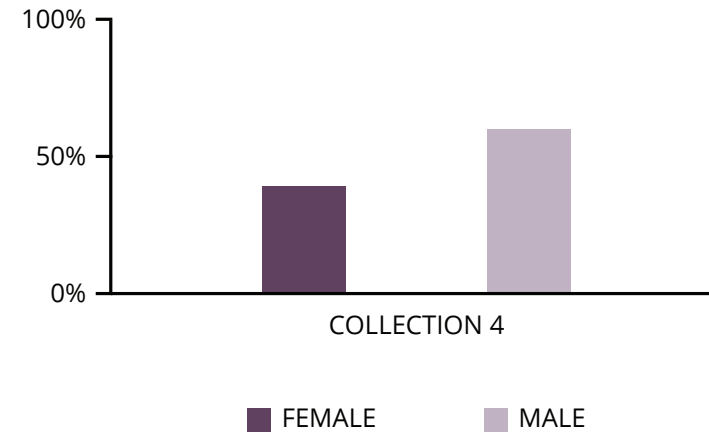
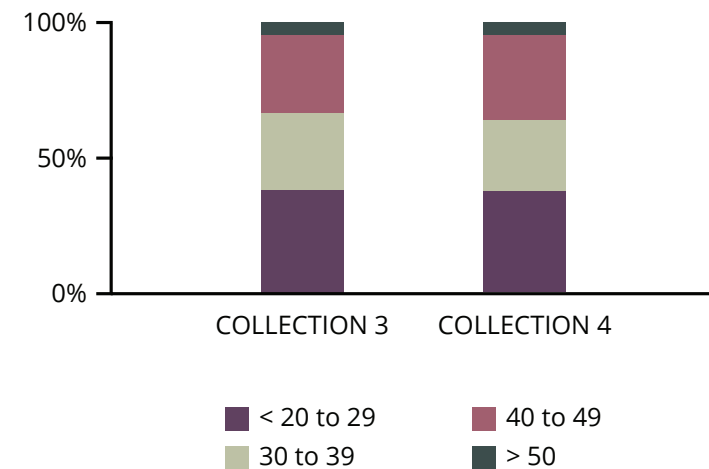


FIG. 20
STORIES ABOUT REFUGEES BY AGE





What do people say about refugees?

FIG.21 illustrates the distribution of stories according to their main topic, i.e. whether the respondents were talking about services or non-services (namely, politics, security or employment) in their story. The majority of stories involving refugees were about jobs and employment (64%), while only 8% were about services. So refugees were not necessarily seen as exacerbating pre-existing service pressure, but they appear to pose serious threats to livelihoods of host communities.

As FIG.22 shows, most stories involving refugees in the last two rounds of research were negative (84%), which suggests that refugees were perceived as having an overall negative impact on people's lives.

FIG. 21
STORIES ABOUT REFUGEES OVER TIME BY SERVICE / NON SERVICE

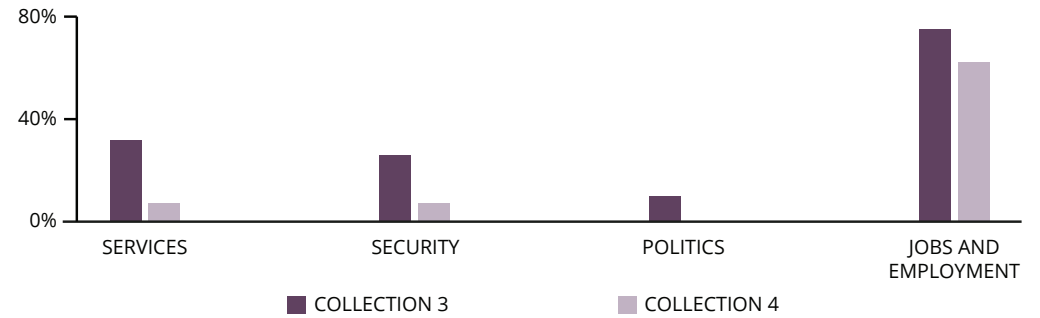
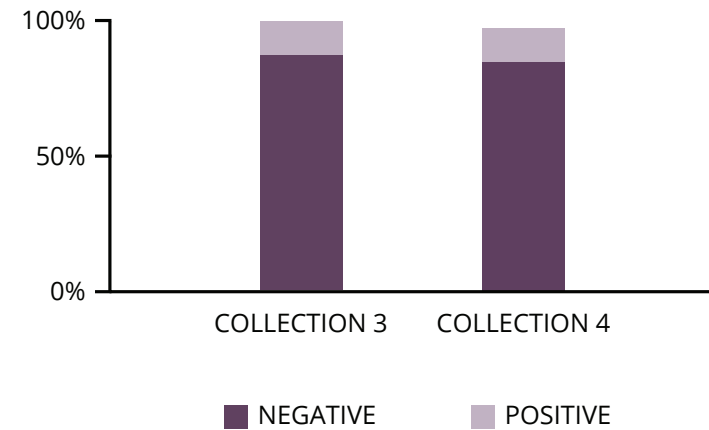


FIG. 22
REFUGEE STORIES - POSITIVE / NEGATIVE





Refugees and jobs/employment

Not surprisingly, the people who talked about refugees in the context of jobs and employment fit the same profile as the people whose stories involved refugees. That is, mostly young males, who form the largest portion of job seekers amongst the economically active population told the most stories about refugees and employment.

"Since the population has increased due to the Syrian refugees, more people are buying food. This has been very good for the merchants, but has created unemployment among Lebanese youth."

Male, 30-39, Sir Dinnieh

Looking at the income status of the respondents who talked about refugees and employment, we can see in FIG.23 and FIG.24 that people within the lower (44% and middle income categories (37% talked more about refugees and employment than people in the higher income category (17%. Therefore, in line with the general discourse that the poorest portion of the Lebanese are most negatively impacted by the presence of refugees, the poorest respondents in the present study have told the largest number of stories about refugees and employment. Competition for employment and job opportunities is between poor Lebanese and the refugees, and is most likely to be happening within the informal labour market for unskilled low paid work, or amongst informal micro-enterprises. This increased competition is also driving down wages.

FIG. 23
STORIES INVOLVING REFUGEES AND EMPLOYMENT OVER TIME BY INCOME LEVEL

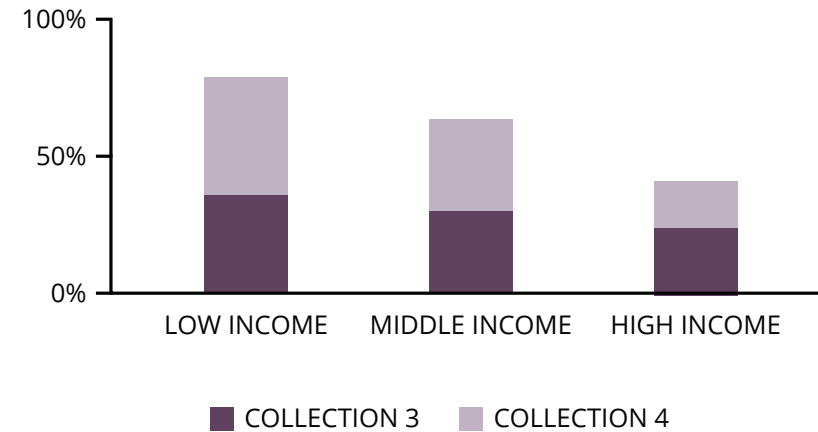
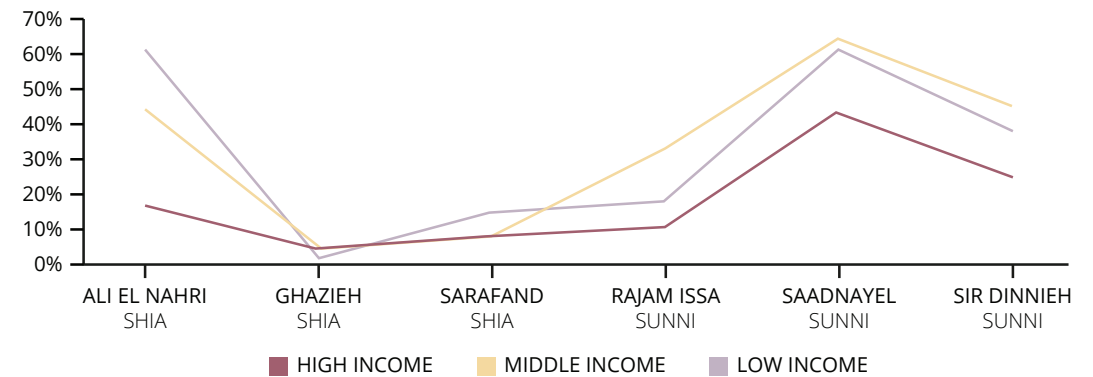


FIG. 24
STORIES INVOLVING REFUGEES AND EMPLOYMENT OVER TIME BY INCOME LEVEL





Refugees and security

Tension can also have an important gender dimension, particularly in terms of perceptions of safety. As FIG.25 shows, the number of stories about refugees and security had decreased significantly. Only 8% of all stories about refugees in the last round of research were about security, compared to 22% of those stories in the previous round of research.

As FIG.26 shows, the majority of stories about refugees and security were told by young females in the last two rounds of research, with the most recent round registering a slight increase in this proportion.⁹

"All six of my children are unemployed, and there is no work for youth. The political leaders do not care about these issues, they're too focused on spending money. The Syrians are everywhere and receive fuel, food and money. No one is looking after the poor Lebanese people."
Female, 50+, Sir Dinnieh

Some individual cases of females fearing the presence of refugees were present, particularly in the Bekaa. However we can conclude overall that refugees are not perceived as a security threat, and concerns about security is decreasing over time.

"I used to take my dog out for walks every afternoon. Now my parents don't allow me to go out. They say that it is not safe to walk alone anymore because of the Syrians."
Female, 18-29, Saadnayel

"I cannot go out at night anymore because Syrians are everywhere and they harass us."
Female, 30-39, Rajam Issa

FIG. 25
STORIES ABOUT SECURITY

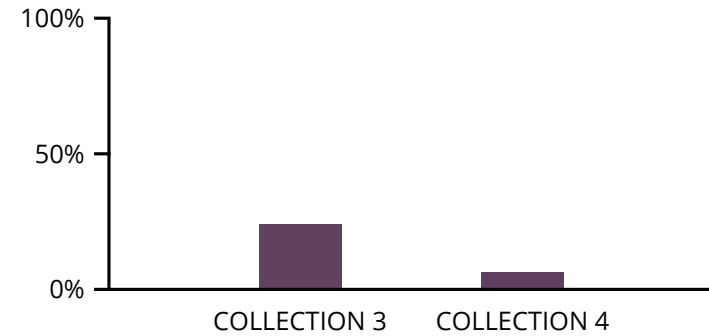
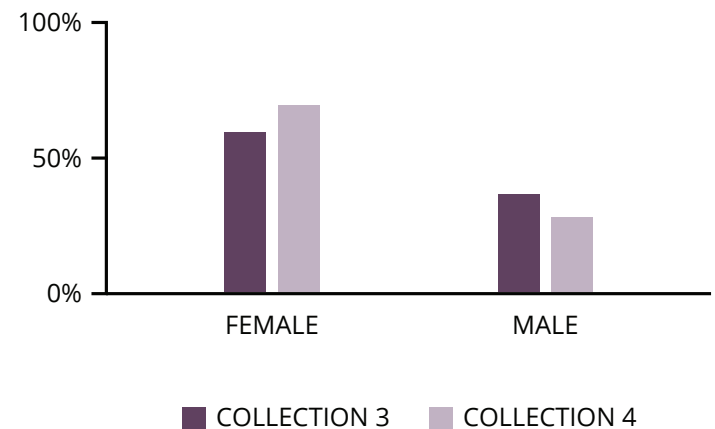


FIG. 26
STORIES ABOUT REFUGEES AND SECURITY OVER TIME BY GENDER





What does this mean?

Although refugees remain a secondary topic of conversation for most respondents, people are talking more about them relative to the last round of research. Concerns that the presence of refugees is not a temporary phenomenon, and that it will have long-term consequences for the opportunities and structure of communities, is most likely driving this increase.

Low and middle income respondents are most concerned about refugees, particularly regarding jobs and employment. In fact, they are most likely to be impacted by the entrance of refugees into the job market since they are competition for low and semi-skilled job opportunities, and also drive down wages. As such, young males of low and middle income levels are the ones talking most about refugees, and in particular about refugees and employment. Therefore, the importance of targeted livelihood programs in these communities cannot be overstated as a means to reduce frustrations among male youth, who are an at risk group in terms of criminality, conflict and extremist influences.

Females in particular feel increasingly insecure regarding the long-term stay of refugees in their communities. Perceived lack of safety translates into greater restrictions on the movement and opportunities of women beyond the household. Municipalities should consider gathering more information from women to understand the reasons for their increased feelings of insecurity.



4.2 Key findings by municipality

The analysis in this section aims to examine findings in each municipality focusing in particular on the following questions:

- Which respondents were most likely to describe situations of instability or powerlessness?
- How did different groups of people view the municipality?
- Who was talking about refugees?

4.2.1 Rajam Issa

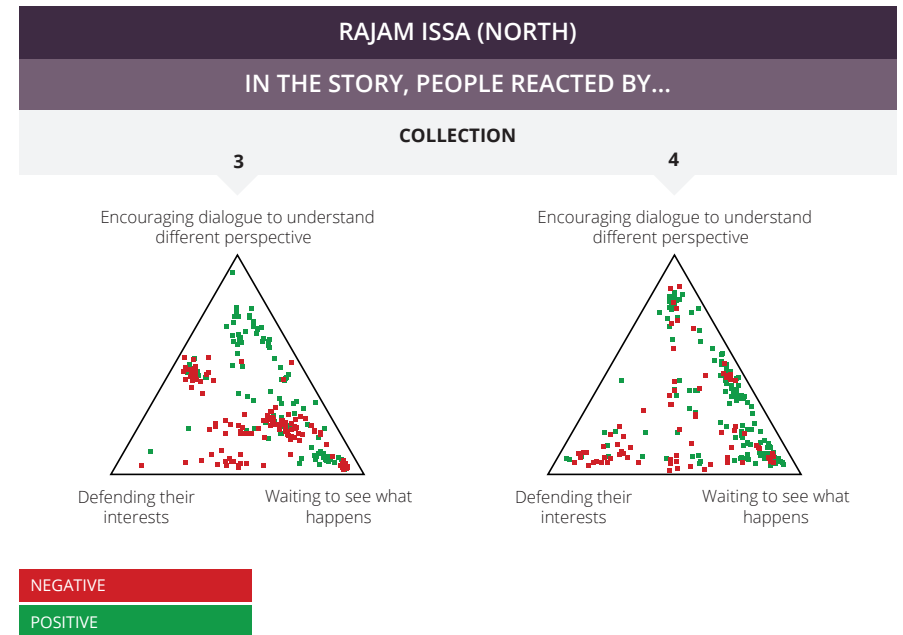
Rajam Issa is located in Wadi Khaled area along the Northeast border with Syria. It is a predominately Sunni community. According to the most recent available data from UNDP and UNHCR, Rajam Issa has a population of 5,865 Lebanese residents and 15,611 UNHCR-registered Syrian refugees.¹⁰

In terms of the sample of respondents, 53% were in the middle income group, compared to 27% in the low income group and 20% in the high. 9% of respondents were unemployed and 83% of the respondents had an intermediate-level education or less.

How do respondents describe community tensions?

As shown in FIG.27, Rajam Issa saw a decrease in negative stories since the last round of research. Males told 70% of the negative stories, and more often described stories in which people in the story competed or defended their interests. As shown in FIG.28, however, stories involving competition were almost exclusively about non-services, particularly jobs/employment, and were told by people in low and middle income groups. This suggests growing competition over employment among these income groups.

FIG. 27



Who is telling stories where people compete and defend their interests?

- Males, who increasingly tell more stories on competition than females;
- Youth, particularly male youth;
- Low and middle income groups;
- Employed respondents increasingly discussing competition around non-services; and
- Respondents with intermediate education level or less, particularly when describing non-services.



While youth increasingly told stories on competition over jobs and access to resources, they still want to engage in dialogue to resolve issues constructively. This can be seen through the fact that youth told more stories about competition than before, but also still told stories where people encouraged dialogue. Youth were more likely to do so than any other age group.

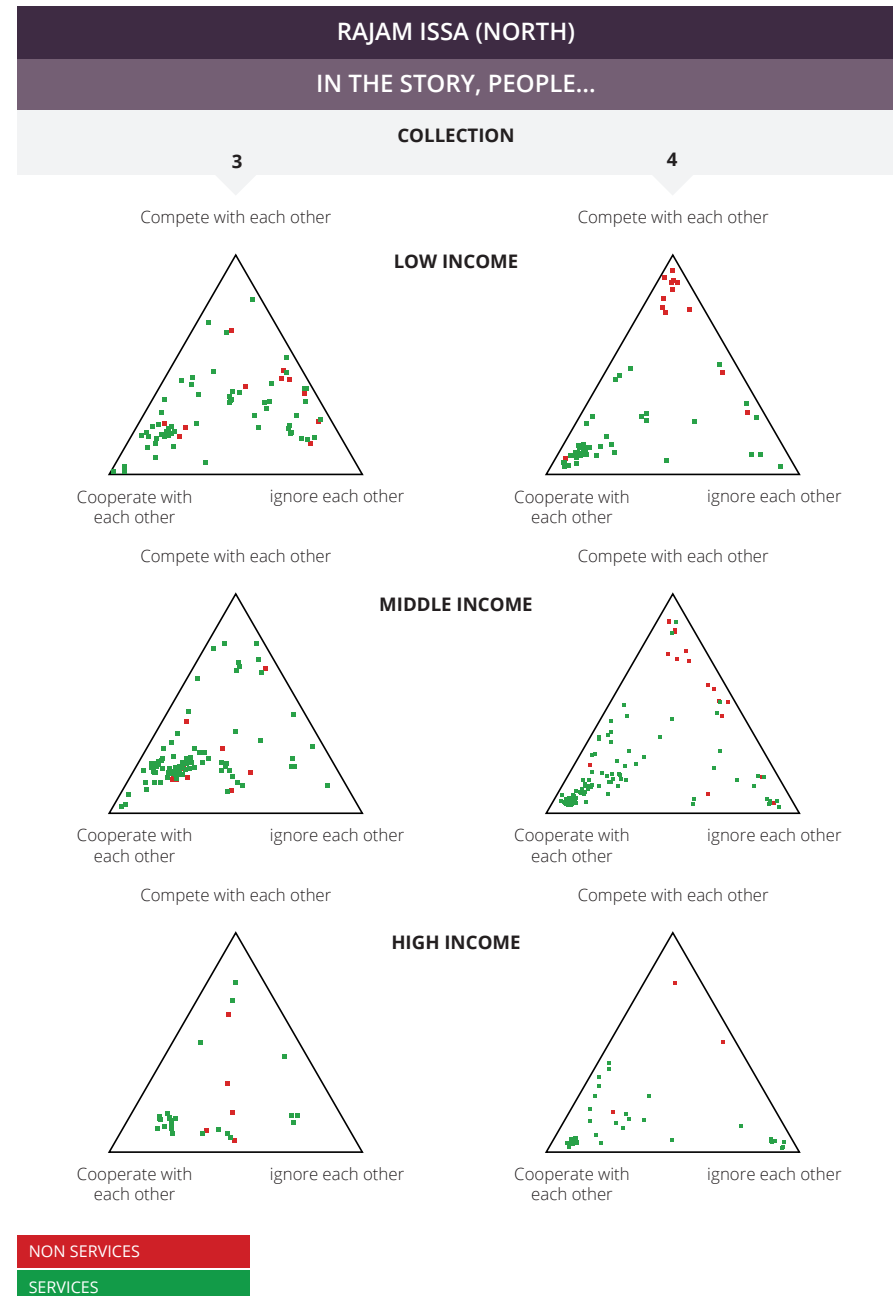
Do people feel empowered?

Female respondents in the most recent round of research described fewer situations where people felt powerless, while men described more. This is a reversal compared to the previous round of research. The majority of these women were not working or looking for work. This could indicate that women feel more engaged in the community and could benefit further from being more involved in the work of the municipality. It will be important to monitor the perceptions of the men going forward to observe any changes.

"The municipality now has a sewage system, which took care of the bad odours we used to smell during the summer and which used to make us sick."
Female, 30-39

Despite ongoing feelings of powerlessness, people of all ages reported situations in which the people in the story increasingly tried to solve problems. as shown in FIG.29, male respondents described situations in which people attempted to solve problems more often than females did. Middle income respondents did so as well. This may indicate an encouraging finding: despite feelings of powerlessness, a significant portion of the community is still attempting to constructively address issues.

FIG. 28





Who describes stories where people feel powerless?

- Ages 18-39 whose stories were about security or jobs/employment;
- Males, particularly those with an intermediate level education or less whose stories referenced refugees.

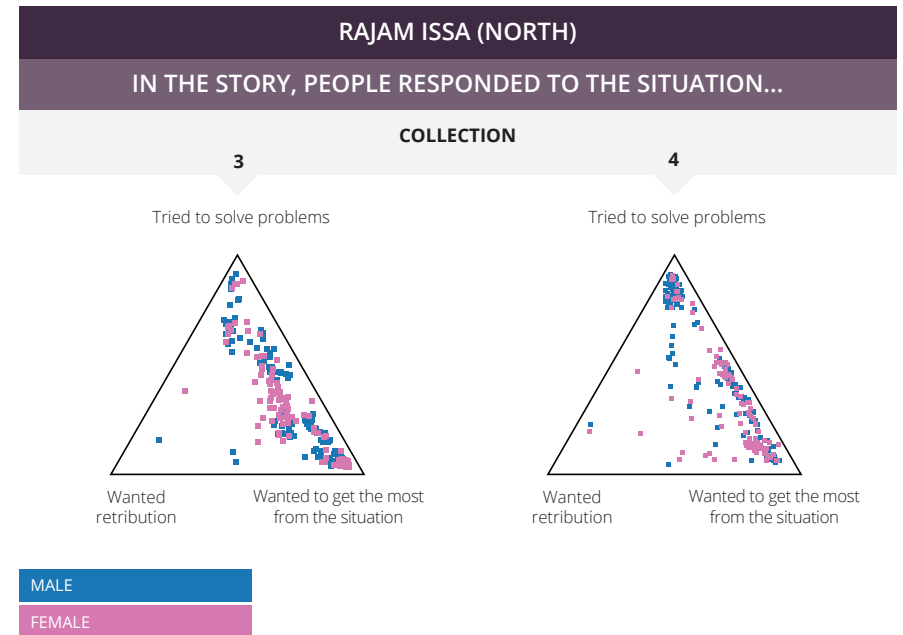
How do respondents perceive the municipality?

More than 60% of respondents in the most recent round of research identified the municipal government as the entity most trusted for service delivery, compared to 6% in support of the central government. Demographic indicators did not play a role in shaping answers to this question.

Both men and women consider the municipal government and the central government to be responsible for improving the situation in their stories, although men attributed this responsibility to the municipal government more frequently.

Respondents largely trusted the municipality to take the right action. As shown in FIG.30, the biggest change in perception came from youth and respondents aged 50+, who now see the municipality as both more trusted to take the right action and more able to do so. Stories were more negative within the middle age groups, however, which indicates that this group in particular is frustrated with the municipality and does not feel that it is taking the right steps to address their needs. This is a concerning finding, particularly when coupled with feelings of powerlessness and limited willingness to encourage dialogue among this age group.

FIG. 29



How can the municipality improve service delivery?

- 51% of respondents said the government should make more services available to people. (*Unemployed respondents and those with an elementary education or less stated this more often*);
- 21% said improve communication with the community. (*Females and higher income groups stated this more often*).



In addition, when examining how people perceive the allocation of services in the community, low and middle income groups more frequently stated that services in the story were allocated based on social group, not correctly or according to need. This, coupled with clear frustration with the capacity or willingness of the municipality to meet their needs, could indicate growing feelings of marginalisation and disengagement among this group.

Who is talking about refugees?

On the whole, men and less educated respondents described stories involving refugees more often than any other respondents. These stories largely relate to jobs/employment, but only made up 14% of the total stories told in Rajam Issa in the most recent research. This indicates that while refugees were not a major topic for most respondents, there is a section of the population that is concerned about competition with syrian refugees over jobs/employment. Coupled with increased number of respondents from this group who described stories where people compete or defended their interests, this could indicate that these frustrations are producing negative behaviors that may drive conflict within the community if not addressed.

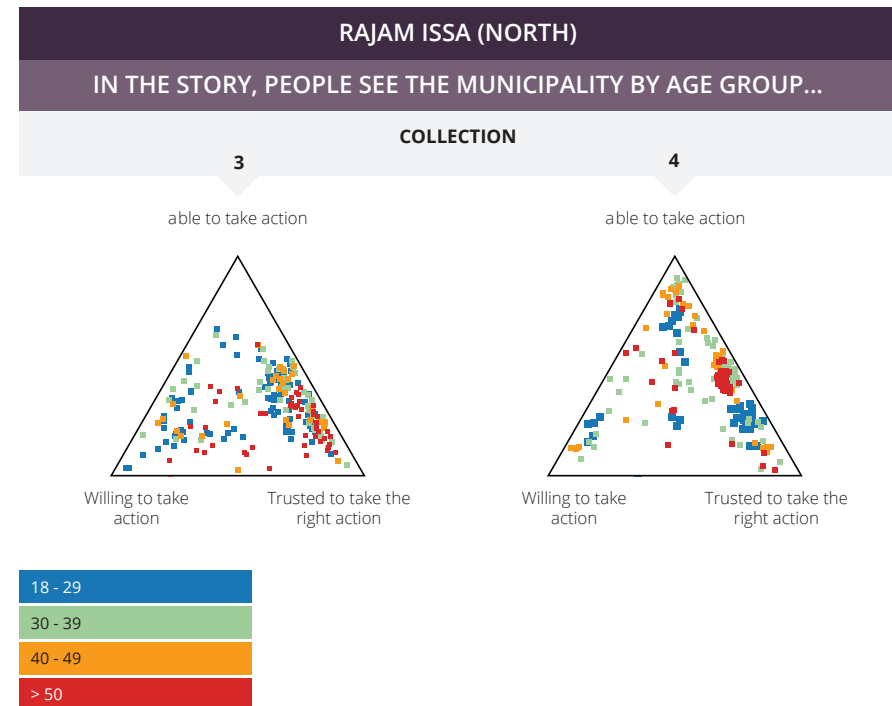
"I work as a painter. A Syrian painter can paint the whole house for \$100 or \$120. How can I compete with this? They buy their goods from Syria, which is much cheaper than in Lebanon. What is most frustrating is that I don't get as much work as before as a result."

Male, 30-39

"I am a phone retailer, and my products used to come from the northern border at cheap prices. But now, due to the border closure, business is bad and profits are limited."

Male, 18-29

FIG. 30



Who is talking about refugees?

- Male respondents (79% of respondents);
- Elementary educated or less (45% of respondents).

The number of stories about refugees decreased from 33 to 29. Refugee stories make up 12% of stories. Stories are largely about jobs/employment (69% of refugee stories). 14% of respondents discussing refugees are unemployed.



What does this mean?

Gender and age clearly play a role in shaping perceptions of stability and municipal legitimacy in Rajam Issa, and several potentially alarming findings have emerged. The increase in males telling non-service stories describing competition, as well as expressing feelings of powerlessness, indicates growing dissatisfaction with opportunities in the community and the gradual reduction in positive community interaction. The increase in stories of competition or unfair service allocation among low and middle income groups could also set the stage for growing tension in Rajam Issa.

While fewer people overall talked about refugees in Rajam Issa since the last round of research, males and individuals with lower levels of education discussed them most frequently, particularly in relation to jobs/employment. The frustration clearly felt by this group is a signal of rising tensions that need to be addressed.

Despite increased signs of tension, most respondents described stories where people attempted to resolve their issues. This demonstrates that while competition may have increased, there is still a constructive and positive avenue that people use before turning to violence. Youth respondents also continued to tell stories encouraging dialogue and cooperation, despite decreased stories of this kind among other age groups. They also see the municipality as more trusted and able than before. This reinforces the importance of this group in decreasing tensions and mediating conflict, provided they are given a voice by the municipality and other stakeholders.



4.2.2 Sir Dinnieh

Sir Dinnieh is located in the Minieh – Danieh District in the North of Lebanon, 12 kilometres northeast of the city of Tripoli. It is a predominately Sunni community with a registered population of 4,228 Lebanese residents and 7,040 UNHCR registered refugees.¹¹ Sir Dinnieh is mostly affiliated with the Future Movement political party.

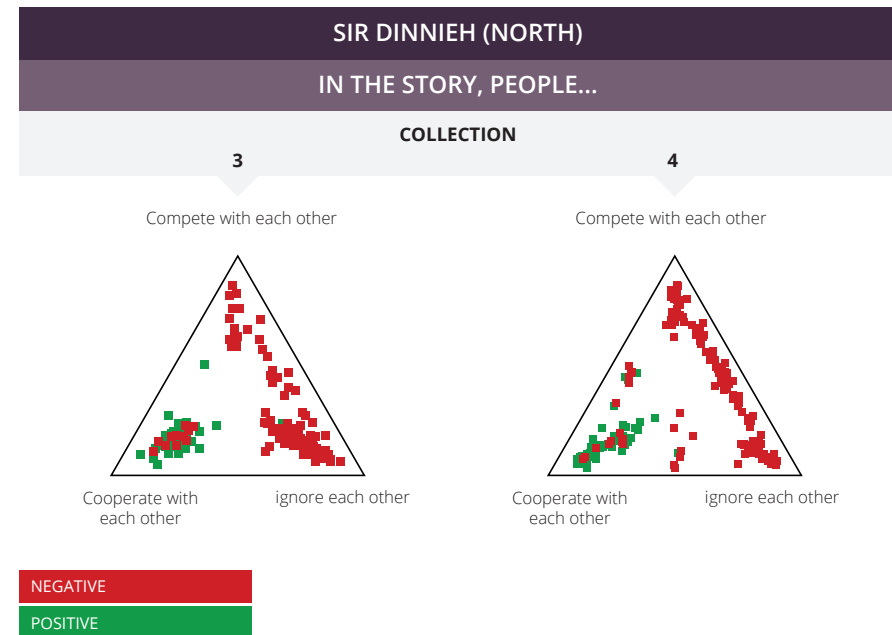
42% of the respondents in Sir Dinnieh were in the middle income group, compared to 15% in the low income group and 37% in the high. 14% of respondents were unemployed and 60% of the respondents had an intermediate-level education or less.

How do respondents describe community tensions?

As shown in FIG.31, the number of negative stories in Sir Dinnieh remained constant between the last two rounds of research, indicating that respondents continue to be frustrated by the situation in the community despite recent service delivery projects. No major findings were observed regarding the specific profile of respondents telling negative stories, as both males and females, as well as people from different income and education groups, told negative stories.

Respondents in Sir Dinnieh were largely divided regarding competition in the community; those with negative stories often described situations in which people defended their interests or waited to see what happened, while the positive stories were clustered towards encouraging dialogue. Many people continued to describe stories involving cooperation, although the number of negative stories involving competition has grown.

FIG. 31



Who is telling stories where people compete and defend their interests?

- Males describing non-services and females describing services;
- Youth;
- The high income group
- Unemployed respondents increasingly discuss competition around non-services; and
- Secondary and university educated respondents now talked more about competition.



Several interesting findings can be observed from the disaggregation of this data. Although youth increasingly told stories involving competition, they also continued to describe both service and non-service stories where dialogue was encouraged, while the older generations were no longer doing so. This demonstrates that while youth are feeling increasingly competitive over jobs and access to resources, they still want to engage in dialogue to resolve issues constructively even when discussing stories related to jobs/employment, while older generations may have given up on doing so.

As shown in FIG.32, stories where people competed or defended their interests also increased among unemployed respondents, particularly around non-services. This may be explained by growing frustration around employment.

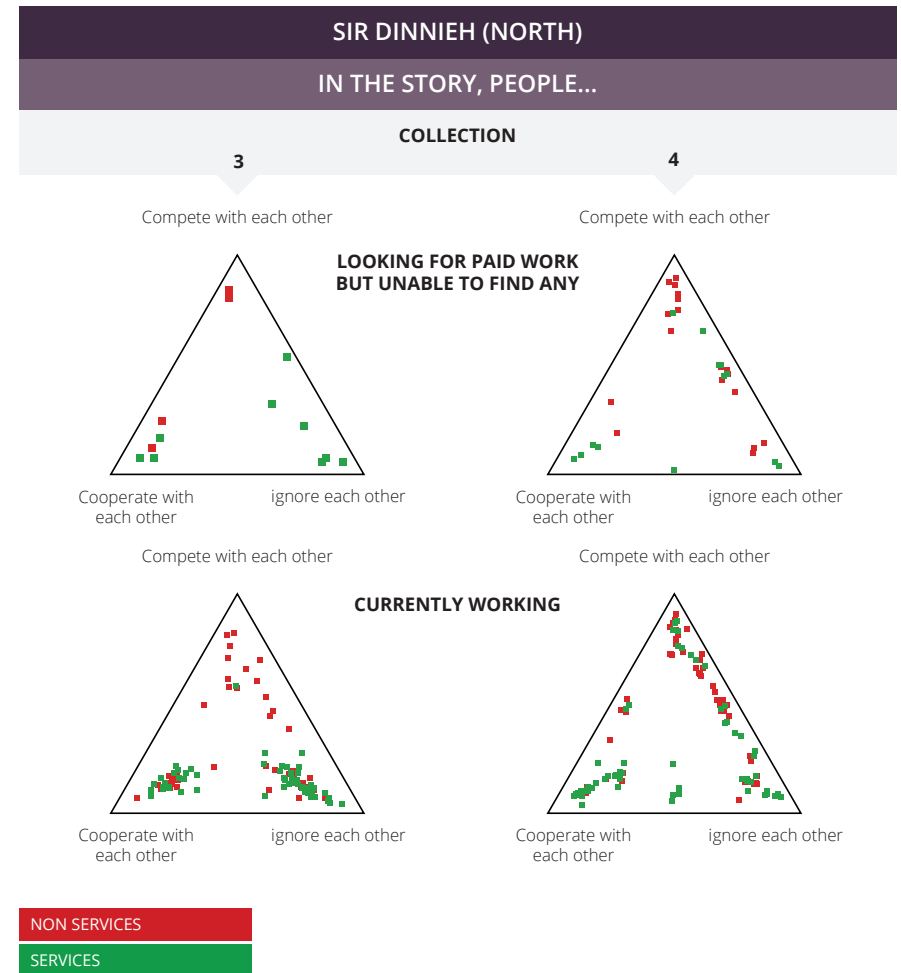
"We cannot find jobs. It does not matter if you are educated or not. I graduated two years ago and am still unemployed. I've asked a lot of people for help but I need to find someone with good connections who can help me get a job. It's the only way now."

Female, 18-29

"Syrians refugees are suffering, especially during winter. We are helping them as much as we can, because they are humans like us. They are increasing unemployment among Lebanese, but we are still trying to help them because their situation is very bad."

Female, 18-29

FIG. 32





Respondents in the low income group no longer described stories where people defended their interests, but instead waited to see what happens. This increased patience may indicate that the low income group has seen positive changes in the community and is willing to wait to see what other changes come.

"The agricultural situation is bad. Farmers are not able to sell their products. I own an agricultural fertiliser shop and farmers are not selling much due to the situation in Syria. Now I cannot pay the rent for my shop, and daily expenses are growing."

Male, 18-29

"Rental prices increased when Syrians came to Lebanon. Business is not as good as before. Employers are firing Lebanese employees and recruiting Syrians. Lebanese women cannot find husbands because the Lebanese men are marrying Syrian women who agree to live with lower economic standards."

Female, 18-29



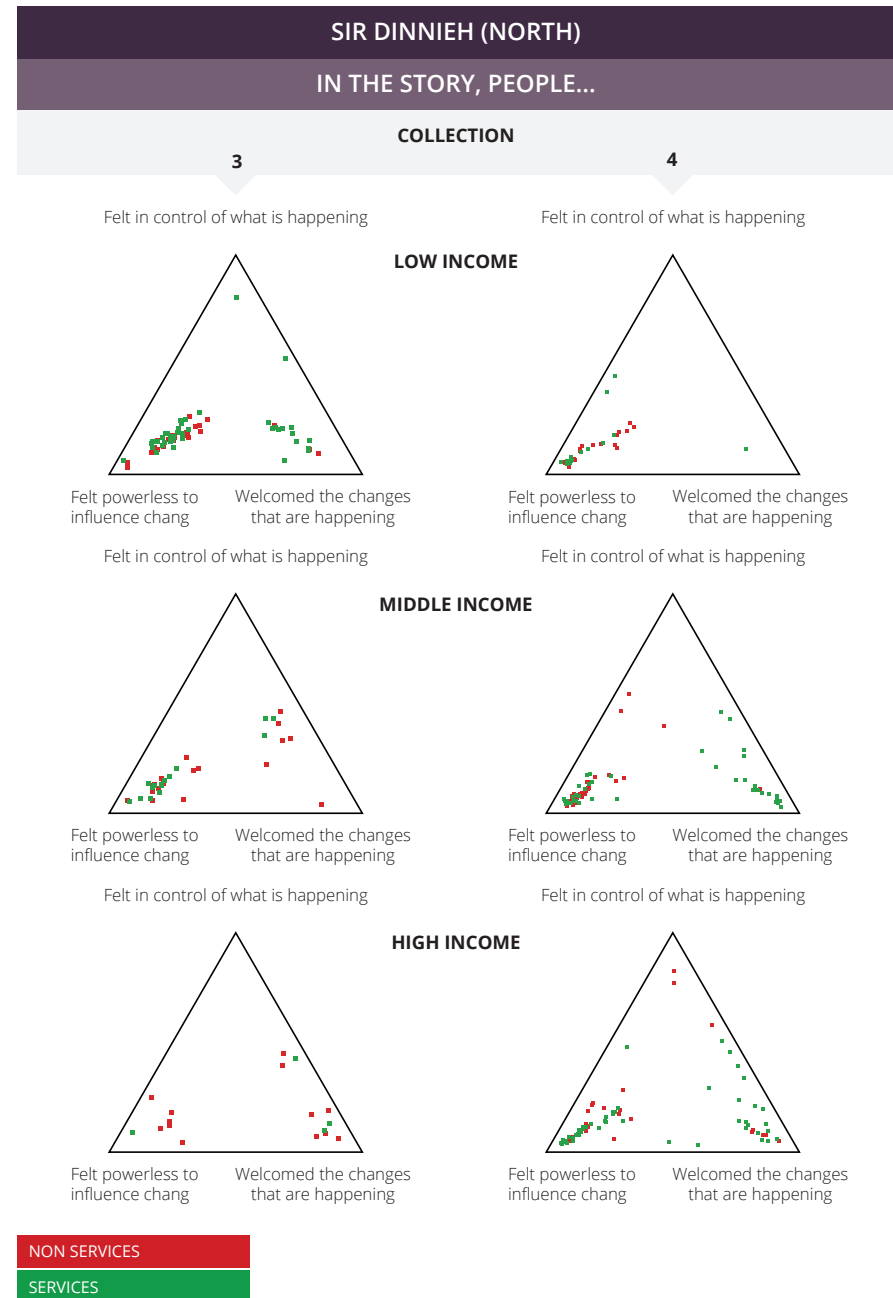
Do people feel empowered?

In Sir Dinnieh, the number of stories moving towards the corner where people feel “powerless to influence change” increased between the last two rounds of research. Feelings of powerlessness were reported by respondents of both genders and all ages, income groups and education levels. This was particularly clear among respondents talking about non-services. Therefore, all levels of society feel that they can do little to influence change in their community, particularly regarding jobs/employment and security. This, together with increased feelings of competitiveness and the need to defend interests, paints a worrying picture of disempowerment and tension.

As shown in FIG.33, feelings of powerlessness in service-related and non-service-related stories were increasingly described by respondents in the high income group. This indicates increased dissatisfaction with the situation in the community and with the opportunities provided for this income group.

Despite ongoing feelings of powerlessness, however, people of all ages, income groups and education levels continued to describe stories in which the people in the story tried to solve problems. As shown in FIG.34, youth described these stories slightly more often than older groups. This may indicate that despite feelings of powerlessness, the community is still attempting to constructively address issues.

FIG. 33



Who describes stories where people feel powerless?

- Everyone who tells non-service stories except for ages 30-39;
- Middle and high income groups.



Retribution was rarely mentioned in stories, indicating that although people feel powerless, they continue to act to resolve issues instead of seeking a more negative solution.

How do respondents perceive the government?

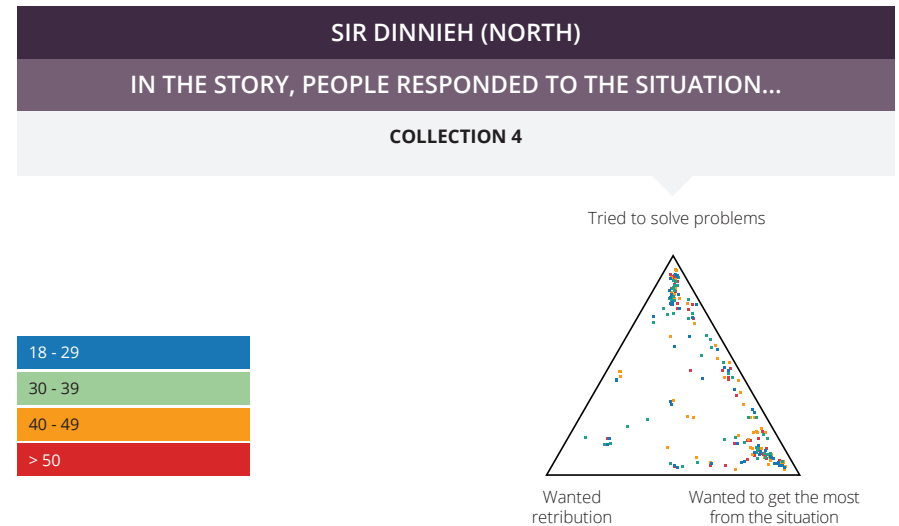
Approximately 26% of respondents in Sir Dinnieh in the most recent round of research identified the municipal government as the entity most trusted for service delivery, compared to 6% in support of the central government. 42% of respondents were in the highest income group. Other demographic indicators did not play in role in shaping answers to this question. This indicates that the municipality receives more support among the better off, and could also indicate that low income groups do not feel they can trust the municipality to provide for them.

As shown in FIG.35, since the last round of research, respondents shifted from attributing the municipality with the responsibility for improving the situation to attributing more responsibility to the central government. employment status, gender and education, among other indicators, did not play a role in shaping people’s answers to this Triad.

“There have been positive changes in Sir Dinnieh. The head of the municipality is a good man: he helps us, and sometimes uses his own money for projects. For example, he brought trees and decorated the Square. They always take care of road repairs and trash collection, and all of this impacts us positively.”
Male, 30-39

“The Government is neglecting this village. We don't have electricity and the roads are very bad. The most important issue is that we are paying two bills for electricity and the generator. It is not fair.”
Female, 50+

FIG. 34



Who feels more in control?

Although the highest income group reported stories where people felt less powerless, no one told stories where people felt more in control, which indicates that while people may welcome the changes in the community, they do not feel like they have any more control than they did before.



In the third round of research, the majority of respondents reported that the municipality was willing to take action in the story, but was not able or trusted to do so. However in the most recent round, more respondents, particularly those age 50 and up and those in middle and high income groups, trusted the municipality to take the right action and saw it as able to do so.

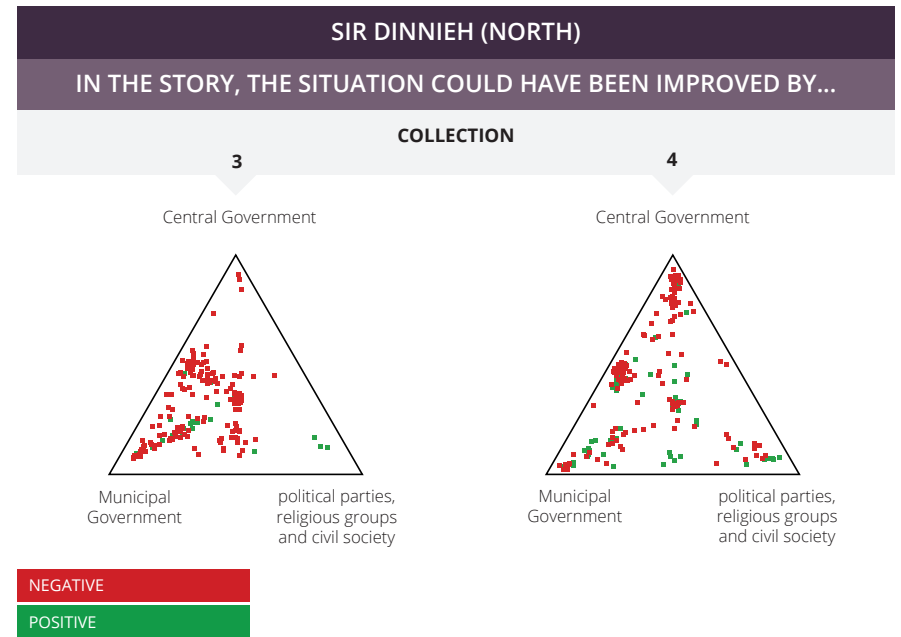
"The Mayor has made improvements by planting trees, repairing the pavement, repairing the roads, and illuminating the trees during Ramadan and Christmas."
Female, 50+

Although many respondents reported stories in which services were allocated correctly and according to need, a growing number of respondents across age groups, gender, income and education level and employment status reported stories in which services were allocated according to social group.

"I have a B.A. in Business Management and I tried to get a job at Ogero, the state-owned telecommunication company. However, you need to have a personal connection with someone to get hired. This is depressing and leads to tensions in the region, when people who do not have academic qualifications for the position are hired."
Male, 18-29

"A new company was established in our area and I was hoping to get a job, but I discovered that you can only get one if you have a personal connection."
Male, 18-29

FIG. 35



How can the municipality improve service delivery?

- 28% of respondents said the government should make more services available to people. (*Females and low income group respondents stated this more often*);
- 27% said improve communication with the community. (*Higher income groups stated this more often*).



Who is talking about refugees?

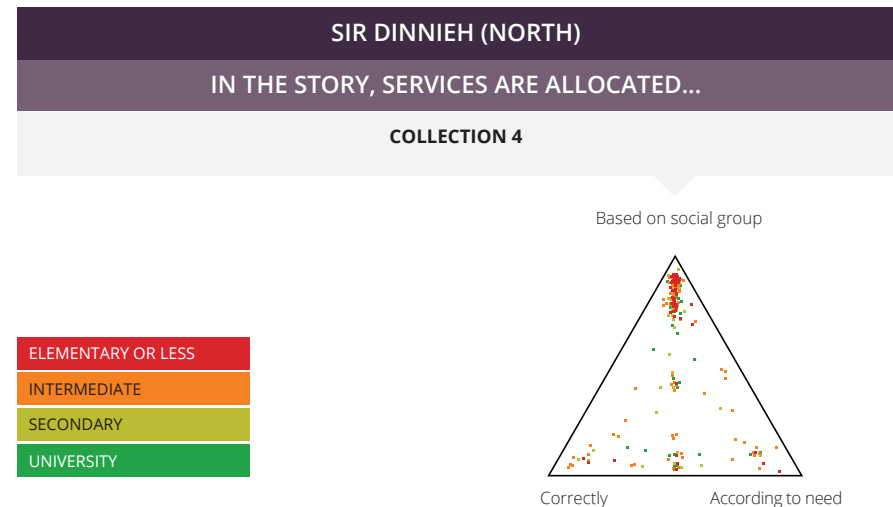
The number of people talking about refugees in Sir Dinnieh has tripled since the last round of research, and now makes up 36% of all stories. Men and women, youth and older age groups and all income levels were talking about the refugee situation equally, particularly related to jobs/employment. This is shown by education level in FIG.36. Unlike in other municipalities, it appears that respondents across all backgrounds in Sir Dinnieh feel equally affected by the presence of the Syrian refugees in the area, particularly regarding jobs/employment, and that concerns regarding their presence is rapidly growing.

"All the Syrians are working and the Lebanese are not. The Syrians are working as taxi drivers, and you see more Syrian drivers than Lebanese...they receive money and rations from other countries while the Lebanese get nothing."
Male, 18-29

"Syrians are renting shops and taking over our work. Now we are unemployed."
Male, 40-49

"I feel insecure because of the Syrians. During the summer we suffer from water and electricity shortages. This village is neglected. The municipality is not working and there is no development."
Female, 18-29

FIG. 36



Who is talking about refugees?

Males and females, young and old, low and high income groups all discussed refugees.

The number of stories about refugees increased significantly from 34 to 90. Refugee stories make up 36% of stories; Stories are largely about jobs/employment (61% of refugee stories). 16% of respondents discussing refugees are unemployed, which is slightly higher than the unemployment rate for the municipality.



What does this mean?

Age, gender, employment status and income level all play a role in shaping perceptions in Sir Dinnieh, but the dynamics between these indicators is complex.

The unemployed (who form 14% of the respondent population), talk more about competition than employed respondents, which might be expected given their income status. However, the high income group also increasingly describes situations in which people feel competitive and powerless. The high income group does not appear to blame the municipality for this competition, as they trust it as the main source of service delivery and believe that the municipality takes the right actions. Rather, they appear to consider competition a direct consequence of the overall situation in the community. This could have a major impact on tension in the community if this group decides not to engage constructively going forward because they no longer see it in their best interest to do so.

While there is increasing awareness of the delineation between the authority and duties of the municipality and those of central government, people across all gender, age, education backgrounds and income levels increasingly believe that the central government is responsible for improving services and non-services. At the same time, very few people actually trust the government as a service provider, which could lead to tension if the municipality does not begin to win their trust.

People of both genders and all age groups and income levels are increasingly talking about refugees. Sir Dinnieh is a well-known summer tourist resort that relies on seasonal low skill labour. The tourism sector has been affected by the Syrian refugee influx, which has increased the supply of low skill seasonal labour and increased concerns about security. As a result, people tend to blame refugees for driving away the tourists and for taking their jobs in the service sector, which may explain the concerns among a wide variety of the population. This is a difficult challenge to address, however, and must be considered carefully by donors and government.

Youth continue to encourage dialogue even though other age groups no longer do so, and they continue to describe situations where people try to solve problems rather resort to acts of retribution. Initiatives should be taken by the municipality and other local actors to build on this finding and harness the efforts of young people as drivers for positive change in the community.



4.2.3 Saadnayel

Saadnayel is located in the Bekaa Valley near the city of Zahle. The town is located strategically near the crossroads between the Beirut-Damascus highway and the main road connecting the northern and southern Bekaa. It is a predominately Sunni community with a registered population of 7,108 Lebanese residents and 16,184 UNHCR-registered refugees,¹² and is affiliated with the Future Movement political party.

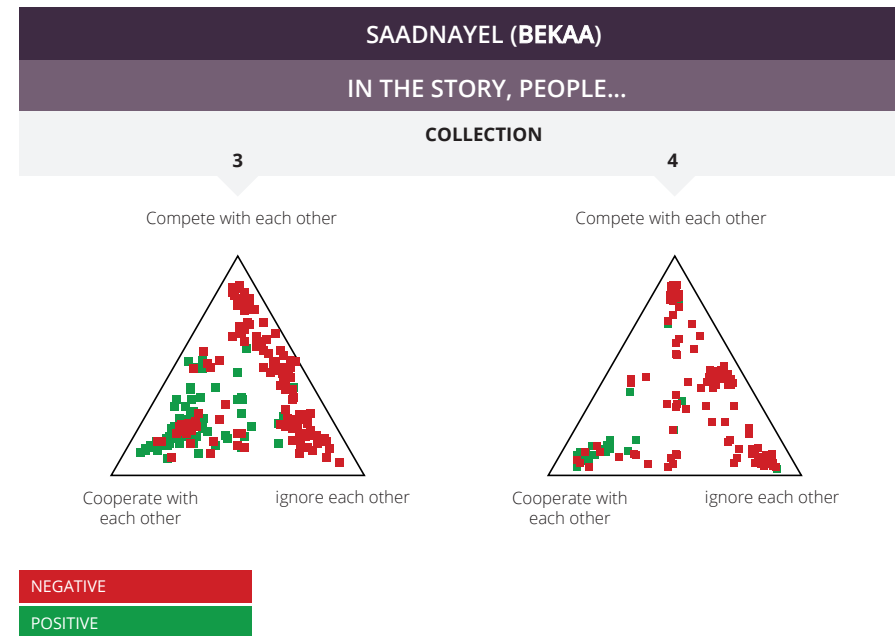
41% of the respondents in Saadnayel were in the middle income group, compared to 36% in the low income group and only 18% in the high. 11% of respondents were unemployed and 58% of the respondents had an intermediate-level education or less.

How do respondents describe community tensions?

As FIG.37 shows, the number of negative stories in Saadnayel increased since the last round of research. Negative stories were told largely by people in the lowest income group (40% of negative stories, while positive stories were more frequently told by youth (58% of positive stories). A clear difference emerged in Saadnayel between the last two rounds of research, as more respondents described stories where people defended their interests or waited to see what happens. There was also a shift away from dialogue and cooperation towards competition.

Stories regarding people competing and defending their interests have increased in number, particularly among respondents in the low income group and with low education levels, as well as with unemployed respondents. This could indicate growing anxieties around the economy that are leading to increased competition. This is concerning, given the large number of low income and unemployed respondents in Saadnayel, and should be watched carefully.

FIG. 37



Who is telling stories where people compete and defend their interests?

- Females increasingly describe stories where people defend their interests;
- Ages 30+
- Low income group
- Secondary level educated respondents and below.



Respondents telling stories about services, however, continued to describe situations in which people cooperate or encourage dialogue. These findings were observed particularly among stories from respondents in the lowest income group or who are unemployed, indicating that while these groups were increasingly competitive, they also saw the value in encouraging cooperation and dialogue.

'Since last year, we have received consistent electricity and I am so happy. I can study anytime I want. Previously they would turn off the generator at 12 midnight... I used to worry because the electricity controlled my studying time.'
Female, 18-29

Interestingly, as shown in FIG.38, youth respondents continued to tell positive stories involving cooperation and dialogue, despite the decrease in such stories among other age groups. This demonstrates that while youth feel increasingly competitive over jobs and access to resources, they still want to engage in dialogue to resolve issues constructively.

Do people feel empowered?

In Saadnayel, the level of empowerment changed slightly between the last two rounds of research. In the third round, most negative stories involved situations in which people felt powerless. In the most recent round of research, there was a slight increase in stories where people felt in control of what was happening.

FIG. 38





FIG. 39

SAADNAYEL (BEKAA)
 IN THE STORY, PEOPLE...
 COLLECTION 4



Who describes stories where people feel powerless?

- Respondents who were unemployed and describe stories related to refugees, particularly males;
- Secondary and university educated respondents;
- Ages 18-29 and 30-39.

Stories where people describe feelings of powerlessness were not influenced by the age, education level, income group or employment status of respondents. Although youth increasingly reported stories in which people felt powerless, so did other age groups.

"After Syrian refugees arrived, there was a shortage of work because plenty of Syrians are willing to work for less. I work in electricity. Syrians break the market prices and decrease work opportunities for Lebanese... we have low income and high expenses. We sometimes take a second job to cover expenses, and living conditions are becoming poorer, especially during the second half of the year when more Syrian labourers arrive. There's no law that specifies work conditions, and wage prices, and prevents them from breaking market price."

Male, 18-29

Who feels more in control?

As shown in FIG.39, a growing number of respondents in the lowest income group, largely older females, described situations where people felt more in control of what was happening. This change was not observed among middle or higher income groups and was also reported among those respondents with intermediate level education or less.



How do respondents perceive the government?

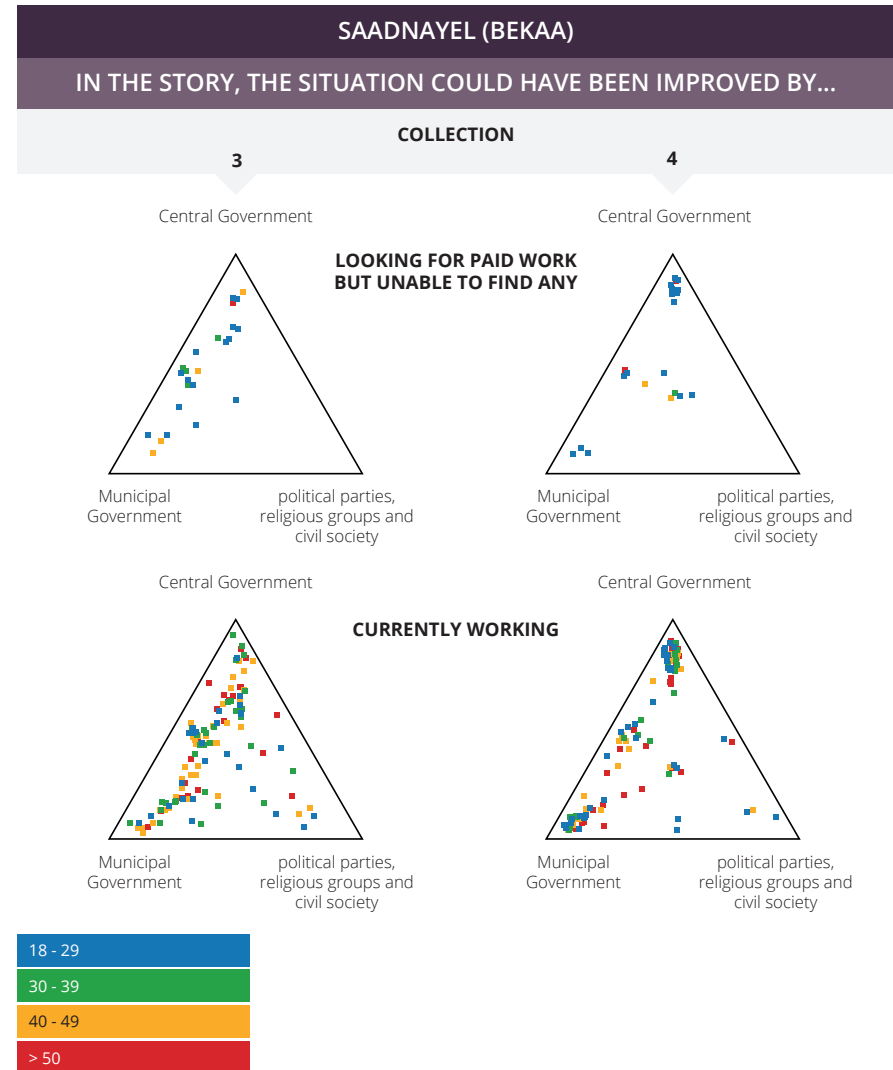
Municipal trust is quite low in Saadnayel: only 15% of respondents identified the municipality as the entity most trusted to provide services, down from 42%. Only 2% of respondents identified the central government as the most trusted provider. Demographic indicators did not play in role in shaping answers to this particular question.

Despite low levels of trust, respondents assigned both the municipality and the central government with responsibility for improving the situation. This is particularly true regarding non-services, such as jobs/employment.

"They established this football court and it has been very good for us. Children can play sports nearby instead of traveling further away... it is good, because they are actually doing something positive for the village."
Female, 18-29

Education level, income group and gender did not play in role in shaping responses to this Triad. As is shown in FIG.40, there is a larger population of unemployed youth in Saadnayel than unemployed older ages. These respondents increasingly attribute responsibility to the central government to improve the situation, although they still see the municipal government as playing a role. This could indicate a growing sense of frustration among unemployed youth against the central government, who they see as being responsible for the lack of jobs.

FIG. 40





A considerable proportion of respondents continued to view the municipality as neither able to take action nor trusted to take the right action. As shown in FIG.41, this finding is slightly higher among the poor and middle income groups, but does not vary significantly by age, gender, employment status or educational level, indicating that the municipality must build the trust and support across the population.

In addition, respondents of all employment, income, education and age groups increasingly believed that services were allocated in their stories based on social group, not necessarily correctly or according to need.

"My relative applied to work in the municipality but they told him that they want Egyptian workers instead. I feel awful, you cannot work in your own country."
Male, 40-49

"The most important issue for Saadnayel is water. We are not provided with it from the government, so we buy drinking water throughout the year."
Female, 50+

- How can the municipality improve service delivery?**
- 29% of respondents said the government should make more services available to people. (*Females, youth and lower income groups said this more often*).
 - 25% recommended to improve communication with the community. (*Females and lower income groups said this more often*).

FIG. 41





Who is talking about refugees?

The number of people talking about refugees in Saadnayel increased from 68 to 95. Stories about refugees made up 38% of total stories – the highest of any municipality. Stories were told about jobs/employment, as well as security. Youth, males, and low income group respondents told these stories most frequently.

“The Syrians are working and also receiving assistance from the United Nations. Meanwhile, the Lebanese cannot find jobs and we don't receive assistance from anyone.”

Male, 30-39

“We are affected by the Syrians. They took jobs from my children, and my children cannot find work. Lebanese people cannot work with such low wages. Syrians are receiving aid, including diesel, food, clothes and money. They accept work for 150,000 - 200,000 LBP but we cannot accept this.”

Female, 50+

Who is talking about refugees?

- Male respondents (58% of respondents);
- Lowest income group (36% of respondents);
- Youth (37% of respondents).

The number of stories about refugees increased from 74 to 95. Refugee stories made up 38% of stories. Stories were largely about jobs/employment (66% of refugee stories) or security (10%). 14% of respondents discussing refugees were unemployed.



What does this mean?

In Saadnayel, a gap appears to be forming between citizens and the local and municipal government. People of all demographic profiles believe that the municipal government is not capable of allocating services correctly and feel that they do not benefit from government services.

Growing frustration with government services is likely to cause increased social tension between host community and refugees. There is a clear, and growing, portion of the population that focuses on competition with Syrian refugees over jobs/employment.

Notably, low income groups increasingly tell negative stories around competition, and the majority of the unemployed population, particularly unemployed youth, feel especially powerless to influence change in the community. They also tend to tell stories regarding refugees and employment, and express growing frustration with the situation in the community.

These findings are particularly concerning given high number of low income and unemployed respondents in Saadnayel, which increases the risk of rising tensions and potential for conflict between this population and refugees. True or not, the perception that refugees are taking the jobs of young Lebanese must be addressed by the municipality as it works to forge stronger relationships with residents and demonstrate its commitment to allocated services fairly.



4.2.4 Ali El Nahri

Ali El Nahri is located in central Bekaa in Zahle Kaza. It is a predominately Shia community with a registered population of 6,209 Lebanese residents and 1,908 registered refugees.

Regarding the sample of respondents, 47% of the respondents in Ali El Nahri were in the middle income group, compared to 38% in the low income group and only 13% in the high. 12% of respondents were unemployed and 67% had an intermediate-level education or less.

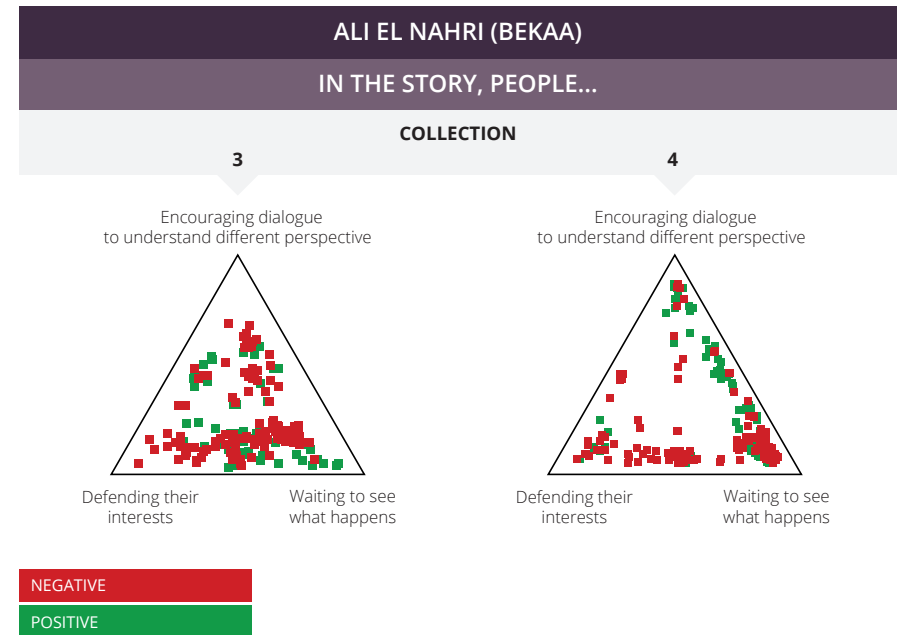
How do respondents describe community tensions?

As FIG.42 shows, the number of negative stories in Ali El Nahri decreased slightly since the last round of research. Negative stories were told largely by the lowest income group (48% of negative stories. Stories involving situations where people competed and/or defended their interests increased, however stories involving cooperation and dialogue also increased. This probably indicates a growing split within the community regarding how people engage with one another.

Overall, the findings did not vary widely by age, gender or income level, which could in part be due to the relatively homogeneous nature of the community. Education level did appear to shape perceptions on some responses. Although most individuals described stories involving cooperation, respondents with an intermediate education level or below were more likely to describe non-service stories in which people competed.

As shown in FIG.43 below, employed respondents increasingly described stories in which people cooperated or encouraged dialogue, compared to unemployed respondents, who more often described stories where people defended their interests or waited to see what happens.

FIG. 42



Who is telling stories where people compete and defend their interests?

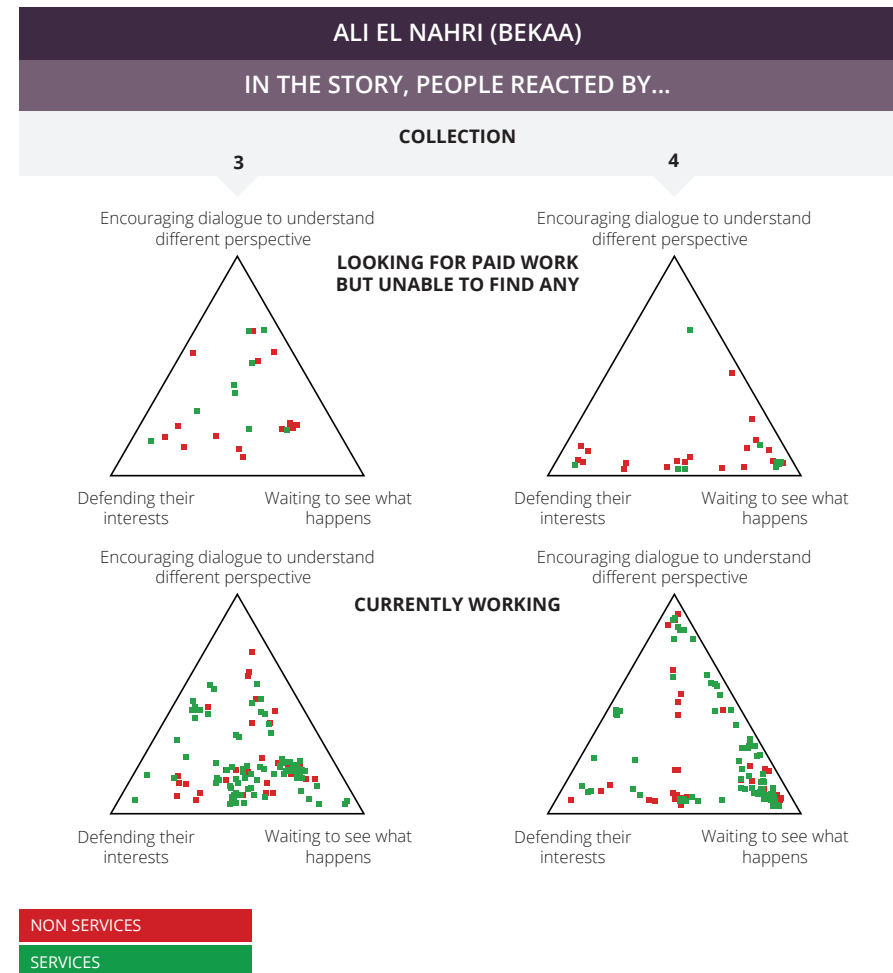
- Age 40+;
- Unemployed respondents;
- Intermediate level education or less.

"They opened a new library with many books. They've also held classes there. My friends and I together to get an education. It's very beneficial for the village and residents."

Female, 18-29



FIG. 43



Who describes stories where people feel powerless?

- Unemployed respondents;
- Respondents with econdary level-education or less;
- young women.

Do people feel empowered?

In Ali El Nahri, a small but positive change was observed, as fewer respondents told stories where people felt powerless, and slightly more stories where people felt in control. Unlike in the previous round of research, where all male youth described stories in which people felt powerless, fewer male youth told such stories in collection 4.

"There is traffic in our village, so they are building a new bridge. I am happy because there will be no more traffic on the roads."

Female, 18-29

As shown in FIG.44 by age, respondents of different ages, gender, income and education levels and employment status continued to describe service and non-service stories where people felt powerless, however. This shows a continued high level of frustration across the community regarding jobs/employment and security.

The last round of research also saw a small increase in the number of young females who talked about non-services and a decrease in the number of older women doing so. These women reported stories where the individuals felt powerless, which may reflect growing concerns regarding jobs and security among young women in the community.



despite ongoing feelings of powerlessness, people of all ages increasingly reported situations in which the people in the story tried to solve problems. This finding was consistent across all age groups, gender, income and education levels. As FIG.45 shows below, unemployed respondents increasingly described situations in which people tried to solve problems instead of turning to retribution.

Who feels more in control?

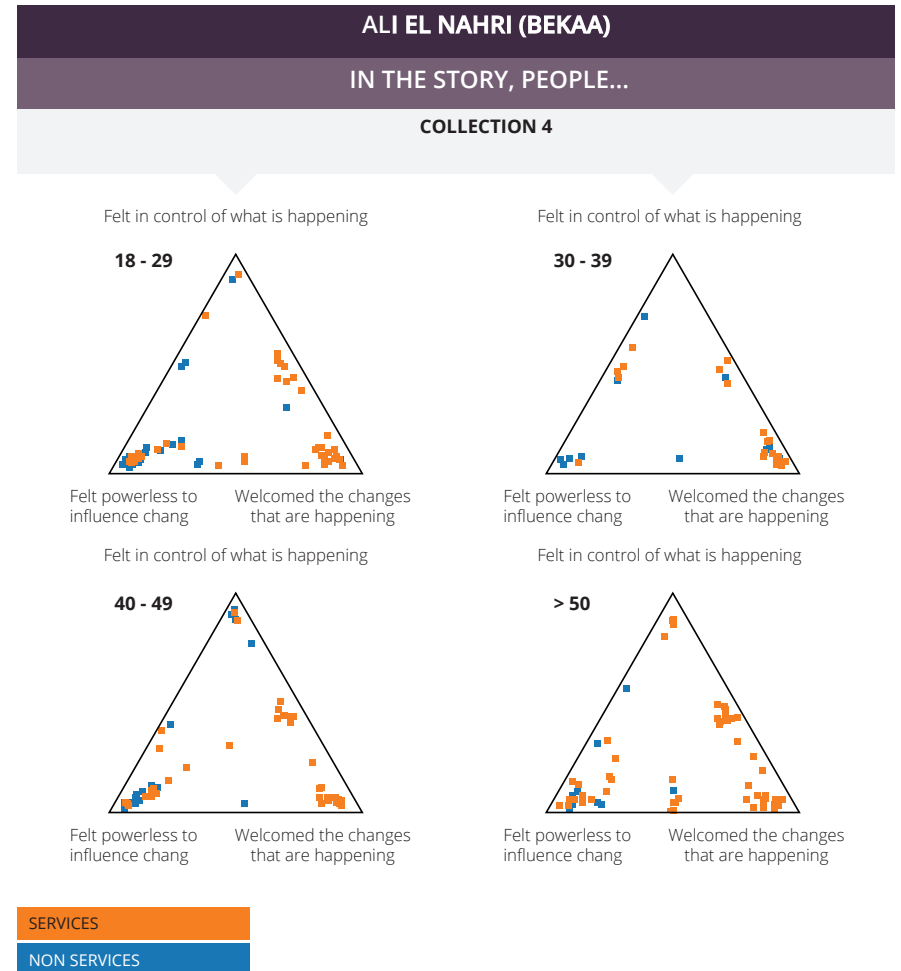
Several different groups increasingly described stories where respondents felt more in control. This includes unemployed males and females, low and middle income groups and Shia respondents.

How do respondents perceive the government?

Approximately 23% of respondents in Ali El Nahri identified the municipal government as the entity most trusted for service delivery, compared to 3% in support of the central government. The majority of the respondents who said they trusted the municipal government were from the highest income group (68%). This may indicate that the wealthier residents trust the municipality to act on their behalf more than poorer respondents do, likely because they have closer ties to them.

Overall, respondents shifted from attributing the central government with the responsibility for improving the situation to attributing more responsibility to the municipal government. This was consistent across demographic indicators. However, unemployed respondents attributed responsibility to the central government more often than employed respondents. They appear to be aware that the municipality does not have the capacity to implement job creating policies and programmes.

FIG. 44





In Ali El Nahri, a large number of respondents continued to view the municipality as both trusted to take the right action and able to do so. Some respondents, however, now see the municipality as willing but not trusted or able. As FIG.46 shows, these respondents are largely in the low or middle income group, indicating that the municipality has higher trust among the high income group.

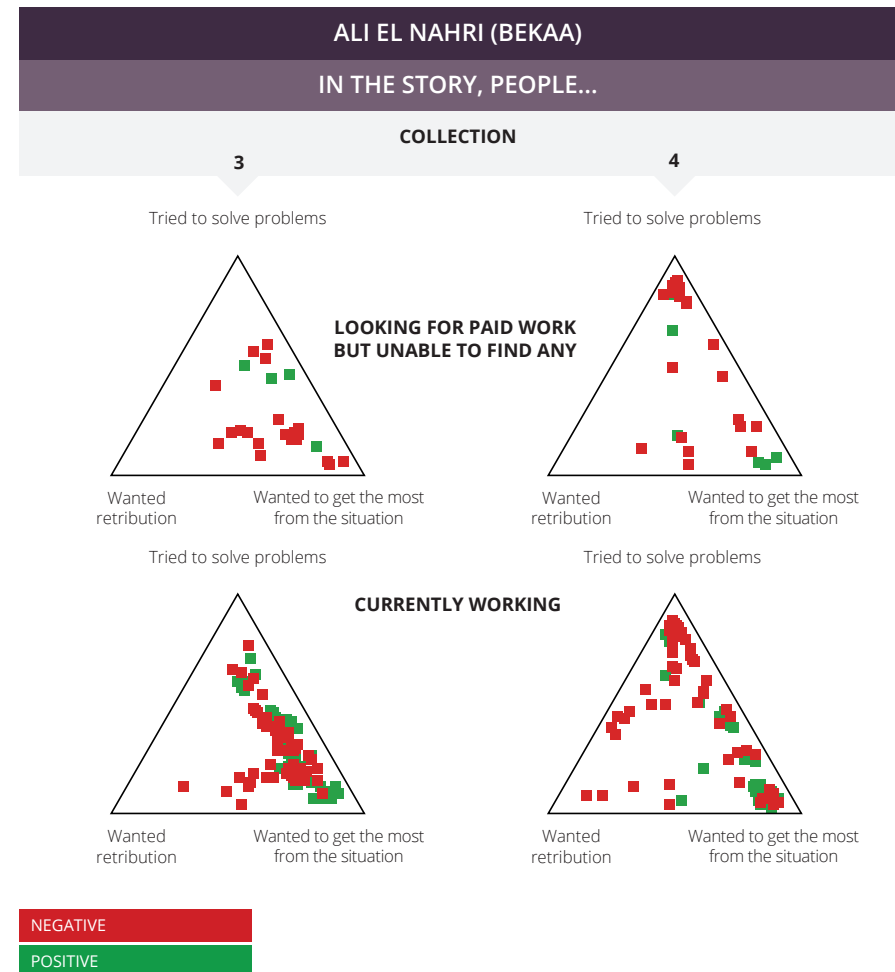
Respondents of all employment, income, education and age groups reported that services are allocated correctly and according to need. A small number still believe that services are allocated according to social group, but demographic indicators did not play in role in shaping the responses.

"We were receiving a good supply of water until the pressure suddenly decreased and the water cut off. We've asked the municipality several times to inspect the problem, but they didn't respond. I went to Zahle and submitted an application: they promised to send someone but no one has come. When they do fix the problem, I will have to pay 800,000-900,000 LBP. I don't know how I can afford this, as I'm currently jobless. I'm a construction worker and I can't find work."
Male, 40-49

How can the municipality improve service delivery?

- 27% of respondents said the government should make more services available to people. (Males and lower income groups said this more often);
- 28% opted for improving communication with the community. (Males, lower income groups and older ages said this more often).

FIG. 45





Who is talking about refugees?

As in Saadnayel, the number of respondents talking about refugees increased since the last round of research. Approximately 28% of stories were about refugees and focused on non-services, mainly jobs/employment and security. As in Saadnayel, youth, males, and low income group respondents discussed refugees more frequently than other groups. This indicates that refugees are a growing priority for respondents in the community, although they still not discussed in most of the stories.

"If you take a walk in the neighbourhood you will find that it is now dominated by Syrian homes; it's no longer safe to walk here; so instead of walking freely the roads of our own village, we walk uncomfortably and with heartbreak, remembering how the village once was and how it has turned out."

Female, 18-29

"My son wants to get married, but I cannot afford house rent due to the Syrians. Nor can I afford to build a house for him. Prices have doubled since the Syrians came here."

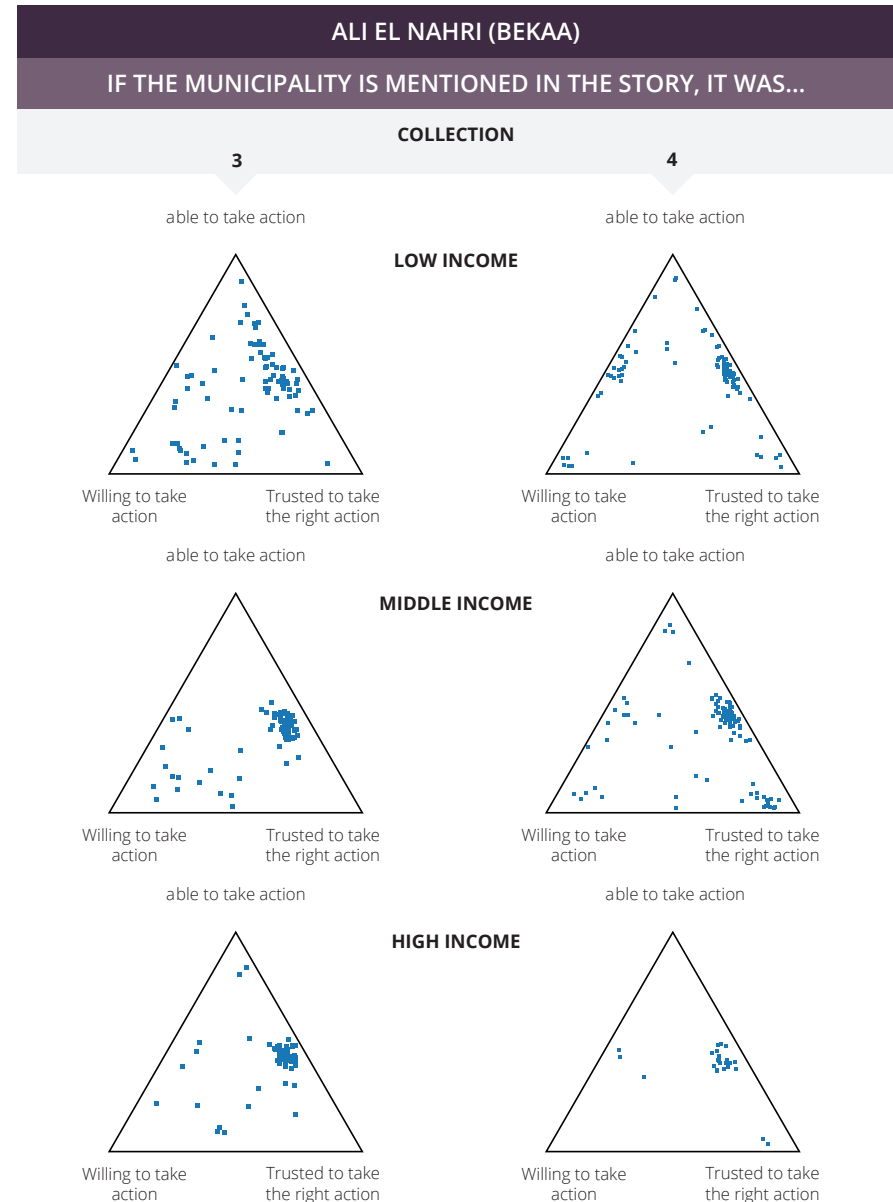
Male, 50+

Who is talking about refugees?

- Male respondents (64% of respondents);
- Lowest income group (47% of respondents);
- Youth (35% of respondents).

The number of stories about refugees increased from 51 to 72. Refugee stories made up 28% of stories. Stories are largely about jobs/employment (68% of refugee stories) or security (10%). 26% of respondents discussing refugees were unemployed.

FIG. 46





What does this mean?

Respondents in Ali El Nahri tended to respond similarly to questions regardless of their demographic background. Even though people overall feel powerless, homogeneity seems to play a role in uniting people and encouraging them to engage constructively improving conditions in the community.

Demographic factors do still play a role in determining people's perceptions regarding tension. Individuals with lower education levels feel more competitive and are concerned more with issues of employment and security. Unemployed respondents also appear to feel more pressure to compete with one another and less willing to engage constructively within the community. The municipality should monitor and support these groups, as they are the most likely to adopt negative behaviours in response to growing frustration around their situation. As job opportunities for low skilled workers become less easy to find, programmes aimed at increasing labour skills or providing new opportunities for lower skilled labourers are needed.

The small increase in feelings of control, particularly among male youth, shows that when young people feel that they are taken care of by their local and municipal governments, they feel encouraged and involved. This reiterates the importance of implementing projects that engage young people and integrate them into social activities and decision-making with the municipality.

At the same time, young women seem to feel increasingly powerless regarding non-services, especially when refugees are involved. Interventions to reduce feelings of vulnerability should be considered, particularly regarding security.

Low and middle income groups do not see the government as being trusted and able, while the high income group trusts the government more as a main service provider. This reflects the unequal access to social services and infrastructure in the community, and the need to provide more equitable distribution of public goods. Young and poor males are the group within the community that focuses the most on competition with Syrian refugees over jobs/employment. This, coupled with descriptions of increased defending of interests signals the potential for increased tensions with refugees.



4.2.5 Sarafand

Sarafand is located in Saida Casa in the South. It is a predominately Shia community with a registered population of 12,483 Lebanese, and 3,436 UNHCR-registered refugees.¹³

Regarding the sample of respondents, 47% were in the middle income group, compared to only 20% in the low income group, and 29% in the high. 5% of respondents were unemployed and 55% of the respondents had an intermediate-level education or less.

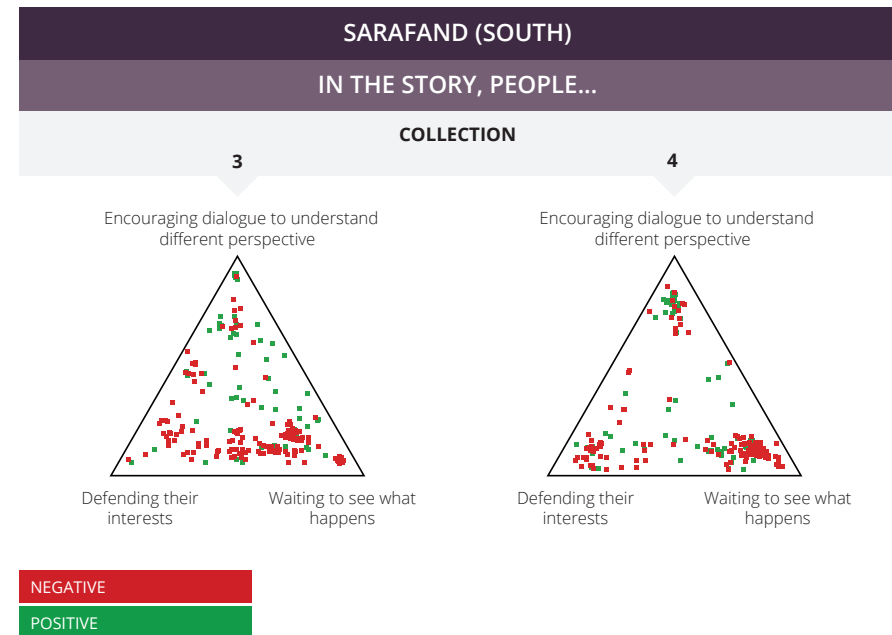
How do respondents describe community tensions?

As FIG.47 shows, the number of negative stories in Sarafand decreased slightly since the last round of research. Demographic indicators did not play a role in shaping answers to this question, although positive stories were more often told by women (61% of positive stories). Stories involving situations where people compete and/or defend their interests increased, as did stories involving cooperation and dialogue, indicating a growing split within Sarafand between people willing to positively engage with one another and those who are now taking a more negative approach.

Youth in Sarafand increasingly described stories where people competed and/or defended their interests, which could indicate growing tension in the community. this is an issue that warrants ongoing monitoring. youth also told a number of negative stories where dialogue is encouraged, which could indicate that despite their frustration with the situation, people still attempted to engage with these issues constructively.

Employed respondents and middle income respondents also described more stories where people competed. Therefore, they are becoming

FIG. 47



Who is telling stories where people compete and defend their interests?

- Women increasingly told more competition stories;
- Youth;
- Middle income groups;
- Employed respondents.



concerned about the situation in the community and are no longer encouraging cooperation and engagement among residents.

Do people feel empowered?

In Sarafand, a small but positive change was observed between the last two rounds of research, as respondents told fewer stories where people felt powerless and slightly more stories where people felt in control. No major variations were observed between different demographic indicators, rather findings were consistent across different ages, gender, income and education levels. As shown in FIG.48, the respondents that most frequently told stories where people felt in control were those from the middle income group.

Who describes stories where people feel powerless?

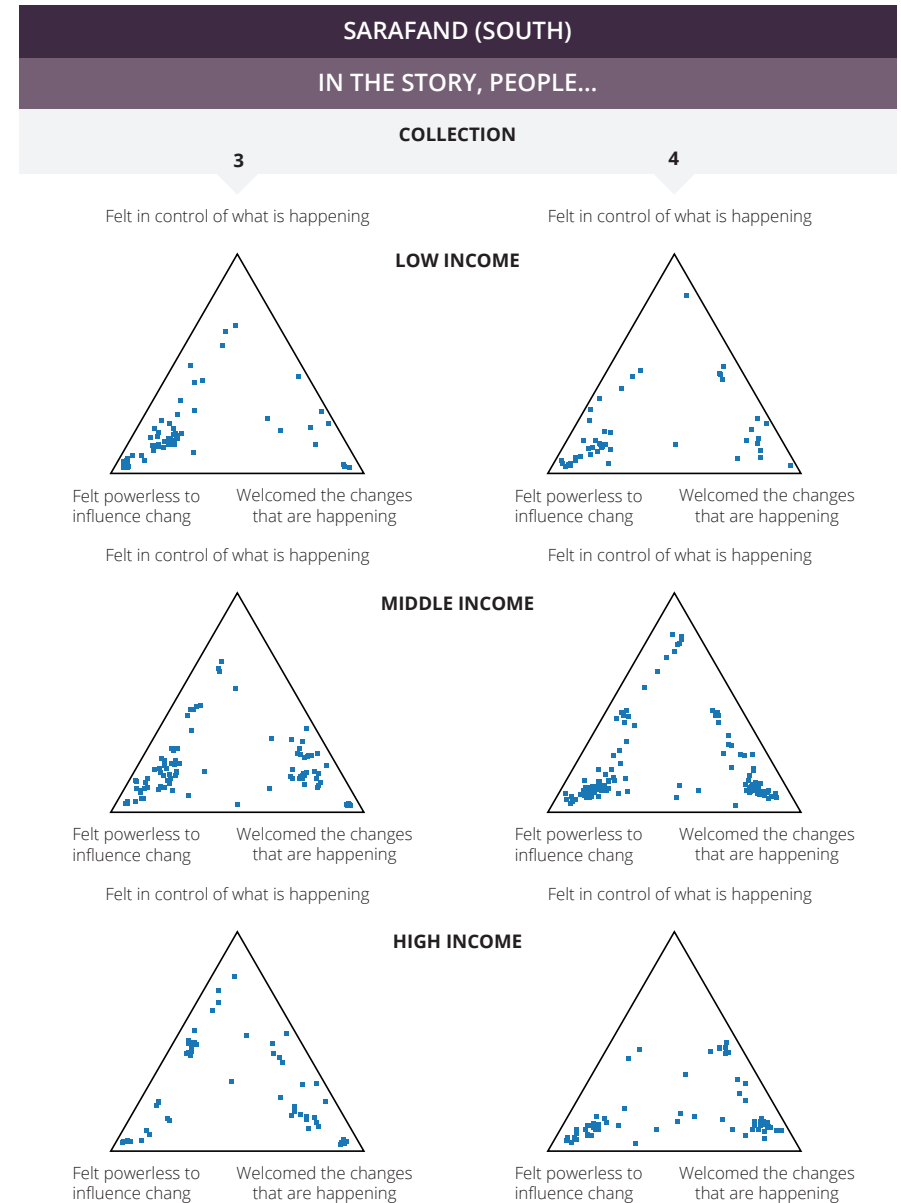
- Young, university educated respondents;
- Elementary or less educated respondents aged 50 and up;
- High income group.

"Now that the municipality is sorting garbage and recycling, it has encouraged people to do it themselves."

Female, 18-29

Despite ongoing feelings of powerlessness, respondents of all ages increasingly told stories where people tried to solve problems. Youth told these stories more often than other age groups.

FIG. 48





As shown in FIG.49, respondents with an elementary education level or below and with low income levels told stories where people tried to solve problems the least often. Instead they often told stories where people wanted retribution. This indicates a growing sense of frustration and thus requires ongoing monitoring to mitigate potential conflict.

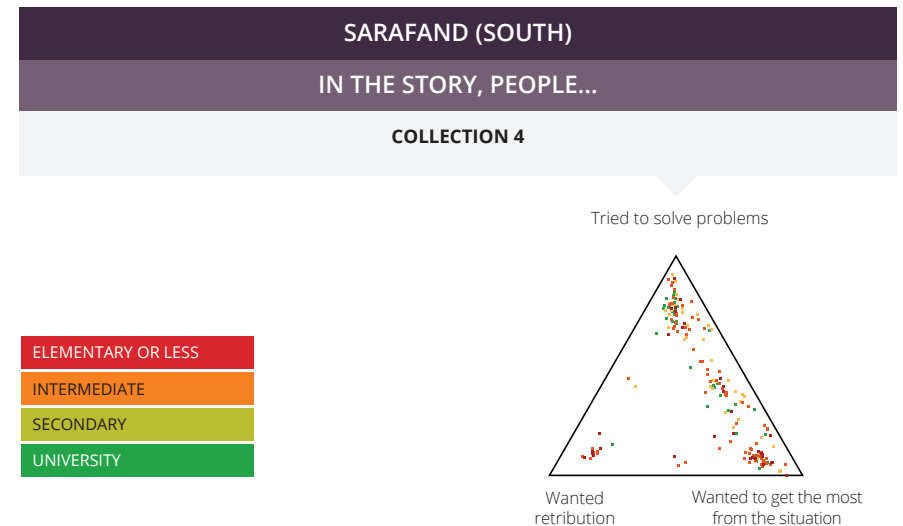
How do respondents perceive the government?

Only 12% of respondents in Sarafand identified the municipal government as the entity most trusted for service delivery, compared to 5% of respondents who trusted the central government. Demographic indicators did not play a role in shaping answers to this question, except that the majority of respondents who identified the municipal government as the most trusted entity were from of the lowest income group.

"We don't have drinking water in the region. We have to pay an annual subscription of 220,000 LBP, in addition to the fees we pay for the water."
Female, 40-49

Overall, respondents continue to see both the municipal and central government as being responsible for improving the situation. Male respondents increasingly attributed responsibility to the municipality, as did respondents aged 50 and up. As shown in FIG.50, low income group respondents no longer referenced the central government as frequently, and attributed responsibility mostly to the municipal government. the low income group also trusts the municipality most as the service provider. This appears to show that this group understands the differences in responsibility between the municipal and central government.

FIG. 49



How can the municipality improve service delivery?

- 42% of respondents said the government should make more services available to people. *(Females stated this more frequently than males);*
- 32% said the municipality should improve communication with the community. *(Higher income respondents stated this more frequently than lower income respondents).*



In both Sarafand and Saadnayel, a considerable number of respondents continue to view the municipality as neither able to take action nor trusted to take the right action. As shown in FIG.52, this finding was particularly strong among low income group respondents, and appears to contradict the earlier findings that the municipality was the most trusted among low income respondents. It may also indicate that while they find the municipality to be trusted to provide services, they do not necessarily believe it is able to do the right thing. This is an area where further research is warranted.

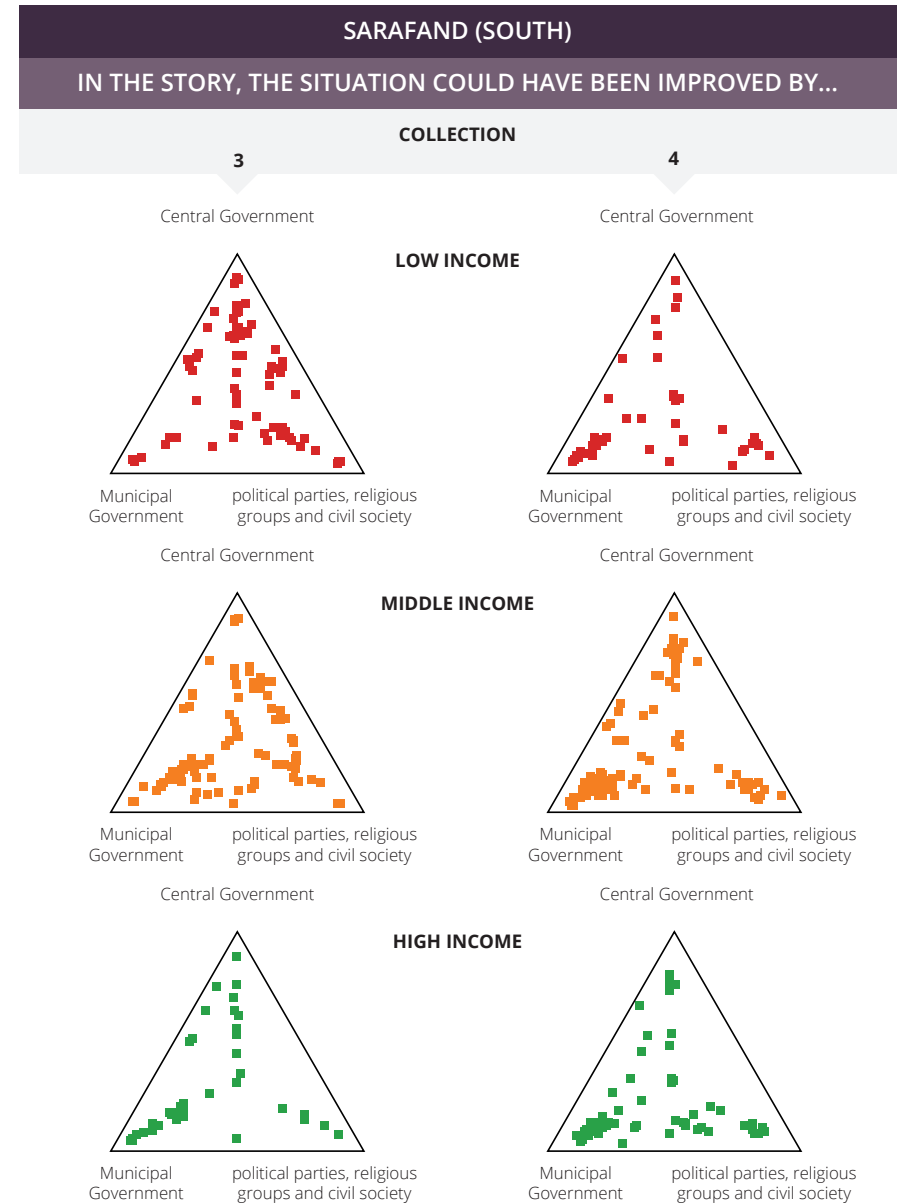
"The roads were terrible and full of potholes, and cars broke down all the time. Now, because of the upcoming election, they started improving the roads and promised to pave them again soon."
 Female, 50+

When asked about service allocation, respondents continue to report that the services described in the stories were allocated by social group, but more stories now report that they were allocated correctly and according to need. As shown in FIG.51 by gender, demographic indicators did not play a role in shaping responses to this Triad, which indicates that it is a feeling held across the municipality.

Who is talking about refugees?

In both Sarafand and Ghazieh, very few people are talking about refugees. In Sarafand, only 5% of stories referenced refugees. This is unsurprising considering that the number of registered Syrian refugees in the South is much lower than in the North and the Bekaa, a number validated by UNHCR. Those few individuals who talked about refugees largely discussed jobs or services, and the majority were men. So while men often felt threatened by the presence of refugees, the source of their discontent regarding competition

FIG. 50





and retribution was more often than not related to other issues. The same is true for low income groups. The municipality should keep a close eye on these issues and conduct further research on the sources of frustration.

Who is talking about refugees?

- Only 19 stories, or 5% of total stories, referenced refugees, a slight decrease;
- 50% of stories involved jobs/employment;
- 64% of respondents discussing refugees were male.

FIG. 51

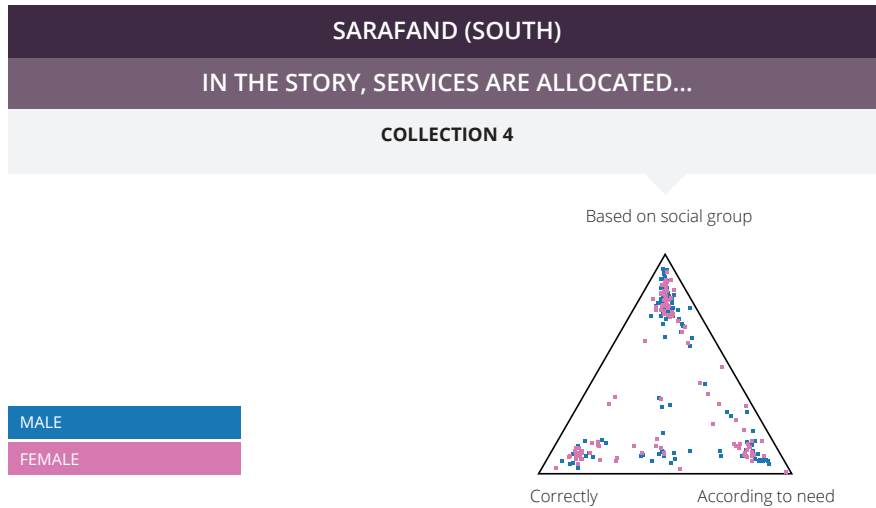
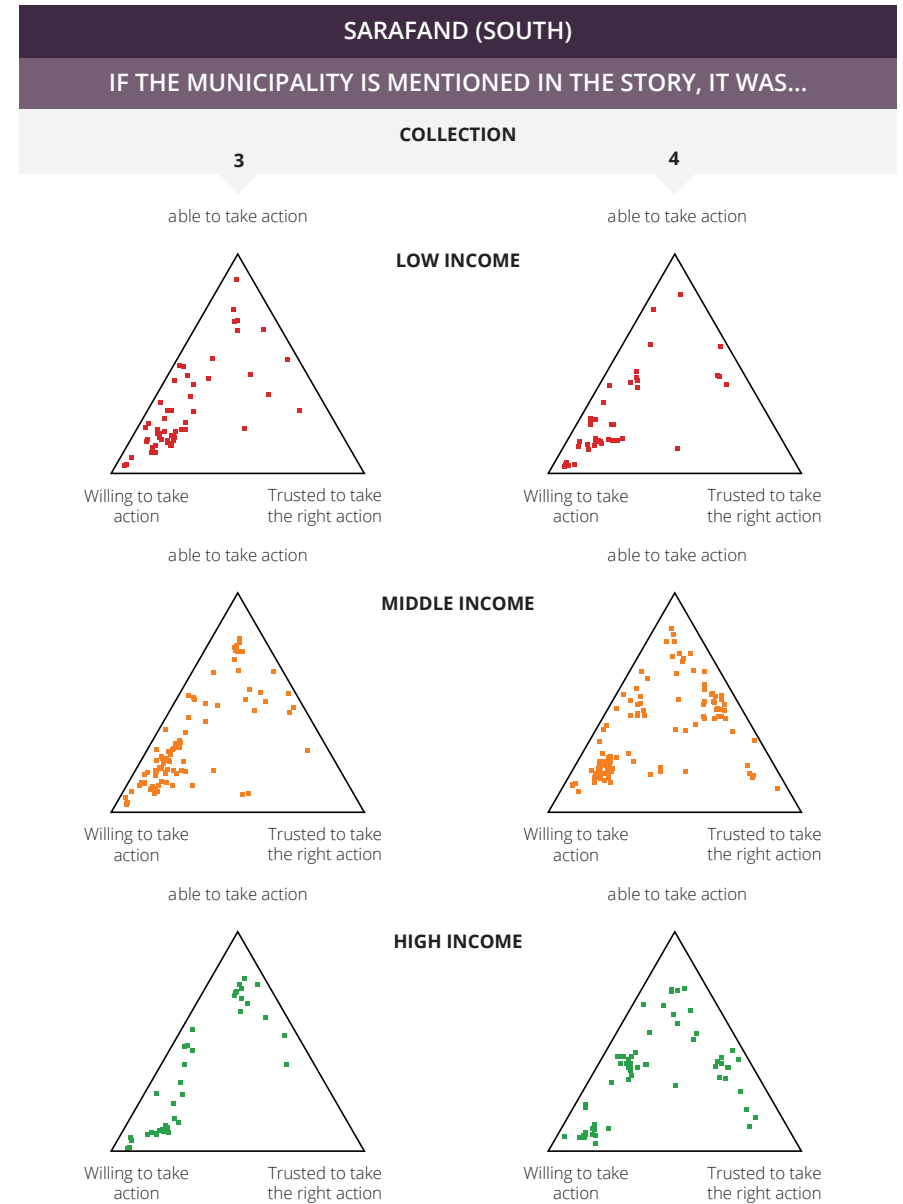


FIG. 52





What does this mean?

While youth are more frequently describing stories involving competition, they are also still seeking opportunities to constructively resolve their issues. The fact that youths are more likely to solve problems shows that they still want to feel involved, and continue to take positive steps despite increased competition. This is a positive finding that should be further encouraged by the municipality.

Employed and middle income people are growing increasingly concerned with their situation, despite having jobs and a relatively secure financial status. There appear to be issues of concern that go beyond the provision of basic services and livelihoods, though more research is needed on this point.

the municipality receives slightly more support among the poorer in the community, however, the share of people who trust the municipality is very small, and these respondents also expressed feelings that the municipality does not represent them well, which indicates that support for the municipality is quite limited. Further engagement is needed to improve these relationships before religious groups or political parties fill the vacuum.



4.2.6 Ghazieh

Ghazieh is located in Saida Casa in the South. It is a predominately Shia community with a registered population of 13,143 Lebanese and 5,236 UNHCR-registered refugees.¹⁴

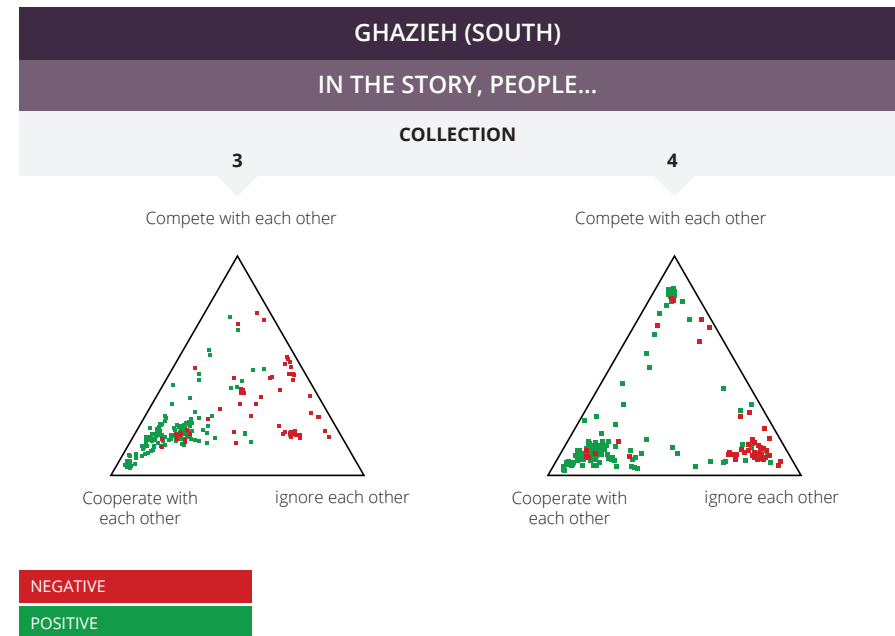
Regarding the sample size, 48% were in the middle income group, compared to 23% in the low income group and 29% in the high. Only 2% of respondents were unemployed and 51% of the respondents had an intermediate-level education or less.

How do respondents describe community tensions?

As shown in FIG.53, the number of negative stories in Ghazieh decreased slightly since the last round of research. Negative stories were more frequently told by the oldest age group (41% of negative stories). While the number of stories where people competed or avoided each other also increased slightly, most respondents still described stories where people cooperated and dialogue was encouraged. Although more respondents told stories where people defended their interests, these stories were largely positive and negative stories were increasingly clustered around waiting to see what happens.

As in Ali El Nahri, demographic indicators do not shape many responses to the research. Respondents aged 50+ increasingly described stories where people ignored each other or defended their interests, which could indicate growing isolation within this age group. Those in the middle and high income groups increasingly described stories of competition. As shown in FIG.54, the low income group is also no longer telling stories where people encouraged dialogue. This is an area of concern, as it may indicate growing dissatisfaction with the community that could lead to conflict.

FIG. 53



Who is telling stories where people compete and defend their interests?

- Age 50+;
- Intermediate-level education or below;
- low income groups.



The situation is getting worse. There are a lot of problems. We don't have enough water."

Male, 50+

Do people feel empowered?

Ghazieh has had a predominance of stories indicating a fairly high level of empowerment. While the most recent round of research saw a continuation of this finding, there is an isolated minority that tell stories where people feel powerless to influence change. However, demographic indicators generally did not play a role in shaping answers to this question. However, as shown in FIG.55, women told stories where people felt powerless more often than men did. The fact that women were more likely than men to tell these stories could indicate that they were better able to voice the concerns of the powerless in the community, or it could indicate that they themselves feel more powerless, and need to be more socially integrated. This is an area where future research is needed.

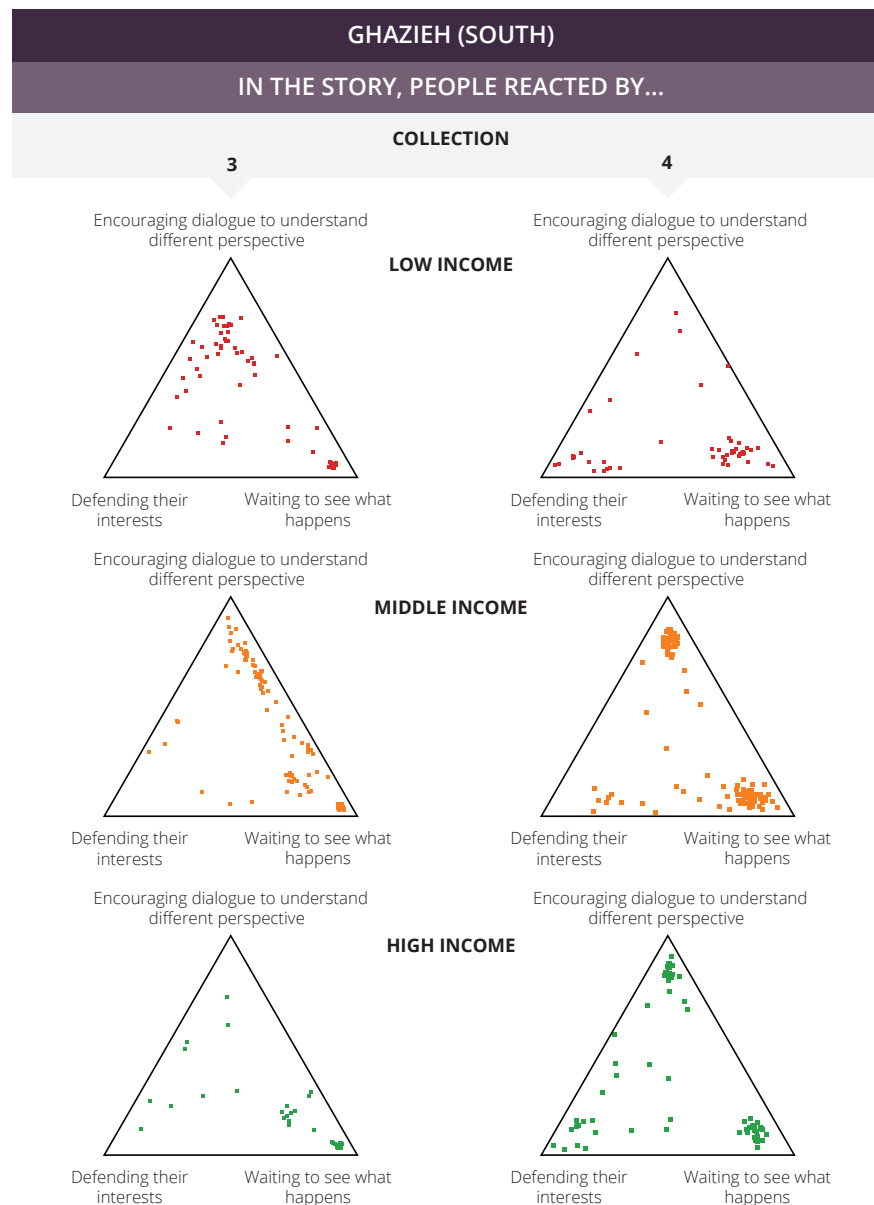
Who describes stories where people feel powerless?

- Very few people, indicating that most people feel they can positively influence the changes in their community

"They put one garbage container in every neighbourhood, so we have to either walk a long way to the end of the street or are obliged put the bag in front of our shop. When they come to collect the garbage, they only empty the container and leave the remaining garbage on the road."

Female, 30-39

FIG. 54





Despite the small increase in respondents who told stories where people felt powerless, people of all ages increasingly described stories in which the people in the story tried to solve problems. These stories were largely positive. Demographic indicators did not play in role in shaping answers to this question, which demonstrates that all types of people within Ghazieh were willing to resolve issues constructively.

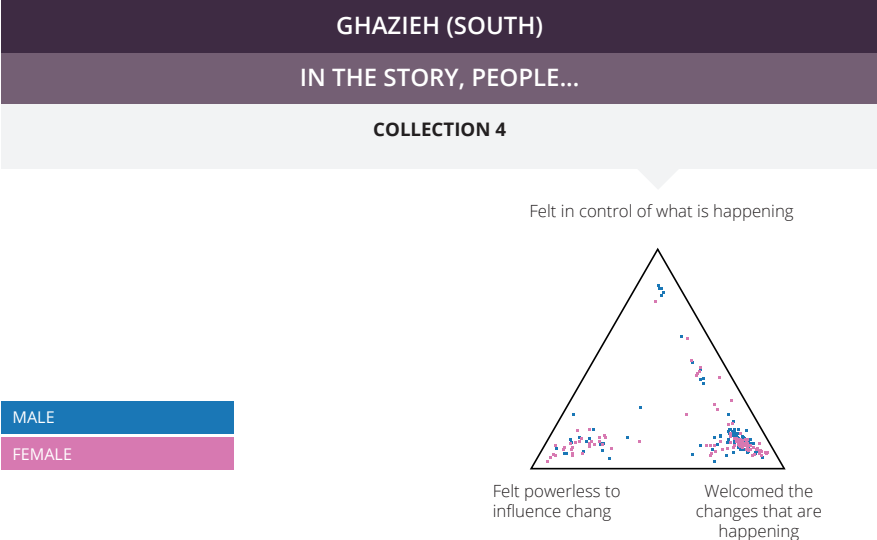
How do respondents perceive the government?

Approximately 35% of respondents in Ghazieh selected the municipal government as the entity most trusted for service delivery, compared to 1% for the central government. 40% of these respondents were aged 50+, indicating that the municipality has a higher level of trust among the older population and may not be as trusted by the younger generation. This is shown in FIG.56 on the following page.

How can the municipality improve service delivery?

- 47% of respondents said the government should make more services available to people. *(Males and lower income groups said this more often);*
- 20% said improve communication with the community. *(Males, lower income groups and older ages said this more often).*

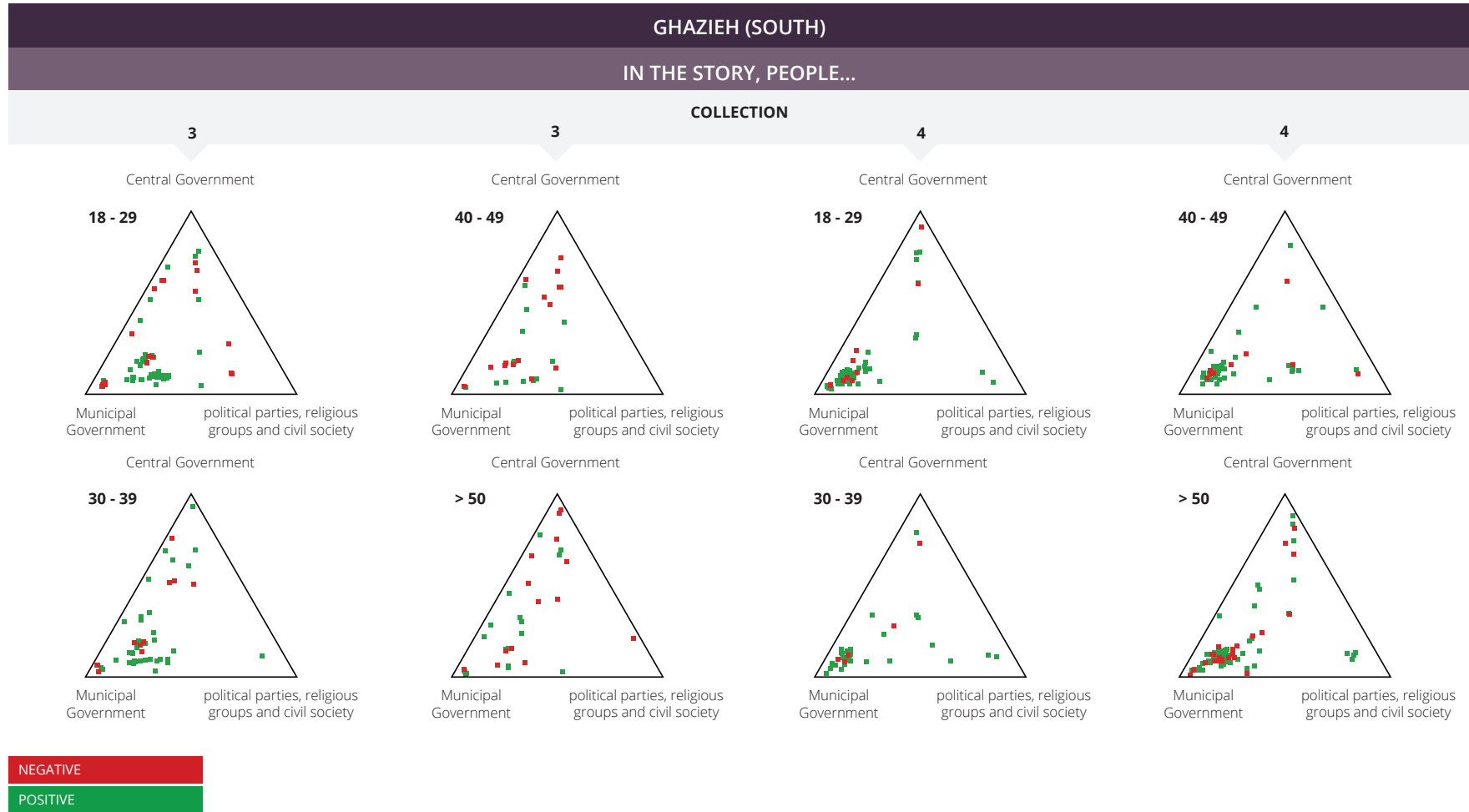
FIG. 55



People increasingly saw the municipality as being responsible for improving services. Respondents age 50+ still attributed responsibility to the central government, despite the fact that they saw the municipality as the most trusted service provider. Middle and higher income respondents increasingly assigned responsibility to political parties, religious groups and civil society.



FIG. 56





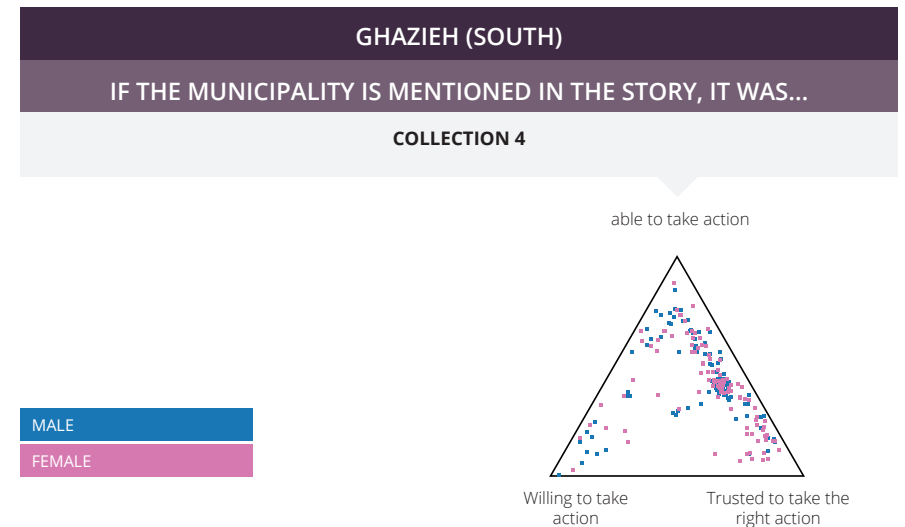
The research also showed a clustering of stories along the axis between “trusted to take the right action” and “able to take action”, demonstrating how a previously divided municipal population increasingly shared similar views. Respondents from the low and middle income groups were less likely to see the government in this way. These respondents were mostly male, as shown in FIG.57.

Respondents increasingly told negative stories where services were allocated based on social group, not correctly or according to need. As with other findings in Ghazieh, demographic indicators did not play in role in shaping responses. However, very few youth told stories where resources were allocated according to social group, compared to other respondents. This indicates that youth do feel as if they benefit from the services they need, and were largely supportive of service allocation. This is a potentially positive finding for youth, but it should be explored further to better understand perceptions around this issue among the other age groups.

Who is talking about refugees?

In both Sarafand and Ghazieh, very few people were talking about refugees. In Ghazieh, only five stories referenced refugees. As noted above, this is unsurprising considering that the number of registered Syrian refugees in the South is much lower than in the North and the Bekaa. With a low presence of Syrian refugees in the South, respondents do not blame refugees for problems in Ghazieh. However, recognising the slight increase in negative stories around competition, particularly among the older population, and noting the perception that services were not allocated correctly or according to need, the municipality must look further into growing tensions within the community, particularly among the older population.

FIG. 57



“Ever since the Syrians came to live here, they started stealing from the electricity network; this is why we have no more electrical power, and if we do, the breaker would keep on ticking off, or it would be very low in intensity: instead of 220V we only get 110V.”
Female, 50+

Who is talking about refugees?

- Only 5 stories in Ghazieh referenced refugees. Stories included politics (2 stories) or services (3 stories).



What does this mean?

The situation in Ghazieh remains largely positive. Respondents are less negative than in previous rounds of research, and cooperation and dialogue remain high. There is a growing minority of low and middle income respondents who are increasingly competitive, but people across all ages and demographic backgrounds are still willing to resolve issues constructively.

Although people feel empowered, there is an isolated minority of female respondents who do not, which could indicate that they feel they do not have a voice in the community, or that they are better able to voice the concerns of the disempowered. More in-depth information should be gathered about this social group of vulnerable women, and inform future targeted interventions with them.

Respondents increasingly trust the municipality as a service provider. However, a gap appears to be growing between middle income groups and the municipality: the middle income group was less likely to see the government as trusted to provide services, and respondents have turned to political parties, religious groups and civil society to fill the perceived gap in service delivery. This could be a trend forming or a temporary pre-elections observation, where usually middle income groups are the most politically engaged, especially in forming an opposition to the current local government.



5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Key findings

Results from the analysis indicate that demographic indicators do play a role in perceptions on stability and municipal legitimacy. Age, gender and income level all influence to varying degrees how a respondent describes interactions within communities. In some municipalities, this analysis revealed a potentially concerning mix of poor, young and male respondents who feel powerless to affect changes in their communities and increasingly competitive with others. Although this varied by municipality and did not indicate widespread patterns of vulnerability, the clear frustration and anger expressed in these stories could provide fertile grounds for conflict if not addressed.

The fact that Lebanon has not experienced significant instances of conflict between refugees and host communities is important to recognise. The municipality in particular plays an important role in reducing social tensions by engaging marginalised groups, such as low income groups but also those members of the middle income group who are less likely to trust the government to take the right action or allocate services correctly.

The number of Sunni respondents who no longer trust anyone to provide services has increased, and the potential alienation of this population increases the susceptibility of this group to outside influences.

Although most stories are not about refugees, the number of stories where refugees were mentioned has increased since the last round of research. This is perhaps due to the fact that as time passes, the permanency of the refugee presence is becoming more of a reality to the host communities, increasing concerns over the impact that this population will have longer-term on livelihoods and quality of life. Young males and low and middle income respondents discuss refugees most frequently, particularly regarding jobs/

employment. Lebanese youth in particular are disproportionately impacted by the lack of jobs and employment opportunities in the North and Bekaa and tend to blame refugees for their current situation.¹⁵

However, the influx of refugees and their continuous presence has only highlighted the structural issues, lack of job opportunities and poor service delivery which existed prior to their arrival. The social groups that reference refugees most often are also considered the most vulnerable within these communities, and are most at risk of poverty, conflict and influence by political or religious groups if not supported further.

Despite these challenges, many respondents continued to encourage dialogue and attempt to resolve issues constructively. Youth, in particular, play an important role in mitigating tensions, as they continued to encourage dialogue and described stories where people resolved problems even when other age groups were no longer doing so. They also increasingly trusted the role of the municipality to take the right action, and were eager to play a more active role in the communities.

5.2 Programmatic recommendations

The following recommendations are made with a view to enhancing LHSP programming:

- Municipal initiatives (projects, planning and communication) should introduce specific measures to engage those in lower income groups and youth. This will help to increase understanding among marginalised groups, and ensure they benefit from services delivered by the municipality. This would also provide useful feedback to municipalities on how to support these groups.



- Increase engagement with programmes providing livelihood and employment generation projects to build links with LHSP and with municipal planning processes, with a view of targeting assistance to at-risk groups and regions;
- Use 'soft' municipal programme activities (e.g. planning and outreach) to tackle negative attitudes towards refugees; make maximum use of opportunities for dialogue with key stakeholders to further the same objective.
- Develop a programme or specialised component within LHSP in the Bekaa that focuses on women, to better understand and address increased feelings of insecurity related to refugees.
- Empower youth to lead new initiatives in collaboration with municipalities and local leaders that focus on dialogue and finding local solutions to livelihood challenges.
- Engage young males who report feeling powerless through targeted activities designed to address and reduce feelings of exclusion that might otherwise lead to conflict.
- Encourage improved coordination between the municipal government and central government, through the MRR process, engaging other Ministries whenever possible to maximise government engagement.

5.3 Research recommendations

The following recommendations were made in relation to the scope and focus of coming rounds of LHSP research:

- Consider including a localised political analysis of the micro-politics in each target municipality. This will help to establish the underlying context in which municipal governments and LHSP operate, including power relationships, institutional setup and decision-making.
- Conduct research in more religiously heterogeneous communities (e.g. communities where Shia and Sunni or larger Christian populations live together) in order to better understand the role of confession in determining perceptions of municipal legitimacy.
- Further examine the underlying factors that may be preventing Sunni respondents from trusting authorities to provide services.
- Ensure that LHSP monitors locations and groups experiencing increased tension, such as Rajam Issa and Saadnayel, frequently;
- Increase the research focus on young people and males in future research to better understand employment-related frustrations and further assess potential conflict drivers.
- Ensure that a sufficient number of refugees are included among future respondents so that their perceptions of stability, access to services and tensions within the community can be captured effectively.



6. Footnotes

¹ SenseMaker® elicits “micro-narratives” (stories) from respondents about their own direct experience in the area of the research. Respondents then signify the meaning their story holds for them against a pre-developed signification framework.

² Attribute data are multiple choice questions related to the story which provide further analysis.

³ Triads are a visual method used in SenseMaker® to signify experiences, where participants consider the dynamics between three competing but linked aspects of an issue and place their response within the three options.

⁴ Non-services as defined in the LHSP research include: jobs/employment, security and politics.

⁵ After the Israeli invasion it was difficult for the Lebanese Government to exercise governance effectively in the South with the presence of a foreign army on its land. Despite the withdrawal of the IDF in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 425 the Lebanese government and Hezbollah still consider the withdrawal incomplete until Israel withdraws from Shebaa Farms. Following the withdrawal, Hezbollah expanded its military and civil control in the southern part of Lebanon, which increased its legitimacy compared to the Lebanese State which continued to struggle with the Syrian occupation of the country and its institutions until 2005.

⁶ Stakeholders during the regional workshops conducted in Feb. – March 2016 suggested that strong support for the family may reflect the fact that most services are privately provided for, so provision is attributed to those who pay for obtaining the service. It may also indicate an overlap in perception between large families represented in municipal government and the municipal government as local authority. This is an area where further research might provide useful insights.

⁷ In Triad 4, respondents are asked whether services in the story are allocated by social group, accordingly to need and correctly.

⁸ According to the figures shared by UNHCR in late March 2016, the refugee numbers in target municipalities are: 5,236 in Ghazieh; 3,436 in Sarafand; 15,611 in Rajam Issa; 7,040 in Sir Dinnieh; 16,184 in Saadnayel; and 1,908 in Ali el Nahri.

⁹ These form 17 stories out of a total of 25. Therefore, further analysis of these stories would be misleading as it is not statistically significant.

¹⁰ Figures received from UNHCR in Beirut by email on 31 March 2016.

¹¹ *ibid.*

¹² *ibid.*

¹³ *ibid.*

¹⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁵ OCHA-REACH-UNICEF, Defining Community Vulnerability in Lebanon, 2015.

