

Survey Report on the Situation of

NON-ID PALESTINIAN REFUGEES

Lebanon

Republished with an additional chapter including updated statistics
Beirut, September 2007



Danish Refugee Council

Humanitarian Aid



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Survey report on the situation of non-ID Palestinian refugees in Lebanon compared to registered and non-registered refugees residing in camps and gatherings

Survey conducted from August to November 2004

First published in Beirut, March 2005

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Refugees authorised the use of their photos for this report.

All names in the report have been changed.



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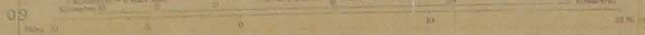
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NOT TO BE PUBLISHED

PALESTINE NORTH SHEET

SCALE 1:250000



REFERENCE

- 1st Class Roads
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 - Heights in metres
 - Railways
 - Customs of approx. 10 metres
 - Trails
- Compiled and printed by Survey of Palestine 1942
 Last revision in July 1942
 Authority of Railway from Army of General in May 1947

CLASS	SYMBOL	DESCRIPTION
1st Class	Double line	1st Class Road
2nd Class	Single line	2nd Class Road
Other	Thin line	Other Road
Water	Blue wavy line	Water, dry except during rains
Heights	Black dots	Heights in metres
Railways	Black line with cross-ticks	Railways
Customs	Black line with cross-ticks	Customs of approx. 10 metres
Trails	Dashed line	Trails

Gridded with Palestine
Transverse Mercator Military Grid



I.O

Executive Summary

Palestinian refugees have been present in Lebanon since 1948. Among the estimated 300,000 to 400,000 refugees, about 3,000 have no documentation. They are not registered by either the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) or the Lebanese authorities.

Most undocumented refugees came to Lebanon in the 1970s, mainly in connection with the events of Black September in Jordan or the war in Lebanon, and at the time did not consider it necessary to seek registration. Only after the disbanding of the PLO politico-military infrastructure in 1982 and the strengthening of security control by Lebanese authorities on their territory after the end of the civil war in 1990, has the lack of documentation become problematic.

The situation of undocumented refugees was, however, unknown until 2001. In 2004, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), in partnership with the Palestinian Human Rights Organisation (PHRO) and with the support of the European Commission Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO), conducted a survey in order to learn more about undocumented refugees and to present a set of recommendations with a view to improving their situation.

Undocumented refugees face restriction of movement, lack of access to UNRWA services and poor health care. In addition and more worryingly, the second and third generations of undocumented refugees face obstacles graduating from

school, getting married, owning property and generally participating in ordinary legal or social life activities.

Even if undocumented refugees exhibit many similar socioeconomic patterns to other refugees, they face more difficulties in that they are more isolated. Palestinian refugees in Lebanon live in the same village structures as in their homeland, thus enjoying support from family and neighbours. Undocumented refugees have often arrived as single men and experience a lower level of support.

Interestingly, most of these refugees, though classified as undocumented, hold some form of documentation, which in relation to their legal status is significant on two levels: their Palestinian identity can be proved and an authority previously responsible for their documentation can be traced.

The first publication of the survey report in March 2005 included a set of recommendations to raise awareness and advocate with view to improving the situation of non-ID Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. These recommendations created the foundation for DRC's ongoing legal aid and advocacy programs. Since the 2005 publication, a number of the recommendations proposed have been realised and the situation of non-ID refugees has changed. Hence an additional chapter is included to report on the progress made, the current situation and also includes updated population statistics generated from DRC's non-ID refugee database.

The image shows two overlapping birth registration certificates from the Department of Health in Lebanon. The top certificate is in Hebrew and English, and the bottom one is in Arabic and English. Both include fields for parents' names, ages, and nationalities.

Top Certificate (Hebrew/English):

- Department: מחלקת הבריאות / DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
- Title: תעודת רשום של לדה / Certificate of registration of Birth
- Parents' Information:

PARTICULARS OF PARENTS		פרטים בדבר ההורים		تفاصيل عن الوالدين	
Father	האב	אב	Mother	האם	אם
Name	שם	שם	Name	שם	שם

Bottom Certificate (Arabic/English):

- Department: מחלקת הבריאות / DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
- Title: תעודת רשום של לדה / Certificate of Registration of Birth
- Parents' Information:

PARTICULARS OF PARENTS		פרטים בדבר ההורים		تفاصيل عن الوالدين	
Father	האב	אב	Mother	האם	אם
Name	שם	שם	Name	שם	שם

2.0

Introduction

Objectives and Purpose of the Report

One day in September 2001, young Hosni Ghazal was stopped for a routine check at the Lebanese army checkpoint at Ein el-Hilweh camp and was told to get out of his car. Hosni panicked and started to run from the checkpoint towards the camp. The soldiers shot him dead. When trying to establish why Hosni ran away, the authorities discovered that his ID was forged. He was afraid he would be found out and ran away. That day, it became apparent that some undocumented refugees were living in fear of being discovered and the existence of the “non-ID” Palestinian refugees in Lebanon was brought to light.

The presence of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon is well known and it is commonly believed that all are registered by the UN mandated agency, UNRWA. However, this incident demonstrated that there are different categories of refugees who do not share the same legal status.

Following the tragedy, a pilot study on non-ID refugees was conducted by PHRO in December 2002.

This study illustrated that while Palestinian refugees residing in camps and gatherings in Lebanon are primarily supported by humanitarian assistance, there are a number of undocumented Palestinian refugees whom, due to their lack of legal status in Lebanon, have fallen through the cracks and consequently experience a more difficult legal and socioeconomic situation.

However, little was known about the reasons for the presence of undocumented refugees in Lebanon or their legal and socioeconomic situation and their aspirations.

In order to acquire an in-depth knowledge of the legal and socioeconomic situation of undocumented refugees, known as non-identified (non-ID) Palestinian refugees, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and PHRO obtained funding from the European Commission Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO) to conduct a survey to collect baseline information about non-ID refugees' legal and living conditions on a larger scale and disseminate its results.

The objectives of the 2005 survey report were to assess:

- Why non-ID refugees are in Lebanon and the reasons for their situation
- Their exact legal status
- Their living conditions – are they different from those of registered refugees
- If they encounter particular difficulties beyond the generally difficult living conditions of refugees in Lebanon
- Solutions that could be explored to help them overcome their situation.

During the months of August to November 2004, PHRO and DRC surveyed a cross-section of 1,800 refugee households from 11 official refugee camps and 27 unregistered gatherings in Lebanon.

Data were collected through interviews with specifically designed questionnaires. Analysis of the data revealed the factors that influence the legal and socioeconomic conditions of non-ID refugees.

For the purposes of this survey report focusing on the non-ID refugees, registered and non-registered refugees were also interviewed in order to allow comparative analysis and, where relevant, the differences in status and living conditions between the three groups will be highlighted.

Registered refugees are registered with UNRWA and the Lebanese authorities. Non-registered refugees are registered only with the Lebanese authorities. Non-ID refugees are registered neither with UNRWA nor the Lebanese authorities (*cf. Section 4.0*).

The survey report also aims to establish how the refugees perceive their situation, their understanding of their legal status and what solutions they foresee.

3.0

Survey Methodology

The survey consisted of three distinct elements: household questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and focus groups. The tools for each element were developed specifically for the survey.

For ease of implementation and reporting Lebanon was divided into four geographic zones – Beirut and Mount Lebanon, the Beqaa, the North and the South (*Annex 1*).

The refugee camps surveyed are those listed and administered by UNRWA and the gatherings are defined as areas where more than 250 Palestinian refugees live in camp-like conditions.

Survey tools

Household questionnaires

The household questionnaire was designed to obtain general data on the legal and humanitarian situation of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and non-ID refugees in particular. The questionnaire (*Annex 2*) is divided up into six sections:

- Household characteristics
- Legal situation

- Education
- Socioeconomic conditions
- Housing and environment
- Health

1,800 household questionnaires were completed. After removal of the invalid (i.e. incomplete or inapplicable) questionnaires, the final sample consisted of 1,765 questionnaires from 38 refugee camps and gatherings in four regions.

The household questionnaire sample was divided up regionally as follows:

Beirut and Mount Lebanon	319
Beqaa	149
North	348
South (Tyre and Saida)	949

Camps

1	Ein el-Hilweh	7	Mieh Mieh
2	Beddawi	8	Nahr el-Bared
3	Burj el-Barajneh	9	Rashidieh
4	Burj el-Shemali	10	Shatila
5	El-Buss	11	Wavell
6	Mar Elias		

Gatherings

1	Bar Elias	15	Maashouk
2	Barish	16	Majdal Anjar
3	Burghliyah	17	Mina
4	Daouk	18	Old City Gathering
5	Doures	19	Qasmieh
6	Fakhani	20	Riyak
7	Fakiha	21	Saadnayel
8	Gaza Buildings	22	Shabriha
9	Hamshari	23	Simaia
10	Itaniyah	24	Seerob
11	Jal El Baher	25	Taalabaya
12	Jaloul	26	Wadi El Zeini
13	Kfar Badda	27	Wasta
14	Kfar Zabad		

No standardised list of spelling of locations exists in Lebanon. Spelling has been standardised throughout the report to correlate with UNRWA spellings where possible or with English translation of Arabic names

The household questionnaires surveyed registered Palestinian, non-registered Palestinian and undocumented Palestinian refugee households. Registered Palestinian refugees were selected randomly, while the non-registered and non-ID refugees were actively sought as they are fewer and more difficult to find. Since non-ID refugees have no legal status and therefore are not registered anywhere, network sampling was utilised. Non-ID refugees were identified from a 2002 PHRO study and with the support of district coordinators and volunteers from the camps and gatherings, who had a rough idea of the whereabouts of non-ID refugees.

Although this is a reasonable selection method in the given situation, this approach has limitations: asking interviewed refugees to suggest other refugees implies a risk of accessing people from the same social and political background and missing some particularly vulnerable groups who would tend to avoid being noticed and interviewed. Thus the survey does not purport to have scientific value or to be a census, however it does provide a picture of the situation of the interviewed families.

Semi-structured interviews

In addition to the 1,800 household questionnaires, 193 semi-structured interviews were conducted with non-ID refugee households. They were aimed at defining specific socioeconomic issues characterising the non-ID refugee target group.

The interviews were organised along four discussion points:

- Seasonal income/expenditure pattern
- Coping with crisis
- Income generation opportunities
- Organisation and support

Preliminary results from the survey indicated that approximately 64% of non-ID refugees surveyed reside in South Lebanon followed by the Beqaa. Subsequently the majority of the semi structured interviews were conducted in the South (Tyre and Saida) and the Beqaa, with a small number in the North and Beirut. A total of 193 families were interviewed.

The interview sample was divided up regionally as follows:

- Beirut 15
- Beqaa 48

- North 30
- South 100 (Tyre - 20 gatherings, 15 Rashidieh camp and 15 Burj el-Shemali camp, Saida - 50 Ein el-Hilweh camp)

Focus groups

Ten focus group sessions were conducted across the four geographic regions. A set of questions was pre-designed for the groups and the sessions were regulated by a moderator. The focus groups consisted of six representatives from each community, with knowledge of the education, health and socioeconomic living conditions in the location where the semi-structured interviews were conducted.

Focus groups were a tool to obtain multiple perspectives and insight into everyday life and people's shared perceptions with regard to the environment in which they and the people around them live. The purpose was to gain a better understanding of the living conditions (demographics, health, education, etc.), the level of integration of non-ID refugees in the community and the difficulties they face. The focus groups served as an informed forum generating information not available in one-to-one interviews.

Collation and checking of data

The data collected through focus groups, semi-structured interviews and questionnaires were combined and checked against each other to produce a detailed and accurate report.

Data were also checked against recognised sources of information, including:

- Statistics: UNRWA, World Bank Living Standards Measurement Study
- Studies: "Difficult Past, Uncertain Future; Living Conditions among Palestinian Refugees in Camps and Gatherings in Lebanon" (Faf0, 2003), "Palestinian Camps in Lebanon, Existing Conditions and Needs", PLO Department of Refugee Affairs, in cooperation with Friedrich Ebert Foundation, June 1998
- Websites: Badil, USCR, UNRWA

Staff recruitment and training

Training sessions for the survey were conducted with 18 survey volunteers and five survey supervisors. During the training sessions, the project objectives and



aims were explained, every question in the questionnaire was addressed and discussed to clarify any uncertainty and to secure mutual understanding of the questions.

Once the questionnaire review was finished, it was tested by the volunteers group and then in Mar Elias refugee camp. As a result, some minor adjustments were made to the questionnaire.

Difficulties during the field work

Because of their tenuous status, not all non-ID refugees agreed to be interviewed for the questionnaire. The survey team did not insist on interviewing reluctant refugees, as there was no guarantee of any improvement of their legal status. All interviews were conducted on a voluntary basis.

In some locations with a significant Islamist presence (e.g. Saida), there was greater reluctance from refugees to complete the questionnaires. In addition to this reluctance, new information about the geographical spread of non-ID refugees in Lebanon, difficulties in completing questionnaires in the Dbayeh camp and the resistance of some non-ID refugees to complete a questionnaire due to the sensitivity of their legal situation led to the decision to change the number of questionnaires originally allocated to each region/location.

The total number of refusals to participate in the questionnaire was limited and did not influence the overall outcome of the survey.

The distribution of questionnaires was revised accordingly: Dbayeh camp interviews were cancelled as they were insufficiently representative. The number of interviews was increased in other regions, mainly the Beqaa and Saida.

Common problems encountered and reported by the field workers included:

- Some of the interviewees were not honest in their answers because they thought they would receive humanitarian assistance based on their answers
- It was difficult to ascertain the sincerity of answers related to income and the importance of money transfers from relatives abroad
- The time allocated for field work was limited and inadequate
- There was no space on the questionnaire to document comments, especially for the non-ID refugees who had many issues they wanted to discuss
- The questions about the 'right to return' and to compensation were not well received by the Palestinian community. The community considered

them an insult and an attempt to marginalise their right to return to Palestine. It must be noted that this did not influence the outcome of the survey and that section of the questionnaire was not used in the report

- Some households demonstrated a lack of trust and reception because of the numerous surveys conducted in the past that have had no tangible impact on their situation
- Some people showed fear and reservation, especially the targeted non-ID refugee group.

Conversely, the field workers were enthusiastic about the questionnaire and the study.

The positive feedback reported included:

- Many of the non-ID refugees welcomed the survey because they felt that they were, for once, not forgotten and someone cared about their situation
- The survey provided more knowledge about the targeted group, the scale of their problems and the general conditions they live in
- The survey provided knowledge about the living conditions of the refugees in camps and gatherings in general.

Software used

The programme used for entering the data is Census and Survey Processing System (CSPPro). CSPPro combines the features of the Integrated Microcomputer Processing System (IMPS) and the Integrated System for Survey Analysis (ISSA).

CSPPro uses data dictionaries to provide a common description of each data file used.

Data entry training was provided for organisation members and volunteers. Five full-time and two part-time volunteers were recruited to enter the data.

Once data entry was concluded, the information was exported to SPSS, a statistical software package designed to perform quantitative research for analysis.

4.0

Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon

The creation in 1950 of a specific agency to provide assistance to Palestinian refugees, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), has registered Palestinian refugees who fled their country as a result of the Arab-Israeli conflict and afforded them eligibility for assistance. Under UNRWA's operational definition, Palestine refugees are:

'persons whose normal place of residence was Palestine between June 1946 and May 1948, who lost both their home and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict. UNRWA's services are available to all those living in its area of operations who meet this definition, who are registered with the Agency and who need assistance. UNRWA's definition of a refugee also covers the descendants of persons who became refugees in 1948'¹.

UNRWA's mandate is to provide humanitarian assistance. The UNRWA mandate does not include refugees who left Palestine after 1950 and does not provide protection for refugees. UNRWA's main assistance framework consists of health, education, social services and camp infrastructure projects. Food distribution and a hardship case programme also address the needs of particularly vulnerable refugees.

The UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) does have a protection role, but excludes from its mandate persons 'at present receiving

1. www.un.org/unrwa/refugees/whois.html

from organs or agencies of the United Nations other than the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees protection or assistance².

By the application of this clause, Palestinian refugees residing in the UNRWA area of operations were excluded from the protection of the UNHCR Refugee Convention. Like all of Palestine's neighbours, Lebanon is not a signatory to the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the status of refugees and considers Palestinian refugees as aliens.

According to UNRWA statistics, December 2006, the total number of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon is 408,438³.

However, it is estimated that less than two thirds of this figure actually reside in the country⁴.

Discriminatory laws against Palestinian refugees as well as the events of the civil war in Lebanon (1975-1990) caused massive migrations of Palestinian refugees, especially to Western European and Scandinavian countries. Though many emigrants to Europe settled permanently and those living in the Arab Gulf states have legal work permits, many still retain their status as Palestinian refugees registered in Lebanon. As a result, the exact number of refugees remains uncertain.

Palestinian refugees in Lebanon can be categorised into three groups:

- **'Registered' refugees:** population 408,438 (UNRWA, December 2006)

This group of refugees is registered by both UNRWA and the Lebanese authorities, and benefit from the services offered by UNRWA. They constitute approximately 10% of the population of Lebanon. According to available UNRWA statistics, approximately 53% (215,890)⁵ live in the 12 registered refugee camps in Lebanon, with the remainder living in non-registered gatherings and Palestinian communities or in cities. They do not benefit from any Lebanese government refugee assistance programme. Since 1978, Lebanese authorities have allowed, in some cases, the transfer of UNRWA files to Lebanon for refugees who were registered by UNRWA in another country.

- **'Non-registered' refugees:** population 35,000 (estimate, 2004)

These refugees fall outside the UNRWA mandate because they either:

- Left Palestine after 1948
- Left Palestine and took refuge outside UNRWA areas of operations

2. Article 1 D, 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees

3. www.un.org/unrwa/publications/pdf/uif-dec06.pdf

4. PLO unofficial figures, however UNRWA does not endorse this estimation

5. www.un.org/unrwa/publications/pdf/uif-dec06.pdf

– Left Palestine in 1948 but were not in need of humanitarian assistance⁶.

Non-registered refugees are only registered by the Lebanese government. UNRWA started, in January 2004, to assist the non-registered refugee population. The explanation for this extension of services was that non-registered refugees are also Palestinians who fled their homeland and are not offered any assistance by the Lebanese government. The crucial factor for non-registered refugees is that they are registered with a recognised organisation or government body.

- **'Non-Identified' refugees:** population 3,000 (estimate, 2004)

Non-ID refugees are not registered with any authority or agency in Lebanon and as a result they do not hold any valid documentation that grants them legal status in Lebanon. They have limited access to UNRWA's assistance programs and endure difficult socioeconomic conditions as they lack a stable income opportunities due to their ineligibility for work.

Without documentation, non-ID refugees cannot leave the refugee camps or travel abroad.

This restriction on movement and travel means that non-ID refugee children are often unable to obtain a higher education as only primary education is available in all camps.

Non-ID refugees are predominately Palestinians who entered Lebanon in the 1970s. At that time, they were supported by political parties, mainly the PLO, which was the dominant organisation in Lebanon. Some of them came to fight for the Palestinian cause, others were trapped in Lebanon and were refused re-entry to their previous country of residence because they were associated with the Palestinian revolution. Now, the second and third generations of non-ID refugees are facing problems graduating from school, working, registering marriages, accessing health services and taking part in social, economic and legal aspects of life.

6. UNRWA mandate initially covered persons who lived in Palestine in 1948, who left because of the conflict, took refuge in one of the five areas of operations and were in need. This latter criterion was abandoned in 1992

Jamal

Jamal was born in Gaza in 1958 and is registered with UNRWA in Gaza. He was forced to flee to Egypt in 1967 and later travelled to Lebanon.

Jamal is married to a Lebanese citizen and lives with his wife and three children in Burj el-Shemali camp, South Lebanon.

Jamal holds an Egyptian travel document for Palestinian refugees, which he has been able to renew with DRC's assistance.

Jamal had an opportunity to legalise his situation in a recent Lebanese Government amnesty for aliens who entered Lebanon illegally, but without a Lebanese employer willing to sponsor him, he was unable to do so.

Jamal's daughter, Loubna, 14, suffers from muscular-atrophy and the family can not afford the costs of her medication and treatment. Loubna and her two brothers are registered on their father's UNRWA card in Gaza, but they are only able to access UNRWA Lebanon's primary health care services.



Photo: C. Mathie

5.0

Survey Findings

Demographics

The 1765 valid household questionnaires interviewed 6,217 registered, 1,620 non-registered and 1,745 non-ID refugees. The survey was conducted in four regions and in 38 camps and gatherings. Over half of refugees interviewed from all categories (53%) were concentrated in the South. 64% of non-ID refugees in the interviewed sample of households live in the South. The second-most populated region is the Beqaa.

	Registered refugees	Non-Registered refugees	Non-ID refugees	Total
Beirut and Mount Lebanon	1205 19.5%	307 19%	87 5%	1599 16.5%
Beqaa	417 6.5%	56 3.5%	277 16%	751 8%
North	1703 27.5%	178 11%	268 15.5%	2149 22.5%
South	2892 46.5%	1078 66.5%	1113 63.5%	5083 53%
Total	6217 100%	1620 100%	1745 100%	9582 100%

Table 1. Geographical distribution of interviewed refugees (number of refugees)
All percentages are rounded to the nearest 0.5%

**63.5% of
non-ID
refugees
interviewed
live in South
Lebanon**

The questionnaire statistics indicated that the average number of members per family is 5.5. This figure was confirmed by the focus groups, which also estimated that each family averages between five and six people. It is very common to find extended families living in the same household.

All refugee camps have a higher percentage of women than men. In some camps, the difference is striking. The focus group of Nahr el-Bared claimed that the ratio of men to women is 1:4. The study also confirmed the average higher female percentage, with 50.5% women and 49.5% men being interviewed.

The non-ID sample population ratio is 59% male and 41% female. When these figures are compared to the non-registered population ratio of 52.5% men and 47.5% women and the registered refugee ratio of 46% men and 54% female, it is obvious that the majority of women hold identification papers, whereas the majority of the sampled men are non-ID refugees.

Thus, while there are more women than men, they also tend to be documented more than their male counterparts. This main difference in demography between non-ID and other refugees is due to the fact that while most registered refugees arrived in 1948 as whole families and even villages, the majority of non-ID refugees arrived in Lebanon as single men in connection with political or violent events.

The focus groups also adduced the history of wars in the region as the main reason for the preponderance of men and their status.

According to interviews and focus group feedback, polygamy is very rare, almost non-existent, within the Palestinian refugee community.

Non-ID children aged up to nine comprise 19.5% of the non-ID population and children aged 10-17 years 28.5%. Young people who are not yet of marital age constitute almost half of the population (48%). The working and adult population of non-ID refugees aged 18-65 make up 51.5% of the population, while 1% are over 65 years old.

With regard to the actual organisation of camps and gatherings, all refugees, regardless of legal status, live together. According to all the focus groups, non-ID refugees do not face any problems in terms of demographics.

Ali

When Ali's family left their home, Nablus, in 1960, they went to Jordan. After a few years in his first country of exile, Ali travelled to Lebanon without proper documentation. Today, he is married to Miriam, a Lebanese citizen and has two children.

Despite their mother's Lebanese nationality, Ali's and Miriam's young sons have inherited their father's legal status. They, like their father, cannot access services organised for Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, such as health care.

Without family members in Lebanon, and unable to find accommodation in a refugee camp Ali and his family do not have a support network like other refugee families to assist in times of difficulty.

Ali has never been able to acquire a stay permit as the husband of a Lebanese citizen, as he does not hold a recognised passport needed to initiate the process.

Ali and his family live in a hut made of wood, iron bars and plastic sheeting in the Beqaa valley, a region where the temperature drops below 0°C in the winter.



Photo C. Petrih

As many as
86.5% of
non-ID
refugees
interviewed
have some
form of legal
document
proving their
identity

Legal Status

The surveyed non-ID population are without any legal registration in Lebanon. In order to try to understand the exact legal status of non-ID refugees, the survey enquired about their nationality, the documents they possess and the issuing authority of these documents.

In Lebanon, the nationality and legal status of a man is extended to his wife and children.

In the case that a non-ID refugee woman marries a man with legal status (registered refugee, non-registered refugee, Lebanese citizen), his legal status will be extend to their children.

Conversely, in the case of a male non-ID refugee marrying a woman with legal status (registered refugee, non-registered refugee, Lebanese citizen) he will not benefit from the legal situation of his spouse and even though his wife will maintain her legal status, their children will inherit their fathers' non-ID status.

During the survey, several families were encountered where the wife had recognised legal status (i.e. Lebanese citizen, registered refugee), but her children had to face all the difficulties encountered by non-ID refugees.

The vast majority of survey respondents claimed to have Palestinian nationality (96% of registered, 89% of non-registered and 88% of non-ID refugees). Other nationalities mentioned by non-ID refugees were Jordanian, Syrian, Egyptian and Iraqi. Unlike the registered (5%) and non-registered (5.5%) refugees, none of the non-ID refugees claimed to be Lebanese citizens.

Refugees have in most cases collected a number of legal documents relating to their family history: birth certificates, passports, registration cards, etc. These documents are not always valid and do not necessarily entitle their bearer to registration in Lebanon.

They can, however, prove the bearer's Palestinian identity and help explain the refugee's current situation.

For this reason, refugees were asked about the documents in their possession, regardless of their current validity in Lebanon. 93.3% of registered refugees

**Only 5%
of non-ID
refugees
claimed they
never had
any form of
registration in
any country**

hold two or more documents, most non-registered refugees (75.5%) and non-ID refugees (64.5%) hold only one legal document.

13.5% of non-ID refugees do not have any documents. Of this 13.5%, some lost their documents, during the destruction of the Tel el-Zaatar camp or during the camps wars, while others never held any documents. The relatively low percentage of non-ID refugees without any documentation suggests two scenarios:

- In the vast majority of cases, the Palestinian identity of the non-ID population can be easily demonstrated
- In the vast majority of cases, it would be possible to trace the non-ID refugees' files and request the collaboration of an authority with a view to a solution.

Refugees were asked about the issuing authority of their legal document(s) to establish if they could track the refugees' files and offer a solution to their legal situation in Lebanon.

It became evident that:

- Legal documents held by the registered refugees were, as expected, supplied by UNRWA and Lebanese authorities
- Non-registered refugees reported that the documents in their possession were supplied by the Lebanese authorities (98%), but also by authorities in other countries, UNRWA in Lebanon or UNRWA in other countries

Surveyed non-ID refugees stated the following:

- The majority (52.5%) claimed having been previously registered by authorities in another country
- 6.5% of them were registered by UNRWA in another country
- The origin of other documents mentioned is diverse: PLO fighter IDs, birth certificates, UNHCR (in countries outside UNRWA mandate), etc.

The survey also showed the existence of different legal status within the same family.

Interestingly, only 5% of non-ID refugees said that they were never registered.

It must be acknowledged that, although the figures cannot be evaluated, some refugees, mainly within the non-ID population, have false documents. In other cases, refugees have valid documents but in the name of another family member; the document has been issued by a recognised authority, under another identity.

The survey subsequently examined the refugees' journey prior to their arrival in Lebanon.

The majority of non-ID refugees (84%) passed through another host country before arriving in Lebanon.

This applied to only 11% of the registered and 35% of the non-registered interviewed refugees. This information can be verified by the fact that 77% of non-ID refugees arrived in Lebanon in or after 1970.

When asked, 64.5% of the non-ID refugees who lived in another country before Lebanon lived in Jordan, 55.5% Syria, 20.5% Egypt and 12% Iraq (the total is more than 100% as some travelled through more than one country).

One of the reasons for the large proportion of non-ID refugees who lived in Jordan is linked to Black September in 1970. Some Palestinians left the country after the events, while others were even deported from Jordan to neighbouring Syria.

With a strong PLO presence in Lebanon and, from 1975, the civil war, Lebanon became an accessible country for refugees fleeing Jordan. Many were smuggled into Lebanon and recruited by Palestinian organisations. They were provided with IDs by the PLO⁷, whose presence in Lebanon was considered legitimate at the time, and as a result refugees did not always seek registration by the Lebanese authorities. After its expulsion from Lebanon in 1982, PLO's presence in the country was illegal and the organisation could no longer issue or renew existing IDs. All PLO ID's were deemed invalid in Lebanon.

There are several other reasons for the arrival of undocumented refugees from Jordan in Lebanon. Some came to pursue a higher education. Upon their return, the majority were denied re-entry to Jordan as a result of being directly or indirectly associated with the Palestinian revolution.

After examining the legal situation and the history of non-ID families, the survey also looked at the consequences in relation to access to services and restrictions of movement.

Access to Movement and Services

As many as 94.5% of non-ID refugees said that they faced restrictions on exiting and entering the registered camps as well as travelling around the country (95%). In addition, 88% reported that the high risks of arrest affected

7. In most of the cases. However, a number of non-ID refugees also claim membership in other organisations

their willingness to move within Lebanon. This clearly illustrates the situation to which not only non-ID refugees but their children are confined. It also gives an idea of the consequential limitations in terms of accessing the labour market, institutions and services located outside the camps, etc.

In practice, non-ID refugees exit the camps, but may be stopped and arrested. Several families reported that one of the members (father/son – usually a male) had been arrested or was currently under arrest because he lacked valid documentation. According to interviewed non-ID refugees, those who are arrested are imprisoned in their region or sent to the Roumieh jail (in Mount Lebanon) for up to three months. They are released with a document requesting them to legalise their situation. Some non-ID refugees regard this document as the first step towards recognition of their residence in Lebanon by the authorities.

Access to services was one of the most significant issues raised by non-ID refugees. Non-ID refugees face considerable disadvantages when compared to other registered and non-registered Palestinian refugees.

The foremost problem is the access to UNRWA services, as UNRWA is responsible for, among others, education and health in the camps.

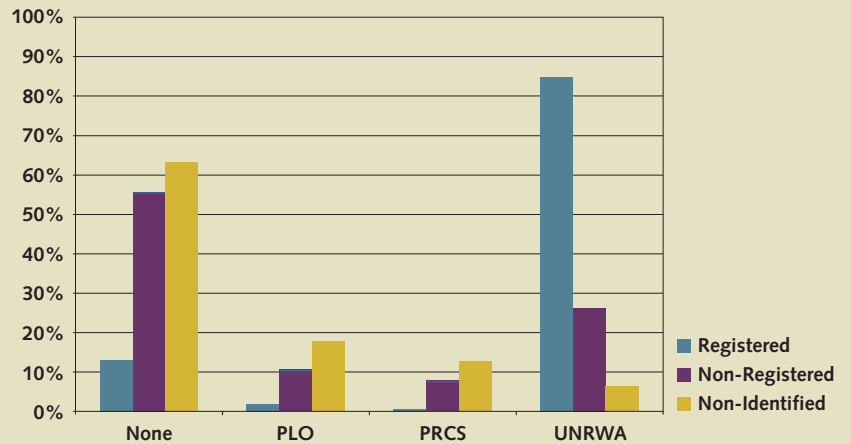


Table 2. Services accessed by surveyed refugees

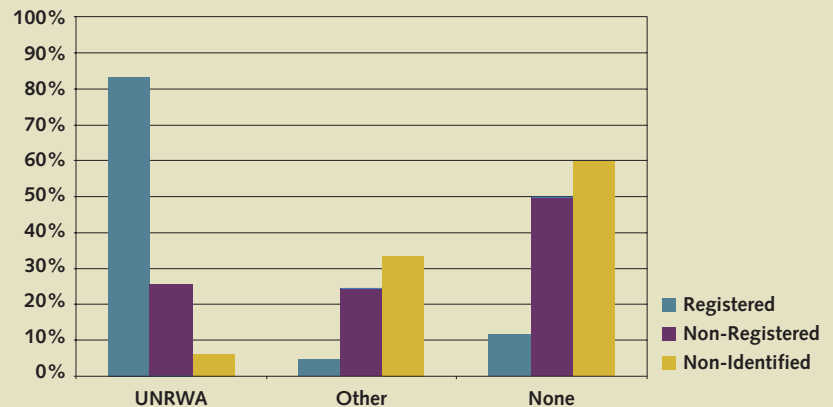


Table 3. Summary of services accessed by surveyed refugees

While registered refugees predominately use UNRWA services, only 24% of the non-registered refugees reported using UNRWA services. Non-ID refugees use services provided by the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS), political or charity organisations, however the majority of non-ID refugees claimed to have no access to services at all. 6% of non-ID refugees reported to be using UNRWA services: in practice, most non-ID children attend UNRWA schools, however due to their lack of identification, they can not be granted official diplomas (*cf. Section 5 Education*).

UNRWA indicated to DRC that special hardship assistance is extended to non-ID children in need, as well as to non-registered refugees. A list of criteria for admission to the special hardship programme is available⁸.

At the time of the survey, UNRWA clinics were not accessible to non-ID refugees. Some nonetheless used these services, by using a forged ID or the ID of another refugee. This can be regarded as a way of coping with their restrictions rather than as a regular, accepted and legal use of these services (*cf. Section 5 Health*).

Non-ID refugees also compensate for the lack of access to UNRWA services by using other service providers more than other refugees: 12% currently use PRCS services, as against a negligible number of registered and 7% of non-registered refugees, while 17% of non-ID refugees said they use PLO services.

An unexpected finding of this survey was that although UNRWA claims to have provided broader access to its services for non-registered refugees since the beginning of 2004, very few beneficiaries were aware of this possibility.

8. www.un.org/unrwa/programmes/rss/specialhardship.html

At the time of the survey, UNRWA was interviewed to clarify the issue of accessibility to services for non-registered refugees, which confirmed that non-registered refugees can access services and also be included on the UNRWA 'hardship case' list. The refugee community was not fully aware of this possibility.

In order to establish how non-ID refugees perceived their situation the survey asked them in an open question to identify, in order of importance, the three main problems they encounter as a result of their legal status. In response, non-ID refugees identified six different problems.

43% of non-ID refugees identified restriction of movement as their primary problem, 21% identified lack of registration/ID as their primary problem and 15% nominated their access to medical services as their primary problem.

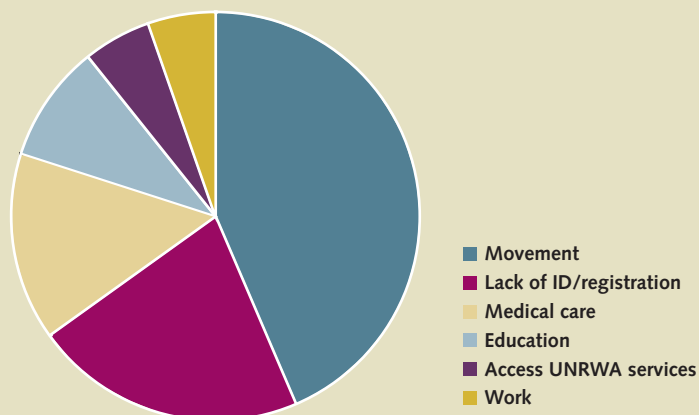


Table 4. Main problems identified by non-ID refugees

When the total number of responses (primary, secondary and tertiary) are summed for each of the six identified problems, restriction of movement was the highest recorded response (87%), followed by medical care (50%) and lack of ID/registration (48%). In addition, non-ID refugees also identified education (39%), access to the labour market (39%) and access to UNRWA services (10%) as problems they encounter.

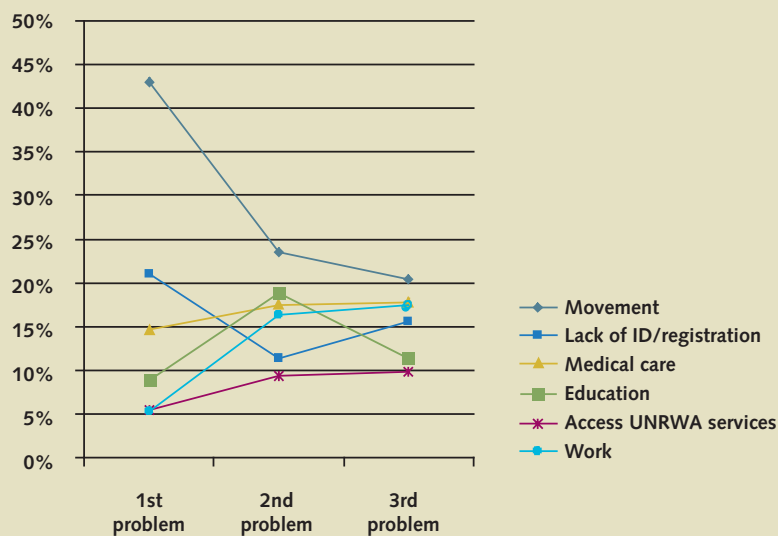


Table 5. Main problems identified by non-ID refugees in order of priority

When asked the same question, non-registered refugees reported their primary difficulties to be accessing medical care (35.5%), UNRWA services (35.5%) and education (8%).

The majority of Palestinian refugees experience difficult living conditions. However the survey has illustrated the different problems and marginalisation facing the 3 categories of refugees. Specifically it has become apparent that non-registered refugees lack information about their access to UNRWA services, whilst non-ID refugees experience a very difficult situation due to the problems connected to their lack of registration including: restriction of movement and no access to medical care, effective education, UNRWA services or the labour market.

Access to health services and education, the socioeconomic conditions, housing and environment will be presented in the following pages.

Jamila

Jamila is a young widow. Her husband, a non-ID refugee, was a Palestinian fighter.

Jamila supplements her small pension from the political party which employed her husband with wages she earns as a cleaner. She has three children, Khadija, 20, Ali, 14 and Ahmad, 10. Although Jamila is a registered refugee (she is registered with UNRWA and the Lebanese authorities) her children have inherited their father's status and are non-ID refugees.

Jamila and her children live in a gathering in the Beqaa, where there is no UNRWA clinic. When her children are ill, she takes them to a PRCS hospital, where she has to contribute towards consultation fees and medication costs.

DRC is supporting Jamila to add her children to her UNRWA registration card in Lebanon, advocating that children should not inherit the status of an absent father.



Photo C. Petrigh

Health

Palestinian refugees rely mostly on UNRWA and PRCS medical services as they are affordable and accessible. Palestinian refugees have access to the Lebanese medical system, but it is dominated by the private sector with high prices for services.

Health risks are high among the refugee population. The focus group in Burj el-Barajneh camp unanimously agreed that poor health in the camps is directly attributable to the social, economic and political stress of their environment. This applies especially to the psychological problems and cases of cancer which are increasing among the refugees.

Use of health care services is high in refugee camps and visits to clinics are quite common among the Palestinian refugees. The survey results showed that 68.5% of non-ID refugees interviewed had visited a clinic with an average of 5.7 visits for at least one household member during the past three months, while 15% had visited a clinic in the past three months to a year. 16.5% had not visited a clinic in the past year.

Registered and non-registered refugees (85.5% and 82.5% respectively) had visited a clinic in the past three months with an average of 6.7 visits for registered and 6 visits for non-registered refugees. This can be attributed to the fact that registered and non-registered refugees have better access to medical care than non-ID refugees. While all refugees are subject to the same health risks, not all have the privilege of medical care.

UNRWA Health Department's statistics indicate that an average of 4 to 5 visits were made by registered refugees to the health centres during 2004.

Registered refugee women interviewed stated that if their husband is a non-ID refugee, they were unable to obtain UNRWA support when giving birth. This was checked and confirmed by UNRWA in March 2005. The same pattern was mentioned for all care related to pregnancy, delivery, infant illness, etc.

62.7 % of non-ID refugees who access health care visit PRCS clinics, 27.5% visit private clinics or hospitals, while 17.5 percent visit UNRWA clinics. 13.4% reported that they visit NGO or CBO clinics. Non-ID refugees who access UNRWA clinics for primary health care are not referred to hospitals for further treatment.

The high turnout for the PRCS clinics can be attributed to the fact that they do not require identification and have low charge rates. However it must be noted

that in some cases these low charge rates still prevent non-ID refugees from accessing health care.

There are five PRCS hospitals, and nine PRCS clinics throughout the country. However, not all the hospitals are located inside the UNRWA camps. For example, the Hamshari Hospital is located outside the Ein el-Hilweh camp in Saida. As a result, it is difficult for non-ID refugees to have surgery or be hospitalised because many operations can not be performed inside the camps.

The UNRWA camps have clinics, but if a refugee needs major treatment and/or hospitalisation, he/she must go to a hospital outside the confines of a camp. Some 52% of non-ID refugees had a family member hospitalised in the past year. 46% received some sort of financial support for hospitalisation as compared to 62% of registered refugees and 40% of non-registered refugees.

The majority of non-ID refugees surveyed stated that affordability was the reason they visited the specified clinics (51.5%) followed by proximity of the clinics (26%) and lack of ID (8.2%). While affordability was the main reason for all Palestinian groups (62.7% registered, 57.2% non-registered), only 12% of registered and 18.8% of non-registered refugees mentioned proximity, while neither group expressed problems related to IDs.

With regard to medical services, most refugees mentioned difficulties in accessing medical services (72.6%). Financial burden was the most common reason given by non-ID refugees (60.5%) followed by lack of ID (18%) and poor medical services provided by UNRWA (12%).

In fact, 71% of non-ID refugees said they pay for medical services. That is because they have no access to free medical services through UNRWA (at least not officially) or any other health provider. Even the PRCS charges a fee for its services. Although the fee is symbolic, the amount can be a burden, given the refugees' financial situation.

Moreover, all focus groups claimed that the doctors at the UNRWA clinics were overwhelmed by patients and thus could never spend much time per patient. The focus groups touched upon the fact that UNRWA fails to follow up possible illnesses that a patient may have. If a patient's condition is not deemed 'urgent', it is postponed for a few months as a 'cold operation'. Problems and complications have arisen through such postponement. According to the UNRWA 2005 Annual Health Report, the UNRWA health centres have heavy workloads - on average, each doctor sees 82 patients a day⁹.

9. www.un.org/unrwa/publications/pdf/ar_health2005.pdf

Some refugees also said that they had occasionally used UNRWA services with the ID card of another person. In addition, 47.5% of refugees reported difficulties with bureaucratic or multiple administrative procedures, 35% with the long waiting time and 30% said the doctor was not patient and caring.

Although all Palestinians complained about the present health care system available, it seems that the lack of ID further restricts non-ID refugees in their choice, access to medical services and puts additional pressure on their limited budget. As a result this places them in an even more vulnerable situation than the registered and non-registered Palestinian refugee population in Lebanon.

Education

One of the main services provided by UNRWA is free education for Palestinian refugees. In Lebanon, UNRWA runs 86 schools, including six secondary schools and one vocational training centre¹⁰. Due to the large number of pupils accessing UNRWA education services, some schools operate two shifts (morning and afternoon class). Refugees who can afford enrolment fees may also access private schools.

Statistics gathered through the survey show that the level of education does not vary greatly amongst the different legal categories of refugees. Differences can be found in relation to geography or type of settlement. The overall illiteracy rate is lower than average in the Beqaa, which was less affected by war. Conversely, non-ID refugees living in gatherings find it more difficult to attend school in the camps because of their fear of being stopped and arrested.

A significant number of the refugees interviewed (42.5%) have a child who dropped out of school. Families were asked about the reasons why children drop out of school. Among non-ID refugees, the highest percentage response was lack of ID (42.3%) followed by financial burden (28.8%) and child disinterest (7.7%). Registered and non-registered refugees listed financial burden as the main reason (42% and 43% respectively) followed by child disinterest (21% and 16.5% respectively) and child failure (12.9% and 7.6% respectively). Only 3.8% of non-ID refugees gave child failure as the reason for dropping out.

Unsurprisingly financial difficulties also play a part in the continuation of education. When asked, 89.7% of Palestinian refugees interviewed mentioned economic factors as the main reason for failing to continue education.

The focus groups pointed out that refugees with fewer opportunities to access the job market, have a higher tendency to drop out of school.

10. www.un.org/unrwa/publications/pdf/uif-dec06.pdf

Non-ID refugee children face restrictions in accessing schools and are more likely to drop out. Even when they seek to complete their education, they face difficulties in obtaining degrees due to their situation: students cannot get an official diploma if they do not have valid ID documents.

Only 16.5% of non-ID refugees said they have a valid diploma, at any level. Though the number of persons in this situation cannot be quantified, some interviewees even mentioned that they or their children obtained a diploma under a false identity or under the identity of a friend or family member.

Socioeconomic Living Conditions

Palestinian refugees in Lebanon are confronted with difficult socioeconomic conditions. At the time of the survey, Lebanese law prohibited Palestinian refugees from working in more than 70 professions. A memorandum issued in June 2005 by the Minister of Labour and confirmed by the Minister of Labour in 2007¹¹ has brought changes to this situation. Currently, Palestinians born in Lebanon and registered with the Lebanese authorities can now access the previously restricted professions.

According to the household questionnaires, 66% of interviewed Palestinian refugees are unemployed. The focus groups revealed that unemployment is generally very high among the refugee population, averaging 65%.

The level of unemployment among interviewed non-ID refugees is 58%. The unemployment rate among non-ID refugees is slightly lower than the general unemployment rate because 31% of non-ID refugees receive wages from the PLO, which they consider employment, while only 2% of registered and 5% of non-registered refugees reported employment with the PLO.

Most refugees engage in agricultural work or in simple trades as labourers or drivers. Those living in gatherings tend to have an occupation – sometimes seasonal – in agriculture. Construction-workers have been left unemployed since the Lebanese construction market collapsed and due to competition from other foreign workers. Due to their inability to work safely outside the camps, non-ID refugees tend to work for political organisations more often than other groups.

According to the focus groups, the average monthly wage within camps and gatherings is around 250,000 LL (\$166 USD). Refugees often struggled to define the poverty line as they considered it important to take account of household size, place of residence and whether people receive a regular salary¹².

11. Decision no.14/1 issued on 8 March 2007 by Minister of Labour, related to the professions exclusively reserved for Lebanese citizens, Official Gazette, Vol. 16, 22 March 2007

12. According to the paper 'The Poor in Lebanon' (A. Haddad, 1995), the extreme poverty line, defined as the income level at which a family of five can meet only its food requirements, was estimated at \$306 per month

**91.5% of
non-ID
refugees
interviewed
said lack of ID
is their main
obstacle in
finding a job**

They agreed that most refugees are living below the poverty line. It is an economic hardship for families to provide heaters and fuel in their houses in the winter. On a micro level, families survive on limited income, a small number of jobs and the bare essentials.

Non-ID refugees are more restricted because due to their legal situation, they avoid looking for jobs outside the camp. In fact, 68.1% of non-ID refugees work inside the camps, while 62.5% of registered and 60.5% of non-registered refugees stated that their work location is outside the camp. Non-registered and registered refugees can leave the camp for work, though the kind of work they can do is restricted and they may encounter daily obstacles at checkpoints. Palestinian refugees also face competition from Syrians and other foreigners seeking jobs.

When asked to specify the main difficulties in finding a job, 91.5% of non-ID refugees interviewed said the lack of ID documents was the main problem, while registered and non-registered refugees mentioned lack of opportunities (53% and 48%) and lack of qualifications (12% and 12%) as the two main obstacles in finding a job.

The labour law restrictions imposed by the Lebanese Government affect all Palestinian refugees in Lebanon¹³. However, for non-ID refugees, the lack of identification and as a consequence their inability to travel freely means they are limited to whatever jobs they can find in their local vicinity. Travelling to find better employment opportunities involves some risk and non-ID refugees therefore are forced to accept jobs they can find in their area of residence with whatever conditions and payment they are offered. This further exacerbates their situation, both physically and psychologically.

Housing and Environment

This section focuses on the living standards of refugees in the camps and gatherings. At first sight, non-ID, registered and non-registered refugees live in similar environment and enjoy similar infrastructures. The major difference is that registered and non-registered refugees can live outside of a camp or gathering, while non-ID refugees cannot without running a significant risk of being arrested.

Refugees living in gatherings use Lebanese infrastructure: they share the Lebanese sewage system, electricity and water supply. Yet, unlike those in the camps, for whom these services and infrastructures are provided by UNRWA free of charge, they have to pay fees like the Lebanese. However, the majority

13. Although restrictions on more than 70 professions were lifted in 2005, Palestinian refugees still face difficulties obtaining the work permit required to work legally

of the gatherings lack reliable infrastructure; they have electricity but commonly have no sewage system.

The physical aspects of the housing conditions and environment are an important way of determining the comfort and space available. According to all the focus groups, non-ID refugees face no special problems in terms of their living environment. This lack of disparity is due to the fact that all refugees regard themselves as being in the same situation and do not differentiate among themselves. However, non-ID refugees cannot access UNRWA shelter rehabilitation programmes, thus if their house needs repair or rehabilitation it must be financed at their own expense.

Salwa

Salwa is a young Palestinian refugee who lives with her mother, brothers and sisters in Burj el-Shemali camp.

Her mother is a registered refugee, (she is registered with UNRWA Lebanon and the Lebanese authorities) and her father is registered with UNRWA Jordan and holds an expired Jordanian passport.

Salwa, her brothers and her sisters are registered on their father's UNRWA card in Jordan. However, this registration does not grant her or her siblings legal status in Lebanon. Salwa's only documentation is a birth certificate from the 'mukhtar', the local mayor.

Salwa is worried about her future and the difficulties she will face. In particular, she is concerned about getting married – with her current legal status her marriage would never be officially registered.



Photo C. Mathie

The survey showed that living conditions are quite dense in the camps and gatherings. Interviewed refugee families average between five and seven members with an average of two bedrooms per household. Approximately 46.5% of refugees interviewed live in two room homes, while about 27% live in three room homes. The actual number of rooms used for sleeping averages 1.86, with about 54.5% of the population having two rooms used for sleeping. However, 69.5% of surveyed refugees have less than half a room allotted to each person. The figures for non-ID refugees are similar.

In addition to crowded and uncomfortable living conditions, the refugees' homes are also in dire need of refurbishment. The focus groups explained that when the Palestinians first settled, they were under the impression that their stay was temporary and they therefore did not construct adequate long-term housing. Periodically, the Lebanese authorities have prohibited building work in refugee camps, so improvements or basic repairs cannot always be carried out. Generally, housing infrastructure is very poor, which poses health risks to the inhabitants. According to the focus groups, as families grow, they construct homes on top of the existing dwelling.

At the time of first publication of this report in March 2005 the ban on construction in the southern camps had been lifted.

Poor housing environment has made it difficult for sewage, electricity and water facilities to function effectively.

According to the questionnaires and focus groups, water is accessible in all the camps. During the summer, water shortages occur due to higher demands. The majority of refugees, (48.5%), get their domestic water from allocated public wells. About 27% get water from the municipal government and 26.5% receive water tanks from UNRWA. Water is often provided to the refugees because the water pipe infrastructure is weak. In the camps, all refugees, including non-ID refugees, receive the same water. As mentioned above, the refugees in gatherings often obtain water from the Lebanese infrastructure.

The focus groups regarded sewage as one of the main problems of the housing environment. This directly affects not only the water quality, but also the health of refugees as they become more susceptible to disease and pollution. Despite poor quality sewage systems, 77% of refugees have sewage services to dispose of their wastewater. The major problem is that they are rarely in good condition and do not have sufficient capacity for the camp population. Two camps in the south, Burj el-Shemali and Rashidieh, and some nearby gatherings, accounting for 16% of the refugee population, do not have sewage systems and use pit

toilets in the ground instead. In Burj el-Shemali camp, located on the sea coast, sewage pollutes the sea which is the source of non-drinking water.

In general, it appears that pollution is the main reason why refugees do not use the municipality's drinking water. In addition, water tends to have high concentrations of salt, calcium and chlorine.

Electricity in the camps and gatherings is provided by Electricité du Liban (EDL), Lebanon's industrial and commercial provider. The percentage of refugees receiving electricity is around 98%. However, the electricity infrastructure for refugees is still under-developed compared to the rest of Lebanon: electricity cables in the camps are untended and hang dangerously low over the homes. The price of generators tends to be high as a result of frequent electricity shortages and thus most refugees cannot afford to purchase them. In fact, in terms of refugee investment, a generator was reported as the least purchased item. The most commonly bought household items are, in order of highest percentage: television sets, refrigerators and washing machines. The least commonly-bought are, also in order of importance: electricity generator, air conditioner and computer.

Semi-structured interviews

The semi-structured interviews were organised along four discussion points: seasonal income/expenditure pattern, coping with crisis, income generation opportunities, organisation and support.

Seasonal income/expenditure pattern

Every region's households have different seasonal expenditure patterns. In terms of the typical costs incurred by refugees, the major expenditure is on food, rent and education. Further expenditure tends to fluctuate between medication, electricity and water.

Expenditure patterns also vary by region. Electricity and water are a problem in Saida and the Beqaa. Water tanks are made available in these regions, but refugees have to pay for them. In the North and the South, expenditure on electricity and water is negligible; the cost of diesel fuel is only an issue in the Beqaa, where the weather is much colder. Those living in northern Lebanon pay more for clothing than for education, which is not the case elsewhere. In all the regions, except the Beqaa, autumn is the most expensive period.

Medication costs are generally high and often referred to as one of the main expenditures. Additional costs mentioned by refugees are marriages and births, furniture and house repairs. In the South, detention and imprisonment are also costly for the families, in terms of transportation, getting the prisoners released and provision of food and clothing.

The income of refugees varies according to location. For example in the South, the PLO provides wages to refugees for simply belonging to a political party. In the Beqaa, income is generally generated from agricultural work. Those in the North and in Beirut tend to live from trade.

One of the most serious problem non-ID refugees face is the delay in receiving their monthly salary. They also identified delays in receiving financial aid, ability to purchase medication and limited work opportunities as significant problems. In a small number of cases, the dilemma of detention and imprisonment is a reality which cannot be ignored. This has caused many households grief.

Coping with crisis

The most distressing situation for refugees relates to health care: the cost and availability of medication and the need for operations and hospitalisation. Such services are not accessible to non-ID refugees. They often have to pay sums that exceed their economic capacity.

The secondary problem identified by non-ID refugees relates to their homes: damage and deterioration, floods and/or subsidence and forced eviction. This has ongoing implications as the state of their homes directly affects refugees' living conditions and their health.

Crises have negatively affected both men and women. They are more nervous, easily agitated and shout more frequently. Men are often described as 'smoking more' and even as having 'abandoned' the family. Women can sometimes turn to their parents for support. The household environment is highly negative. Family members shout and argue with each other, admitting that discussions lead to more tension and problems. As a result, domestic violence tends to increase, especially towards women. There was consensus that financial aid could have reduced the level of tension.

Income generation opportunities

According to more than 90% of non-ID refugees, employment opportunities exist in other localities and neighbourhoods, but are not available to them

because they lack ID and are often unskilled. Those in Beirut were the most negatively affected by their 'lack of skills' because of the wide range of jobs available in the city as opposed to other regions.

Organisation and support

Non-ID refugees said that they generally participate in social occasions with each other on a regular basis. Within a neighbourhood and community, people have close relations and take part in each other's events, such as marriages, births and deaths. The interviewees all stated that mutual activities and closer relations with one another could benefit them. Networking within their society provides them with the chance to find common ground and share experiences.

All refugees claimed that they are fully acknowledged by their community leadership.

However, most of non-ID refugees do not partake in community-based decision-making, allowing the Popular Committees or other political parties to take complete charge.



6.0

Recommendations

On the first publication in 2005, the survey report addressed the following list of recommendations to the identified stakeholders: refugee community, refugee representatives, UNRWA, Lebanese authorities, Palestinian, Egyptian, Jordanian and Syrian authorities, NGOs, UNHCR, media, public opinion and donors:

As a first step, having observed that the issue of non-ID refugees is ignored by most of the stakeholders encountered, it is of crucial importance to:

- **Raise awareness of the situation of non-ID refugees**

About 6.5% of interviewed non-ID refugees claimed that they had been registered by UNRWA in an earlier country of asylum. It is recommended that:

- **UNRWA files of registered refugees are transferred to Lebanon**

Furthermore, refugees who have left Palestine as a result of the creation of the state of Israel and its consequences should benefit from the same recognition and assistance as those already recognised. It is recommended that:

- **Non-ID refugees have full access to UNRWA services**
- **Non-ID refugees are included under the UNRWA mandate**

Some non-ID cases encountered need protection. They are not covered by the UNRWA mandate, therefore it is recommended that:

- **Non-ID refugees with protection needs should be recognised as persons of concern by UNHCR**

On the other hand, some of the interviewed undocumented refugees did not express any protection concerns related to their previous country of origin and have tried without success to reclaim residence in these countries. It is recommended that:

- **Refugees who volunteer to return to earlier host countries are accepted**

About 13.5% of interviewed non-ID refugees do not have any legal documents at all.

A Palestinian Authority is in place and is progressively extending its activities to all its citizens. The representation in Lebanon could in the future obtain the status of embassy. In these circumstances, it is recommended that:

- **The Palestinian Authority issue IDs to non-ID refugees**

Under current Lebanese legislation, children take the nationality and legal status of their father. However, in most of the situations encountered, non-ID fathers are married to a woman with recognised status: registered refugee, Lebanese citizen. If this status were extended to their children, many cases would automatically find a solution. It is recommended that:

- **Children take the citizenship or legal status of their mother as well as their father**

A relatively small number of cases will still fall outside these solutions. It is in the interest of both refugees and the Lebanese authorities that all refugees present in Lebanon are registered. It is recommended that:

- **Non-ID refugees are registered by the Lebanese authorities**

Lastly, it has been brought to our attention that some families need immediate humanitarian assistance due to their vulnerable situation. While the above recommendations are being explored, DRC will:

- **Suggest ways of providing assistance to vulnerable cases**

Since publication of the 2005 report, an advocacy and legal aid program was established by DRC based on the above mentioned recommendations. Progress and achievements are detailed in section 7.0.

7.0

Update and latest statistics

This additional chapter to the survey report will provide updated information regarding the current situation of non-ID Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. Since the first publication of the survey report in 2005, the position of the Lebanese authorities and UNRWA, with regard to non-ID Palestinian refugees has changed considerably. Furthermore, at the time of writing, September 2007, DRC had conducted interviews with 243 families, documenting their cases, tracing their history since they or their ascendants left Palestine, archiving copies of the documentation they possess and visiting their homes. These individual case files have been entered into a database and are used to monitor and track the progress of each case and to generate population-based statistics.

This chapter will provide the following:

- Statistics based on 243 case studies from the DRC non-ID database
- Changes and updates of the situation of non-ID refugees since 2005

Statistics on non-ID refugees

The statistics that follow are based on information gathered from interviews conducted with 243 heads of non-ID refugee households, who are typically non-ID refugees and have the most accurate information regarding their families' displacement and legal history. Any information recorded in the interviews remains confidential.

The interview collects information relating to the families' date of first exile, exiled family members, the country of first asylum and the status obtained and the date of arrival in Lebanon. The families' protection needs are also defined and documented.

DRC collects copies of any documentation related to the family. This may include passports (valid and expired), UNRWA registration cards from another area of operations, birth and marriage certificates, PLO certificates.

Based on the geographic spread as established in the 2005 survey, interviews were conducted in the South, the Beqaa, the North and Beirut.

Demographics

Family size

243 non-ID households (1252 persons) have been interviewed and recorded in the DRC database. The demographic breakdown is as follows:

- Number of adults: 437 (fathers and mothers or single adults living alone)
- Number of children: 815 (includes children aged 18+ and living with their parents for ease of classification)

Amongst the 1252 persons recorded in the database, 1005 are non-ID refugees. The remaining persons are the wives/mothers of non-ID refugees, who have legal status in Lebanon either as Lebanese citizens or registered refugees in Lebanon.

The average family size is 5.15 people.

More specifically, family size in the Beqaa and the North (5.57 and 5.56 respectively) is larger than in the South (5.06).

Geographical distribution

Interviews with refugees were conducted with 115 families from the South, 56 families from the Beqaa, 50 families from the North and 22 families from Beirut and Mount Lebanon.

In the South, interviews were concentrated in Rashidieh, Burj el-Shemali and el-Buss camps, Qasmieh and Maashouk gatherings, with 8 interviews conducted in Saida. In the Beqaa interviews were predominately conducted in Wavell

camp, Saadnayel, Bar Elias, Al Marj, Taalabaya and Majdal Anjar gatherings. In the North, interviews were exclusively conducted in Beddawi and Nahr el-Bared camps. Only 22 interviews took place in Beirut and Mount Lebanon, mainly in Shatila, Burj el-Barajneh and Mar Elias camps.

75% of interviewed non-ID refugees live in UNRWA refugee camps. The highest percentage of non-ID refugees living outside the camps is in the Beqaa where 77% of interviewed refugees live in gatherings.

The geographical distribution of interviewed families is reflected in Table 6, and represents the number of persons living in each region (not the number of households).

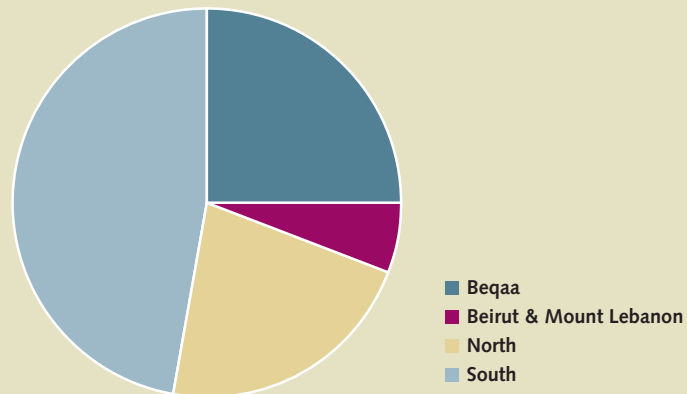


Table 6. Geographic distribution of interviewed families

Legal status

Place of origin and residence of the family

In order to track refugees' file and establish the authorities historically linked to their registration cases, refugees were asked about their previous host country/ies and their former place of registration. The interviews recorded the following responses:

- 32% said they were from the West Bank
- 21% said they were from the Gaza strip
- 11% said that they were from Lebanon (born in Lebanon)
- 10% said that they were from Syria

- 8% said that they were from Palestine
- 7% said that they were from Jordan
- 3% said that they were from Iraq
- The remaining percentage (8%) said they were from other countries including Egypt and Pakistan.

Non-ID refugees were also asked about what identification documents they hold.

- 28% said that they had passports (whether valid or expired); more specifically, 25% of interviewed refugees said they had Jordanian passports
- 25% said they had travel documents; more specifically, 18% of interviewed refugees said they hold or used to hold Egyptian travel documents
- 46% of interviewed refugees said they were registered in other fields of UNRWA's operations and have or used to have an UNRWA registration card.

It should be noted that non-ID refugees often hold both an UNRWA registration card and a passport/travel document.

Wife documentation

Non-ID refugees, in most of cases have married women with legal residency in Lebanon. 55% of interviewed non-ID refugees have married refugee women registered with UNRWA in Lebanon, 20% have married Lebanese citizens, 8% have married non-ID refugee women, 7% have married Palestinian refugees registered in another UNRWA field, and 2% have married non-registered Palestinian refugees. Other nationalities (8%) include Iraqi, Syrian, Jordanian women.

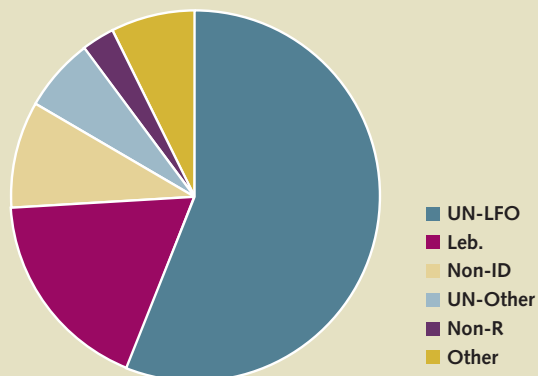


Table 7. Legal status of wives of non-ID refugees

Changes and updates of the situation of non-ID refugees

The information below will detail specific outcomes since 2005 with regard to the situation of non-ID refugees.

Awareness of the situation of non-ID refugees

One of the survey report's recommendations was to raise awareness of the situation of non-ID Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. At the time of publication, very little was known about their legal situation and the problems they face.

After the publication of the survey, an advocacy campaign was launched to specifically target the Lebanese, Jordanian, Egyptian, Palestinian, Syrian authorities, UNRWA, UNHCR and international and local NGOs working with the Palestinian community. Local and foreign media outlets were also utilised within the campaign.

Awareness and understanding of the situation of non-ID Palestinian refugees have since 2005 increased considerably and a number of policy changes and advances have been realised:

- The Lebanese authorities have officially acknowledged the magnitude of the problems faced by non-ID refugees and they have committed to seeking solutions to ease their plight
- The new PLO office in Beirut, opened in May 2006 is working with the Lebanese government on the issue of non-ID refugees
- UNRWA has revised regulations to allow access to some services for a category of non-ID refugees
- The Egyptian authorities renewed expired Egyptian documentation on a case by case basis
- UNHCR has recognised a protection gap exists for non-ID refugees and the need for it to be bridged
- A number of local NGOs have launched a joint advocacy campaign to promote solutions for non-ID refugees
- Referral mechanisms have been established between agencies and international NGOs working with the Palestinian community
- Local and foreign media have taken an interest in the issue of non-ID refugees in Lebanon (*cf. Annex 3*).

The sections below will highlight the main changes and updates related to the situation of non-ID Palestinians.

Position of Lebanese authorities

DRC's advocacy with the Lebanese authorities has engaged the Directorate for Palestinian Refugee Affairs, the General Security, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Labour in a series of meetings and dialogue. Furthermore, following the establishment of the Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee (LPDC), at the end of 2005, DRC presented the committee with briefing notes, highlighting the situation of non-ID Palestinian refugees, emphasising their major problems and proposing potential solutions.

The situation of non-ID Palestinian refugees is currently a key subject on the agenda of the LPDC. Ambassador Khalil Makkawi, Chairman of the Committee, announced in March 2007 that the Committee had begun to study the file of non-ID Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon.

In addition to the recognition of the existence of non-ID refugees, the Lebanese Government has moved to propose a number of solutions. In an interview with the Danish Refugee Council in April 2007, Ambassador Makkawi reported that granting non-ID refugees, non-registered status (non-R) was being considered as a solution. The government has also indicated its willingness to engage in dialogue with the Jordanian and Egyptian authorities if necessary.

In May 2007, LPDC held a roundtable discussion with representatives of the PLO, local and international NGOs working with non-ID refugees to debate potential solutions for non-ID Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. The Committee advised all participants that the PLO (considered the official representative of Palestinians in Lebanon), would be responsible for submitting data regarding exact number of non-ID refugees living in Lebanon, their place of residence and the documents they hold to the Lebanese Government. NGOs working with non-ID refugees were invited to support the PLO by sharing all available information.

The issue of non-ID refugees is part of the official Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee's commitment to improving the living conditions of Palestinian refugees living in camps and gatherings throughout the country.

Position of Palestinian authorities and the PLO

The 2005 survey report documented that approximately 13.5% of non-ID refugees did not hold any legal documents (*cf. section 5*). Statistics from DRC's database (updated September 2007) substantiate these figures.

This issue was raised with the Palestinian authorities in Palestine in 2005 and 2006. DRC emphasised the importance for undocumented refugees and their children to have some form of documentation to prove their Palestinian origins. This issue was also raised with Palestinian representatives in Lebanon participating in the Lebanese-Palestinian dialogue.

The Palestinian authorities acknowledged the importance of an identity document for undocumented refugees and have suggested the creation of an ID card to be recognised both by the Palestinian and the Lebanese authorities.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) re-established their presence in Beirut in May 2006 following a Council of Ministers decree in January 2006. In November 2006, the PLO began providing identification certificates or 'proof of nationality certificates' for non-ID Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon. The certificate aims to facilitate movement, registration of marriages and births, registration at schools and universities. The PLO deems the certificate to be a temporary document and as such discussions between the Lebanese authorities and the PLO are ongoing to verify the nature and the validity of the certificate¹⁴.

Position of UNRWA

After the 2005 publication of the survey, DRC initiated ongoing dialogue with UNRWA -Lebanon, Jordan, Syria- and UNRWA headquarters, advocating for the following¹⁵:

- Transfer of the files of refugees registered in other UNRWA fields to Lebanon
- Extend refugee women's registration to their children
- Allow access to services for non-ID refugees
- Include non-ID refugees fitting the criteria in UNRWA's special hardship cases program
- In the long term, include non-ID refugees in UNRWA's mandate.

With the exception of the final point, the agency has demonstrated a general commitment to broadening access to services for non-ID refugees.

14. 'The Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon: Lacking of Probative Identity Papers'. Statistical Study by the PLO, p. 2, February 2007

15. The reference to UNRWA in this section should not be taken to relate exclusively to the position of the UNRWA Lebanon Field Office

46% of interviewed refugees reported that they were previously registered in another field of UNRWA's operations (*cf. section 7, p.46*).

To confirm this registration, DRC, with the approval of each non-ID refugee household, submitted the cases of refugees who claimed to be registered with the agency to UNRWA Lebanon Field Office.

UNRWA confirmed the registration of 55% of submitted cases. Some cases could not be traced, which could be attributed to a discrepancy in spelling, an incomplete name or a non-registration with UNRWA.

Transfer of UNRWA files

The transfer of files from other UNRWA field offices to Lebanon, requires the approval of the previous host countries in some fields and of Lebanese authorities. To date, the latter condition has not been fulfilled. However, the issue of file transfers is under consideration by the Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee¹⁶.

The transfer of files of non-ID refugees registered in other UNRWA fields to Lebanon, with the Lebanese authorities' approval, would grant refugees legal status in the country and full access to all UNRWA services.

UNRWA has recently allowed a male refugee registered in another UNRWA field to add his children to his UNRWA registration card, allowing his children to have easier access to UNRWA services.

Extension of refugee women's registration to their children

The extension of the woman's registration with UNRWA to her children has also been explored with UNRWA. Whilst the agency is supportive of this legal registration, the approval of the host country is needed. As stated in section 5, under Lebanese law children inherit the legal status of their father; hence citizenship or refugee status is determined by the father's status.

In 2006, eligibility to receive some UNRWA services was granted to children of registered Palestinian women married to non-registered persons¹⁷ (including non-ID refugees). Until this time, access to UNRWA schools without prior approval from the Director of UNRWA Affairs in Lebanon, to health care, relief and social services was not afforded to children of women married to non-ID refugees. These children are now eligible to receive primary health care, relief and social services and education (excluding UNRWA vocational training centre and university scholarships).

16. 'The Lebanese government moves forward with the non-ID file', Non-ID roundtable minutes, 14 May 2007, available at: <http://www.lpdc.gov.lb/index.php?page=news&id=4&action=Detail>

17. Under UNRWA's terminology, the refugee woman is referred to in that case as MNR (married to non-registered), if she has an official document (ID) proving her marriage

It should also be noted that prior to 2006, a registered Palestinian refugee woman would lose access to some UNRWA services, (mainly the health care services), if she married a non-registered person (including a non-ID refugee). This situation has since been rectified.

Eligibility to services for non-ID refugees

Eligibility for non-ID refugees to receive UNRWA services has also improved since 2006. The Consolidated Eligibility and Registration Instructions have been modified and effective as of June 2006. However, a distinction exists between non-ID refugees registered in another UNRWA field and those without any registration with the agency. This distinction is detailed below:

- A non-ID refugee and his children registered in another UNRWA field, are eligible to receive all services except university scholarships, and contractual services (hospitalisation) are subject to the approval of the original field of registration. Previously, if the non-ID refugee did not provide any documentation (ID or passport), he would only have access to school based on prior approval from the Director of UNRWA Affairs
- A non-ID refugee and his children not registered in any UNRWA field, are eligible to receive UNRWA services (except vocational training and university scholarship), only if the non-ID refugee is married to a registered woman (MNR)
- A non-ID refugee married to a registered Palestinian refugee woman with UNRWA whose marriage has not been registered will not be able to benefit from UNRWA services. His wife will not be able to benefit from pregnancy and delivery related services.

It should be noted however that the UNRWA's mandate defines its primary responsibility is to provide humanitarian and relief services for the 408,438 registered Palestine refugees in Lebanon. According to the agency, due to their limited resources, they may not be able to support all non-ID Palestinian refugees.

Inclusion of non-ID refugees in UNRWA SHCP

UNRWA has a special hardship case program (SHCP) for extremely vulnerable families e.g. women headed households, who if they meet a defined set of criteria are eligible to receive cash and food assistance and are entitled to benefit from shelter rehabilitation.

The agency has recently agreed that non-ID refugee families who fit the required criteria are included in the SHCP assistance.

Conclusion

DRC is continuing to advocate with stakeholders and authorities towards a solution for the legal status of non-ID refugees and in the meantime supporting the non-ID community through a variety of legal aid and support programs.

8.0

Acknowledgements

This project was conducted by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) in partnership with the Palestinian Human Rights Organisation (PHRO) and funded by the European Commission Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO)¹⁸.

The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) www.drc.dk

The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) is a private, humanitarian organisation covering all aspects of the refugee cause.

The aim of the organisation is to protect refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) against persecution and to promote durable solutions.

Danish Refugee Council is an umbrella organisation with more than thirty member organisations and is currently present in more than 20 countries worldwide.

DRC Lebanon was established in September 2004 in partnership with the European Commission Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO) and a number of community-based local partners.

18. Note about agency cooperation: DRC and PHRO have jointly undertaken the 2005 survey and the survey report drafting work. However, each of the agencies disseminated the results and advocated for non-ID refugees in its own way

DRC Lebanon is committed to responding to the assistance and protection needs of refugees and internally displaced persons throughout the country.

Since its establishment, DRC Lebanon has produced a series of population assessment surveys, developed a legal aid and assistance program for non-ID Palestinian refugees and worked to implement relief and livelihood programs for recently internally displaced persons and returnees.

DRC Lebanon continues to respond to the ever changing needs of new and existing beneficiaries with programs that uphold the Code of Conduct for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), NGOs in Disaster Relief and the UN Convention on Refugees.

European Commission Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO)

The European Commission Humanitarian Aid department is under the direct responsibility of Commissioner Patrick Laurent.

Since, 1992, the Commission has funded relief to millions of victims of natural and man-made disasters outside the EU.

Aid is channelled impartially to the affected populations, regardless of their race, ethnic group, religion, gender, age, nationality or political affiliation.

In the area of humanitarian aid the Commission works with more than 200 operation partners, including specialised United Nation agencies, the Red Cross/Crescent movement and non-governmental organisations (NGO's).

The European Commission is one of the biggest sources of humanitarian aid in the world. In 2006, it provided €671 million for humanitarian programmes. This does not include the aid given separately by the EU's 25 Member States. Support went to projects in 60 countries. The funds are spent on goods and services such as food, clothing, shelter, medical provisions, water, supplies, sanitation, emergency repairs and mine-clearing. The Commission also funds disaster preparedness and mitigation projects in regions prone to natural catastrophes.

DRC's non-ID program has been supported by the European Commission Humanitarian Aid department since 2004.

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Annex 1

Map of Lebanon and the 12 official camps



Annex 2

Household questionnaire



PALESTINIAN HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANISATION-(PHRO)-LEBANON
DANISH REFUGEE COUNCIL

Household Survey Questionnaire

Assessing the Current Status of Palestinian Refugees Residing in Camps and Gatherings

ECHO Funded Project No. ECHO/ME/BUD/2004/01027

Questionnaire # _____

The Palestinian Human Rights Organisation, in a joint project with DRC funded by ECHO, is conducting a household survey to assess the current status of the Palestinian refugees residing in camps and gatherings in Lebanon.

The aim of the survey is to gather basic information on households in order to gain in-depth knowledge of their current living conditions and their legal and humanitarian situation. Your cooperation in completing the survey will be much appreciated and the accuracy of the survey depends on your sincerity and exactness in answering the questions. We assure you that all personal responses will be confidential and not revealed to anyone.

Thank you in advance for your participation in this survey.

Geographical Location: _____

Household Number: _____

Name of camp or gathering: _____

City: _____

Household Location

Street: _____

Building Number: _____

Floor Number: _____

Apartment Number: _____

Phone Number: _____

• Name of Interviewer _____

• Date of Interview _____

Time of Interview: _____

Start: _____ End: _____

Result Codes: 01- Completed 02- Partly Completed

I. Household Characteristics

	1	2		3	4	5	6
	Number of residents at the Household	Relationship to head of the		Sex	Date of	Marital Status	Place of
		Indicate the relation of the household residents to the interviewee		Is (name)?	When was (name) born?	01. Single 02. Engaged 03. Married 04. Widowed 05. Divorced 06. Separated 99. No answer	Indicate place of
		01. Head 02. Wife 03. Husband 04. Son 05. Daughter 06. Son-in-law 07. Daughter-in-law 08. Grandson 09. Grand-daughter 10. Grand-mother	11. Grand-father 12. Mother-in-law 13. Father-in-law 14. Brother 15. Sister 16. Brother-in-law 17. Sister-in-law 18. Other relative 19. Maid 20. Not related	01. Male 02. Female	dd/mm/yy		
01							
02							
03							
04							
05							
06							
07							
08							

II. Legal Status / Refugee Situation

	Person 1	Person 2	Person 3	Person 4	Person 5	Person 6	Person 7	Person 8
7. Specify your nationality: 01. Palestinian 02. Lebanese 03. Lebanese of Palestinian origin 04. Other, specify _____								
8. Do you have dual nationality? 01. Yes (go to q. 9) 02. No (go to q. 10)								
9. If yes – specify								
10. Legal status 01. Registered 02. Non-Registered (go to q. 10) 03. Non-Identified (go to q. 11)								

11. If you are a non-registered refugee, what are the reasons for your legal status?

12. Identify 3 main problems faced because of your status? (Prioritise with the most serious first)

13. If you are a non-identified refugee, what are the reasons for your legal status?

14. Identify 3 main problems faced because of your status? (Prioritise with the most serious first)

15. Specify the passport or legal papers you hold? (valid or expired)

16. Entity issuing document:

01. UNRWA in Lebanon
02. Lebanon's Bureau of Registry
03. UNRWA in other host countries. Specify _____
04. Palestinian Red Crescent Society
05. UNHCR

06. Not registered

07. Bureau of Registry in another country. Specify _____

17. Indicate the year you fled from Palestine?

18. Indicate your place of residence before leaving

19. Do you have any idea of what happened to your place of origin?

01. Yes – Specify _____
02. No

20. Do you have any idea of the current status of your property in your place of origin?

01. Destroyed
02. Occupied
03. Relatives/friends living there
04. No property

- 21. Since Exodus, have you lived in another country before moving to Lebanon?**
01. Yes (go to q. 22)
02. No (go to q. 23)
- 22. If yes, which country**
01. Syria
02. Jordan
03. Iraq
04. Egypt
05. Other – Specify _____
- 23. Year of migration to Lebanon**
- 24. Since your arrival in/migration to Lebanon, how many times have you changed your place of residence?**
- 25. Indicate the first place you stayed when you arrived to Lebanon.**
01. Camp
02. Gathering
03. Outside the camp
- 26. Specify the name of the camp**
- 27. Do you face any restrictions when moving out of the camp?**
01. Yes
02. No
- 28. Do you face any restrictions when moving around the country?**
01. Yes
02. No
- 29. Does the restriction affect your willingness to move around?**
01. Yes
02. No
- 30. Have you currently initiated an immigration application?**
01. Yes (go to q. 31)
02. No (go to q. 33)
- 31. Indicate the name of the country you are willing to migrate to?**
- 32. Indicate the reasons for migration to another country?**
- 33. Do you want to return to Palestine?**
01. Yes
02. No
98. I don't know
- 34. Would you accept compensation as another solution to the right of return?**
01. Yes
02. No
- 35. Explain**
- 36. What are your future plans? Elaborate**
- 37. Are you currently using services from:**
01. UNRWA
02. Lebanese government
03. NGO – Specify _____
04. PCRS – Specify _____
05. International NGO – Specify _____
06. Other – Specify _____
- 38. Did any of your descendants acquire Lebanese nationality? (Even those not currently living with you)**
01. Yes (go to q. 39)
02. No (go to q. 40)
- 39. Indicate how your descendants acquired the nationality**
- 40. Are you familiar with the term human rights?**
01. Yes (go to q. 41)
02. No (go to q. 42)
- 41. If yes, define the term "human rights"?**
- 42. Define the term "refugee"**

46. Indicate the number of children currently going to school.
47. Indicate the number of children who failed the official exams in the past year.
48. Indicate the reason/ reasons for the failure of the children in the official exam.
49. Do you have children who dropped out of school?
01. Yes (go to q. 50)
02. No (go to q. 51)
50. Indicate the reasons why the children dropped out of school.
51. Do you have any children not enrolled in school?
01. Yes (go to q. 52)
02. No (go to q. 53)
52. If yes, how many and why?
53. Specify the type of schools the children are registered in:
01. Public school
02. Private school
03. Private missionary – Specify
04. UNRWA
05. Other – Specify _____
54. Do you have any children in nursery school?
01. Yes (go to q. 55)
02. No (go to q. 58)
55. If yes, is the nursery school within the camp or outside the camp?
01. In camp
02. Outside camp
56. Do you pay fees for the nursery school?
01. Yes
02. No
57. Specify the amount of fees in Lebanese pounds?
58. Do you think that the economic factor is a main reason for failure to continue an education?
01. Yes
02. No
03. I don't know
59. Are you currently receiving any support for the education of children?
01. Yes (go to q. 60)
02. No (go to q. 61)
60. Specify the type of financial support you are receiving and the provider.
01. Stationery provider _____
02. Books provider _____
03. School uniform & outfit provider
04. Exemption from fees provider
05. Other _____ provider _____
61. Indicate the amount of money paid for education in the past year in Lebanese pounds.
62. Do any members of the family know how to use a computer?
01. Yes (go to q. 63)
02. No
63. If yes, How many? _____

73. Do you think it is possible to find a job outside the camp?

01. Yes
02. No

74. What are the main difficulties faced in finding a job?

01. Absence of ID documents
02. Lack of work permit

75. Were you ever terminated/dismissed from a job?

01. Yes (go to q. 76)
02. No (move to next section)

76. If yes, was it because of

01. Lacking work permit
02. Lacking ID
03. No obvious reasons
- Other _____

V. Housing and environmental conditions

77. Indicate number of rooms in the house (excluding kitchen and bathroom).

78. How many of the rooms are used for sleeping?

79. Indicate the type of residence?

01. Owned flat
02. Rented flat
03. Owned independent house
04. Rented independent house
05. Other - Specify

80. Are you aware of the amendment of the Property Act?

01. Yes (go to q. 81)
02. No (go to q. 82)

81. Did you face any constraints due to the amendment of the Property Act?

01. Yes, specify the type of constraints
02. No

82. Do you think that your house needs any form of refurbishment and reconstruction?

01. Yes
02. No

83. In the past year, did you refurbish or renovate your house?

01. Yes (go to 85)
02. No (go to 86)

84. Specify the sources of funding

01. Personal resource
02. European Union
03. UNRWA
04. NGOs and CBOs – Specify name
05. Community parties in the camp
06. Palestinian NGOs – Specify name
07. Other _____

85. What are the main sources of water for domestic use? (allow more than one answer)

01. Municipal
02. Private well
03. Cisterns/tankers
04. Bottled table water
05. Water shops (gallons)
06. Allocated public wells
07. Water tanks from UNRWA
08. Water tanks from other NGOs and CBOs
- Specify _____
09. Other - Specify _____

86. What are the sources of drinking/cooking water? (allow more than one answer)

- 01. Municipal
- 02. Private well
- 03. Cisterns/tankers
- 04. Bottled table water
- 05. Water shops (gallons)
- 06. Allocated public wells
- 07. Water tanks from UNRWA
- 08. Water tanks from other NGOs and CBOs
- Specify _____
- 09. Other - Specify _____

87. If you are not using the municipal water supply for drinking, what are the reasons? (allow more than one answer)

- 01. Colour
- 02. Taste
- 03. Turbidity
- 04. Odour
- 05. Hard water
- 06. Not clean
- 07. Quantity insufficient
- 08. Lack of adequate pressure
- 09. Price
- 10. Other - Specify _____

88. Do you have services for wastewater?

- 01. Yes
- 02. No

89. Do you pay for wastewater services?

- 01. Yes
- 02. No

90. How do you dispose of your wastewater?**91. Indicate the frequency of wastewater collection and disposal.**

- 01. None
- 02. Weekly
- 03. Monthly

- 04. Yearly
- 05. Other

92. Do you receive electricity?

- 01. Yes
- 02. No

93. Indicate the source of electricity?

- 01. Municipal (government)
- 02. Private electricity (generator)
- 03. Other - Specify _____

94. Indicate the amount of money paid monthly?

		Items	Yes (01)	How many? Indicate the number
01.	Car			
02.	Radio			
03.	Television			
04.	Video			
05.	Refrigerator			
06.	Cooker			
07.	Electrical cooker			
08.	Fan			
09.	Water heater			
10.	Air conditioner			
11.	Electricity generator			
12.	Washing machine			
13.	Telephone			
14.	Mobile			
15.	Satellite connection			
16.	Computer			

VI. Utilisation of health care services and current health status

- 95. In the year 2004, when was your last visit to the clinic for check-up or follow-up.**
01. Never visited the clinic
 02. The past 3 months
 03. Within the 3 months to 1 year
- 96. How many times have you visited the clinic during the past three months?**
_____ visit(s)
- 97. Which clinic do you regularly visit?**
01. Health care centre for UNRWA – Specify the place

 02. Health care centre for PRCS – Specify the place

 03. Health care centre run by NGO or CBO – Specify the place

 04. Other – Specify name and place

- 98. What was the main reason for the visit to the specified health care services?**
01. The funding NGO or UNRWA transferred me to the health care centre
 02. This health care centre provides the best quality of services.
 03. I cannot afford the payment for services in other clinics.
 04. This is the nearest health care centre to my home.
 05. This clinic has the shortest waiting time.
 06. The working hours of the health care centre suit me best.
 07. Other – Specify _____
- 99. Did you have difficulty accessing medical care?**
01. Yes (go to q. 101)
 02. No (go to q. 102)
- 100. If yes, why?**
- 101. Are you satisfied with the services received?**
01. Highly satisfied
 02. Somewhat satisfied
 03. Not satisfied
 04. I don't know
- 102. If non-ID, are you paying fees for the medical care?**
01. Yes
 02. No
- 103. Indicate if you have faced any of the following problems.**
01. Bureaucratic procedures – numerous administrative procedures.
 02. Long waiting period between the date of request of appointment and the appointment itself.
 03. Tiresome and lengthy waiting time.
 04. The doctor did not spend enough time.
 05. The doctor was not patient & caring with me
- 104. Were you or any family member hospitalised in the last year?**
01. Yes (go to q. 106)
 02. No (go to q. 110)
- 105. Did you receive financial support to pay your hospital bill?**
01. Yes
 02. No
- 106. If yes – Specify**
- Percentage _____ Source _____
- Percentage _____ Source _____
- Percentage _____ Source _____

107. Did the support extend to medication and laboratory analysis?

01. Yes (go to q. 109)
02. No (go to q. 110)

108. If yes – Specify

Percentage _____ Source _____
Percentage _____ Source _____
Percentage _____ Source _____

Answer the following questions if there is a pregnant woman in the household

109. Did she visit the obstetrician and gynaecologist?

01. Yes
02. No

110. Is she following a diet high in vitamins, minerals and folic acid?

01. Yes
02. No

111. If no – Specify why _____**112. Did you receive any financial support?**

01. Yes
02. No

	Infant 0 – < 2	Child > 2 – 15	Youth 15 – 65	Elderly 65+	Pregnant Woman
113. Kindly indicate if any of the family members 01. No disabilities 02. Vision 03. Auditory 04. Mental 05. Physical 06. Partial paralysis 07. Systemic paralysis 08. Upper extremity deformity 09. Lower extremity deformity 10. Multiple disabilities – Specify _____					
114. Indicate the reasons for the disabilities? 01. Birth deformity 02. Accident – Specify _____ 03. Illness – Specify _____ 04 Other – Specify _____					
115. Do you use any form of prosthesis for the disabled person? 01. Yes – Specify donor party _____ 03. No					
116. Indicate the health care centre where treatment is received: 01. Health care centre for UNRWA 02. Health care centre for PCRS 03. Health care centre for an NGO – Specify _____ 04. Private health care centre 05. Other – Specify _____					

Annex 3

Media articles

New York Times

May 6, 2007

Invisible Palestinians Exist in Legal Limbo in Lebanon

By Nada Bakri

BEIRUT, Lebanon, May 5 — Three generations of the Hamdallah family have lived in Lebanon. And for three generations not a single member of the family has been allowed to graduate from school, legally marry, or hold a job, or even set foot outside of the rundown camps that have been home to generations of Palestinians.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency estimates that more than 400,000 Palestinians live in Lebanon — refugees, their children and their children's children — all denied many basic rights in their adopted homeland on the Mediterranean.

But within that diaspora at least 3,000 people, including the Hamdallah family, are invisible to the legal system, aid groups here say. When their families arrived in Lebanon, they failed to get refugee status, and without it they cannot get identification cards, the currency of all life transactions in this region. Marriage, travel, work — all are impossible without a national identification document.

“They are not persons in front of the law,” said Stéphane Jacquemet,

regional representative for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Lebanon. “They live in camps, don't have access to services, schools, hospitals, and strictly speaking a person with no documents can be arrested. They absolutely have no future, and they are giving their no future to their children.”

Palestinian refugees have been denied citizenship in Lebanon for years, and they are prohibited from practicing more than 70 professions. The Lebanese government has insisted that the plight of the refugees should not be settled at the expense of host nations, and it has made clear that it eventually wants the Palestinians to go back to Israel after a settlement with that government.

At the heart of that policy lies the fear that the refugees could upset Lebanon's already complicated and tenuous power-sharing system, based on ethnic and sectarian affiliation. Because most Palestinians are Sunni Muslims, nationalizing them would throw the power balance to Sunnis.

So, with no real hope of becoming Lebanese citizens, Palestinians remain

squeezed in dark, small camps where sewage water often runs in claustrophobic alleys, the only playground of young refugees. Outside most of these camps, the Lebanese Army maintains a heavy presence.

But while most Palestinians are denied citizenship, a vast majority have identification papers that allow them to participate in society.

"Generally speaking, everyone must have and is entitled to a legal identification paper," said Fateh Azzam, a regional representative of the International Council on Human Rights here. "In this part of the world you can't do anything without it."

That is a reality that the Hamdallah family has struggled with for generations.

Born in Jerusalem, the oldest member of the family, Moetaz Hamdallah, 65, came to Lebanon in 1970 from Jordan after "Black September," when King Hussein expelled Palestinian militants. Mr. Hamdallah was one of those militants. He arrived in Lebanon when the Palestine Liberation Organization — then ensconced in southern Lebanon — was at the height of its power, and so he never thought about legalizing his status.

"The revolution was strong, I was strong," Mr. Hamdallah said in an interview. "I never thought about identification papers or what would happen to me and to my children without them."

But when the P.L.O. was driven out of Lebanon in 1982, "I started pitying myself," he said as he sat on a plastic chair outside his concrete-block house in the Rashidieh refugee camp in

southern Lebanon. Inside, flies buzzed under a zinc roof and unpainted walls.

Mr. Hamdallah did not flee when Israel was formed over the former Palestine in 1948, and so he and his family did not meet the United Nations definition of Palestinian refugees. In Lebanon, the P.L.O. was blamed for igniting civil war, and so Mr. Hamdallah, like others with his background, were not welcomed.

Their situation came to light in 2001 when a young refugee without proper identification was fatally shot in the back by Lebanese soldiers after he ran from a security checkpoint monitoring his refugee camp. When investigating why he ran back toward the camp, the army found out that he had a forged ID card and feared arrest.

"They have melted into the background for too long," said Richard J. Cook, director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East. "This is a problem not going to go away on its own; now is the time to solve it."

But obstacles complicate the more direct possible solutions, human rights advocates say. For example, Jordan and Egypt have refused to renew the passports of the Palestinians who used to live there before their move to Lebanon. Refugees cannot transfer their files with the United Nations to Lebanon from their previous resident countries unless they have the approval of those countries and Lebanon.

One of the solutions would be for the Lebanese government to provide Palestinians with some sort of documents that recognize them as a special category

of refugees entitled to remain in the country until the issue of the so-called right to return to Israel is settled. But the government said that a lack of a thorough and well-documented survey about them prevents that for now.

"They are illegal in the country, so they are not going to raise their hands up and say, 'We are illegal, can you help us?'" Mr. Cook said.

The Danish Refugee Council, a nongovernmental organization funded by the European Union Commission Humanitarian Aid Department, put the number of undocumented Palestinians in Lebanon at 3,000, while other nongovernmental organizations put it at as high as 5,000.

Some human rights advocates insist that the real problem is not a lack of clear statistics, but the government's objection to any measure that would raise the official number of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.

That charge is denied by Khalil Makkawi, a former Lebanese ambassador to the United Nations who now leads the committee negotiating with the Palestinians on how to regulate their presence here.

"It has no foundation whatsoever," Mr. Makkawi said. "It is in our interest to solve the problem and identify them as Palestinians."

When the government gets clear figures from the P.L.O. office here, it can start talks with Jordan and Egypt to renew refugees' old identification papers and to transfer the files of those registered with the United Nations elsewhere to Lebanon, he said. As for those who lack papers and have never been

registered anywhere, the government will seek a special solution, he said.

When Mr. Hamdallah's oldest son, Mohannad, 34, was a child, he asked his father why he did not have an identification paper like his fellow classmates. He was told that he would get papers when they returned home — meaning Jerusalem, he said.

Recently, when Mohannad Hamdallah was asked how he would respond if his 7-year old daughter, the oldest of a third generation of refugees in his family without identification, someday asks him why she cannot graduate from school, he thought for a moment before answering.

"I would tell her they were burned during the war," he said.

Desperate for some form of legal identity, he has throughout his life collected hundreds of papers with his name, place and year of birth written on them from local mayors, hospitals and schools where he studied but never graduated.

He keeps the papers, their edges worn from use, in a briefcase, and the briefcase in a safe. "I keep every piece of paper because I am like the drowning man who clutches at a straw," he said. Still, at one military checkpoint, they evoked only mockery, then detention, he said.

He looks for work as a freelance accountant, but can only keep a job until his employer asks for legal identification.

"When they do, I disappear," he said. "I can't tell them I don't have an ID. They won't understand."

The Daily Star

Wednesday, August 08, 2007

Palestinian refugees lacking IDs live in double bind

Danish NGO leads effort to forge solution that would grant legal existence

By Nafez Zouk, Special to *The Daily Star*

BEIRUT: Imagine being asked to produce a document to identify yourself and not possessing one to do so. Or worse, imagine having an ID that, once produced, is rejected on the grounds that it is not valid. You can prove who you are, but it doesn't matter. You don't exist.

Unfortunately, this is the fate of around 3,000 Palestinian refugees in Lebanon who, according to Amnesty International, do not possess valid identification documents and hence "face more severe restrictions on their human rights than registered refugees."

The UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) estimates that 400,000 Palestinian refugees reside in Lebanon. Records for the 3,000 undocumented refugees, or non-ID Palestinians, do not exist with the Lebanese government or UNRWA.

The problem is not that these Palestinians hold no identification documents. In fact, 92 percent of non-ID refugees do have some form of identification. The problem is that these documents are deemed invalid both by the Lebanese authorities and UNRWA.

These Palestinians simply do not exist.

The plight of non-ID Palestinians was first brought to light by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), a humanitarian organization mandated to ensure the protection of refugees, and whose mission in Lebanon involves a combination of human rights awareness, legal campaigning, and humanitarian assistance to ease the burden of these refugees.

The DRC cites several reasons as to why some refugees in Lebanon are undocumented.

When the Arab-Israeli conflict broke out, Palestinians who were working or studying in Lebanon were not permitted by the Israeli authorities and ensuing border changes to return to their homeland.

Other undocumented Palestinian refugees are former PLO fighters who lost any legal status when the PLO was forced out of Beirut in 1982.

Finally, when some Palestinian refugees, due to recurrent Arab-Israeli conflicts, were exiled for a second time from their initial country of

asylum, their original registration files with UNRWA did not follow them to Lebanon, and they lost their “official” form of identification. They are thus not registered as refugees in Lebanon.

Not only do non-ID Palestinians share the same abysmal conditions facing the remainder of refugees, but the fact that they have no proper identification breeds additional burdens that they must nevertheless face.

A report by Cynthia Petrigh of DRC states that these refugees are also “unable to move outside the camps for fear of being arrested. They cannot travel, own property, register marriages, graduate from high school, or enroll in either private or public higher education. They find it difficult to access UNRWA services and cannot afford to pay for healthcare.”

But perhaps more severe is the fact that second and third generations of non-ID Palestinians with no legal existence have started to form. Lebanese law does not recognize children born to non-ID refugees, even if the mother is a registered refugee, since a woman cannot pass her status to her children. “A whole generation of undocumented persons is now coming of age with no prospect of participation in social and economic life,” according to a report by Cynthia Petrigh of the DRC.

Amnesty International included the following case in a report on Palestinian refugees:

“Rola is a 42-year old Palestinian refugee. Her family came to Lebanon in 1948 and is registered with UNRWA. Her husband (whom she divorced) had a Jordanian passport; however,

he lost his passport and the Jordanian authorities allegedly refused to renew it. Rola does not have a civil certificate for her marriage, only a religious one. Despite being registered with UNRWA, her children lack such registration; they are non-IDs. They all went to non-UNRWA paying schools. They were not able to continue their education after the 9th grade as they could not sit for the state exams,” which require official identification.

The lack of protection that keeps these refugees living with the constant fear of arrest is the result of a vicious bureaucratic circle involving regional governments and UN agencies.

UNRWA considers that non-ID Palestinians are outside its domain of operation. Under its definition, a Palestine refugee is a person whose normal place of residence was Palestine between June 1946 and May 1948, as a result Palestinians who fled after 1948, due to subsequent conflicts, do not fall under UNRWA’s mandate.

Furthermore, although the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is mandated to protect refugees and assist asylum seekers, it cannot support Palestinians in Lebanon because of an article in its mandate that prevents it from extending aid to people “who continue to receive from other organs or agencies of the UN protection or assistance” -in this case, the UNRWA.

Finally, Lebanon lacks a mechanism to process asylum-seeking requests, which means that non-ID refugees cannot turn to the state for assistance.

The DRC, funded by the European Commission’s Humanitarian Aid

Department, and currently working with 225 such families, is at the forefront of efforts being exerted to help the undocumented refugees.

Mireille Chiha, legal counselor and project manager at DRC, told The Daily Star that the organization’s efforts, geared toward finding solutions are focused on providing legal and advocacy aid.

“Our legal counseling efforts stemmed from many field visits throughout the camps to identify and trace the family history of undocumented refugees,” said Chiha, adding that the process has led to the building of a large database on these refugees. DRC advises affected families on their options, and identifies the most appropriate method to help them.

“We are also in contact with the relevant agencies and authorities in the region, such as UNRWA, UNHCR, the Palestinian Authority, and the governments of Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan and Syria. We are pushing for document renewals, or UNRWA file transfers, on a case by case basis as necessitated,” she said.

In some cases, non-ID Palestinians hold expired documents, such as Jordanian passports or Egyptian travel documents. Renewing them could provide them with an interim solution by making them eligible for work or stay permits.

“However, the best solution remains to register non-ID Palestinian refugees with the Lebanese government,” Chiha said

DRC has been working in close coordination with the Lebanese government, particularly through

the Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee (LPDC), in order to forge a solution to the problems faced by non-ID refugees.

“We are in the process of preparing all the documents concerning the non-ID Palestinian refugees, and, along with proposed solutions, we will submit our recommendations to the relevant authorities within the government for a decision to be made,” said Ambassador Khalil Makkawi, president of the committee.

Makkawi explained how the LPDC has delegated “the PLO and Palestinian NGOs to make a comprehensive study to find out the exact number of non-ID Palestinians and where they live so that we can identify them.”

“It is in the interest of the refugees themselves and the Lebanese government to identify them as being truly Palestinian,” said Makkawi.

He explained that “most non-ID Palestinians are not classified as refugees from 1948, and so Lebanon cannot register them.”

Makkawi said that, of the approximate 3,000 non-ID Palestinians currently in Lebanon, the PLO has identified 1,800 and is gathering information on the remaining.

In concurrence with Chida, Makkawi said that the committee had plans to “identify the non-ID Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, and give them Lebanese documentation.”

This however, requires a political decision, which is not entirely forthcoming in Lebanon. The Palestinian presence is viewed as a very sensitive issue, primarily due to

the perception that it can alter the confessional balance in Lebanon.

In the final analysis, as long as the issue of non-ID Palestinians is caught in a sticky web of bureaucratic procedures

and contradictory definitions, and as long as any solution to their plight must first pass through murky political channels, it is likely that these refugees will only see their crisis perpetuate.

The Daily Star

Wednesday, August 15, 2007

UNRWA urges better refugee conditions

Cook insists efforts will not hinder Palestinians' right of return

By Hesham Shawish, Special to *The Daily Star*

BEIRUT: The United Nations Relief & Works Agency (UNRWA) for Palestinian Refugees' director in Lebanon Richard Cook said that improving the living conditions of Palestinian refugees does not jeopardize their right of return. “The continuation of appalling conditions in refugee camps would radicalize many Palestinians and any backlash could cause problems for the Lebanese state in the longer term,” he said.

Cook was speaking to *The Daily Star* at the UNRWA's Field Office in Bir Hassan about the conditions of Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, and the need to help many refugees about their legal status.

He said he had suggested to Prime Minister Fouad Siniora that non-IDs refugees – those lacking any official identification – in Lebanon should be

registered within the Interior Ministry and registration offices, emphasizing the need for these people to be recognized.

Cook said that UNRWA accepts the Danish Refugee Council's figure showing that of the 400,000 Palestinian refugees residing within Lebanon, 3,000 non-ID Palestinians are not recognized by the Lebanese government or UNRWA.

However, he said, the number of people who have approached UNRWA as non-ID Palestinians has only reached 201. Of those, UNRWA has found 108 already registered with the Agency in Lebanon or other fields of operation.

“UNRWA has assisted these cases with registration and access to services such as healthcare and education on a case by case basis,” he said.

Cook said that UNRWA would help other non-ID refugees get their

documents from their towns of origins in the Occupied Territories.

He added that even when those documents cannot be transferred from Gaza, for example, to offices in Lebanon, UNRWA will still help them.

“Each instance will be looked at case by case and there are no rigid rules with us” said Afaf Younis, UNRWA’s chief field education programmer.

Younis said that children of non-IDs do have access to UNRWA schools and are provided with school IDs.

He said that non-ID students were able to graduate from High School due to a coordinated but informal arrangement between UNRWA and the Lebanese government’s departments of education.

Younis said that female registered refugees married to non-IDs and whose marital status is not reflected in government documents can approach the Islamic court or Mukhtar to produce a statement of marriage or identification attestation. This would allow their descendants to receive UNRWA services, as assessed on a case by case basis.

“The current government of Fouad Siniora has been the first government in the region to raise the issue of non-ID Palestinians” Cook said.

He added that “this government has a lot of ground to make up. Fouad Siniora recognizes the plight of non-IDs and the need to establish a dialogue with UNRWA over this issue. He has asked me to submit a paper on non-ID Palestinians and have found the current government to be particularly active regarding this issue than previous governments.”

The government has granted a \$15 million initiative to improve the conditions

of Palestinian refugee camps and in 2005 reached an agreement with UNRWA over the Rafik Hariri Hospital in Bir Hassan to offer services to the Agency at preferential rates for both in-patient and out-patient treatments for refugees.

Dr. Jamil Yusef, UNRWA’s chief field health programmer said “the Health Ministry provides UNRWA with technical assistance for medical treatment. During the Nahr al-Bared fighting between the Lebanese Army and Fatah al-Islam Islamic militants, the government demanded that any injured Palestinian could be treated at the expense of the Ministry of Health.

Pre-Siniora governmental opposition to grant greater citizenship rights to Palestinian refugees generally stemmed from the fear that any settlement program would jeopardize their <right to return’.

“This truly is a breakthrough.

Here we have a government willing to talk and solve the issues that matter mostly to Palestinians residing in Lebanon,” Cook said.

In 2005, the government passed a law granting Palestinians the right to work in 50 professions out of 72 listed by the Ministry of Labor. Many criticized the fact that Palestinians should have been given full rights to pursue occupations in all professions.

However opposition was found in many syndicated professions such as medicine, law, engineering and architecture.

The government is currently considering granting housing rights for Palestinian refugees residing in Lebanon and has asked UNRWA to submit documents and papers over

the issue of non-ID refugees.

Although much work has been done by the current government to improve the living conditions of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, UNRWA’s chief field relief and social services programmer Leila Kaissi told The Daily Star that “social benefits for unemployed Palestinians need to be addressed.

“Currently, those that have been lucky enough to find employment don’t receive any form of social security and this is one area we are pushing the government to approach,” she said.

Cook urged all Palestinians who feel entitled to UNRWA services to come forward to any of the agency’s centers and make themselves known to any of our chiefs of relief services.

“We have offices in all refugee camps and in various other areas of the country. We only want to help. If UNRWA can’t help these people then we will refer them to someone who can” he said.

