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TASK FORCE REPORT

Syrian Women and Children: Identifying Gaps and Goals for Reconstruction

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GLOSSARY

3RP Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan
CEDAW Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CFF Concessional Financing Facility
CIA Central Intelligence Agency
COI Commission of Inquiry
DGMM Directorate General of Migration Management
GBV Gender Based Violence
GED General Education Development
GOI Government of Iraq
GOJ Government of Jordan
GOL Government of Lebanon
GOT Government of Turkey
GWU General Women's Union (of Syria)
HRP Syria Humanitarian Response Plan
ID Identification
IDP Internally Displaced Person
ILO International Labor Organization
IRC International Rescue Committee
ISIL Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant
JRP Jordan Response Plan
KR-I Kurdistan Region of Iraq
KRG Kurdistan Regional Government
LCRP Lebanon Crisis Response Plan
MIPEX Migration Integration Policy Index
MOH Ministry of Health
MOU Memorandum of Understanding
MSF Médecins San Frontiéres
NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO Non-Governmental Organization
NLG No Lost Generation Initiative
OCHA Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PKK Kurdish Worker's Party (Turkish Kurdish Party)
RACE Reaching All Children with Education in Lebanon
RAIS Refugee Assistance and Information System
SARC Syrian Arab Red Crescent
SCPR Syrian Center for Policy Research

SGBV Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SUTP Syrians under Temporary Protection
SYP Syrian Pound (Currency)
TEC Turkish Temporary Education Centers
UN United Nations
UNCDF United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDP United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNIFEM United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNOCHA United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNPA United Natural Products Alliance
UNSC United Nations Security Council
USD US Dollars
VAW Violence Against Women
WFP World Food Programme
WHO World Health Organization
WHO EMRO World Health Organization Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean
YPG Peoples Protection Unit's (Syrian Kurdish Forces)

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INTRODUCTION

The Issue

The Syrian civil war has grown to be the defining humanitarian crisis of the early 21st century. What began as peaceful protests in 2011 has since evolved into a protracted and bloody conflict, claiming over 400,000 lives[1] and triggering the largest refugee exodus since World War Two. Among those affected by the crisis, Syrian women and children are counted among the most vulnerable to the social, political, and economic fallout. Persecution by both state and non-state actors alike has forced many to flee their homes to seek refuge in other regions of Syria or as refugees in another country. Those who flee may face persecution and limited access to legal or economic protections in host countries, while those who stay are subject to the continued threats of torture, sexual violence, and unreliable access to basic needs. While many studies have focused on the short-term needs of Syrian refugees, there is a shortage of comprehensive analysis being done on the long-term impacts on women and children. Without trying to downplay the importance of providing short-term support to the Syrian people during the ongoing crisis, this report intends to open the discussion of Syria's reconstruction and how this can be done in a way that is inclusive and equitable for women and children. The most unfortunate reality of this crisis is that innocent civilians are suffering the often-fatal consequences of both state and non-state actors' decisions. Therefore, the crisis will undoubtedly shape the nation of Syria's collective psyche for decades—or even centuries—to come. It is our hope that this report gives the UN, Syria, and the international community insight and direction; the goal is for Syria to move forward with a comprehensive and realistic plan for post-crisis reconstruction, especially as it concerns the status of women and children.

Why Women and Children?

Centering on women and children underlines the importance of supporting this population as both a worthy humanitarian cause, as well as a vital step towards the redevelopment of Syria. Women and children are also a particularly vulnerable segment of any conflict-ridden population, making them targets of sexual and psychological violence, exploitation, and social and economic marginalization. This has been true of every conflict in human history, with notable examples being the Bosnian war, in which somewhere between 20,000 and 60,000 women were raped[2], the Rwandan genocide, and more recent conflicts across Africa.[3] The same is true of the Syrian civil war, in which sexualized violence has been deployed on a mass scale by government troops[4] as well as by opposition and terrorist groups. In addition to direct

violence, the fallout of armed conflict tends to impact women and children more heavily. Outbreaks of disease which stem from the destruction of healthcare services and sanitation infrastructure tend to target children the most, while women are often passed up for economic opportunities or forced to undertake exploitative work. In particular, female-headed households have experienced the dual impacts of wartime resource scarcity and the social precariousness of being without a male figure head in a society that is traditionally patriarchal.

This report focuses exclusively on women and children within Syria and the neighboring countries of Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan and Iraq. Despite the fact that most Syrians refugees have been displaced within Syria's borders and the neighboring countries of Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Turkey, much of the international community's attention has been on those refugees who try to cross over into Europe or seek resettlement in North America and this is drawing attention and resources away from the core issues. The UNHCR's 3RP report puts the figures at 2.76 million refugees in Turkey alone, with an additional 4.81 million displaced to Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt.[5] Within these host countries a mere 10% of refugees reside in officially designated camps, while the remainder have moved into urban and peri-urban areas. This poses a multitude of new challenges to aid agencies and host-country responses, where integration into existing systems has placed immense burdens on the administrative and financial resources of the country. This is to say nothing of the population of the roughly 6.3 million IDPs still residing within Syria, where aid and reconstruction efforts have been patchy or non-existent due to the ongoing hostilities in several regions of the country.

To establish a basis for comparison with the country's current conditions, the report begins with a pre-crisis analysis of women and children's situation in Syria with regards to rights, economic roles, healthcare, and education. The second half of this section goes on to highlight how the crisis has impacted these sectors, and provides a brief overview of any aid or programs that are engaging these issues. Part three of the report offers a parallel analysis to the latter, though with a separate focus on women and children who have been displaced to Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, and Iraq, and how their circumstances vary accordingly. Our gap analysis section highlights the key issues found in each section, and expands upon the role of humanitarian aid and development efforts. Our recommendations section provides aid and policy recommendations that address women and children's needs, as well as the Syrian nation's needs. This culminates into a concise overview of what the issues are, what is being done, and what still needs to be done in order to achieve parity with, or surpass, pre-crisis conditions.

Finding ways to address women and children's needs in a way that recognizes the barriers they face is paramount to ensuring that aid actually has a positive impact

on the conditions of women and children. The sectoral approach of this report highlight how gender and age effect Syrians' opportunities and access to basic goods and services, and offers recommendations for both the short term in Syria and refugee host countries, as well as long term goals and policy recommendations for the reconstruction of Syria. Given women's increasing involvement in economic and political activities, the solutions should also look at fostering the participation and visibility of these groups and their circumstances. Our analysis of pre-crisis conditions with regards to laws and political representation shows how women and children's status has changed, and identifies opportunities for capacity building and empowerment. As per UN Women's report on Gender and Post-Conflict Governance, protections for women and children must insure the articulation of their needs in peace processes and development efforts, and a greater representation in local and national forums such that the issues highlighted in upcoming sections can be addressed through mainstream processes without having to rely perpetually on the assistance of NGOs or foreign intervention.[6]

Role of the United Nations

In the wake of a conflict as divisive as the Syrian civil war, the United Nations offers a rare degree of diplomatic legitimacy in a truce that is otherwise rife with distrust and hair-trigger reactions. Just recently a political officer for the Free Syrian Army outlined a list of demands for the Geneva talks, and amongst them was a strong desire for an "effective and independent UN-led monitoring mechanism and clear consequences for those who violate it (the ceasefire)."[7] The UN has already done a great deal to help alleviate the struggle of Syrian refugees through the works of the UNHCR, UNPF, UNICEF and others, while the Security Council has also passed some important resolutions pertaining to the freedom of movement and protection for aid convoys within Syria itself. The UN's involvement within Syria itself has been indirect owing to the continued conflict and the failure of past talks in Geneva, though Russia and Turkey's ability to facilitate ceasefires and negotiations has renewed hope for more solid aid effort in Syria. The recent Astana talks paved the way for another round of talks in Geneva, with the first talk having just taken place this past February 20th, 2017.

The UN is uniquely positioned to leverage and manage financial and social development efforts within Syria and in neighboring countries. Efforts to develop a comprehensive response to the needs of women and children will require more than addressing day-to-day needs, as a sustainable solution demands broader systemic reform and development efforts that target women and children's academic, professional, and social development. NGOs operating in the region have addressed some of the more immediate humanitarian needs, though consolidation of efforts under the umbrella of the UN would help eliminate redundancy and maximize

efficiency of responses. Additionally, the UN's commitment to the rights of women and children would help to ensure that the voices of these populations are being heard and that the responses are in keeping with their needs and wants. The creation of the Whole of Syria Strategic Steering Group (SSG) and the country-based pooled funds showed potential in their efforts to consolidate aid dispersals according to different regions.[8] The SSG's 2017 Humanitarian Needs Overview has demonstrated the merits of increased cooperation between the UN, NGOs and regional governments in generating consensus on the most pressing issues. The SSG report also breaks down data by gender, age and region, which indicates that women and children's status is already being given special attention.[9]

Crisis Implications

Today Syria lies in ruins. Major cities and economic hubs like Aleppo have been reduced to rubble by years of shelling; millions of talented Syrian professionals and skilled laborers have either been displaced or killed; schools and hospitals have either been destroyed or decommissioned, and the social fabric of the country has been torn apart along sectarian and ethnic lines. With a tacit ceasefire in place, a mix of fatigue on the part of armed groups and mounting pressures from international powers like Iran, Russia and Turkey may bring some form of political settlement into effect in the near future. With many Syrians professing a desire to return to their country, the break in hostilities will presumably lead many to return to their homes- as some already have following the opposition's defeat in Aleppo- though the country they will return to will no longer be able to sustain its population for lack of funding, resources, trained professionals, or public services. As a result of cultural norms, many Syrian women and children will face a steeper climb than most to establishing a self-sufficient, stable, and equitable society in Syria. Likewise, for those who choose to remain in the neighboring host countries of Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan and Iraq there will be unique challenges posed by the particular legal frameworks and cultural relations in place there. This is the reality which this Task Force has addressed, and which we hope the United Nations, NGOs and state actors in the region will take into account when addressing the needs of the Syrian people.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Six years of civil war has exacted a massive toll on Syrian women and children. Those who remain in Syria face constant threats of violence from armed groups, while those in refugee host-countries have been left in a legal limbo with limited access to resources or protection. This report, written by students from the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies, identifies the key issues affecting Syrian women and children both within Syria and in four neighboring refugee host-countries. Our approach uses a sectoral breakdown of rights and representation, economic opportunity, access to healthcare, and access to education in Syria and neighboring refugee host countries. We begin by analyzing each of these sectors in pre-crisis Syria, and then contrast these with the current situation. The juxtaposition of Syrian women and children's outstanding needs with current efforts to address them provides the basis for our subsequent Gap Analysis, and the concluding recommendations. The second half of the sectoral analysis applies a similar treatment to the situations in Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Iraq but with a greater focus on how national and international response plans have reacted to their presence.

Our section on women and children's rights and representation addresses the growing prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence in Syria and refugee host-countries. The issues of rape and honor killings pre-date the crisis in both, but the breakdown of legal enforcement and the deployment of SGBV as a weapon of war have led to a spike in the number of victims. The report also addresses the degree of women's participation in political and legal arenas while beginning to identify some of the potential avenues for women to seek support. On the local and national levels, women have historically been underrepresented in public decisions making processes. Our gap analysis and recommendations in this area focus on developing grassroots rights-consciousness amongst women and girls, in addition to strengthening the protections afforded to them in political and legal forums.

Economic opportunity and the overall financial security of women and children is a crosscutting issue with a broad range of impacts. Our analysis of pre-crisis employment reveals that women were largely employment in education, healthcare, public service jobs, and in the informal economies of petty commerce and agriculture. Children contributed to the informal and agricultural sectors, though compulsory education requirements and laws against child labor limited their involvement. Since the crisis this pattern has shifted, with women assuming a far greater share of household financial responsibilities and children being forced to supplement incomes through begging and informal markets. These strains on women and children, particularly in female-headed households—which find themselves both short-handed

and marginalized in most communities—limit their ability to access healthcare, education, food, and other basic goods. Our gap analysis identifies how different types of aid are being used to address this issue, and what can be done to facilitate the recovery of sustainable livelihoods for Syrian women and deter children from premature entry into the labor force.

In terms of health within Syria, women and children have suffered from a lack of medication and vaccines- either due to aid blockades or prohibitive costs- the destruction of hospitals, and the loss of roughly half of Syria's doctors and healthcare professionals. These issues bleed into the neighboring host countries as well, where medical facilities have struggled to accommodate the influx of Syrian refugees. While Syrians in the neighboring host-countries have greater access to most of these services, there are still gaps that need to be addressed. Our analysis also extends beyond medicine and healthcare to a range of issues that contribute to the general health and well-being of Syrians. These range from to nutrition, physical and mental health, to water, sewage treatment, and housing.

The final issue that this report tackles is access to education. With millions of children unable to access school as a result of economic hardship, violence, and administrative barriers there is a real concern for the future of these children, and Syria as a whole. A lack of education and opportunities for upward mobility can perpetuate civil unrest, and without quality schooling there cannot be a sustainable solution to Syria's brain-drain. Our report addresses the situation within Syria, but acknowledges the comparative advantage that the international community has in addressing education in host-countries where security and aid dependability are more stable.

The gap analysis synthesizes all of these issues, and highlights four recurring issues that the Task Force identified across all of the sectors. These keystone issues are laws, policy and enforcement; infrastructure, funding gaps and brain-drain. Identifying these issues allows international actors like the United Nations, as well as regional governments and NGOs, to clearly see how these keystone issues affect each of the sectors mentioned above. While the Task Force accepts that there is no "silver bullet" for the crisis affecting Syrian women and children, directing resources towards these focal points will yield the greatest net-benefit to them. Our policy recommendations take this process a step further, identifying some specific steps that can be taken to address these issues.

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PART A:

CONTEXT

The Roots of the Syrian Crisis: The Past's Role in the Present

Abstract

Since its inception, Syria has dealt with the consequences of diverse, fluid and conflicting identities, as a result of the disregard for regional identity in creating a Syrian state on the part of European powers. Upon taking power, Hafez al-Assad addressed this by creating a repressive state apparatus. The implementation of a vast internal security force buried regional identities and created a paranoid and submissive population. The Arab Spring uncorked decades of repressed religious and ethnic friction, which have now engulfed Syria. The chaos that has resulted from the numerous different local actors has drawn both regional powers such as Turkey and Iran as well as International powers such as Russia and the US into the conflict each looking to influence the outcome to better their interests in the region. The toll this conflict has taken has been immense. The infrastructure systems in many of the urban centers of the country have been particularly hard hit. The damage to housing, energy, transportation, education, heath, roads, water and sanitation systems is estimated to have exceeded US$6 billion. The impact of this crisis on human life has been much more tragic than the infrastructural damage sustained. More than 6.2 million Syrians have registered as internally displaced persons (IDPs). Over 80% of these people are women and children. Apart from following gender lines, displacement has occurred along sectarian lines. Kurdish populations have fled to areas controlled by the YPG. Alawites have fled to the Alawi stronghold of Latakia. Christians have fled to other Christian populations on the coast near Tartus. The damage to the Syrian infrastructure has made it particularly difficult for these displaced populations to receive humanitarian aid and assistance.

Introduction

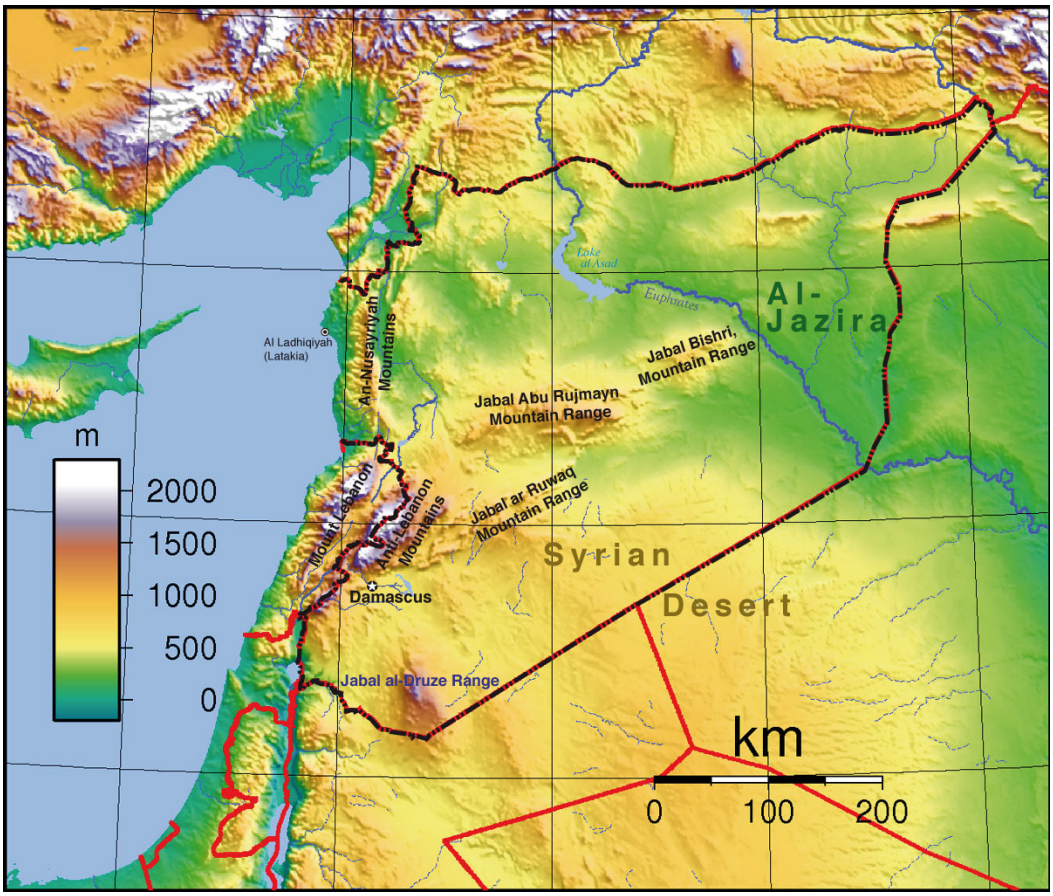
The crisis in Syria is characterized by sectarian violence and massive displacement of populations driven by friction between numerous ethnic and religious

groups as well as both regional and global pressures. To even begin to address the severe impact this crisis has had on the women and children of Syria, it is vital to understand both the distribution of various identities within Syria and the history that helped to shape the conflict today.

Geography

Syria is a country located in the Eastern Mediterranean. It is composed of an incredibly varied terrain including a fertile coastal plain in the west, several mountain ranges trisecting the country and an arid plateau in the east. The Euphrates River runs through the northeast and provides power and drinking water for that region of the country.[1] It is bordered by Turkey to the north, Iraq to the east, Lebanon and the Mediterranean Sea to the west, and Israel and Jordan to the south.

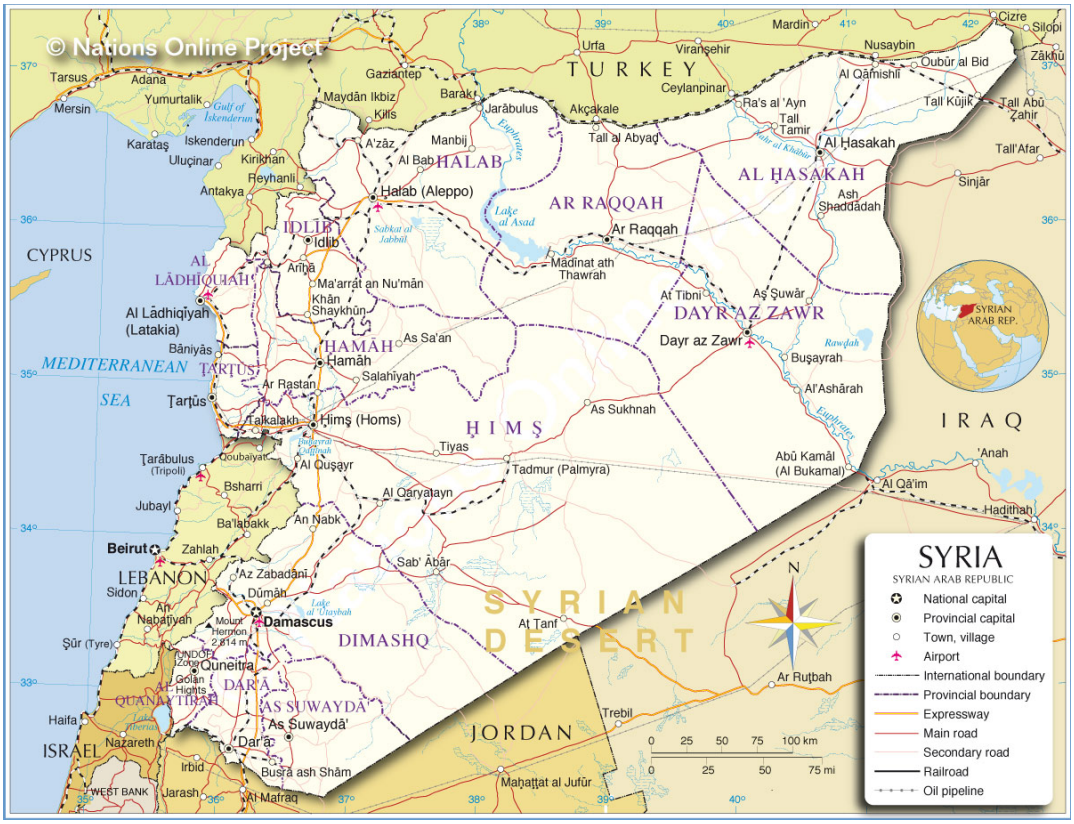
Figure 1.1: Topography of Syria[2]



There are several major urban centers in Syria. On the coast are the vital port cities of Latakia and Tartus. Inland from these is an urban corridor bisecting the country

from its largest city of Aleppo in the north, through the industrial center of Homs to the capital of Damascus in the south of the country (Figure 1.2). In the east is the city of al-Raqqah, which is located near the country's largest dam, the Tabqa Dam. This currently serves as the capital for ISIL.

Figure 1.2: Political map of Syria[3]



Identity

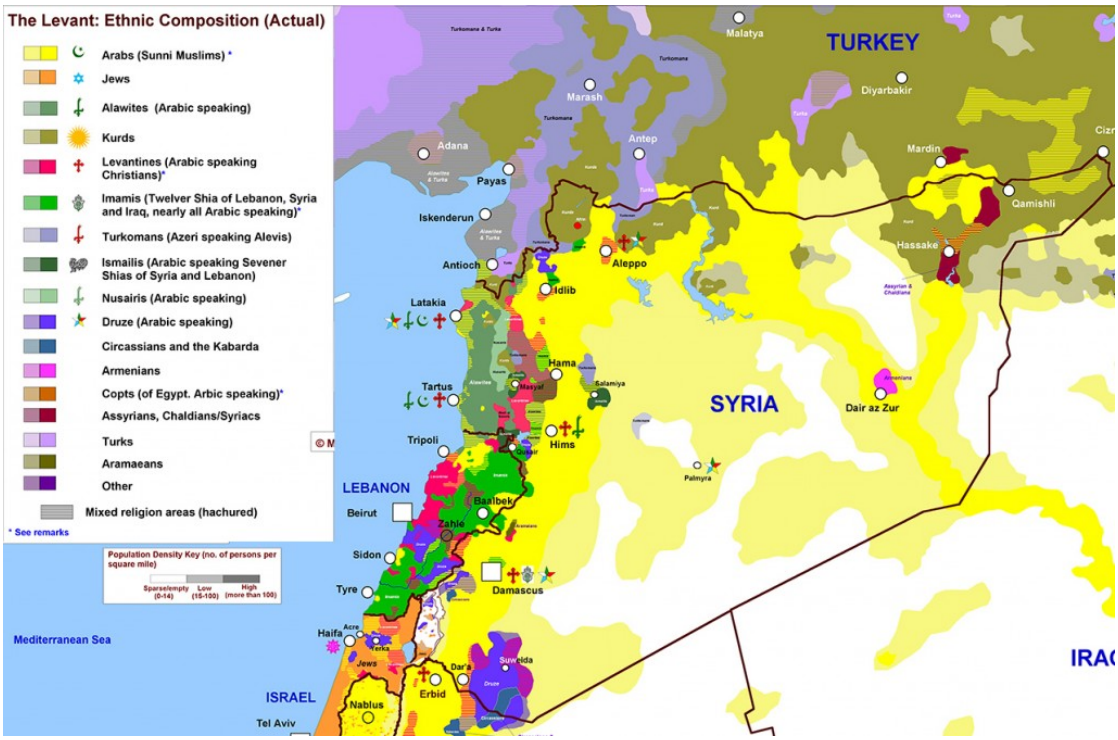
The diversity of geography in the region is reflected in the diversity of its peoples. It is comprised of a disparate tapestry of various ethnic groups, religious communities and sects that overlap and intersect throughout the region. It is this fluidity of identity that makes the conflict the confusing, messy affair that it is today. While this fluidity means that the divisions between various groups are not sharp and often overlap, prior to the crisis, a general geographic distribution of the key ethnic, religious and tribal actors existed.

Religious Distribution

Figure 1.3: Religious demographics of Syria[4]

Religion	Percentage of Population
Muslim (Sunni)	75%
Alawite	11%
Christian	7.8%
Druze	1%
Muslim (Ismaili)	1%
Jewish	<1%
Muslim (Yezidi)	<1%

Figure 1.4: Ethno-religious composition of Syria[5]



In Syria, Sunni Muslims make up the vast majority of the population, which is reflected in the prevalence of their communities throughout the populated regions of the country. The next largest religious group in Syria is the Alawites, the religious group to which Bashar al-Assad is a member. Their communities are mostly concentrated on the coast around Latakia and Tartus. Christian communities constitute

the next largest religious minority in the country. Their communities are spread throughout the country with prominent ones concentrated around Hama and Homs as well as in Aleppo and Damascus. Druze communities can be found in the southwest near the Golan Heights and the Israeli and Lebanese borders as well as in the far south around al-Suwayda. Non-Alawite Shi'a and Ismaili communities can be found in Homs, in between Hama and the Coast as well as in between Raqqa and Hama. Jewish communities can be found in Aleppo and Damascus.[6]

Ethnic Distribution

Along with religion, ethnicity is a key identifier in Syria. Arab communities constitute the large majority in the country making up 90% of the population. As the dominant majority, Arab populations are spread throughout Syria. The Kurdish people and other non-Arabic speaking minorities make up the other 10% of the population[7]. Though they identify as Sunni Muslims, the Kurds distinguish themselves from Arab Sunnis through a distinct language and cultural traditions. Populations of Kurds are concentrated in the north and northeast of the country where their populations spread into Southern Turkey, Northern Iraq, and Iran (Figure 1.4). Both of these ethnic identities are important as they cross borders and push back against the idea of a purely Syrian identity.

Regional Identity

Contrary to popular discourse one does not need to travel back to the time of the Prophet to make sense of the violence in Syria today. The schism between the Sunni and the Shi'a is certainly important, however the true roots of the crisis today can be found only 150 years back, in the late Ottoman Period.[8] At the time, Syria looked nothing like it does today. It was divided into various administrative districts—called vilayets—centered around cities. At the time there was not a "Syrian" identity as we see today, rather, people identified more regionally with the cities they lived near, be it Aleppo or Damascus.

Near the turn of the Nineteenth Century though, the region became more and more interconnected. The introduction of the telegraph opened quicker communication between the various communities in the region. At the same time the construction of the Hejaz Railroad was completed. This connected the inland cities of Aleppo, Homs, and Damascus with Istanbul to the north in Anatolia and Medina to the south in the Hejaz; furthermore, roads were constructed that connected those same cities with Beirut and Tripoli on the Coast. This facilitated increased trade between

regions, tying them closer and closer together in the economic sphere. The increasing interconnectivity in the region allowed for a loose "Syrian" identity to form in the region.[9] This older Syrian proto-nationalism was much broader than the Syrian identity today. It encompassed parts of southern Anatolia, modern day Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, parts of western Iraq and the Hejaz. This was reflected in the intermarriage of elite families from the different cities in the region as well as the spread of newspapers throughout the area.[10] Unlike the nationalist movements sprouting up in other parts of the Ottoman Empire at the time though, the identity forming in Greater Syria was very loose. Ethnic and religious divisions still took precedent over any broader overarching identity.

Creation of Modern Syria

During the First World War, the British looked to the Arab communities in the Ottoman Empire for help in destabilizing and defeating the Turks. In return for Arab help, the British promised the Arabs a state carved out of the remains of the Ottoman Empire.[11] The state promised to the Arabs was ambiguous though, which led to different expectations between the British and the Arabs. The Arabs, under King Hussein and his sons Faisal and Abdullah, envisioned a state reflecting the economic and cultural interconnectivity that had been established in the preceding years.[12] This understanding was demonstrated when Faisal and the newly elected Syrian parliament in Damascus, upon victory, proclaimed a Syrian state encompassing just those boundaries.[13]

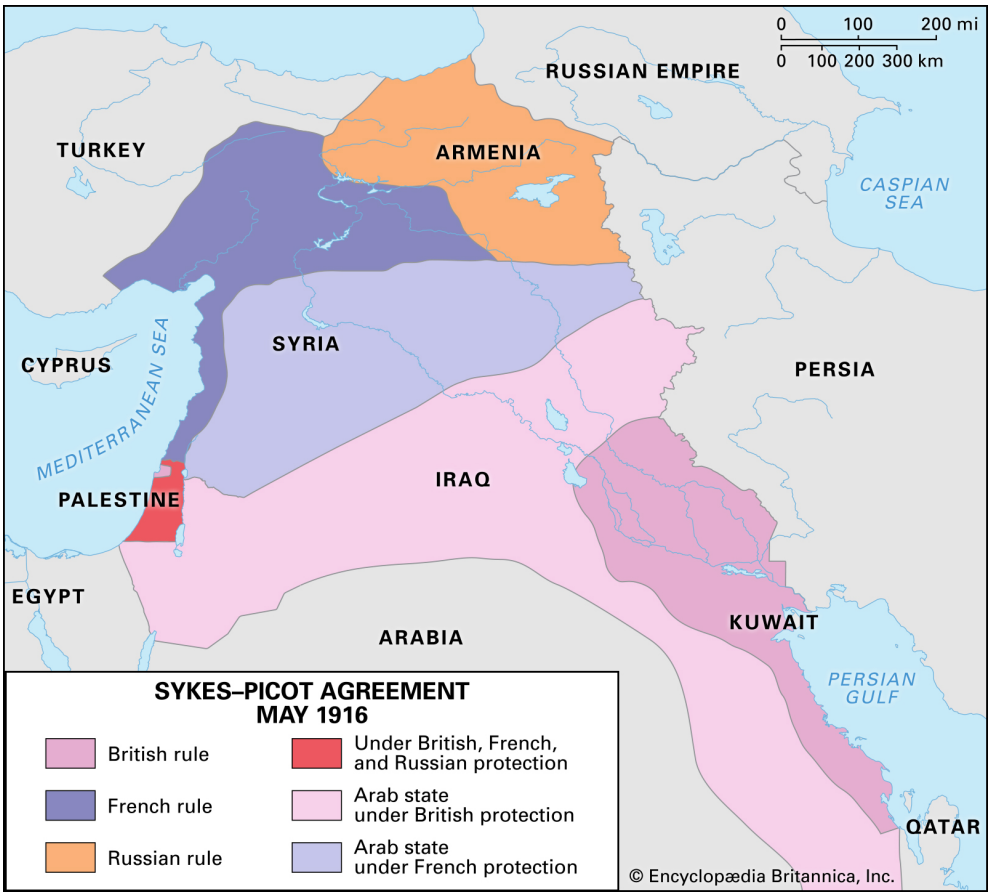
Meanwhile, the British had other ideas for the region as well as the prospective Arab State. The British entered a series of secret diplomatic agreements with the French and the Russians as to the division of the Ottoman Empire upon their defeat in the war. Of these, two were important.

The first was the Istanbul Agreement between the British, French and Russians. This established the respective interests in the region that any future agreement would consider.[14] The second agreement was even more formative with regards to the current turmoil in the Middle East. This was the Sykes-Picot agreement between Mark Sykes of Britain and Jean Georges-Picot of France.[15] This divided the Levant into areas of direct control and indirect influence between the French and the British.

The British were to have direct control over modern day Iraq (Red Zone), as well as influence over Trans Jordan and eastern Arabia (B Zone) (see map). The French on the other hand would be given control over the modern day Syrian coast (Blue Zone) and Lebanon as well as influence over inland Syria (A Zone). Palestine was to be an International zone on account of its religious significance. The borders of this agreement were, more or less, codified after the war by the League of Nations with the granting of mandates for both the British and the French.[1617] This division obviously did

not square up with the Arab ideas of their state.[18] The greater Syrian identity that had been fostered for the previous 50 years was divided under the two imperial powers.

Figure 1.5: The Sykes-Picot Agreement[19]



The Rise of the Assad Family

After 23 years of French rule under the mandate, the modern nation of Syria declared independence in October 1945. Through the 50s and 60s Syria joined its Arab neighbors in opposing Israel, fighting several wars against the Jewish state.[20] They were also swept up in Nasser's Pan Arab Movement in Egypt. This culminated with the brief union of the two countries as the United Arab Republic in 1958. That did not last with Syria again becoming an independent state in 1961.[21] With this backdrop, a man name Hafez al-Assad stepped onto the scene. Hafez had risen through the Syrian air force and took power in a successful coup in 1970. Assad quickly worked to consolidate power, strengthening the power of the presidency while weakening party and state institutions that checked its power. An Alawite himself, Assad elevated enough fellow Alawi kinsmen to dominate the intelligence and security services.

Under Assad, Syrian society reflected the dominance of the intelligence and security apparatus. The regime crafted its bureaucracy and coercive intelligence apparatus in the mold of the Soviet Union. Purposefully inefficient government institutions served to obscure the real channels of power in the government. This opacity hid the relative weakness of state institutions in comparison with presidential power.

In addition to the bureaucracy, the Assad regime took notes from the Russians with regards to its security apparatus. Its internal security service, the Mukhabarat, constantly monitored the Syrian population, rooting out dissidents and opposition.[22] Rather than being uniformed, the majority of the government security agents in Syria dressed in plain clothes and blended with the population.[23] This fostered paranoia and distrust among the population, resulting in a society that would not broach issues of politics unless in the company of only close family members. This made for a timid, docile population and allowed for the Ba'ath party[24] to retain power.

The repressive state apparatus allowed Hafez al-Assad to choose and groom his successor; first, his son Bassel al-Assad then, following Bassel's death[25], his younger son Bashar.[26] Upon taking power, Bashar was popular among the population, as he seemed likely to reform the repressive state.[27] Those reforms never took place, though, as the new Assad maintained the coercive security apparatus that his father had created.

The Current Crisis

The Arab Spring

The repressive authoritarian regime of the Assad family was not unique in the Arab world; rather, it was a common trait throughout the region. On top of the repression that characterized the region, and the destabilizing effects of the ongoing war in Iraq, the 2007 financial crisis struck hard, leading to soaring unemployment. The impacts of this were amplified as a result of increased rural-urban migration and the proliferation of the Internet and communications technologies.[28] With these pressures and the tools to organize, the entire region was a tinderbox waiting for a spark. That spark was Mohamed Bouazizi.

On the 17th of December 2010, Mohamed Bouazizi, a street vendor in Tunisia, lit himself on fire in protest of government and police corruption after the government had confiscated his wares. This sparked a series of protests in Tunisia that rapidly grew and eventually encompassed most of the Arab world. The Arab Spring had begun. The wave of protests spread to Algeria, Egypt, Jordan and Yemen, all of these met markedly less success than Tunisia.[29] [30]

Protests in Syria

As the protests spread to Syria, they were met by a markedly different response from the regime than was seen in Egypt and Tunisia. The first demonstrations in Damascus on March 15th, 2011 were forcibly put down with the police firing on the crowd. Subsequent protests claimed the lives of 15 protesters and 7 police officers. Ten days after the outbreak of protests, Bashar al-Assad gave a speech blaming them on foreign conspirators.

By early April 2011, the focus of the protests had shifted from demanding democratic reforms and an end to government corruption to demanding the overthrow of the Assad government. This shift was accompanied by increased violence, leading to the deaths of over 1,000 civilians and 150 security personnel by the end of May.[31] This increased violence lead to the first phase of displacement within Syria as citizens living near the protests fled the violence to safer neighborhoods.

Civil War in Syria

Following is an overview of the major events in the Syrian Civil war leading up to the emergence of ISIL as an actor in the conflict.

Figure 1.6: Timeline of the Syrian civil war 2011-2012

Date	Event
March, 2011	• 15 - Protests begin in the city of Damascus • 30 - Bashar al-Assad blames "foreign conspirators" for pushing Israeli propaganda at the Protests
April, 2011	• 8 - The demonstrations shift toward a call for the overthrow of the Assad Government. • Protests Spread • As confrontations between protesters and security forces increased, Syrians fled the violence to safer neighborhoods initiating the First Phase of Displacement.
May, 2011	• 31 - 1,000 Civilians and 150 Police officers had been killed
July, 2011	• 29 - The Syrian National Council is formed from a coalition of anti-government groups
October, 2011	• 1 - Syrian Army begins an offensive to take back the city of

	Homs
November, 2011	• Fighting in Homs escalates spreading from neighborhood to neighborhood.[32] • This begins the Second Phase of Displacement in Syria as civilians fled the war torn neighborhoods to safety.[33]
January 2012	• Assad regime begins indiscriminate shelling of opposition groups
April 2012	• Government forces gradually retake control of Homs and Idlib • The death toll of the conflict surpasses 10,000 deaths
July 2012	• The battle for control of Aleppo, Syria's largest city, becomes the focus for both government and opposition forces. • Kurdish forces (YPG) join rebel forces to fight the Assad Regime[34]

Rise of ISIL and Al-Nursa Front

Throughout the fighting, the rebel groups were very dis-unified with many factions, like the Kurdish YPG, desiring different goals and acting in their own interest. This made choosing a rebel group to support incredibly difficult to the international community. 2013 saw increased fighting between more moderate rebel groups and the radical Islamist groups that had joined the fray, such as the Al-Nursa Front and ISIL.

The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) can trace its roots to the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. In dismantling the Ba'ath party and army as well as creating a Shi'a dominated government in Baghdad, the US isolated and disenfranchised thousands of Sunni elites, many of whom had served in the army. In the face of the sectarian violence that ravaged the country following the fall of Saddam Hussein, these disenfranchised elites were radicalized and formed the Islamic State in 2006, which worked in Western Iraq until 2013.[35]

In 2013 ISIL, with a surge of foreign recruitment, began conquering territory in central and northern Syria under the auspices of creating a Caliphate. This resulted in a third major faction entering the fight, now with the government forces, rebel forces and Islamist forces all fighting each other.

Foreign Interests

The cruelty and effectiveness ISIL showed in conquering territory quickly brought it to the forefront of the international conversation. In addition to the humanitarian crisis that had formed from years of fighting, this prompted the entrance of several international players into the conflict. Regionally, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Iran have looked to assert their influence over the conflict.[36] Turkey has supported opposition groups to the Assad regime as well as provided air support in the fight against ISIL. Turkey also has a vested interest in ensuring that there is no formation of a Kurdish state in the north of the country due to their own internal problems with their Kurdish minority. Saudi Arabia has supported Sunni rebel groups as a part of their broader power struggle with Iran in the region. Likewise, Iran has supported the heavily Shi'a government forces and militias as a counter to Sunni and Saudi influence in the conflict.

On an international level, the US has led airstrikes against the Islamic State and supplied select rebel groups in the battle against the Jihadists. Most notable of these is the US support of Kurdish forces, which have proven the most capable in fighting ISIL. This has strained relations between the US and fellow NATO member Turkey. Inaction and political uncertainty have diminished the US role in the crisis at present. Russia has also joined the struggle by providing air support for both the fight against ISIL as well as for the Regime forces. A combination of Russian and Regime airstrikes against rebel forces in Aleppo are responsible for the vast levels of displacement the city has seen as the humanitarian crisis worsens there.

Ceasefire

As of February 2017, there is an uneasy ceasefire between the Regime and rebel groups with Russia and Turkey acting as guarantors. This has allowed for the passage of humanitarian aid to besieged communities throughout the country. The peace is tenuous as a result of the fractious nature of the opposition groups as well as the continued fight against the Islamic state in the east.

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[1] A coastal plain stretches along the Mediterranean from southern Turkey to Lebanon. Bordering the coastal plain are inland mountain ranges. In the North there is the Jabal al-Nusayriya. It is heavily populated on the fertile western slopes and its highest peak is the Nabi Yunis at 1,575 meters. Further south are the Anti-Lebanon Mountains on the border between Lebanon and Syria. In this range is Mount Hermon reaching 2,814 meters into the sky. An arid plateau dominates the south east of the country. This plateau is characterized by two desert regions, the Hamad in the south and the Homs Desert further north, bisected by a low-lying Mountain Range, the Jabal ar Ruwaq. In the northeast the Euphrates River flows from the mountains of Turkey, through Syria and into Iraq. The area surrounding the river is fertile, especially the Jazira region to the northeast.

[2] Kästle, Klaus. "Political Map of Syria." Political Map of Syria - Nations Online Project. Accessed February 10, 2017. http://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/map/syria-map.htm.

[3] Ibid.

[4] "Syria Population 2016." Syria Population (2016) - World Population Review. Accessed January 18, 2017. http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/syria-population/.

[5] "Demographics." Heritage for Peace. Last modified October 16, 2013. http://www.heritageforpeace.org/syria-country-i

[6] "The World Factbook: SYRIA." Central Intelligence Agency. January 12, 2017. Accessed February 02, 2017. https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sy.html.

[7] "Syria Population 2016." Syria Population (2016) - World Population Review. Accessed January 18, 2017. http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/syria-population/.

[8] Carter V. Findley, Turkey, Islam, nationalism, and modernity: a history, 1789-2007 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010).

[9] Gelvin, James L. The Modern Middle East: a history. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

[10] Bickerton, Ian J., and Carla L. Klausner. A history of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2007.

[11] This agreement was known as the Hussein-McMahon correspondence, named after King Hussein of the Hejaz and Sir Henry McMahon the British High Commissioner of Egypt, who worked out the deal.

[12] This would have been based out of Damascus encompassing modern day Syria, Palestine, and Jordan, as well as parts of Western Iraq and Southern Turkey.

[13] Gelvin, James L. The Modern Middle East: a history.

[14] For the British, those interests were the protection of the Suez Canal and Iraqi oil. For the French, it was a "historic right to protect Christians around modern day Syria and Lebanon. The Russians wanted Istanbul and the Dardanelles to protect their vital Black Sea shipping lanes.

[15] Bickerton, Ian J., and Carla L. Klausner. A history of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

[16] The French took control of modern day Syria while the British were granted control of Iraq, Trans Jordan and Palestine

[17] Gelvin, James L. The Modern Middle East: a history.

[18] The French left little doubt about which claim would be enforced though when they ousted King Faisal and the Syrian parliament, and asserted control over their mandate.

[19] "Sykes-Picot Agreement". Map. ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANNICA ONLINE. Web. 15 Feb. 2017. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Sykes-Picot-Agreement?oasmId=205635>

[20] Syrian Wars after Independence: The 1948 War, The Six Day war, The Yom Kippur War, Syrian occupation of Lebanon

[21] Owen, Roger. The rise and fall of Arab presidents for life. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012.

[22] Stories of the maltreatment and torture of those taken by the Mukhabarat were well known throughout the country.

[23] Sahner, Christian C. Among the ruins: Syria past and present. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014.

[24] The Ba'ath party was an Arab socialist party that help pan-Arab views. It was the ruling party across Iraq and Syria and was the party of both Hafez al-Assad and Saddam Hussein. The Syrian and Iraqi branches split in 1966 into the their own respective movements.

[25] Bassel died in a car accident in 1994.

[26] Owen, Roger. The rise and fall of Arab presidents for life.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Severe drought had been ravaging the Mediterranean for several years, leading to a significant increase in migration from rural areas to urban ones in search of work. This resulted in large

numbers of unemployed youth throughout the region, particularly in cities. The advent of the Internet and social media only served to amplify the tensions that this created, disenfranchised and repressed populations across the Arab world finally had a way to circumvent the state-run media and collectively organize to act on the vast inequalities within their countries.

[29] Brownlee, Jason, Tarek E. Masoud, and Andrew Reynolds. The Arab Spring: pathways of repression and reform. Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2015.

[30] Egypt saw the next best outcome of the Arab spring with the toppling of President Hosni Mubarak. After the Egyptian population elected the Muslim Brotherhood candidate Mohammad Morsi as president, the deep state in Egypt, specifically the military, overthrew the new president. This in combination with repressive crackdowns on opposition groups signals significant democratic backsliding in the country. Yemen on the other hand represented the worst outcome of the Arab Spring. The country, as a result of the instability caused by the uprisings, has devolved into a sectarian civil war that serves as a major theatre for the regional proxy war between Saudi Arabian and Yemen.

[31] Ghattas, Kim. "US policy on Syria 'depends on success in Libya'" BBC News. May 24, 2011. Accessed February 10, 2017. http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-13529923.

[32] Homs was the self-proclaimed "Capital of the Revolution"

[33] Many of the Syrians who fled during this time moved to neighborhoods of a similar socio-economic class.

[34] The YPG had interests of their own they hoped to protect when entering the conflict. The ethnic minority has sought the establishment of Kurdish state since the time of the Ottoman Empire. Though they joined on the side of the opposition, the Kurds viewed the turmoil in Syria as an opportunity to establish their state. This has been reflected in the efforts of the YPG to secure the borders of their own land against both Assad and ISIL. This quest for a state is a topic of contention in the international community. The Kurds are widely viewed as the most effective force against ISIL, however, their close affiliation with the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) in Turkey is viewed as threatening by the Turkish who consider the PKK a terror organization.

[35] Weiss, Michael, and Hassan Hassan. Isis: inside the army of terror. New York, NY: Regan Arts, 2015.

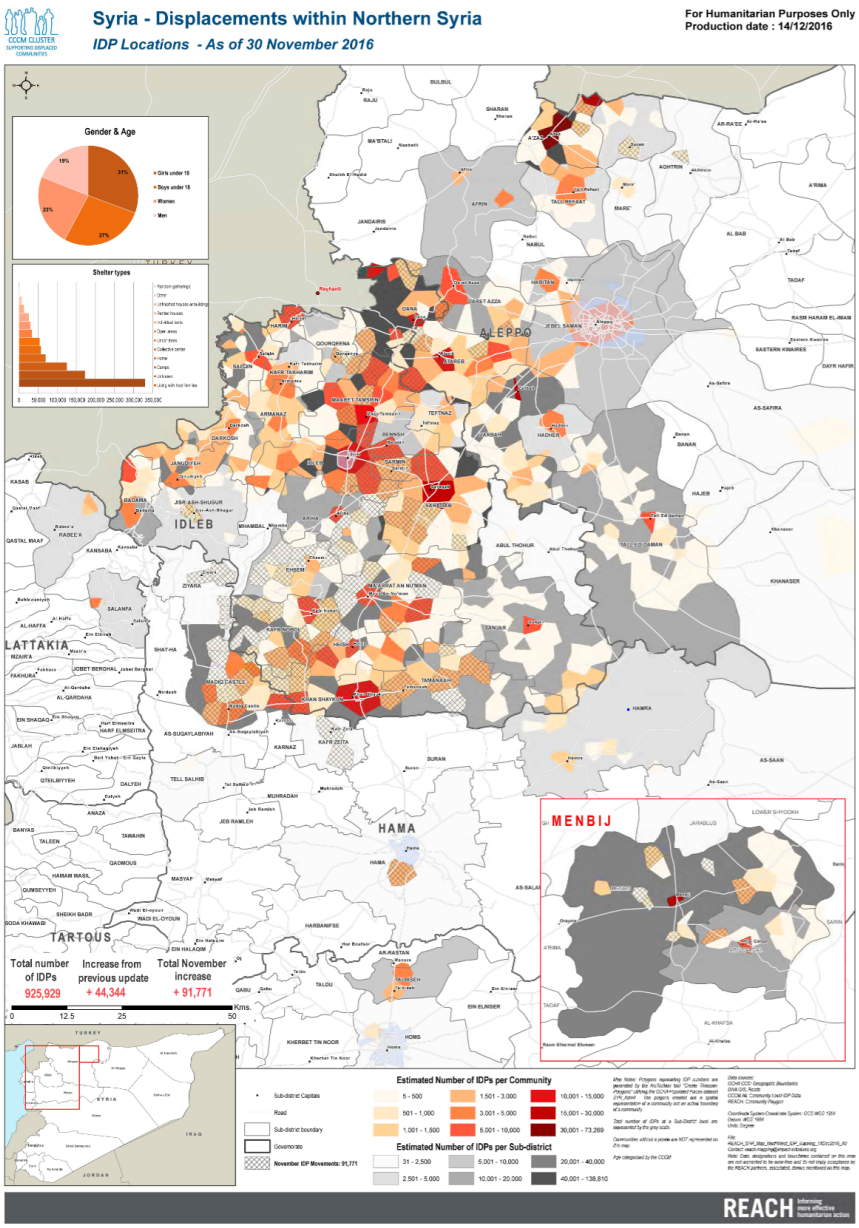
[36] Anderson, Scott. "Fractured Lands: How the Arab World Came Apart - The New ..." New York Times. Accessed February 2, 2017. https://www.bing.com/cr?IG=BE9A199708FB46C0BF79BD9441538B64&CID=1DC9C9871A9E6A230531C3991BAF6BC5&rd=1&h=jXruOPT8k2cHTXE5K8xTjnUt_rKIsLW93AoWQBdO7ok&v=1&r=https%3a%2f%2fwww.nytimes.com%2finteractive%2f2016%2f08%2f11%2fmagazine%2fisis-middle-east-arab-spring-fractured-lands.html&p=DevEx,5073.1.

The Syrian Refugee Crisis:

Internally Displaced People

Introduction

Figure 2.1 IDP demographics and living situation within northern Syria, OCHA[1]



This section's purpose is to identify the "who" which is inclusive, but not exclusive to, age, sex, religion, and ethnicity; additionally, highlighting where Syrians have fled internally as IDPs and externally as refugees. To provide recommendations before identifying this "who" will inevitably fail, as vastly different lifestyles will positively respond to vastly different forms of assistance.

The political situation in Syria is not conducive to data collection in many parts of the country. Consequently, the migration patterns of Syrian IDPs are difficult to identify and triangulate, but not entirely out of reach. Internal Displacement is no isolated phenomenon; it has affected every governorate in Syria. As of January 6th 2017, 6.3 million people were registered as internally displaced persons.[2] This displacement most heavily affects rural Damascus (1.27 million), Aleppo (1.25 million), and Idleb (704,500). Although rural Damascus is a critical point in the IDP narrative, demographic data is non-existent. The cryptic nature of this information is information in itself. It likely indicates a lack of access to rural Damascus by humanitarian groups and a gap in services provided to the area.

Rural Damascus's implication is Syria's reality. Nearly every population center suffers from insufficient resources with the majority of Syrian civilization pre-crisis lived in urban areas (64%). Safe havens have been constructed in Northern Syria to ease the burden placed on urban areas and those unable to relocate to them. Unfortunately, in 2016 several attacks on safe havens in Northern Aleppo and Idleb resulted in deaths, forcing groups to question the safety of said camps and strengthening the allure of urban areas. Attacks on camps created a new reality for IDPs in which Syria was no longer an option. Syrians attempted to flee to Turkey but were rejected. Consequently, "165,000 civilians [were] trapped between the Turkish border and an ISIS offensive near the town of Azaz in northern Syria."[3] Syrians in urban areas fled to enclaves of similar socioeconomic status, which likely corresponds with familial ties, another pattern of migration.[4]

Infrastructural Damage

The destruction and devastation that has been wrought by this crisis is both vast and comprehensive. Beyond the incredible human suffering that has occurred, five years of violence and conflict have left the basic infrastructure of the country in disrepair. The World Bank estimates through surveillance of satellite imagery that damage to the Health, Housing, Education, Energy, Transportation, Water and Sanitation infrastructure of 6 major cities[5] in Syria totals to around US$ 6 billion.[6] Of these, the damage to the housing infrastructure was most severe totaling US$4 billion. Energy infrastructure has sustained nearly $1.2 billion USD in damages followed by

Health services, which sustained nearly US$400 million USD in damages.[7] The impacts of the devastation of Syrian infrastructure will be addressed in subsequent sections highlighting gaps that must be addressed in any attempt at reconstruction of the Syrian state.

Urban communities have become highly reliant on assistance due to the comprehensive nature of the destruction to infrastructure. Despite the need, sufficient aid has not been provided, which is the result of damage to transport infrastructure such as roads and bridges. Infrastructure damage has affected half the IDP population.[8] Native communities have attributed their deteriorating circumstances to IDP populations materializing in violence and tensions between IDPs and host communities.[9] The most heavily populated IDP populations are in Northern Damascus, West and North Idleb, and Northern Aleppo. Left with few options, over 1 million Syrians live in shelters of last resort. These include mosques, schools, and public buildings, typically located in rural areas. Due to the likelihood of these structures being military targets, people in rural areas are almost four times more vulnerable living there than in urban areas.[10]

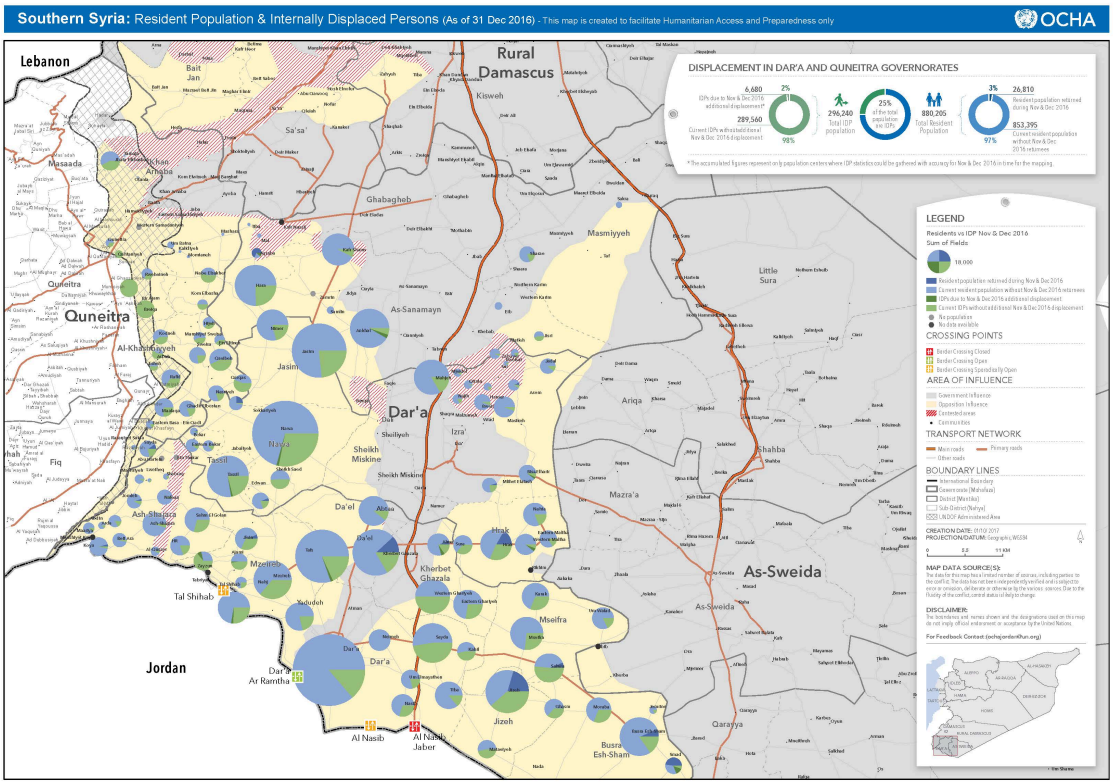
A lack of infrastructure coupled with increased risk complicates the aid process. When aid does arrive, female-headed households, single women, and IDPs fleeing from another area face increased difficulty.[11] These issues can be attributed to the power dynamic women have in a male dominated public sphere. Ultimately, services to IDPs are few and far between due to the changing military dynamics with women and children least likely to receive adequate aid.

The civil war is the cause of the Syrian IDP and refugee crisis, but who are the people and where did they flee? Modern Syria, and the situation it has created for women and children would not exist without its sectarian divisions, subsequently; it is impossible to describe Syrians without noting said divisions. Syrians practice different cultures, speak different languages, and follow different religions. The information will be structured around the three phases of displacement, which include urban to rural, IDP flight to camps, and sectarian patterns of displacement.

Three Phases of Displacement

Phase One: Urban to Rural Displacement (2011-2012)

Figure 2.2 IDP demographics within southern Syria, OCHA [12]

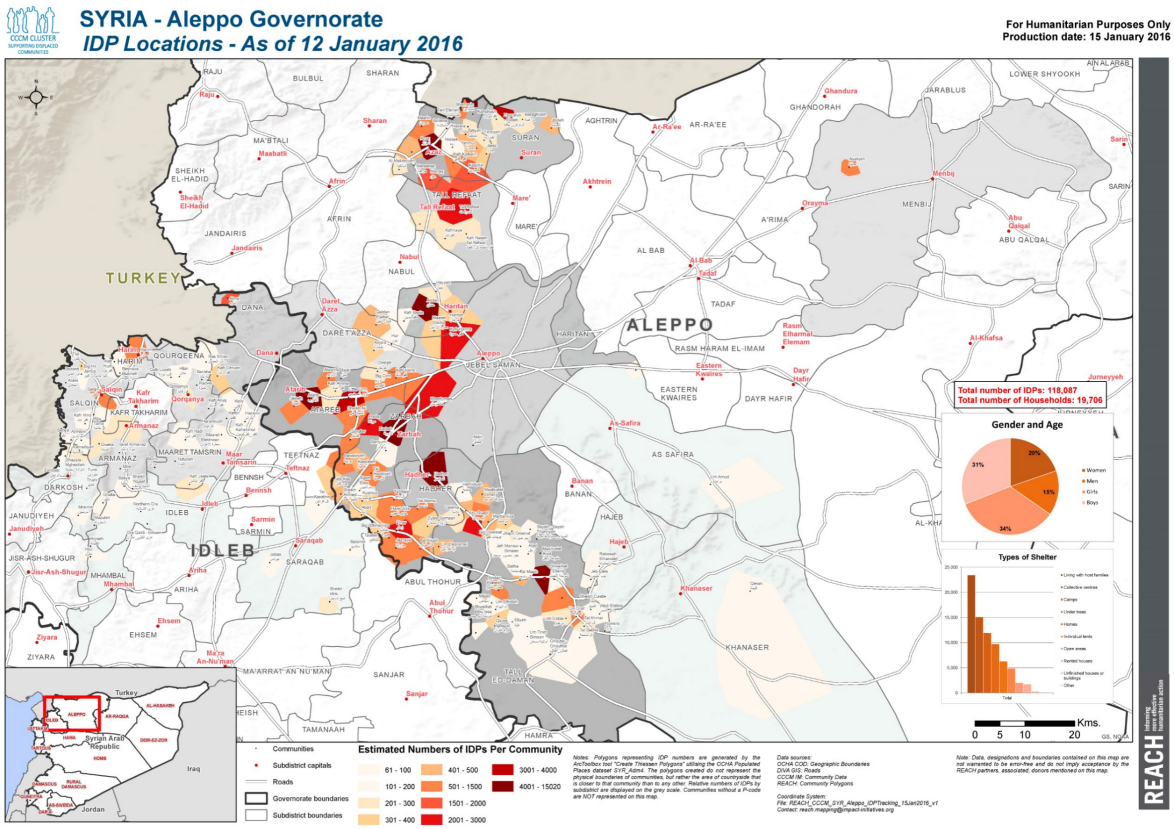


During the first phase of the Syrian Refugee Crisis, most internal displacement was forced by government repression of protests. Primarily located in less populated areas, IDPs fled smaller cities to rural areas most notably Dara'a and rural Damascus in the South. These displacements were short term and many returned as soon as security forces regained control of the area. Displacement in the south proved more complex than its north and east counterparts because Southern Syria was far more diverse than the north and northeast. Ethnically, Jews, Druze, Circassians and Kabarda, and Turkomans were dispersed throughout the Arab Sunni population. The cohabitation of these groups would prove tentative as the conflict progressed. IDPs from Zabadani and Duma fled from the outskirts of Damascus to quieter suburbs such as Jaramaneh, Babila and Sayeda Zeinab. These areas "witnessed a doubling, if not a tripling, of their residents."[13] Currently, varying reports suggest Southern Syria (including Dar'a and Quneitra) house around 300,000 IDPs as of December 31, 2016. This mass exodus

towards smaller, ill equipped areas was a catalyst for protests in areas initially deemed safe from government repression. The following protests forced IDPs to the camp settings.

Phase Two: IDP Flight to Camps (2012-2013)

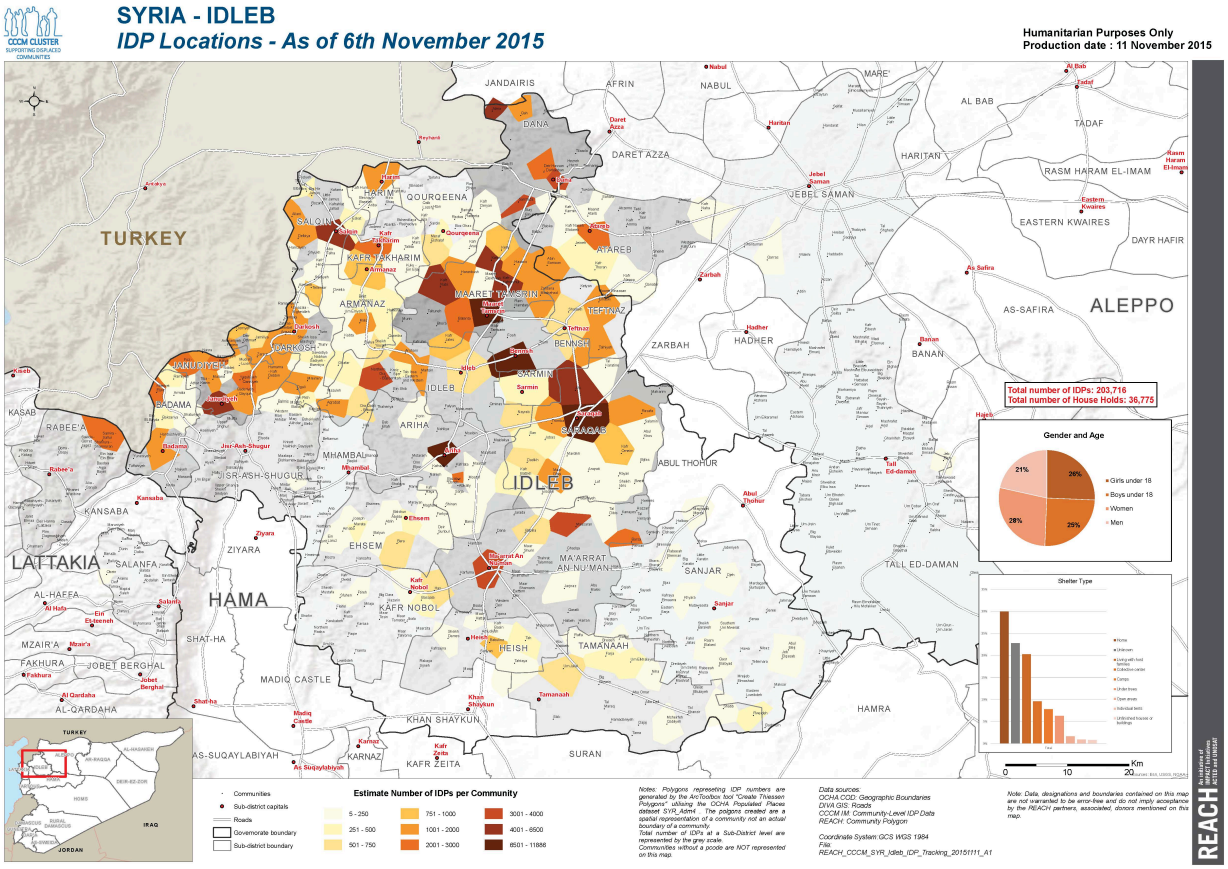
Figure 2.3 IDP demographics and living situation within Syria's Aleppo Govornate, OCHA[14]



As protests moved to urban centers like Aleppo, Damascus, Idleb, Deir-Ez-Zor and Dara'a IDPs movement intensified. Peaceful protests were replaced by urban warfare pushing Syrians from major population centers into makeshift camps throughout the state. Opposition groups began to gain territory, which was met with government retaliation. Syrians bore the blunt of these reprisals and decided to flee to rebel controlled areas near the Turkish border or Kurdish YPG controlled areas. This explains the concentration of IDPs in the north. As of January 12th, 2016, Aleppo, a predominately Sunni Arab, and Kurdish Governorate, housed 118,087 IDPs. Much like the entire region, the Aleppian IDP population is overwhelmingly comprised of women and children under the age of 18 (85%).[15] The majority of IDPs live with host families, in

collective centers, or camps. Integration into host families homes complicates types of support women and children may receive as it must align with the values of the house to avoid conflict with host families. Given the tendency for Syrian IDPs to move to areas with similar socioeconoimc standing and strong familial ties, it is likely that the Kurdish population primarily emigrated to south west Turkey (see figure 1.4) leaving Eastern Aleppo in the hands of Arab Sunnis. Idleb lies to the West of Aleppo. The further west IDPs travel the more diverse the demograpic becomes.

Figure 2.4 IDP demographics and living situation within Syria's Idleb Govornate, OCHA[16]

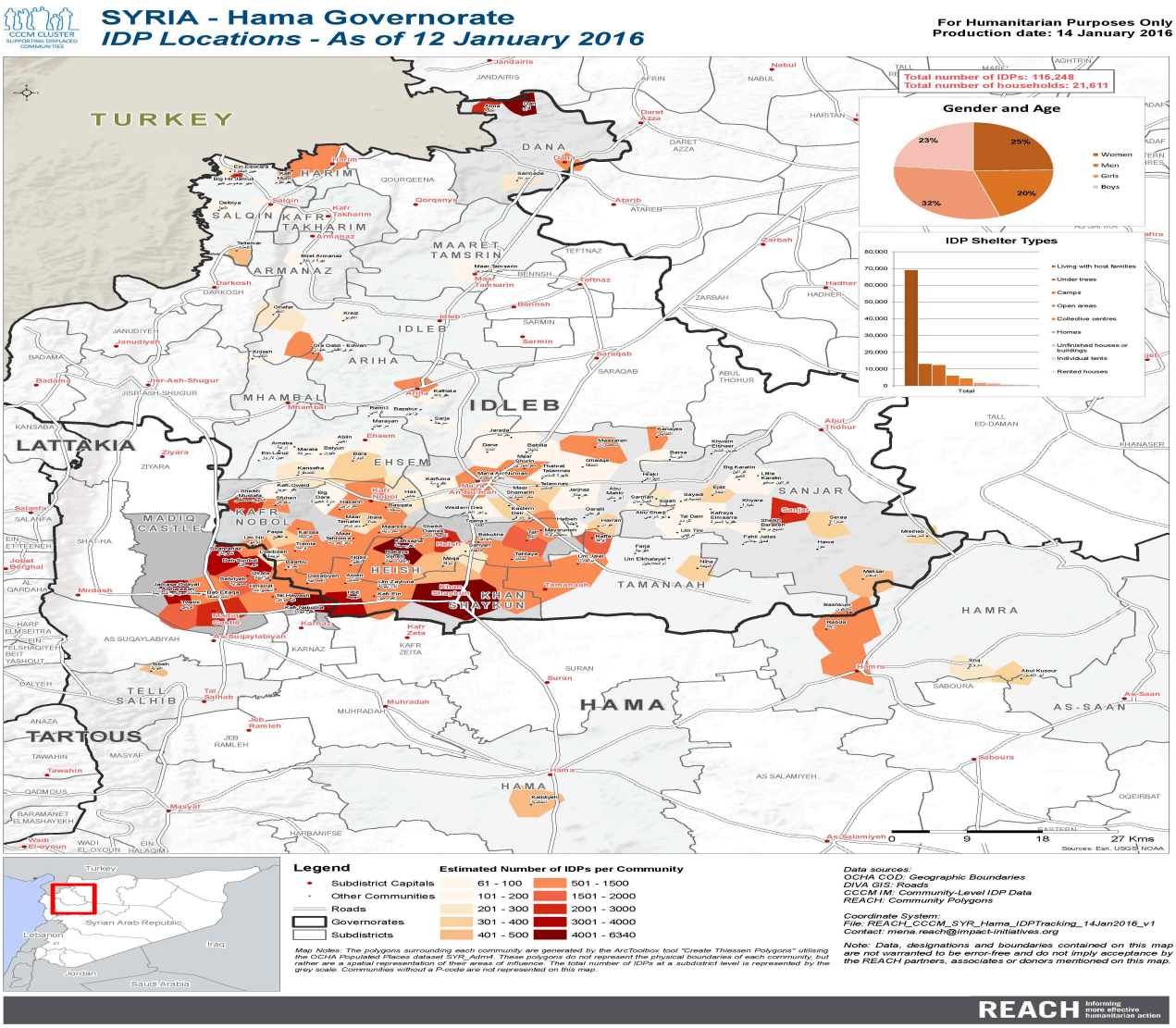


Idleb houses around 200,000 IDPs, 79% are women and children. Unlike IDPs in Aleppo, those in Idleb live in homes for the most part (30%).[17] Only 20% live with host families. Fortunately, with a significant number of IDPs living in thier own homes, they are able to make decisions in their best interest as opposed to factoring in host family prespectives. Although Idleb is predominately Arab and Sunni, it housed Jews, Imamis, or Twelever Shi'a from lebanon, Druze, Kurds, and a small portion of Alawites. The initial diversity of the area may be grounds for experimentation in more progressive solutions for women and children in the governorate, as exposure to different

worldviews may indicate a more tolerant population. The areas diversity quickly became a burden as the 3rd stage of displacement took shape.

Phase Three: Sectarian Pattern of Displacement (2013-Present)

Figure 2.5 IDP demographics and living situation within Syria's Hama Govornate, OCHA[18]



As warfare engulfed the entire country, "minorities sought safety from combat among their kinfolk.[19] Kurds fled from Sheikh Maqsoud (Aleppo) to Hasakah (North East Syria) under Kurdish control and Christians and Alawis fled central regions, mainly for

the coastal cities of Tartus and Latakia. Hama houses 115,000 IDPs predominately in the northwest Heish region. Of the 115,000 approximately 60% live with host families while the next largest group (11%) live under trees.[20] 80% of this population are women and children under 18. Hama's diversity influenced its population's migration towards the West. Heish was predominately Levantine, ethnically Jewish, and Imami, given the extreme diversity of Latakia and Tartus, minorities from central districts found refuge the closer they were to Syria's coast.

Conclusion

The Syrian Refugee Crisis is a result of three distinct phases: government repression, retaliation, and various parties focused assault on minority populations. Women and children constitute approximately 80% of the IDP population and are the most vulnerable in many cases. Although ethnic, religious, and geographic restrictions complicate the methods international agencies may utilize to provide services for these groups, they must be taken into account to create a less hazardous environment for women and children within Syria. Ignoring Syria's past while rebuilding its present is likely to fail. In order to provide feasible recommendations in defending and developing the status and livelihoods of Syrian women and children, an understanding of their pre-crisis standing is necessary. The following section will address the key factors in determining the status of women and children including: cultural perspectives, political rights and representation, and gender based violence.

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[1] UNHCR. Syria – Displacements from Norhtern Syria, IDP Locations - As of 30 November 2016. UNCHR, 2016. http://www.refworld.org/docid/587e10dc4.html

[2] UNHCR. Syria Emergency. UNHCR, 2017.

[3] Rudaw. "Middle East." Rudaw. Date Posted April 5, 2016. http://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/syria/280520162

[4] Norwegian Refugee Council/Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. Forsaken IDPs adrift inside a fragmenting state. NRC/IDMC, 2014. http://www.internal-displacement.org/assets/library/Middle-East/Syria/pdf/201410-me-syria-overview-en.pdf

[5] The Cities are Aleppo, Dar'a, Hama, Homs, Idlib and Latakia

[6] "The Importance of Planning Syria's Eventual Reconstruction." World Bank. May 24, 2016. Accessed February 10, 2017. http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2016/05/24/the-importance-of-planning-syria-s-eventual-reconstruction.

[7] Ibid.

[8] OCHA. Humanitarian Needs Overview Syrian Arab Republic. OCHA, 2016. http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2017_Syria_hno_161205.pdf

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid .

[12] OCHA. Southern Syria: Resident Population & Internally Displaced Persons (As of 31 December 2016). OCHA, 2017. http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/pop_01_oj_southern_syria_population_and_idps_nov_and_dec_2016_a3_170110.pdf

[13] Norwegian Refugee Council/Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. Forsaken IDPs adrift inside a fragmenting state.

[14] UNHCR. Syria – Aleppo Governorate, IDP Locations - As of 12 January 2016. UNHCR, 2015. http://www.refworld.org/docid/569defe74.html

[15] UNHCR. Syria – Aleppo Governorate, IDP Locations - As of 12 January 2016.

[16] UNCHR. Syria – Idleb, IDP Locations – As of 6th November 2015. UNHCR, 2015. http://www.refworld.org/docid/564c49ce4.html

[17] UNCHR. Syria – Idleb, IDP Locations – As of 6th November 2015.

[18]UNHCR. Syria – Hama Governorate, IDP Locations - As of 12 January 2016. UNCHR, 2016. http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/reach_cccm_syr_hama_idptracking_14jan2016_v1.pdf

[19] Norwegian Refugee Council/Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. Forsaken IDPs adrift inside a fragmenting state. NRC/IDMC, 2014. http://www.internal-displacement.org/assets/library/Middle-East/Syria/pdf/201410-me-syria-overview-en.pdf

[20] UNHCR. Syria – Hama Governorate, IDP Locations - As of 12 January 2016.

PART B:

SITUATION IN SYRIA

Women's Roles, Political Rights and Gender-Based Violence

Abstract

As a signatory to CEDAW, Syria is obliged to take steps to eliminate Gender based violence. However, women and children lack legal constitutional protections to protect them from GBV. Unenforced laws regarding honor crimes and sexual violence in conjunction with the collapse of the Syrian government has caused a massive increase in sexual and gender based violence in Syria. As a result, there is a notable increase in the frequency of honor related killings in Syria. The lack of protections and enforcement has also caused widespread human trafficking in the region with many Syrian women being forced into sex work wither with fighters in Syria including government forces and ISIL or abroad as sex slaves. State sponsored violence is also very prevalent in Syria with government forces regularly using sexual violence as a weapon of war. Forced and Early marriage has increased in prevalence across Syria with many women being trafficked into forced marriages with ISIL fighters. Further, women lack the ability to transfer Syrian citizenship to their offspring, thus, there has been a large increase in the number of stateless children born to a non-Syrian fathers and Syrian mothers. Overall, women's lack of legal representation has made the conflict in Syria particularly detrimental for Syrian women and children.

Syrian Women's Roles in Society and the Arab Family

Introduction

Traditionally, roles in the Arab family are highly gendered with each sex having different roles and responsibilities. While the Ba'ath party legislated gender equality into the constitution upon its rise to power, religious based cultural norms continue to pervade society and are often reinforced by religious-based family courts within Syria.[1] Thus, cultural and religious norms directly affect many laws regarding women's rights and responsibilities. Patriarchal, patri-local, and patrilineal families remain the norm across Syria. Because of these norms, there is a stigma surrounding women participating in certain jobs and activities.[2] Issues related to cultural norms regarding

women's roles and related laws including honor crimes, marriage rights and violence against women continue to plague Syrian society and have increased greatly since the start of the conflict.[3] As the crisis in Syria continues, the traditional Arab family continues to be uprooted and altered and roles of women and children within the family and society as a greater whole continue to evolve.

Pre-Crisis: Culture and The Arab Family in Syria

The Arab family is in many ways the basic socioeconomic building block of Syria.[4] The Arab family is highly reliant upon each other for support, and prior to the expansion of state-run services in Syria, functioned as an informal social security support system.[5] High degrees of intergenerational interdependence are common as in many areas extended families live either with or near each other.[6] While households based on nuclear families are increasingly common, especially among more affluent urbanites, multigenerational households remain the norm for many across Syria.[7] They are especially common in rural areas, and among the urban poor.[8] Among multigenerational families, it is relatively common to have a common budget across the household regardless of whether the family lives in the same house, creating strong bonds of social and economic support.[9]

Arab families are largely hierarchical with respect to age and gender, with elder members having more authority than younger members and males generally having more power than females.[10] The families can generally be described as patriarchal, patrilineal and patrilocal.[11] The eldest male member of the household generally holds ultimate authority over household matters. As families are patri-locally organized, married women usually live with their husband and often with or near his parents and family.[12]

Traditionally, large families were valued in Syria as a larger number of individuals could assist in household tasks and labor.[13] The average family size in Syria is about 6 individuals.[14] However, family size varies significantly by family status, and location with urban families generally preferring fewer children, though this difference is significantly more pronounced among non-Muslims in Syria than it is for their Muslim counterparts.[15]

Families in Syria, especially Arab families, are largely endogamous, and it is very rare for individuals to marry outside of their socio-religious group. Both male and female Syrians are very likely to marry someone of their same ethno-religious group.[16] Marriages between Syrians and individuals from outside of Syria are uncommon as the right to Syrian citizenship is passed exclusively through the male line and Syrian women who have children with non-Syrian men cannot pass on Syrian citizenship to their children.[17] Children born in Syria, to a Syrian mother and a father that is not a Syrian

national must periodically renew their residency permits.[18] They may also be required to leave the country if their father loses his residency putting many children at risk of statelessness.[19] Further, Syrian law requires non-Muslim men to convert to Islam in order to marry a Muslim woman.[20] While most inter-sectarian marriages are legal under Syrian law, marriages between individuals of different sects remain the exception rather than the norm.[21]

Roles within the family are generally very clear and highly gendered. Male members of a household—especially adults—take charge of matters outside the home; primarily, they provide financially for the family and perform any strenuous physical labor.[22] Females dominate the everyday affairs inside the house such as raising children and maintaining the household.[23] While men may often be absent for routine household affairs, they normally hold supreme authority in most household matters.[24] Due to the gendered division of labor, certain household tasks that are particularly physically tasking such as the retrieval of water may be stigmatized for women. However, it is not uncommon for women to participate in informal labor activities within the home, like a small home business.

Roles of children in the household are varied based on age and gender, but it is common for children to have a fairly active role in the family. Children are subservient to the adults in the family, but the relation between parent and child is commonly viewed in many ways as a mutual end evolving commitment.[25] While children are viewed as dependents in their early years, their role shifts to provider for their parents as their parents' age.[26] The role of a child in an Arab family also varies based on gender. Both male and female children generally attend school, however male children are slightly more likely to be literate.[27] Nonetheless, the gender gap in literacy and educational attainment varies greatly by region and income level, with rural and poor families generally having a larger gender gap and overall poorer educational attainment.[28] Boys are generally expected to follow in the career path of their father (often training with him after school) while girls often aid their mothers in housework.

Although the legal age for marriage in Syria is 17, early marriage continues to be an issue.[29] Judges and religious leaders often make exceptions for the marriage age, regularly allowing girls as young as 13 to marry. Prior to the start of the conflict, around 13% of women are married before the age of 18.[30] Early marriage has increased dramatically since the conflict began several years ago. While no UN or governmental statistics on child marriage have been gathered since the start of the conflict, many organizations believe that the rate of child marriage among IDPs is similar to that of refugees in neighboring host countries (at least 30-40%.)[31] As early marriage is strongly correlated with an increase in domestic violence and a decrease in school attendance, the practice often puts girls at risk for future abuse and maltreatment.[32]

A family in Syria is usually viewed as a cohesive group rather than a collection of individuals.[33] Thus, an individual's primary loyalty is to his family, and the honor of the family is viewed as highly important because the status and reputation of an individual is strongly intertwined with a family's reputation and honor.[34] Actions of individuals, both positive and negative are viewed as a reflection of the family as a whole. As such, the honor of an individual is based in a large part on the actions of other members of the family.[35] Misbehavior of women in the family is generally seen as more damaging to a family's reputation and honor than the misbehavior of men due to cultural beliefs. Thus, the burden of maintaining honor often falls on the women, and the actions of women in families are often tightly controlled in order to avoid situations that may dishonor the family.[36] Women who bring dishonor to the family may be punished severely. Honor Crimes, killing a woman in order to maintain the family's honor remains a problem in Syria. The UNHCR estimates that in 2010, 300-400 honor killings occurred in Syria.[37]

Most women in Syria have some degree of choice in their partners.[38] While arranged marriages continue to be the norm in most communities, they usually require the consent of both parties. Women are often allowed to choose among several eligible suitors.[39] Under Syrian law, a woman cannot be forced to marry.[40] However, a women's choice in marriage may be limited in cases where the family's honor is in jeopardy. Women who are raped are often forced or pressured into marrying their rapist in order to maintain the family honor.[41]

Marriage is viewed not only as a bond between individuals, but a union with economic, social and political implications.[42] Marriage is often viewed as a form of economic security especially for women and their families. A suitor's financial situation and family history are generally important to a woman in determining his suitability.[43] Due to the perceived financial stability of marriage, pressure to marry early is especially prevalent for poorer families, though early marriage occurs in more affluent families as well.[44]

Although uncommon, some women may participate in Nikah Mut'ah. Mut'ah is a form of "temporary marriage" in Islam.[45] These "temporary marriages" can be used to legitimize relations between men and women that would be considered haram or forbidden in other contexts. These marriages are informal and are dissolved after a specified period of time.[46] They are also unique in that they lack many of the protections awarded to other Islamic marriages, notably spousal support.[47] Mut'ah remains relatively rare in Syria as most Sunnis believe that such relations are haram, and many communities in Syria consider these relationships to be taboo.[48] However, the conflict has significantly increased the number of these marriages as women are forced to become temporary brides for financial or security reasons.[49] Due to the unofficial

and temporary nature of the relationship, the number of Mut'ah marriages in Syria is unknown.

Current Crisis: Changes in the Family and Women's Roles

The ongoing conflict in Syria has significantly shifted gender roles in the home as well as the roles of children.[50] As men enter the fight and leave their traditional role as main financial provider of the household, many women have entered the work force or become the main economic provider for their family (often in addition to their household duties). The number of female-headed households in the country has increased significantly since the conflict began six years ago.[51] Children are also more commonly becoming providers in their households, especially among poorer families and families suffering the effects of displacement.[52] Although gender roles in the home continue to blur as a result of the ongoing conflict, a stigma remains against individuals—particularly women—who do the work of the opposite gender[53]. These changes in traditional family roles have increased household tensions according to Syrian family focus groups and many women cite a lack of support from male partners in the household as a key contributor to intra-household conflict.[54]

As much of the Arab family revolves around the authority and support of male members, the death of men in the family often results in upheaval and unstable financial circumstances. Given the multitudes of deaths of men in the conflict and widespread displacement Syrian citizens, many families are now separated from their traditional social and economic support systems, amplifying other problems related to the conflict.[55] Due to the importance of family in Arab culture, and the high degree of interdependence among family members, many women have found that the displacement of families has eliminated many means of emergency financial and social support.[56] Economic and social options can be limited without the traditional familial support system.

While the post-independence government of Syria has pursued gender equality, under the ideals of The Ba'ath party, familial and cultural restraints continue to pervade Syrian society. Although women are legally allowed equality in most parts of society, strong ideas about honor and shame in the community continue to influence the actions of Syrians, especially women. While gender roles in Syrian families are usually strict, they have evolved recently as a result of changing demographics and economic prospects (largely due to the ongoing conflict).[57] Overall, strong beliefs regarding family, gender roles, and honor influence and limit women's roles rather than official laws.

Syrian Laws and Legal Representation of Women

Introduction

Syrian laws and the legal representation of Syrian women have drastically changed over the last five years. Apart from being undermined as a result of the current state of war, women and children lack representation and just laws to protect them. The first constitution of Syria, drafted in 1973, remained valid until February 2012, when the government decided to amend the text without considering its most vulnerable populations.[58] The amendment of the text gives Syrian women and children far less agency and protection. Under the new constitution, the Syrian government fails to address its discriminatory and disadvantageous laws with regard to the status of Syrian women and their children. Furthermore, the current crisis involves different autonomous groups carving up parts of Syria for themselves, resulting in countless different laws in each territory that often contradict each other.

This section compares the rights, representation, and legal role, or lack thereof, of Syrian women prior to the conflict with the situation today. It also explores how Syrian children are legally underrepresented and neglected in such destabilized situations. Finally, it will offer recommendations on measures the government can take to ensure women and children gain better protection and representation within the effort to normalize the political climate of Syria.

Pre-Crisis

The Syrian legal system derives from French civil law, Turkish law, and Shari'a (Islamic) law. Prior to the revolution, the judiciary was divided into secular and religious courts. While the secular courts heard both civil and criminal cases under the jurisdiction of the ministry of justice, religious courts served different religions and presided over issues pertaining to women. For instance, Shari'a courts handled codes that do not afford Syrian women full and equal status as citizens, such as the personal code, the nationality status code, and the penal code.

The intricacies of this dual level judicial system are difficult to navigate and created inequalities among different populations. Before the disintegration of its national cohesion, the Syrian constitution made great efforts to be inclusive of women by guaranteeing expanded civil and political rights. Even before they had constitutional rights, Syrian women were able to vote starting in 1949, and could run for elected office by 1953. Once the constitution was established in 1973, Article 26 noted that every citizen has the right to participate in the political, economic, social, and cultural life. In addition, Article 45 of the Syrian constitution guaranteed women the opportunity to fully and effectively participate in political, social, cultural, and economic

life. The state removed earlier restrictions that prevented women's development and participation in building the socialist Arab society.[59]

These laws resulted in the formation of the General Women's Union of Syria, the first women's organization of its kind in the nation. The organization sought to promote reforms and advancements for women in all public spheres, including education and employment, in order to raise women's social status. However, no laws protected women in the event of gender-based discrimination, and no formal mechanisms existed through which women could complain to the government if they encountered discrimination.[60]

The personal status codes, which are a body of legal regulations, oversaw family relationships, child custody, divorce, inheritance, and the transfer of property. Some general rights that applied to women in Syria under these codes included the right to contract her own marriage, receive a dowry or inheritance, and control her own property. These rights were only upheld if legal proof of property existed. In the case of dependent children, women were responsible for the custody of their children, while men were responsible for their economic security. The nationality status code of 1969 required that a Muslim Syrian woman marry a Muslim Syrian man in order for their children to have Syrian citizenship. At the time, this law stripped 120,000 Kurds of their Syrian nationality. The penal code before the current crisis imposed strict and discriminatory punishments on women. For instance, Article 473 imposed harsher punishment for convicted adulterous women than for convicted adulterous men. Women served 3 months to 2 years in prison, while men served only 1 month to 1 year.[61]

Current Crisis

Since the Revolution began, the shift from inclusion to marginalization of women and children has worsened. This can be seen in the lack of female participation in formal negotiations and in peace processes.[62] Critics of the GWU argue that the organization is the only recognized group because it follows the mandate of President Bashar al-Assad's party, the Ba'ath Party; and in return, the organization receives financial support from the government. Independent women's organizations were absorbed into government-sponsored ones; through this absorption, the Ba'ath party came to control several aspects of women's public life.[63] This is problematic, as the GWU is constrained to provide support only to women with similar political affiliation and interests, as opposed to all Syrian women. All other women's groups are considered to be operating illegally and are forbidden from receiving government and foreign funding due to laws that prohibit donor grants from abroad.[64] Currently, the only source of support for these groups within Syria stems from private foundations, charities, and non-profits. Remittances are also playing an increasingly important role in

funding humanitarian projects. Unregistered 'informal value transfer systems', which operate outside of government-controlled areas, are being used to support women's groups' operational costs and suppliers.[65]

Women who are politically active and expose human rights violations are met with brutality from the regime, making it very difficult for a women's group to operate independently of the GWU. Prominent activists such as Rosa Yassin and Hiba al-Dbagh recount experiences of imprisonment and torture for their activism outside of the GWU in several documentaries.[66] Amendments, such as the 2011 legislative decree amending penal code number 148, directly affects women's groups by increasing the incarceration penalties as well as minimum and maximum fines for a number of offences, especially for crowds gathering in processions on public roads or in places open to the public. The government considers such gatherings to be a riot, and has made it punishable by imprisonment of one month to a year, with a fine of fifty thousand Syrian Pounds attached to it (which was previously twenty thousand Syrian Pounds).[67]

Despite these limitations, many Syrian women refuse to be passive victims of war and have thus formed several grass-roots women's groups. In 2015, out of 60 civil society groups in Syria, 47 were identified as women's groups. 6 of them were cross-border groups, carrying out activities within the county as well as in refugee areas of neighboring countries.[68] The women's groups aim to enhance women's roles in peace building through political empowerment, gender-based violence education, combatting child recruitment into militia groups, and promoting civil peace as well as coexistence.

However, women face intersectional challenges that are amplified by the current fractured state of Syria. As extremist groups gain control of more regions, women are faced with less opportunity to participate in peace processes. Female activists in extremist-controlled areas face severe restrictions through dress codes and movements, and can even face public beheadings for their activist work.[69] They are forced to refocus on creating their own safe spaces, instead of continuing to protest and organize within the community at large.

In order to achieve the crucial inclusion of women, activists urge political entities to empower their female members, and to also allow a certain amount of women from the opposition parties to be part of all political processes. Although there is a growing number of women in leadership roles and government, the practice of electing them into office fails to represent or address the need of the general population of women, and are often perceived as token appointments because the male-centered concentration of power in the elite circle is institutionally embedded. In 2016, women's participation in the Syrian Parliament was 13%.[70] Women also make up 16.3% of leadership positions in labor unions, 14% of ambassadors, 7% of ministry leaders, and

4.2% of local administrative councils.[71] Najah al-Attar and Najdat Anzour, both women, hold two of the highest positions in the Syrian political system, as vice president and speaker of the parliament, respectively. But these two appointments were the result of promotions within the party's hierarchy and inner circle.[72] Female political activists and members of political parties emphasize that, despite their participation, they rarely receive invitation into decision-making processes.[73] Women's symbolic participation is limited to a supporting role for the Ba'ath party. Women that question or criticize the status-quo face backlash ranging from harassment to torture, which is meant to stifle women's efforts.[74]

Child Custody Laws

Along with their mothers, Syrian children are suffering disproportionately during the crisis. The Syrian Nationality Act, which denies Syrian women the right to pass on their nationality to their children, has devastating impacts on the civil, economic, and social rights of their children, as well as on the future of Syria. Because they cannot inherit property, nor obtain other basic rights, the road to recovery and the peaceful future of Syria is compromised. The direct impact of the nationality status code has increased the number of stateless people. Within Syrian Kurds inside Syria, this number has increased to an approximate total of 290,000 stateless people today, up from 120,000 people before the crisis.[75] The tradition of patrilineal citizenship has persisted since Syria's independence, and is even more impactful as Syrian women are forced to flee the country to places where they might not marry a Syrian man.

Current child custody laws allow a woman to be the legal guardian of her children only in the event that the father has died or is legally incapacitated, stateless, or unknown. A woman has the right to have and care for her children until the age of 13 for boys and 15 for girls. Yet, while the mother has the right to keep the children, she does not have the same rights as a guardian. For example, she cannot register her children for school or move with them. Furthermore, divorced mothers who remarry may lose custody of their children, but this does not apply to a father who remarries.[76]

The law further exploits children by lacking protection rights and targeting human infrastructure. Human rights organizations reported multiple cases where security services detained minors and placed them in adult prisons.[77] Furthermore, Syrian officials are legally protected from prosecution for any crimes committed while on the job, leaving victims of torture and their families with no avenue for recourse. In 2015, UNICEF verified almost 1,500 of those violations; these included abductions, arrests, attacks, killing, maiming, and the recruitment and use of children by parties of the conflict. Syrian officials are legally protected from prosecution for any crimes committed while on the job, leaving victims of torture and their families with no avenue for redress.[78]

Even though Syrian laws and the legal representation of Syrian women have drastically changed over the course of the crisis, women continue to fight for their rights and representation. Both constitutions of Syria, the first drafted in 1973 and the second in February of 2012, fail to protect women and children. Both put Syria's most vulnerable population at risk of being politically, socially, physically and economically taken advantage of. Female activists from Damascus and Al-Hasaka who were active during Hafez Al-Assad's rule believe that the regime has "forever waged a battle against Syrian women."[79] Under the newest constitution, the Syrian government fails to address its discriminatory and disadvantageous laws with regard to the status of Syrian women and their children. These weaknesses in the constitution have always existed but are now amplified due to the war. Moreover, the different actors within Syria are instituting different laws over different cities, further destabilizing the state and weakening women's resistance. Additional to traditional values, discriminatory laws, and an authoritarian government that deprive women of many basic legal and social rights, the international community must not further marginalize them. The 2002 United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) report, "Women, War and Peace: The Independent Experts' Assessment on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Women and Women's Role in Peacebuilding", recommends that women be represented at the negotiating table, making up at least 30% of those present.[80] This is some Syrian women are striving to achieve.

Gender-Based Violence in Syria

Introduction

As the crisis in Syria intensifies, Syrian women and girls continue to hold the greatest burden as gender-based violence becomes more prevalent. Gender-based violence has hindered Syrian women from gaining justice and equality for decades. While the Syrian government fails to address these human rights violations and amend its discriminatory laws, the status of Syrian women only deteriorates further. Moreover, the armed crisis exacerbates this issue as women's rights tend to be overlooked and violence against women goes under-documented. This chapter seeks to define gender-based violence and its legal framework in the international community and in Syria. It will also address the critical issues Syrian women faced prior to the crisis and during, including sexual violence, physical violence in the form of honor crimes, and forced early marriages. Ultimately, this chapter demonstrates the need for appropriate protections for women from gender-based violence.

Defining Gender-Based Violence

"Gender-based violence," or GBV, is a violation of essential human rights resulting in female subordination due to power inequality. In 1993, the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women defined the term as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life."[81] Since then, the definition has expanded to include any harm towards a person based on gender inequality, distinguishing GBV from common violence. Men and boys can also be targets of GBV, however women and girls are primarily the victims. Though there are many cases of GBV, five categories exist to understand its extent: 1) Sexual violence; 2) Physical violence; 3) Trafficking; 4) Forced/early marriage; and 5) Harmful traditional practices.[82] These acts violate several human rights principles including the right to life, liberty, and security of the person, the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, the right to freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment, the right to enter into marriage with free and full consent and the entitlement to equal rights to marriage, and several others.[83] Because of these violations, combatting increasing GBV in Syria is a high priority when responding to the unfolding crisis.

Legal Framework

As these human rights violations continue, several international institutions exist to address GBV and provide protection for victims. The primary institution is the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) established in 1979 by the UN General Assembly. Syria ratified CEDAW on March 28, 2003, assuming the responsibility to end discrimination against women, however it expressed several reservations on certain articles because they are incompatible with Shari'a law. Nonetheless, Syria has agreed to "investigate, prevent, prosecute, and punish" perpetrators of GBV.[84] Since CEDAW, civil society organizations have engaged with the international community to address GBV and pressure governments to take action against these human rights violations.

Violence against women, VAW, was defined as a human rights abuse in 1995 at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. Further, the UNSC adopted Resolution 1325 on October 31, 2000 which "calls on all parties to armed conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict."[85] As GBV in Syria becomes more exposed throughout the crisis, the global commitment to ending this violence has increased. In April 2013, the

Declaration on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict issued by the G8 consortium declares mandates systems for prevention, treatment, and redress of sexual violence.[86] Under international criminal law, sexual violence can also be considered war crimes or crimes against humanity. In situations of military conflict, sexual violence is considered weapons or tactics of warfare if they are aimed at fulfilling military or political agendas.[87] Because of these legal measures to combat GBV, the Syrian Arab Republic has been under high scrutiny since the crisis began.

Pre-Crisis

Sexual Violence

Because of the Syrian government's failure to address gender discrimination, sexual violence has challenged Syrian society since before the crisis began in 2011. Though women rarely report rape due to cultural stigma and fear of exclusion and continued violence, women's advocates reported 1,300 rape cases in 2009.[88] Sexual violence in Syria has increased over time largely due to criminal laws that fail to protect women. Under article 489 of Syria's Penal Code, rape is not criminalized if the rapists marry their victims.[89] Furthermore, article 473 states that women who have sex outside marriage are sentenced to jail for three months to two years, while men are only sentenced between one month and one year for the same crime.[90] Nonetheless, many victims of sexual violence and oppression are silenced out of fear of dishonoring their families or facing imprisonment. Government representatives have also claimed that care for victims such as shelters for support are "unnecessary" since they resort to family environments to resolve issues,[91] disregarding the fact that violence is often committed by family members. The government has also declared that marital rape is theoretical and a "phenomenon which occurs only at the individual level and is not widespread."[92] Because of this silence and lack of government protection, only two shelters existed in Syria for women abused by husbands or family members by 2011.[93]

Physical Violence and Honor Crimes

Physical violence against women has existed in Syria long before the crisis began, especially in the form of honor crimes. According to a 2010 report by UNIFEM, about one in four women had been victims of physical violence committed by their spouses.[94] Another study of 1,900 families in Syria found that domestic abuse was more prevalent in the rural areas where families face economic hardships, are less educated, and where women get married at younger ages.[95] Furthermore, the Syrian government has been reluctant towards amending laws that would punish these kinds of crimes. Since the law permits domestic violence, honor crimes have become more prevalent in Syria. Honor crimes are most commonly acts of homicide directed towards women and girls by family members when they bring dishonor to the family. This "dishonor" can be

in the form of adultery, refusal of an arranged marriage, or marriage by free will rather than an arranged marriage.[96] In 2009, President Assad replaced Article 548 of the Syrian Penal Code, which waived punishment completely for men who commit honor killings. However, the new article only called for a two-year punishment for men: "he who catches his wife, sister, mother or daughter by surprise, engaging in illegitimate sexual act and kills or injures them unintentionally must serve a minimum of two years in prison."[97] While men began experiencing punishment for honor killings, it was rather insignificant in comparison to the regular sentences of 15 to 20 years, or in some cases life sentences, for murders unrelated to honor.[98] This amendment did not halt honor crimes from occurring in Syria before the crisis. According to a 2010 report by UNHCR, between 300 and 400 honor crimes occurred annually.[99] Other aspects of Syrian penal codes such as Article 192 allow judges to reduce sentences based on honorable intent[100], suggesting that honor crimes are insignificant in comparison to other crimes. In 2011, President Assad amended Article 548 again, increasing the punishment for honor killings to five to seven years. However, honor crimes have only increased since the Syrian crisis began.

Forced and Early Marriages

While the legal marriage age for girls in Syria is 17 years, this has not stopped underage children from being forced into marriage. Under CEDAW's Article 16, a woman's right to freely enter into marriage and choose her own spouse is central to her equality as a human being.[101] However, Syria's personal status law makes exceptions for girls as young as 13 years old to be forced into marriage. In fact, UNICEF estimated that 3% of Syrian girls were married by 15 and 13% by age 18, with higher percentages in rural communities like Daraa that have strong tribal traditions.[102] Syria's Penal Codes also encourage rapists to marry their victims to avoid punishment. According to Article 508 of Shari'a Penal Code, "If there is a contracted marriage between the man who commits rape, sexual abuse, kidnapping, sexual harassment and the victim, then there is no charge or the punishment is stopped."[103] Forced early marriages only exacerbate this violence further. The International Rescue Committee states that girls that marry before the age of 18 are twice as likely to experience physical abuse by their husbands and girls under 15 years are five times more likely to die in childbirth than women that are in their twenties.[104]

Current Crisis

Sexual Violence

Since 2011, sexual violence has become shockingly evident in Syria. Although reliable statistics are unavailable since the majority of women do not admit to their abuse, data has been collected from those reaching out for medical assistance. In 2013, UN forces treated 38,000 victims of sexual violence in just one year.[105] According to a senior official with the UNHCR, sexual violence is used "as a weapon of war to intimidate parties to the conflict destroying identity, dignity and the social fabrics of families and communities."[106] Unlike before the crisis when acts of sexual violence were predominantly committed by family members, perpetrators of SGBV are now primarily traced back to the Syrian government and opposition forces. The Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic (COI) reported in August 2013 that, "Sexual violence has played a prominent role in the conflict, owing to fear and threat of rapes and by the violence committed. It occurs during raids, at checkpoints and prisons across the country. The threat of rape is used as a tool to terrorize and punish women, men and children perceived as being associated with the opposition. Underreporting and delayed reported of sexual violence is endemic, making an assessment of the magnitude difficult."[107]

SGBV by Government Forces

The UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic (COI) confirms the widespread use of sexual violence by the Syrian government. The COI reports that this violence occurs particularly during house searches, detention camps, hostage-taking, and checkpoints by government forces and the Shabbiha, government-controlled militia.[108] Detention centers continue to increase as places of sexual violence as government forces have been found to gang rape women and girls that they believe to be affiliated with the opposition. Both boys and girls have endured not only rape in detention, but electric shocks and burning of the genitals.[109] The COI further states that this sexual violence in detention is used to "humiliate, harm, force confessions or pressure a relative to surrender."[110] After returning abducted victims to their families, government forces attempt to expose their rape to shame them and bring dishonor to their families. There have also been cases in which rape has occurred publicly and in front of family members. Because of this shaming, many women face death, divorce, or alienation by their families, only worsening this issue. These crimes by Syrian government forces violate the IV Geneva Convention (Article 27) and human rights law,[111] yet the government has made no legal efforts to address this rising issue.

SGBV by Opposition Forces

Since mid-2014, reports of sexual violence committed by terrorist groups have rapidly increased, particularly those associated with ISIL. The Commission reports that ISIL predominantly targets women and girls in the Iraqi Yezidi community along with other minorities and forces them into sex trafficking and slavery within the Syrian Arab Republic.[112] ISIL also commonly targets transgender and intersex persons based on their sexual orientation at checkpoints under their control and detention camps.[113] The UNSC identified five other opposition groups also suspected of committing acts of SBGV: Jabhat al-Nusra, al-Islam Brigade, Aknaf Bait al-Madqis Brigades, Ansar Bait al-Maqdis Brigades, and Ahrar Ash-Sham Islamist Movement.[114] However, ISIL remains the primary perpetrator for these acts.

Physical Violence and Honor Crimes

As sexual violence has become a weapon of warfare by armed forces, women have become more vulnerable to honor crimes. These crimes have become most common in rural and militant areas that experience an enhanced degree of lawlessness because of the crisis. The head of the criminal division of the Court of Cassation Ahmed al-Bakari states that honor crimes are more common in militant areas because armed forces provoke females to rebel against their families which encourage family members to kill her for her rebellion.[115] Since the armed groups are in control rather than legal officers, it becomes easier for honor killings to occur without punishment. As rape in detention centers and checkpoints increases, so do honor killings as perpetrators murder their victims to preserve their family's honor. CEDAW and other woman's groups have been active in pursuing the Syrian government to amend Article 548 further to make punishment longer, but the government has not made any changes since 2011.

Forced and Early Marriages

As the Syrian crisis unfolds, forced and early marriages are increasing rapidly to protect women's honor and relieve economic pressures. Because the crisis has brought economic distress and insecurity to many Syrian families, adolescent girls are more vulnerable to early marriage to reduce family expenses or care for an injured or older man.[116] Females are also more exposed to rape and sexual abuse throughout the crisis, resorting to early marriage in the hopes of preserving their honor. According to a 2013 study, women that had been raped were also increasingly forced into marriage to avoid honor killings.[117]

Forced Marriage and Trafficking by Opposition Groups

Forced and early marriages have also increased with the rise of opposition groups. Armed groups often view women's sexuality and fertility as commodities they can own and often abduct women and traffic them as part of the political economy of war.[118] Abduction for the purpose of forced marriage has become widespread in Syria, especially by ISIL as it forces Sunni women and girls into marriage with fighters. The majority of these marriages are undocumented with 90% of them as secret affairs.[119] While women in these marriages are usually not granted any rights, they are often on their own when their husband gets killed. Moreover, studies show that a large number of these marriages result in divorce just after two months so that the fighter can marry other women.[120] This issue leaves women in a further vulnerable state as they are treated like property by opposition forces, rather than granted the rights they deserve.

Solutions and Barriers

Though the Syrian government has ratified CEDAW and many other international agreements directed towards GBV, the government has taken no measures to amend their laws to fulfill CEDAW articles. CEDAW's Article 1 declares that states must address GBV whether it is committed by government authorities or by private actors, yet women and girls continue to face GBV everyday as the crisis continues. Further, the silence by victims of GBV due to fear of cultural stigma, exclusion, or even death has only worsened the issue. The crisis has also created mass lawlessness in conflict zones where enforcing particular laws become nearly impossible, leaving women and girls unprotected from GBV. Rather than pushing the Syrian government to implement amendments to its Penal Codes, the solution to ending GBV lies in empowering women and children. First, women and children must receive education on GBV, how to prevent it, and what can be done legally as a victim. Second, more shelters and support services must be created to help victims that have experienced GBV. Third, women must have a larger voice in Parliament and peace negotiations in order for their voices to be heard.

Because there is a negative stigma surrounding sexual violence in Syria, education on preventing GBV is often brushed aside or overlooked. Women and girls often risk dishonoring their families and even death when reporting cases of sexual assault, therefore many are unwilling to report these issues. Erasing this negative stigma surrounding sexual violence through education is key to prevention. Women and girls need access to sexual and reproductive health information within Syria along with access to legal information regarding their rights as victims. Because the government of Syria insists on women to resort to their families rather than the law when they are sexually or domestically abused,[121] women need more education on

their rights and support services. Funding should be directed towards building safe, non-stigmatizing, programs and spaces for women and children to receive information on GBV and how to prevent it. These programs should also include men and boys to teach them about GBV and the legal repercussions it has under national and international criminal law.

Victims of GBV are also in need of care providers and shelters to prevent further violence. Continued attacks on hospitals and other health facilities make finding the existing services difficult for victims and many care providers have left Syria to neighboring countries. While minimal shelters existed before the crisis began, the current shelters are far too overcrowded and can barely meet humanitarian needs of those inside them. Funding should be directed towards building adequate infrastructure to treat victims and protect them, while also providing them with experienced care providers.

Women's active involvement in peace processes is the most crucial element to ending GBV in Syria. The UN Security Council Resolution 1325 requires "states to include women's active and meaningful participation in peace-building and in post-conflict reconstruction, to ensure that initiatives to address human rights violations, including GBV, are fully incorporated into post-conflict states' governing structures."[122] The involvement of all genders in peace processes allows sustainable peace to prevail and keep peace agreements from failing. In Syria, women are typically not involved in formal or informal peace processes despite their attempts for inclusion. Syrian women have declared for participation on all committees and negotiating teams of at least 50% but no less than 30%, yet they continue to be excluded.[123] The key to solving this human rights issue is to allow Syrian women's voices to be heard by the international community and domestically. The hindrance of allowing women's participation only places women back into the pre-crisis legal framework where they continue to be oppressed and victims of GBV.

Conclusion

Gender-based violence in Syria has become more prevalent as the Syrian crisis unfolds. While Syria's legal framework oppressed women and girls with its discriminatory language and lack of protection from GBV, the crisis has exacerbated this issue. Sexual violence is the most blatant form of GBV and is often the primary reason why many Syrians are fleeing the country to seek refuge in neighboring countries where they might be better protected. While sexual abuse before the conflict was often in the form of marital rape, because perpetrators are protected under the law, sexual violence is now often committed by government or opposition forces. Unfortunately, the negative stigma surrounding sexual violence often silences victims out of fear that they will be killed for dishonoring their families or face exclusion. As

sexual violence increases, so do honor crimes. Because the law minimally persecutes those committing honor crimes, there is little protection for its victims and has become more prevalent. Also, conflict zones experience severe cases of lawlessness where many perpetrators can avoid persecution all together. Finally, the number of forced and early marriages has increased as the crisis continues, including a large increase in trafficking. Many families offer their daughters up for marriage to assist in economic support before the legal age of marriage. ISIL fighters are also capturing minority women and forcing them into marriages that they cannot escape because of the law. While these issues often result from the lack of protection under the law, they are unlikely to change unless women and girls are empowered to make change in Syria. This empowerment requires education on how to protect oneself from GBV, services for victims, and most importantly participation in peace negotiations and movements. The solution to GBV lies in the grassroots movement of women's mobilization, and it is the international community's responsibility to offer the tools for them to succeed in gaining the rights they deserve.

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Syrian Economy: Impacts On Women and Children

Abstract

Syria has experienced an economic downturn since 2000, in part due to domestic droughts and international sanctions, but by many measures, the country has achieved significant improvements in both female employment and economic participation. The adoption of CEDAW by the Syrian government in 2003 has had one of the largest tangible impacts on women's employment. The onset of the crisis, however, has exacerbated the worsening economic situation, and has negatively impacted Syria's progress in supporting female economic participation. At the national level, massive destruction brought on by conflict during the crisis has severely damaged infrastructure such as pipelines, power stations, roads, and the pillars of the Syrian economy: the oil, manufacturing, and agricultural industries. In effect, up to 90% of industrial enterprises in major conflict areas have closed down. Facing the collapse of these major economic sectors, women and children have been forced to assume more responsibilities in supporting their families. Women struggle to find an 'appropriate' job due to cultural stereotypes and increasing household burden. In 2014, the overall poverty rate was 83% in Syria. This, in turn, has lead women and children to participate in informal sectors; smuggling supplies, engaging in survival sex, and joining military groups to boost their income.

Pre-Crisis

Introduction

Syrian women's employment prospects prior to the crisis were greatly influenced by the Ba'ath political party, which introduced socialist principles and drafted a new state constitution. In some ways, new opportunities were created for women's equality that changed their role in the economy. Gender discrimination in hiring was an issue, as well as low prevalence of female owned businesses. Efforts were being made to invest capital in some women's enterprises through microloans, and there was a national effort to increase female hiring in leadership roles.

Economic Overview and Employment Opportunities

Economic Overview

The economic situation in Syria today developed from the 1960s with the rise of the Ba'ath party and with it, basic principles of socialism. In 1963, a redistribution of land and nationalization of resources began under the Ba'ath government. The Syrian class structure changed and a larger agrarian middle class was created. Those who did not benefit from land reform began a movement to urban centers to find work in the major industries. In 1973, with Hafiz al-Assad in power, Syria created a new constitution and slowly began to open the economy to private investment. Whereas previously Syria depended on agriculture as its main industry, beginning in the 1970s there was increased demand for work in new industries such as petrochemicals, textiles, and food processing. The petroleum sector doubled between 1988 and 1993 due to the success of light crude oil, and investment in energy began. Between the 1970s and 1990s, some women were employed in the formal job market, mostly working as teachers, and others were involved in the informal market, typically helping in the agricultural sector. The new constitution allowed women a greater role in the economy, though laws pertaining to guardianship and discrimination maintained a preference for males.

The Syrian economy fluctuated under Hafiz al-Assad, and saw (with the collapse of the Soviet Union) the loss of an economic ally that had bought Syrian exports. Steady inflation began in the early 1990s and the role of the black market within Syria increased. With price inflation and unemployment rising in the 1990s, men and women travelled outside of Syria to find jobs, and even shop in Lebanon.[1] The black market in Syria had been established for decades due to its central geographic location. Black market goods included drugs and weapons, consumer goods, and human trafficking. In the 1980s and 1990s there was fuel smuggling between Syria and border countries, and then a rise in drug smuggling in the 1990s (specifically opium and hashish). Some estimates put black market revenue at 24% of Syrian GDP.[2] Up until 1997 Syria was on the list of countries recognized by the U.S. as trafficking drugs. In 1997 Syria was taken off this list, though drug smuggling increased later in the 2000s. Also during the 1990s oil was sold on the black market, which could explain a rise in oil export revenues during this time (though this could also be explained by development of light crude oil). Human trafficking included the trafficking of Syrian and Iraqi women primarily.[3]

In 2000, the succession of Bashar al-Assad marked another transition period that produced positively regarded policy reforms.[4] Negotiations also began to reopen the Syrian stock exchange; it later reopened in 2009. The economy still lacked major industries during this transition, so both men and women began to work more.

Because women needed to work outside of the home, it became more widely accepted, though all economic responsibility was still the legal responsibility of men.

In 2009 the global recession hit Syria, as well as a large drought, affecting its growing economy.[5] Syria had experienced an average annual growth rate of 5% in the period between 2004 and 2009.[6] In the years leading up to 2009 women's employment outside the home increased[7], and women's labor force participation was high compared to other MENA countries at 41% in 2006.[8] Unemployment had consistently been higher for the age range of 15-24, at a rate of 39% of women in 2007.[9] In 2009, after the global recession, Syria's reserves remained stable, along with the amount of remittances that were sent into the country.[10] Agriculture was most affected, and forgiving tax breaks were implemented for farmers in 2009 and the budget was increased for the Agricultural Support Fund.[11]

Main Sectors of the Economy and Participation Rates

The percentages of total GDP of the main sectors have changed slightly between 1990 and 2010. In 1999 the largest sector of the Syrian economy was agriculture, and it accounted for 27.3% total GDP.[12] This sector was affected by periodic droughts, a movement of workers to urban areas, and increased sanctions. In 2009 agriculture accounted for 23% of GDP, second to the industry sector, which made up 28% of total GDP.[13] In the early 2000s the number of women working in agriculture rose and the number of men in agriculture declined. This marked an increased percentage of female agricultural workers compared to men, signifying that women's employment was to be more affected by changes to the agriculture sector than men's employment.[14] Between 1997 and 2007 there was greater investment in the energy sector, specifically nuclear energy.[15] In 1999 mining accounted for 5.8% of GDP but this sector was largely off limits to any female employment as women were prohibited from various forms of dangerous physical labor, including working in mines, quarries and glass smelters.[16] Contributions by percentage of GDP of the informal market in which many women worked cannot be accurately determined.[17] Since 2000, many workers, both men and women, have held more than one job. Average real wages did fall an estimated 21% between 1992 and 1999, causing many workers to consider taking on second jobs, whether they be seasonal or informal in nature.[1819]

Barriers to Women's Employment and Legal Considerations

Implementation of CEDAW

In March 2003 Syria adopted the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, also known as CEDAW, but has maintained a few exceptions. One of the main principles of CEDAW is non-discrimination, however Syria has yet to implement anti-discrimination laws, which specifically support women's employment. The Syrian Employment Act, for example, does not prohibit sexual harassment in the workplace.[20] According to a study of employers in Syria, 33% said that gender (with a male preference) was the most important factor to consider when hiring.[21] Discrimination with a preference for males could take place in public sector jobs more frequently due to the benefits offered to women (the most central benefit is maternity leave). Systemic discrimination, however, is clearly influenced by the patriarchal society in Syria.

Other ways in which Syria does not comply with CEDAW are in the Nationality Code, personal status laws and the penal code. Specific to women's employment personal status laws pertaining to guardianship have affected some women's autonomy in their professions. There are restrictions on women's right to travel without consent from her guardian (father or husband) that can limit her to working close to her home.[22]

In 2007 after signing onto most of the principles to CEDAW, Syria was evaluated by the UN for their work implementing CEDAW and the improvement they needed to make to non-ratified articles. This report found that most Syrian women were unaware of their rights under the articles of CEDAW that Syria had accepted, and many women did not know that Syria had not accepted anti-discriminatory measures. The UN suggested that more cases related to workplace discrimination would be brought up if women knew more about CEDAW.[23] The report did find Syria to be compliant with measures to increase female participation in leadership roles, with a national goal of 30% involvement in elected and appointed roles.[24] This pre-crisis national goal was not a quota system, similar to other MENA countries, rather a soft goal without specific means of encouragement. Occupational segregation is another barrier to women's employment, however that will be mentioned in the following section on women's involvement in economic sectors.

Child Labor

Before the crisis, with compulsory education in place, the Syrian government did not publish any official statistics on child labor participation. The school drop out rate among children was about 3% and the literacy rate was maintained above 90%.[25] Children in female-headed households, however, were at greater risk of dropping out of school than children in male-headed households. The drop out rates were 1 in 12 children in female headed households compared to 1 in 20 children in male headed households. In this study the reason that most children were found to be dropping out was to find jobs.[26] This trend in child labor participation is supported by the statistic that 40% of female-headed households earn under 6000 SP (poverty level) compared to 16% of male-headed households.[27] Even though the estimated percentage of female-headed households pre-crisis was between 5-8%, this significant trend toward child labor participation in female-headed households demonstrates a pre-crisis problem that will be exacerbated by the conflict.

Women's Involvement in Different Economic Sectors

Public vs. Private Sector

Syrian women generally preferred to work in public sector jobs than in private sector jobs due to the public sector having better wages and benefits overall than the private sector. Most public sector jobs are located in urban settings, so the majority of these jobs go to urban women and not rural women. In 2006 70% of urban female workers were employed in the public sector, which was a higher percentage than men, and 63% of rural female workers were employed in the private sector (mainly in agriculture).[28] The majority of rural women worked in the private sector, even though these jobs were less desirable. However, because public sector jobs were more desirable, women were more likely to wait to be employed in this sector and forego job opportunities in the private sector, affecting the duration of time they spent unemployed.

The difference in benefits between the public and private sector was significant. Women in the public sector enjoyed more job security overall, including protection from arbitrary dismissal.[29] In both the public and private sector women were allowed a standard maternity leave of 120 days for their first child, with decreasing leave for each subsequent child, however this was harder to ensure in some private sector jobs.[30] Access to childcare was another factor for women's employment, and in some private sector jobs there was easier access than in private sector jobs. In both cases the distance that women travel to work affected their childcare options.[31]

A large number of Syrian women sought jobs as teachers, and in 2010 women made up 57% of all primary school teachers nation wide.[32] Teaching was an acceptable job, along with work in the medical field, specifically as midwives or delivery nurses. Women working in the informal sector in rural areas apart from working in agriculture would typically find jobs in childcare, sewing, knitting, cooking or hairdressing.[33] There was gendered occupational segregation due to social norms despite work by government and non-government organizations to encourage female labor force participation in new sectors. As mentioned in the overview, women were blatantly restricted from some forms of physical labor (working in mines and quarries), as well as were restricted from working late at night or working against the permission of their guardian. Despite limitations in some sectors, Syrian women were well represented in university level education, indicating a growing population of well-educated women. In 2009 47% of the class at the University of Damascus were women, mostly studying to become teachers, while fewer were in science fields.[34]

Women's Leadership and Entrepreneurship

Prior to the crisis, women's leadership at the national level (in government work or women's organizations) was growing and making a positive impact on the economic opportunities for women. Women held high government positions, notably including Vice President Najah Al-Attar who was appointed in 2006. There was also an increase in women in parliament; in 1990, 9.2% of the 250-person parliament were women, while in 2010 the figure was 12.4%.[35] Another influential female figure in Syria is Asma Al-Assad, the wife of current president Bashar Al-Assad. Asma is a role model due to her education, successful business ventures and advocacy for women's groups, two of which she founded, FIRDOS and FARDOS. These organizations provide monetary support for women in rural regions, investing in their business as well as training and job counseling. FIRDOS has provided a total of 157 million (SP) in loans to women with a 100% repayment rate.[36] Another NGO specifically helping women is Mawred, which provides more training and counseling than monetary support. There are also various state sponsored organizations that support women's training and economic opportunities. In 2004 55% of the beneficiaries of loans given by the Agency of Combatting Unemployment were women.[37]

Studies have found that female owned and managed firms are more likely to hire women, creating a positive employment cycle for women based on each investment to female owned firms.[38] Just prior to the crisis more loans were needed, specifically for training women in rural areas to increase employment in the private sector.

Conclusion

Ba'ath party politics prior to the crisis changed aspects of the Syrian economy that shifted major sectors, as well as changed perceptions of women in the workplace, and the employment opportunities they had. Prior to 2010 Syria had average participation rate by women in their economy, as compared to other countries. Women were highly involved in teaching and nursing, and most female college students were training for these fields. Work in private sectors jobs such teaching was coveted for the promised benefits. Many women did work informally, with a greater proportion of women in agriculture than men. CEDAW (a convention signed onto by Syria in 2003) had many positive affects on Syrian women's employment, but by the start of the crisis anti-discrimination laws had not yet been established. Poverty rates were higher for female-headed households, which affected childhood drop out rates from school and subsequently child participation in the informal labor market. National benchmarks were established to promote greater involvement of women in leadership, though these benchmarks were not substantiated by any legal quota system. Micro loans and financing for training programs for women did exist pre-crisis but were aiming to expand further in rural areas.

Current Crisis

Introduction

As the ongoing Syrian refugee crisis steps into its 6th year, Syria's economy has been largely destroyed. The long-lasting civil war has taken away most people's livelihoods with half of the population displaced. As a result of Syria's high injury and death rate, women often need to take responsibility for generating income and caring for the family with their husbands absent. However, they often find barriers when finding livelihood opportunities. In cases when women fail to support the family, children are also forced to work, even in the worst positions. At the same time, the large-scale exodus out of Syria leads to an exaggerated "brain-drain." As a result, the crisis further deteriorates the economic situation and the hope of future reconstruction dims.

Economic Overview and Employment Opportunities

Destruction of Important Economic Sectors

Before the crisis, Syria's macro-economic policies in general had a positive impact despite some structural imbalances. According to data from International Monetary Fund, before the crisis started, Syria's economy had relatively stable growth. Non-oil GDP averaged 4.4% growth during 2000-2009. Its current account was seen as largely in balance and its international reserve was relatively stable.[39] After the onset of the refugee crisis in 2011, however, its nominal GDP has dropped from $53 billion to $14 billion and the gross public debt has hugely piled up from 37% of GDP to 150%, leaving the country's economy in extremely unstable shape. As Syria's economic condition deteriorates everyday, domestic and foreign investors have lost confidence, leading to huge amounts of flight capital and the drastically weakening exchange rate (from 47 LS/$ to 260 LS/$).[40]

Aside from heavy economic declines, productive capital and physical infrastructures were also severely damaged during the civil war, which destroyed many predominant economic sectors before the crisis.

In 2010, the revenue from crude oil and natural gas were estimated to 4.7 billion dollars, which accounted about 12% of national GDP. During the crisis, the well-developed energy infrastructures, including natural gas pipelines and electricity transmission networks have been severely damaged. Additionally, resource production has dropped sharply, predominantly in government-controlled areas.[41] The destroyed oil industry posed great challenges to the supply of electricity since most of Syria's power stations depend on natural gas or oil.[42]

The Syrian Center for Policy Research (SCPR) stated that up to 90% of industrial enterprises are closed down in major conflict areas like Aleppo,[43] which limits the country's ability to sustain its population since basic commodities and consumer goods cannot be produced. Instead, the destroyed industrial sector makes the country more or less dependent on agricultural production, which accounted for one-fifth of GDP before the crisis. However, agriculture production now is also facing substantial losses due to destruction of farmland and irrigation systems, lack of inputs (seeds, fertilizers, etc.) and shortage of farm labor. Some of the formerly productive farming areas such as Aleppo and Raqqa are now out of the government's control.[44]

Syrian people are suffering the effects of civil war economically as the job market deteriorates. Millions of people lost their jobs and families are struggling in extreme poverty. The Syrian Center for Policy Research (SCPR) estimated the overall poverty rate in 2014 to be 83%(compared to 12.4% in 2007).[45] The increase in poverty

is mainly the result of increased prices on consumer goods, high unemployment rates and damaging of physical assets.[46]

The SCPR also estimated that 60% of the labor force are now unemployed with 52% living in rural areas. Approximately 3 million people lost their jobs because of the conflict. Those were mostly in the agriculture, transportation and manufacturing sectors that were destroyed.[47]

Deteriorating Living Conditions

Given the devastating economic conditions, one of the outstanding threats that have emerged is "the war economy." Authors Karen Ballentine and Heiko Nitzschke listed some features of "war economy" including "the destruction and circumvention of formal economy and the growth of informal and black markets," as well as "pillage, predation, extortion and deliberate violence against civilians is used by combatants to acquire control over lucrative assets."[48] War economies, often illegal, are spurred in areas that are out of government's control such as Raqqa, Aleppo, Deir Ezzor and rural Homs,[49] which have brought massive fear and insecurity among the regions.
Due to a shortage of food supply, the price of food has kept rising rapidly. In December 2016, the average cost of a standard food basket raised 42% compared to the previous year, while in Aleppo, the increase was 250%.[50] The shortage of food is getting worse as IDPs are flowing into different parts of the country. Local communities with dramatically reduced agricultural production are having a hard time providing for both existing and new residents.

The cost of living has also increased greatly. First of all, continuous bombings and fighting have cut off access to water and electricity in the northern parts of the country. The price of fuel and oil is also rising considerably as a result of destroyed energy infrastructures. People are now finding heat from wood or fuel stoves, which are often the cause of serious incidents. The human, weapon, and drug trades are everywhere in those areas. Illicit economic activities have also further shored up prices of consumer goods that were already high under inflation. According to the central bureau of statistics, national-wide consumer prices reached a record average inflation of 320% in 2014, with Aleppo topping the rank at 346%, followed by Raqqa at 331%.[51] The high prices have encouraged people to take risks; in Aleppo, citizens often venture into the opposition controlled areas to buy cheaper goods and foods and get killed by snipers. They often take this risk since in government-controlled areas those necessities are usually 100 times the price.[52]

The civil war and refugee crisis has brought catastrophic bearings on Syria's domestic economy. Formerly important economic sectors are failing or already

scattered. People are forced to leave their jobs and to struggle for survival. "The war economy" provides a favorable environment for criminal networks and illicit economic activities, which brings tremendous danger to Syrian citizens. Also, people seeking livelihoods, including women and children, are induced to participate in dangerous and illegal activities such as joining the army or opposition military groups, or practice killing, or injuring Syrian citizens in order to earn a living. Also, as human, weapon and drug trades expand, children are recruited into smuggling and killing and girls are often sold into prostitution rings.[53]

Barriers to Women's Employment

Women have become the major victims of the civil war and refugee crisis in terms of economic welfare. Before the crisis, men, who were the heads of their households, financially supported most of the women. Women had comfortable lives and emotional support networks and families and friends nearby.[54] The female labor force participation rate in 2009 before the crisis, according to data from World Bank, was 14.9%.[55] During the crisis, 3 million women and girls of reproductive age (15-49) have been affected by the crisis and most of them are displaced at least once.[56] In many cases when men are missing from home (participating in armed forces), or injured or killed (account for 11.5% of the population), women have to take responsibilities of generating incomes for sustaining the whole household. Until 2014, the post-crisis female labor force participation rate has raised to 15.5 %.[57] Statistics show a substantial increase of female participation in service and industry sector from 2009-2014 during the crisis,[58] mainly because of the decline of agriculture production and the migration trend from rural to urban areas.[59]

Despite women's needs to support their families, the female unemployment rate remains high: among the 865,000-unemployed labor force, 42 % are women.[60] As mentioned previously, during the crisis many important sectors suffered heavy destruction, and most women lost their previous livelihoods.

Syrian women constantly encounter barriers when they try to establish livelihoods. One of the persisting barriers is the wide spread patriarchal attitudes and deep-rooted stereotypes regarding the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family. They are the root causes of the disadvantaged position of women in the labor market.[61] Although legally women and men have equal economic rights in terms of property rights and rights to control their incomes, women often face pressures from family members and lack of confidence when they try to take over matters that used to fall into men's responsibilities.[62] Also, although the 1973 constitution enables women to participate fully in economic life, there is no legislation developed to prevent gender-based discrimination.[63] As a result, a large majority of Syrian women believe

that there are obstacles to employment and even though a majority of unemployed women want to work, they are not actively looking for jobs.

Interview participants often highlight that women's livelihood opportunities need to be "appropriate" for females.[64] According to the Care report, "appropriate" work often refers to "feminine" works like sewing, hairdressing, knitting, cooking, dairy production etc. while physical work is generally not considered appropriate.[1] On the other hand, women also need to consider the time and location of the livelihood opportunities; they often prefer income-generating opportunities at home or those that do not require them to go outside of home for too long. The violent environment in Syria also greatly limits women's activities outside of the house. Women and girls are often reluctant to step outside of the house due to high risk of harassment, persecution, shelling, aerial bombing and sniping.[65]

Increasing housework responsibilities also greatly limit women's ability to work. In Syria, 25% of the population suffers from acute injury or disabilities due to prevalent violence.[66] As a result, many Syrian women have to take care of the injured or disabled at home. After the crisis, previously easy housework becomes much exhausting. In government-controlled areas where energy or water supply is uncertain due to infrastructure damage, women also bear extra burden and danger by walking farther distance or even venturing into opposition-controlled areas to get water or fuel.

Overall, opportunities for women to work in Syria are scarce: Care research in Southern Syria indicates that 38% of female-headed households depend on remittance or support from outside of Syria, which leaves those families in further desperation should the support stop.[67]

Care assessed that in Syria, 12%-17% of households are now female-headed.[68] Women's emerging role as head of households induces psychological pressure on both women and men. Interviews show that both Syrian women and men feel that their roles and responsibilities have been totally reversed; while women start to participate in decision-making on income and expenditure and assume responsibilities outside of the house, men lose their role as decision-maker and bread-winner, and therefore feel emasculated.[69] As a result, the risk of domestic conflict and violence significantly rises.[70] Given that women often fail to find jobs, for those who have to sustain families without a husband, they face daily struggles to earn enough money to buy food and basic commodities for their families and children. Many mothers then choose to keep children out of school to help at home or leave them alone at home when going to work.[71]

Child Labor

Before the crisis, with compulsory education in place, the Syrian government did not publish any official statistics on child labor participation. School dropout rates were merely 3% among children and the literacy rate was constantly above 90%.[72] Today, a quarter of all Syrian schools - more than 6000 - have been damaged and are now being used as war zones, detention centers, torture chambers, or shelters for displaced families. Numerous teachers have been killed and 52,000 teachers have lost their positions,[73] making school attendance nearly impossible for children.
Observations from UN agencies and international organizations confirm that children in Syria are being forced to participate in the labor force.[74] As mentioned above, mothers often bear the burden of the whole family in devastating economic and employment conditions. When they fail to generate enough income, the commonly used coping mechanisms are dropping children out of school and driving them to work. According to UNICEF, the recruitment of children is on the rise with a trend towards recruiting even younger children—as young as 7—including girls.[75]

Participation in Military Groups

United Nations has listed recruitment of children to armed forces as one of the six grave violations against children. Unfortunately, Syrian children are massively recruited into armed forces in Kurdistan and ISIL controlled areas. The United Nations has verified the existence of centers in rural Aleppo, Dayr-Al-Zawr and rural Raqqa that provided military training to boys aged between 10-15.[76] Recruitment of young boys is prevalently found in the Free Syrian Army, Kurdish People's Protection Units, ISIL, and al-Nusra Front.[77] In 77% of the cases, children are armed or used in combat.[78] Boys associated with armed forces are commonly between 14 to 17 years of age, with some cases of child recruitment under the age of 12.[79]

Recruitment in the armed forces often provides economic incentives. For example, in most of the cases, children are paid up to 400 USD per month.[41]
Compared to other common income-generating activities like harvesting potatoes and working in a grocery shop, joining in violent armed forces is much more rewarding and perhaps is the only way to support a family without a male head of the household. However, participating in armed forces is often a life-threatening choice; on one hand, the Syrian government continues to detain children for their association with armed group and in most of these cases, these children were tortured and killed.[80] On the other hand, there are increasing cases in which children were killed and sexually abused during their time in the armed forces.[81]

Widespread child labor continues to be the most persistent form of exploitation and violence. The consequences of harmful work for children are long lasting. Child labor also leads to the loss of education opportunities, which constrains children from participating in economic reconstruction after the crisis.

Brain-Drain

As a result of the accelerating unemployment rate and deteriorating insecurity in Syria, the "brain-Drain" stands out as a major concern. Brain-drain is defined as "large-scale emigration of a group of intellectuals and professionals with high qualifications and unique technical skills and knowledge."[82] Effects of the brain-drain can be costly to a country due to a lacking professional labor force. In the case of Syria, the brain-drain phenomenon is not only worsening the crisis, but also darkening the country's future by expelling the elite class and the talented youths.

The brain-drain in Syria began with the beginning of the crisis in 2011. Lack of opportunities and political freedom had been driving educated people out of the country from decades before the crisis, but the crisis has increased the loss of professionals in an unprecedented scale. Four million people have been driven out of Syria, and more than 200,000 sought asylum in Europe in 2014. Apparently among these are some of the most talented and most needed people, including many doctors and nurses.[83] In some major conflict areas like Aleppo, more than 75% of health-care professionals have been forced to leave.[84] The mass exodus of people has left Syria with 1,500 fewer doctors, which accounts for half of the total number of physicians in the country.[85]

At the time when Syria's need is the greatest, its elite class - those with advanced education and professional skills - has left the country.[86] Without it, Syria lacks the necessary skill set for reconstruction. Internal displacement has brought about large-scale demographic changes, which possibly intensifies violence against women and children. Without local leaders and trained professionals, national or local political solutions for mitigating cross-ethnical frictions are hard to achieve.[87] Also, successful future political reconciliation and economic reconstruction are strenuous tasks that require great numbers of educated professionals and political leaders who have fled Syria and found opportunities elsewhere.

Many independent and educated women have left the country and found new employment activities in hosting countries. According to an assessment of women's employment in Jordan, 63% of university-educated female refugees are currently employed and most of them work in education, health-care and financial sectors,[88]

while the same array of sectors in Syria face professional shortages. As mentioned above, women in Syria are facing many barriers when finding employment opportunities, which is also a main factor that results in brain-drain among female educated labors.

Aid

Currently, two kinds of humanitarian aids are focused on reducing economic burdens of Syrian internally displaced persons (IDPs), especially of women and children: one is to directly provide them with basic commodities and services, in some cases cash; the other is to support employment and help with early recovery. Although living conditions are getting better, neither kind of aid is considered fully meeting IDPs' demands.

Basic Needs

The international community has provided various help on food and other necessities. The World Food Program is managing to meet the urgent food needs of more than 5 million displaced people in Syria.[89] Also, UNHCR is acting actively to provide IDPs with fuel, water, mattresses, etc. in order to ensure IDPs' daily basic needs.[90]

However, there are still some gaps among humanitarian aids, first being insufficiency. Secondly, basic commodities and services are provided in relatively stable and mostly government-controlled areas. However, besieged and ISIS controlled areas are often hard to access and therefore neglected. According to data in 2015, there were 2.3 million more people living in "hard-to-reach" areas compared to 2013, however, food received by those people fell by 94%.[91] The area of Deir-ez-Zor has been besieged by ISIL since 2014 and thousands of people are running out of food supplies in Eastern Deir-ez-Zor.[92] The WFP used to operate airdrops of food and basic commodities, but now is no longer able to because the drop-zone is under ISIS control.[93]

Also, humanitarian aid is sometimes not able to keep up with people's movements that are happening swiftly and in a large scale. For example, in September 2016, fighting in Hama governorate displaced 100,000 people from northern rural Hama towards neighboring villages and Hama city between August and September 2016.[94] Due to a lack of sufficient shelter space, many displaced families in Hama governorate were temporally sleeping outside in the national parks. Although schools

and mosques are opened to serve as temporary shelters, there is still an unmet need for shelter, portable water, food and other basic facilities.[95]

The gaps are largely due to government's control of assistance and the hardships aid agencies encounter when they try to enter opposition-controlled areas. Currently international humanitarian aids provided by organizations like UN are channeled through local organizations, which is authorized by the government to distribute aid on the ground.[96] Although there many unmet needs, the government constantly refuses international NGOs to work on government-controlled territories. For the opposition-controlled areas, aid agencies face great obstacles when trying to negotiate with local authorities.[97]

The gaps among humanitarian needs are also results of under-funding. For example, the food operations provided by WFP are severely under-funded, which forced the organization to reduce the level of assistance it provides.[98]

Early Recovery and Livelihood Support

As most of humanitarian aids are focused on emergency supply of basic needs, there are very limited programs that provide early recovery and livelihood support in Syria. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has been implementing its Humanitarian Livelihoods Program, which revives industrial facilities to create jobs and to provide emergency employment.[99] The program established sewing workshops employing more than 200 women.[100] Also, World Food Program has integrated "gender equality and empowerment" into its Livelihood and Resilience Strategy targeted from 2015-2017.[101] However, as identified in the strategy report, barriers to women's employment have existed before the crisis and are hard to overcome.

In order to support the livelihoods of women-headed households and to incorporate women in the economy, more practical resolutions and larger-scale programs need to be in place.

Conclusion

Massive economic destruction in post-crisis Syria resulted in deteriorating living conditions and large-scale unemployment. Among the most vulnerable are women who have to support the whole household. They often need to take care of children and the injured under devastating economic conditions. Despite their urgent needs to find livelihood opportunities, they constantly face barriers. Overall, the chances for them to find secure jobs remain slim.

When a mother fails to support the family by herself, children are often forced to go to work, sometimes in the worst forms such as joining militia groups. The UN has

found extensive cases in which children were murdered and tortured due to their participation in armed forces.

While the unemployment rate remains high domestically, many of Syria's educated people have fled the country and found opportunities elsewhere. Among these are medical professionals and political leaders that the country needs the most. Many educated Syrian women also left the country and joined medical, educational, or financial sectors in hosting countries even though Syria faces labor shortages in those areas currently.

Humanitarian aid is provided mostly in the form of emergency supply of basic goods and services. Very limited efforts are paid to support employment and early recovery in Syria. Due to their inability to access and lack of control within Syria, international humanitarian aid agencies failed to provide aids to many in need, especially those in besieged areas. Often they don't have the ability to act swiftly with changing conditions.

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[2] Herbert, Matt. "Partisans, Profiteers, and Criminals" Syria's Illicit Economy." The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs.

[3] Ibid.

[4]A proposal to allow private banks within Syria began in 2001. By 2004 three private banks had opened and in 2006 there were six. Negotiations also began to reopen the Syrian stock exchange; it later reopened in 2009. CGAP. "Policy and Regulatory Framework for Microfinance in Syria" CGAP. (January 2008). 1-10.

[5] Syrian and US relations changed throughout the 1990s and early 2000s and sanctions affected foreign investment in Syria. Syria has been a US-designated State Sponsor of Terrorism for decades. In the 1990s relations improved with the Untied States, but in 2003 President Bush enacted the Syria Accountability Act, placing sanctions against Syria for allegedly harboring terrorists, and proliferating weapons of mass destruction. Since being considered a State Sponsor of Terror, Syria was generally limited by broad US sanctions; however, the Syria Accountability Act was a set of sanctions specific to Syria, which did limit some US companies' investment in the country. In 2008 Syrian relations with France, the US, and the EU improved once more; bilateral trade agreements—including talk of a Euro-Mediterranean free trade zone—and membership in the World Trade Organization were discussed. Syrian establishment in the WTO happened in May 2010 but no meetings have occurred to date.

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[6] Tabler, Andrew J. "Global Economic Crisis Boosts Utility of U.S. Sanctions on Syria" The Washington Institute. (Feb 26, 2009).

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[14] World Bank. "The Status and Progress of Women in the Middle East and North Africa." World Bank Middle East and North Africa Social and Economic Development Group (2009). 1-99.

[15] A possible nuclear reactor was created in Al Kibar, though this site was destroyed by an Israeli airstrike in 2007. The IAEA conducted an investigation of Al Kibar concluding that there was evidence of uranium particles but could not officially say Al Kibar had been a reactor. Syria had extended its energy sector in other ways during this time; there was increased trade of natural gas with Iran, as well as the opening of a petroleum refinery in Homs. Sharp, Jeremy M. "Economic and Political Issues in the Middle East: Syria: Background and U.S. Relations." Nova Science Publishers, Inc. (2011).

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[17] UNDP. "Toolkit- The Importance of Gender Mainstreaming in Syria" UNDP. (2009).

[18] Herbert, Matt. "Partisans, Profiteers, and Criminals" Syria's Illicit Economy." The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs.

[19] In 2010 Syrian oil exports accounted for about one third of their total export revenue, when they produced an average of 370,000 to 385,000 barrels a day. Oil revenue was 4.7 billion USD in 2010.[1] Syria had a modest 2.5 billion barrels of oil reserves, but their reserves were much smaller than in other regional countries like Iraq and Saudi Arabia.[2] Syria's state owned Oil Company, General Petroleum Corp., bought local companies oil and had contracts with international Oil Companies like Shell. Most of Syria's 150,000 barrels of oil exports went to Europe.[3] The greatest oil producing regions in Syria are Hassake and Deir Ezzor, though the two regions produce heavier and lighter crude oil respectively; there is greater demand for lighter crude oil. Within Syria there were not sufficient oil refineries to produce all the gas and diesel that Syria used, so imports of some of these products were needed to fuel the military.[4]

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Women and Children's Health

Abstract

Prior to the conflict in 2011, Syria had one of the best healthcare systems in the Middle East. The health of Syrian men, women, and children were improving, and approximately 90% of the population had access to healthcare. Vaccination rates were almost 100%, while the deaths caused by infectious disease was close to 0%. Contraceptive prevalence rates increased and maternal mortality rates decreased. Once the Syrian crisis unfolded, people's health deteriorated and healthcare access was reduced. Hospitals and healthcare providers were attacked, reducing vaccination rates, prenatal care, and mental health services. Sewage and waste management stopped, and water resources were used as weapons of war. Inadequate sanitation and lack of water have contributed to the food insecurity and poor health outcomes of Syrians.

Sanitation

Pre-Crisis

Two major contributors to an individual's health are access to clean water and proper living conditions. War and conflict exacerbate issues of obtaining potable water and managing sewage systems, but prior to the unraveling of the Syrian Crisis, Syria already had trouble in both of these areas. Syria's climate is extremely dry with very little rainfall. With a growing population, drinking water becomes an increasingly valuable resource. The sewage system was not built to serve that many people. This section will discuss the state of sanitation, specifically water access and sewage management in Syria prior to the crisis.

Syria's geographical location does not supply enough water for citizens to drink, bathe, irrigate crops, and other activities that require clean water. In 2002, Syria's population of 18 million people was consuming water at a faster rate than water renewable resources were able to replenish.[1] Furthermore, Syria's hot climate and vast areas of desert make water increasingly scarce. Syria has been plagued with droughts throughout its history. One of the most severe droughts took place between 2006-

2009. This drought endured for consecutive seasons and years, which led to the destruction of agriculture, decline in employment, and displacement of the population.[2] The increased aridness from the drought forced 1.5 million people from rural regions to migrate to urban areas for more water.[3] There was an additional drought in 2011 that resulted in the loss of income for rural populations and their forced migration as well.[4] Struggling for adequate amounts of water has been a reoccurring issue for Syrians.

To add to Syria's misfortune, the mismanagement of water wastes its precious supply. The outdated irrigation techniques of agriculture quickly depleted the water supply because 83% of agriculture was watered using total flooding.[5] By neglecting to use modern methods of irrigation, such as sprinkler and drip systems, water is irresponsibly lost and water resources cannot renew themselves.[6] Syria wasted an extremely valuable resource and put people under stress by using this archaic method of irrigation. Lower socioeconomic classes in rural areas of Syria were under the most stress from the water crisis because the cost to purchase water soared.[7] The demand for water only increased as the Syrian population rose, but the supply unfortunately continued to sink.

In addition, the poorly managed sewage and waste system contributed to the depletion of water. Inadequate planning and mismanagement created problems with sewage and waste before the Syrian Civil War unraveled. The growing population required cities to expand, and while the cities were being developed, the sewage lines were not.[8] Only about 45% of the rural population in Syria was connected to a sewage system because sewage systems were more concentrated in urban areas.[9] Not having a proper sewage system led to the pollution of water and agriculture. Areas with untreated water used the same water to irrigate agriculture.[10] Utilizing untreated water to irrigate crops polluted surface and ground water, which increased levels of contaminants, such as nutrients, pathogens, and pesticides.[11] Furthermore, the poor sewage system pumped the sewage directly into the Euphrates River, polluting the limited water Syrians have.[12] Syria did not have the expertise to properly oversee and manage the water and sewage, and unfortunately, citizens had to suffer.

Scarce water resources and a terrible sewage system significantly increased the health risks caused by polluted water and contaminated food. Water-borne and food-borne pathogens run rampant when not addressed. The way that Syria operated its water and sewage systems before the civil war was not beneficial to the country by any means. When the crisis unfolded, sanitation dramatically worsened in Syria.

Current Crisis

Syria did not have adequate water or sewage management before the civil war broke out. The negative impact on sanitation is due to collateral damage from the crisis

and deliberate harm. Water was used as a political and military weapon between the belligerents of the crisis. The culmination of damage from the war and the manipulation of water supplies crippled Syrians and their health.

The supply of water to citizens has plummeted from the effects of the crisis. Syrians went from having access to 75 liters of water a day per person to only 25 liters.[13] Water pumps have been damaged causing large decreases in amounts of pumped water; Deir Ez-Zor dropped by 90% and Damascus dropped by 20%.[14] Power and electricity are partly responsible for the decrease in water availability for Syrians each day because they are required to pump water from the ground. Electricity and power are only available for certain periods of time, which limits the amount of water that can be pumped.[15] Devastatingly, total water supply has dropped to one-third of the level that it was before the crisis.[16] Furthermore, chemical production to treat water has reduced, leaving water untreated.[17] Some can only access dirty water, which puts their health at risk.

Current methods as to how people obtain drinking water make them vulnerable to water-borne disease and attacks from battle. Children are often responsible for fetching water at wells, street pipes, and collection centers; these places have terrible lines that force children to wait for hours.[18] The water that comes from these locations are potentially unsafe because citizens do not know if they came from potable groundwater or if the water was even treated.[19] Contaminated water exposes Syrians, especially children, to many contagious ailments, such as diarrhea, typhoid and hepatitis.[20] Additionally, children are at risk of injury and death by simply trying to obtain water for their families.[21] It is probable that children and other Syrians can be hurt or killed from the violence of the war that is transpiring around them.[22] Another obstacle for Syrian families for obtaining water is the price. The limited supply of water in Syria has sky rocketed the price because governing bodies are not present to regulate the price and quality of water.[23] Private vendors can take advantage of vulnerable Syrian families without any repercussions. The devastation of the crisis is increasing the vulnerability of Syrians across the country.

Similarly, the current state of sanitation is dilapidated from the effects of the crisis. Sewage treatment in Syria plummeted from 70% before the crisis to only 35%.[24] Waste is piling up in different cities, like Aleppo, Homs, and Damascus because garbage collection has halted.[25] The accumulation of waste, trash, and the like create massive mounds of health hazards. These piles are breeding grounds for mosquitos, flies, and mice that serve as vectors for disease.[26] When citizens try to clear the rubbish themselves, guards stop them because the authorities are worried that weapons are being hidden underneath the waste.[27] Sewage and waste management continues to decline, making living conditions in Syria hazardous.

Aside from the decline of sanitation, combatants of the crisis manipulate the water supply to force the opposition to succumb (Figure 4.1).[28] Limiting water to civilians and opponents allows groups to control large swaths of an area, to gain economic incentives, to control civilians by inciting fear, and to prevent the advancement of opponents.[29] In the midst of peace talks in December 2016, fighting in the Barada Valley shut off the water to Damascus.[30] There has not been conclusive evidence as to who was responsible for the shut off of water, but the United Nations has determined that water infrastructure in the Barada Valley was damaged from deliberate targeting.[31] The majority of the water piped into Damascus and its surrounding areas comes from the Barada Valley, so the damage has affected over 5.5 million individuals.[32] These heinous acts combined with the current shortage of water heavily impacts where and how can people obtain water.

Figure 5.1: Use of water as a weapon by major combatants[33]

Combatants	No. of Attributed Incidents
Islamic State (IS)	21
Free Syrian Army (FSA)	2
Syrian Regime	3
Iraqi Kurds	1
Jabhat Al Nusra	3
Islamist Shari'a Council	2
Iraqi Security Forces	4
Other	4
NA	6

Syria's state of sanitation is in dire need of repair and aid. There needs to be ample intervention to restore and build the infrastructure for water, sewage, and waste. Without immediate response, sanitation will decline, the health of citizens will diminish, and the danger presented to citizens will rise. Although Syria's infrastructure for water and sewage was subpar before the crisis began, this is not rationale to allow the infrastructure to deteriorate even further. The further sanitation descends; the more work is required to improve sanitation in the future.

Physical and Mental Health

Pre-Crisis

Before the Syrian crisis broke out in 2011, Syria had achieved a significant improvement with regards to its public health over the past three decades. There are various indicators that can precisely represent the status of general health among the members of a country, such as maternal mortality rate, life expectancy at birth, infant mortality rate. Said indicators will be used in this paper to examine the public physical and mental health of Syrians, with particular regards to women and children, of pre-crisis Syria.

General Public Health

Despite several violent conflicts and the domestic political instability of the 1950s and 1960s, Syria had made advances in public health under the Assad regimes. One of the health indicators that can represent a country's public health infrastructure is life expectancy since this indicator is closely related to various factors that are critical to an individual's well-being. According to the Syrian Ministry of Health, life expectancy at birth had increased from 56 in 1970 to 73.1 in 2009.[34] This considerable enhancement was possible due to Syria's increase in health care capacity, which also affected other health indicators significantly. Due to improved health care, vaccination coverage of communicable diseases was over 95% in 1988 and had peaked at 99% in the 2000s until 2011[35]. As a result, deaths caused by communicable and preventable diseases decreased greatly. In 2011, the WHO report stated that the total number of deaths caused by infectious and parasitic diseases in Syria was 3,000 in 2008, which comprised only a small fraction, 0.014% of its 2008 population of 21,226,000.[36] More specifically, death rate caused by diarrheal diseases was 0.033% (700 deaths) of the total population, tuberculosis was 0.0024% (500 deaths) and death caused by meningitis comprised 0.0014% (300 deaths).[37] Syria's total death caused by infectious and parasitic diseases was almost the same as that of Turkey, which is one of the Middle Eastern countries with a great healthcare system.[38] Moreover, Syria's total death caused by nutritional deficiency was 0.0019% (400 people), and neuropsychiatric conditions such as bipolar disorder and schizophrenia was 0.0151% (3200 people).[39]

Death caused by injuries is another good health indicator that could represent the situation of pre-crisis Syria. There are two types of injuries: unintentional injuries and intentional injuries. Unintentional injuries include injuries from road traffic accidents, poisonings, falls, fires, drownings, and other unintentional activities, while intentional injuries include injuries from self-inflicted injuries, violence and war. From these two types of injuries, this paper focused only on intentional injuries. In 2008

Syria's total death caused by intentional injuries was only 0.0028% (600 people), and this number was derived mostly from violence, rather than war.[40]

Women's Health

Improved health among women in particular, is an important marker of amelioration in general health of the Syrian public because women are often marginalized and discriminated against in Middle Eastern societies. Although, a huge gender inequality gap still exists, along with the improvement in the health care system and some efforts to reinforce women's rights, women's health had improved a lot. First of all, the maternal mortality rate had decreased significantly. Maternal mortality rate is the annual number of women's deaths per 100,000 live births, caused by any pregnancy and its management related reasons.[41] This is a great women's health indicator because maternal mortality rate directly corresponds to level of women's health care. According to the Syrian Ministry of Health, the maternal mortality rate reported in Syria was 482 cases per 100,000 live births in 1970.[42] However, Syria successfully managed to decrease maternal mortality to an impressive level of only 49 cases per 100,000 live births in 2009, which is only about 10% compared to that of 1970.[43] Contraceptive prevalence rate is another helpful health indicator that represents women's situation, because women's health care accessibility as well as education level could be implied from this rate. In 1978, Syria's contraceptive prevalence rate was only 29.5%, but it gradually increased and became 58% in 2006, which is two times bigger than it used to be in 1997.[44]

Children's Health

Since 1970, the general health of children (aged 0 to 14) also improved until the Syrian crisis outbreak. There are several health indicators that show great achievements in child health, but only two indicators of child health will be focused in this paper for pre-crisis Syria; One indicator is under 5-year-old mortality rate, and another one is childhood-cluster diseases. Under 5-year-old mortality is a broad indicator that includes infant mortality, neonatal mortality and post-neonatal mortality, thus the general child health could be examined with this indicator. In 1970, Syria's under 5-year-old mortality rate was 105.2 per 1,000 live births.[45] However, in 10 years, it had dropped to half by 2010 and became 15.3 per 1,000 live births in 2010.[46]

Another important health indicator is deaths caused by childhood-cluster diseases. Childhood-cluster diseases are diseases that mostly show up in clusters of people because these are infectious and these diseases particularly affect children. Pertussis, Poliomyelitis, Diphtheria, Measles and Tetanus are examples of childhood-cluster diseases. Most childhood-cluster diseases can be preventable through vaccination, and most countries have very high vaccination coverage rate. In particular,

with a global effort to eradicate poliomyelitis, death rates caused by poliomyelitis have decreased drastically on the global level.[47] Syria was one of the countries that had a vaccination coverage rate of almost 99%.[48] As a result, death caused by childhood-cluster diseases was only 0.0005% of the total population in 2008, more specifically, 100 deaths from children aged from 0 to 14.[49]

Current Crisis

Understanding Physical and Mental Health

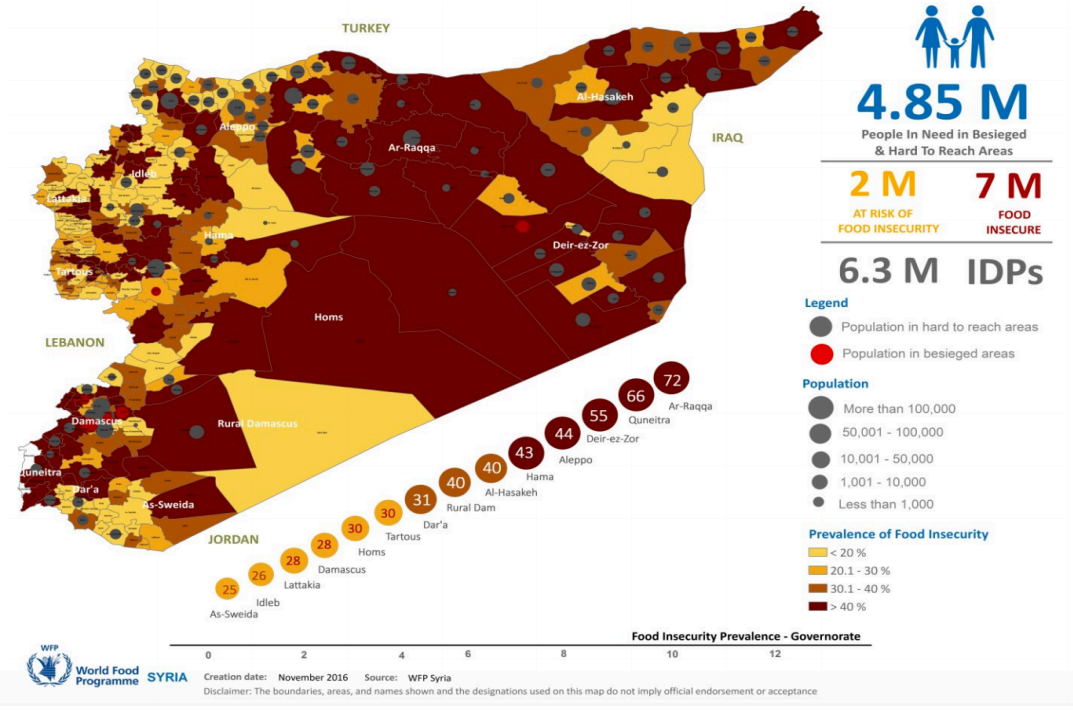
As much as the Syrian crisis affected the nation itself and the global community, it had profound impact on public health of the Syrian population. Throughout the crisis, most infrastructures and human resources were critically damaged and have lost their ability to function normally. Additionally, continued conflict destroyed Syria's agricultural sectors, and it resulted in increasing number of people suffering from food insecurity, drastically. Namely, the crisis had deteriorated the general health status of the Syrian people as medical facilities and agricultural sectors that are critical to well-being of them were massively destroyed. In addition to such destruction and conflicts among major entities, such as various militia groups, ISIS, UN, the Syrian, Russian, and the US government, involved in the Syrian Crisis have led to a failure of providing sufficient international and domestic aid of medical volunteers, resources, and doctors.[50] Given that the nation has largely lost the ability to better and control its public health, many areas of Syria currently depend on the global community's aid and concern. However, international aid will not be much relief for the Syrian people if the international community and various domestic military powers fail to ensure distributing aid properly for civilians.[51]

In conclusion, insufficient access of human resources, food, medical equipment and infrastructure for civilians resulted in continuous deterioration of Syria's public health, which has left the majority of Syrians—women and children in particular—in a dangerous level of vulnerability. Public health indicators and reports of post-war Syria are hardly showing any sign of improvement; rather, the majority of them indicate that public health in Syria is substantially deteriorated. Hereafter, the effect of the Syrian Civil War on women and children's physical health will be specifically examined, as well as its impact on their mental health.

Food Insecurity and Nutrition Concerns

Before the Syrian crisis uprising, Syria was self-sufficient country in terms of food production, due to improvements in land and crop management practices.[52] However, because of the continued devastating crisis in Syria, agricultural infrastructure has destroyed, and it is followed by food insecurity and malnutrition among the Syrian population.[53] Over recent years, food insecurity has deteriorated drastically. In 2015, 8.7 million people, which is 45.3% of the Syrian population, needed some form of food assistance, and 32.8% were suffering from food insecurity. According to the latest report, food insecurity rate is still increasing and total number of people in need became 9.4 million.[54] Figure 5.2 clearly shows that more than half of the regions within Syria are suffering from severe food insecurity.[55] Global organizations such as WFP and UN are trying to provide food, but still level of food security is deteriorating continuously since not all the food related aid are effectively delivered. Moreover, people in hard-to-reach and besieged areas are facing heavier problem accessing food because households in those areas often have highly limited and unpredictable access to markets.[56]

Figure 5.2: Prevalence of food insecurity[57]



As a result of the continuous crisis and severe food insecurity, nutritional problem also has arisen. According to the nutrition assessment conducted by UNICEF,

13 governorates of Syria showed the global acute malnutrition (GAM) prevalence of 7.2%, 2.3% severe acute malnutrition and 4.9% moderate acute malnutrition, which is indicating a poor health situation.[58] In terms of food insecurity and malnutrition, children-headed households and female-headed households are the most vulnerable group. According to the Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment of 2014, one of the reasons for an increase in vulnerability of children under 5 years old is inaccessibility to infant formula.[59] In 2015, an assessment found that 28.9% of children have received nutritious products and infant products by various organizations, but this assessment didn't show the type of food, number of times received or duration.[60] Additionally, women, including breastfeeding and pregnant women, are also eating less food to give their children more.[61] Insufficient food for children and pregnant women is a major concern, because it is critical to provide good nutrition in the 1,000 days from women's pregnancy to child's second birthday, or it causes irreversible health problems as well as mental health.[62]

Women's Health

According to the United Nations Population Fund, the total number of Syrians affected by the Syrian crisis was 12.2 million in 2015 and 3 million of them in particular were women and girls of reproductive age (age from 15 to 49).[63] The 2015 United Nations Population Fund report also stated that among 3 million women and girls suffering from the Syrian Crisis, 500,000 were pregnant.[64] Understandably, women of reproductive age need special attention with specialized health staffs. Unfortunately, women of reproductive age in Syria are under serious health threat as the Syria's ongoing crisis significantly increased the difficulty for them to access sufficient reproductive services. According to one of the most recent WHO report, more than half of hospitals and public health care centers in Syria are either closed or partially functioning.[65] Accessibility and quality of medical facilities are two important factors directly impacting the well-being of many women of reproductive age because maternal deaths are the second biggest cause of death for women of reproductive age worldwide, according to the WHO.[66]

Recent maternal mortality rates in Syria are already showing the fatal price of insufficiency in proper reproductive services as the ratio substantially increased to 68 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2015, compared to that of 49 deaths per 100,000 live births in pre-crisis Syria of 2009.[67] Pregnant women living in besieged areas have access to even fewer medical resources while they often suffer from malnutrition and psychological disorders caused by the siege of their town.[68] Pregnant women are indeed the most crucially affected group of Syrians from accessible reproductive services. However, the health of women who are not pregnant is also at great risk due to insufficient reproductive services as the majority of them cannot afford or have

access to contraceptives that can prevent them from pregnancy. Thus, the general health of approximately 3 million women of reproductive age is facing a serious threat of illness, death, and lack of medical support.

The Syrian Crisis did not only degenerate the physical health of the Syrian people but also deteriorated their psychological healthiness. Given that the civil war is still ongoing and different parts of Syria are under control of various factions, it is hardly possible at the moment to thoroughly assess recent general mental health of the Syrian public thoroughly. However, reports from various organizations in Syria may help us to grasp how Syrian civilians have been mentally affected by the horrors of the civil war. Mental Center For Civilians In Conflict, a non-profit international humanitarian organization, interviewed Syrian civilians in 2013 in the midst of the civil war and reported "Displacement and threats to physical safety are having a psychological impact on adults and children."[69] In a recent 2016 interview with Doctors Without Border, many women, particularly in besieged areas, have reported they are suffering stress caused by preterm birth, illness, death, lack of medical resources, food shortage, malnutrition, and a gloomy future for their children after the crisis. Also, some women reported that they are not only psychologically suffering from the ongoing crisis but also from the fear of consequences following the war, as they fear violent revenge or massacre by armed opposition groups.[70]

Children's Health

Children of Syria have been vulnerably exposed to the horrors of war since 2011. According to a Telegraph article by Raziye Akkoc, approximately 2,000,000 Syrian children live in areas that are hard to reach while 2,800,000 children are displaced from their original place.[71] The war has changed not only the environment children grow up, but also their health. The Syrian crisis severely damaged water and sanitation systems and it increased the risk of disease for children.[72] As the WHO warns that 361,000 children die every year due to diarrheal disease caused by unsafe water supply, an undisrupted supply of clean water is critical to health of people, especially for children.[73] It is obvious that without clean water, Syrian children are under a great health threat. In addition to water and food shortage, children of Syria are also exposed to injuries and violence. An article from UNICEF shows that many children in Syria are dangerously exposed to ruins of collapsed buildings, which often have debris that are sharp or flammable.[74] Also, the same article reports that children are not receiving proper medical treatment for injuries they gained, such as shrapnel in their body, from the crisis.[75] According to the Mental Center For Civilians In Conflict, children are not only suffering physically but also mentally. According to their 2013 report, many children are showing fear of being displaced as well as post traumatic

symptoms of being afraid of bright light, loud noise, and the presence of both Syrian and foreign soldiers. Children in particular are under imminent threat to their mental health, as they are showing signs of posttraumatic stress disorders such as speech disabilities, recalling of traumatic events, and nightmares, after being exposed to attacks.

Access to Healthcare

Pre-Crisis

Prior to the start of the Syrian Crisis in 2011, the Syrian healthcare system was one of the further developed systems in the Middle East. The Syrian Ministry of Health ran a public health system, organizing a workforce and services at the village, district, provincial and national level.[76] Each level had separate responsibilities. First, village health systems oversaw rural centers and mobile health units to bring health care to the rural population.[77] Second, district level systems oversaw health care workers in every district, enforcing a quota of physicians, nurses, technicians and midwives across the country.[78] Third, at the provincial level, every province organized and implemented family planning, disease prevention, health education and environmental health programs.[79] Lastly, the national health system ran the public network of ambulances, blood banks, and drug distribution.[80] Due to the highly structured health system in Syria, public healthcare covered 99% of the population in 2004.[81] Urban and rural healthcare access only differed by 4% in 2000.[82] Overall, Syria ran an advanced healthcare system in the Middle East and was able to provide medical services for almost all its citizens.

As a result of the Syrians' successful public health structure, a health insurance system did not emerge throughout the country and the private health care sector remained very small.[83] All public health care provided through the Ministry of Health was free to all Syrians. There was a limited demand for individuals to purchase health insurance or attend a private health facility because public facilities provided basic treatments and procedures throughout the country. Private health facilities often offered services beyond the public health system, for example ambulatory and secondary health services.[84]

Within the broad healthcare system in Syria, there was a large population of health care workers to accommodate the many public and private health facilities. In 2004, there were 96 physicians, 137 nurses and 30 pharmacists per 100,000 Syrians.[85] These numbers continued to increase over the following years. Although Syria had a strong health care worker population, it created problems of overstaffing within health

facilities.[86] Hospitals on occasion became unorganized and inefficient operating with an excess number of workers. Despite the occasional influx in staff, the large healthcare work force contributed to the expansive health system in Syria.

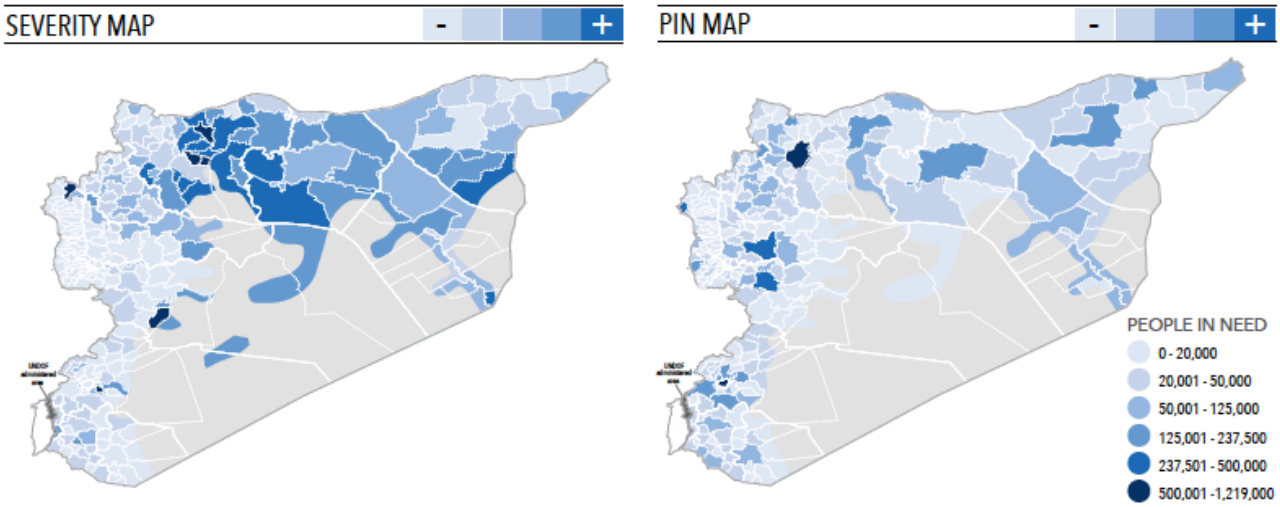
Examining the health of women and children in Syria prior to the crisis is a reflection of the outstanding health care system. The rate of access to services and vaccinations was high throughout the country. In 2002, 87% of pregnant women had access to the reproductive care they needed.[87] In 2004, 86.5% of child deliveries had a trained medical attendant present and 90% of the population was vaccinated.[88] The healthcare system in Syria was able to provide adequate care and services to its women and children due to its widespread and accessible programs. Syria had created an extensive and strong healthcare system for its population, but unfortunately that system has been torn apart.

Current Crisis

In 2011, once the violence began, the Syrian healthcare system significantly deteriorated from its once thriving and complex organization. The healthcare system is suffering under reduced access to besieged and rural areas, displacement of the Syrian population, constant threats of violence, decreasing health care work force and lack of sufficient medical supplies. Currently, there is not a countrywide health structure as before; instead hospitals and health care workers are mainly operating independently. Every day is a constant struggle for the fractured health system to keep up with the high demand for health services and products amongst the Syrian Crisis.

First, hospitals and health care workers have become limited during the crisis in Syria, especially in besieged and rural areas, and citizens can no longer travel to access healthcare due to blockades or physical conditions. This has cut off large numbers of the population from access to healthcare. Throughout Syria there are 12.8 million people who are in need of health assistance and 4.9 million of those people live in hard-to-reach areas.[89] Those living in besieged and rural areas lack access to food, healthcare services and supplies.[90] In besieged areas, government forces and violence have kept relief efforts and international teams from sending in the necessary food and healthcare as a military tactic.[91] There have been rare occasions where relief efforts and international teams are allowed access to these areas, but it is limited, hindering the ability to provide consistent and quality healthcare.[92] Rural areas require significant medical supplies and additional personnel, but with the levels of demand at hospitals in urban areas, there are not enough resources to focus efforts in providing healthcare to rural parts of Syria.

Figure 5.3: Map of Syrians in need of healthcare from December 2016[93]



Second, the displacement of Syrians, whether internal or external, has caused disruptions in medical treatment and eliminated the possibility of routine access to healthcare. Syrian citizens are constantly re-locating their family members and lives because of increasing violence, therefore unable to regularly visit the same hospital and physicians.[94] Due to the low supply of drugs and medical equipment throughout the country, if an individual is receiving treatment for a certain illness or injury at one hospital, the next hospital they access following displacement may not be able to provide the same treatment.[95] Physicians and nurses are then unable to follow up with patients afterwards and monitor any physical recovery.[96] Displacement assures that the health of the Syrian people can no longer be a comprehensive effort, but a practice of individual and isolated events.

Third, the infrastructure of the health system has decreased due to hospitals and clinics becoming targets of government attacks. Between March 2011 and March 2014, there were 150 attacks on 124 medical facilities throughout Syria.[97] Many health structures are no longer standing or fully operating due to the damage caused by bombs or airstrikes. In 2016, 48% of hospitals were fully functioning, 26% had partial function and 26% were unable to run.[98] The decrease of health facilities has made it increasingly difficult for individuals to access healthcare when needed. Citizens must now travel further distances with family members who are severely ill or injured. In addition, with less facilities but an increased demand, hospitals and clinics are often overcrowded, with more patients needing services than a health facility is able to

provide.[99] Violence from the Syrian conflict is leading to a physical break down of the Syrian healthcare system.

Fourth, the healthcare work force in Syria has considerably decreased from levels seen before the crisis. Healthcare workers are the targets of violent attacks to discourage and disrupt the medical treatment of Syrian citizens.[100] Since the beginning of the crisis in 2011, 770 healthcare workers have been killed, with 14 dead and 40 injured solely between January-August 2016.[101] Violence towards hospitals and healthcare workers has caused many personnel to flee Syria or abandon their position in healthcare, causing a health sector brain-drain.[102] A decrease in healthcare workers contributes to the strain of increased demand on hospitals.[103] With a smaller workforce, medical specialists, whether for physical or mental conditions, have dramatically decreased, leaving Syrians with complex or rare conditions without proper consultation or treatment.[104] Physicians and nurses still working in Syria are in high-demand at hospitals and clinics, often underpaid for their services and forced to work exceptionally long hours because there are no replacements to relive them of their duties.[105] Personnel often become tired and fatigued, working under strenuous conditions, putting themselves at risk for underperformance.[106] Therefore, even if citizens are able to access a hospital, the hospital may not be able to provide services due to an extremely limited workforce.

Lastly, hospitals and clinics throughout Syria are lacking an ample inventory of medical drugs, equipment, tools and other supplies. As demand increases, availability of medical supplies continues to decrease.[107] Low levels of medical supplies limit the accessibility to certain medical procedures and treatments. In 2013, only 74% of functioning public hospitals offered pregnancy care, 56% were able to manage child diseases, 18% had malnutrition management and 11% offered mental health services.[108] Across the country, Syrian doctors and health facilities are particularly lacking in medicine and equipment to treat non-communicable diseases, such as diabetes and cancer.[109] The lack of access to medical supplies has created a medical black market, selling valued items, often un-safe products, at highly inflated prices.[110] Humanitarian efforts are often prohibited from assisting due to government forces removing medical supplies on humanitarian convoys to further inhibit access to health care in an area.[111] The besieged and rural areas of Syria are highly affected by decreasing supplies because if relief efforts are granted permission to bring in new shipments of drugs and equipment, access to hard-to-reach areas is severely limited.[112] Overall, the healthcare system in Syria has been destroyed by the government on multiple levels, leaving the Syrian people without routine access to functioning hospitals, medical personnel, and supplies.

Aid

Many national and international organizations are supporting Syrians in Syria to improve health outcomes. Funds and programs come from organizations, such as the UNHCR, UNICEF, WHO, and Doctors without Borders. With many organizations contributing to relieve the Syrian crisis, Syrians are provided with food, water, shelter, medical treatment, and more.[113] The combined efforts are not left to be unnoticed, but the current humanitarian aid available to Syrians is not enough. Wealthier countries often pledge a certain sum of funds to mollify the crisis each year, but only a portion of that pledge is given. Aside from inadequate funding, there is difficulty in reaching Syrians who are residing in besieged areas and zones of conflict in Syria. These areas have restrictions on what types of aid can enter and are often dangerous for humanitarians. Although the circumstances are not ideal to aid Syrians, organizations and the people that support them continue to serve during this time.

Syria's water and sewage systems were not adequate before the civil war began. However, further deterioration since 2011 has been counteracted by various organizations to aid the remaining Syrians within the country. UNICEF is one of the big proponents of providing Syrians with water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services. The organization has served 4.8 million people by repairing, rehabilitating, and augmenting water and sanitation systems in Syria, while their WASH facilities and services have directly helped 1.6 million people.[114] In besieged areas like Deir ez-Zor and Aleppo or other hard to reach places, UNICEF was able to assist over 100,000 individuals by providing WASH services and supplies.[115] This is the type of aid that is vital to the health of Syrian women and children because clean water, clean living spaces, and clean lives prevent disease and harm from affecting innocent lives. CARE is also an organization that provides aid to help with water and sanitation issues in Syria by rehabilitating water treatment plants and distributing water-purifying tablets to families.[116] With the great work that UNICEF, CARE, and other organizations have provided to Syria, there is a huge gap in the funding to aid water, sewage, and sanitation issues. Approximately $73 million was required to dedicate towards WASH services in Syria, but only 6% of this was funded.[117] The 94% gap in funding greatly limits how much can be done for Syria and leaves the health of Syrians at risk for water-borne and food-borne diseases.

When the health of Syrians decline from sanitation, trauma, and other causes, organizations must step in to create safe spaces, and provide medicines, and medical supplies and services. UNICEF Syrian Arab Republic has worked on preventing the spread of disease through vaccinations and worked to provide medical supplies to the Syrian Ministry of Health and clinics ran by NGOs in Syria.[118] Aside from physical health aid, actions have been taken to address the rising numbers of mental health cases

within Syria. International agencies and NGOs are working together to provide psychosocial support to people with mental issues caused by the Syrian crisis.[119] Furthermore, there has been work to advocate for the inclusion of mental health in typical medical services and to educate current providers in diagnosing and managing mental health problems.[120] Although supplies and medicines are provided to aid healthcare access in Syria, there are major gaps as well. Donor funds are often limited to specific components of healthcare, such as buying supplies and medication, but not paying for operating costs or salaries of staff.[121] This forces healthcare workers to leave Syria to find work internationally and forces hospitals to cease operations.[122] Aid gaps are a barrier to a stable healthcare system from re-emerging in Syria.

To address food insecurity and malnutrition, organizations have provided cash and food assistance to Syrians. These are only bandage solutions for the ripple effects of the crisis and cannot be maintained for the years to come. Restoring Syria's and its people's agricultural economy will address food security and creates a hope for a future back home. The World Food Programme has been actively ensuring as many Syrians as possible in Syria and its neighboring countries have access to food. Supplying Syrians with food and electronic food vouchers, while creating local jobs in the food sector have been a few of the actions the World Food Programme has taken to address food security.[123] However, the extent that World Food Programme can help Syrians with malnourishment and food access is limited to the amount of funding they receive. Shortage of funds has been a significant obstacle, but also access into besieged areas has been difficult, too.[124]

The UNOCHA states that there are 4.9 million Syrians in hard to reach places within Syria, with approximately one million of those people in besieged areas.[125] Besieged areas are notorious for denying humanitarian assistance to reach the people.[126] For instance, since Aleppo has been besieged in the summer of 2016 humanitarian access has been prohibited.[127] However, the WHO has been preparing to help once they do gain access. Trapped in eastern Aleppo once entry to the city is granted.[128] The WHO is prepared to give medicines and supplies to northern Syria that would help approximately 150,000 Syrians once accessible.[129] Gaining access to hard to reach and besieged areas in Syria is essential for humanitarian aid to take care of citizens. The feat is more than difficult, but should be prioritized by the international humanitarian regime.

Humanitarian organizations have provided generous services and supplies to Syria amidst the crisis. Researching ways to keep sanitation adequate in camps and carrying out vaccination campaigns are essential for improving the health of Syrians to levels prior to the crisis. Countless efforts have been made, but there is much to go. Injuries are being left untreated and the hungry are left starving. Countries with the capabilities to help Syrians need to intervene and help.

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Women and Children's Education

Abstract

The devastation of six years of civil war in Syria has reversed decades of the nation's educational progress. With more than 2 million children within Syria having lost access to education since the crisis began, the country now suffers from one of the lowest enrollment rates in primary education in the world. This collapse in educational enrollment owes to a host of factors, primarily the destruction of educational infrastructure within besieged areas, displacement and overcrowding of schools, lack of safety and growing economic insecurity due to the crisis. Moreover, the ability to reach affected children within Syria with educational aid has been difficult, if not nearly impossible as a result of ongoing hostilities. As a consequence, the protracted inability of many children to access school threatens to leave a lost generation of Syrian children that will hinder future efforts at economic reconstruction, social stabilization and peace-building.

Introduction

Education has often been overlooked as a priority during the Syrian Crisis. There has not been enough focus on education in Syria because of other problems affecting the nation such as food, water, and finding safety from violence. There are many barriers to accessing education due to the crisis including locality of region, economic security, infrastructure, and limited resources. Education is important because it will be necessary in rebuilding Syria in the future.

Access to Education

Pre-Crisis

Prior to the crisis in Syria, the education system in Syria was easily accessible to everyone. The enrollment rate of students in Syria pre-crisis was 95% for primary school and 72% for secondary school due to free education being offered to the public. There

was still a higher attendance rate for students in urban areas as compared to students in rural areas. The literacy rate was 90% and the government only spent 5% of GDP on the education budget.[1] Prior to the crisis of the Arab Spring and Syrian War, twelve years of education was offered for free among children as part of the Syrian education system.[2]

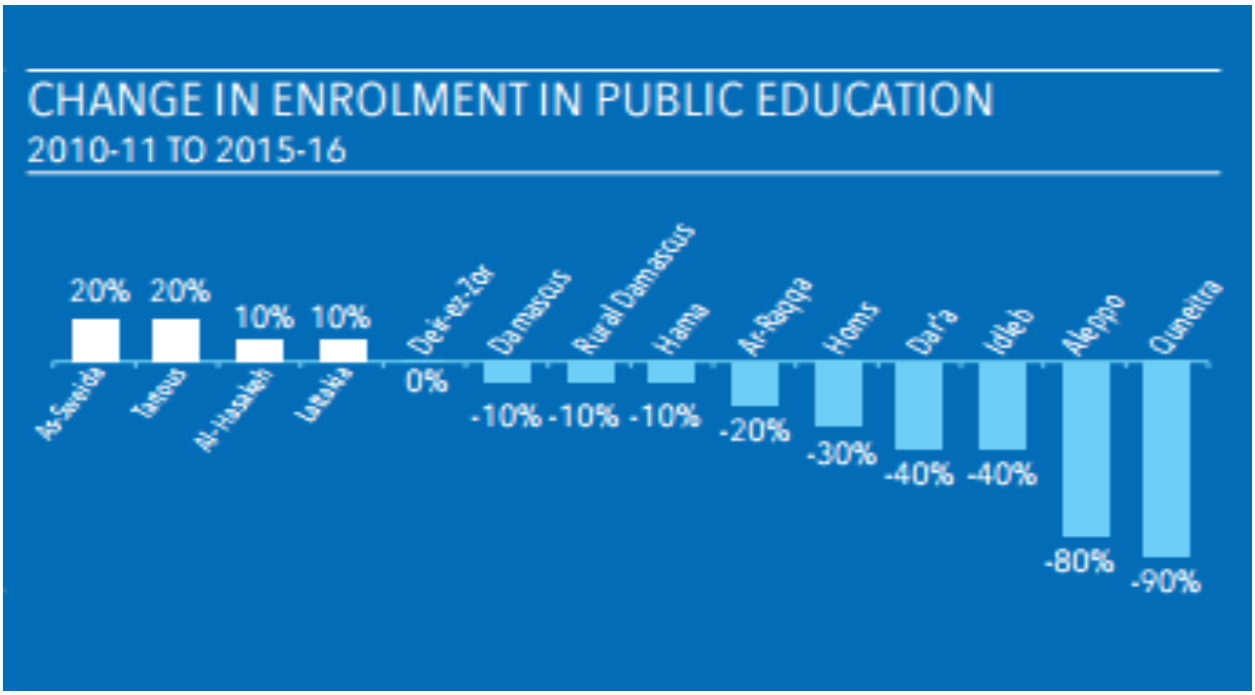
There were three stages of Syria's educational structure. The first stage was basic education that was offered for grades one through nine, meaning nine years of free education. To continue to the next stage, students had to take and obtain a Basic Education Certificate. The results of the exam determined if the student passed onto secondary school and if they qualify for the academic or for technical secondary school.[3] Secondary school was three years of education and not compulsory: consisting of academic and technical branch students learned about science, math, and literature. Another national exam was needed to continue onto more schooling. Meanwhile in the technical branch students learned commercial skills such as accounting, administration, book keeping as well as feminine arts including childcare, home economics, and carpet-making as well as industrial skills including computing and electronics. Students who finished the technical branch could continue another two years of education for an associate's degree or begin working. Passing secondary school academic or technical and passing another national exam administered by the Ministry of Education, would lead to another certification, which was equivalent to a high school diploma.[4] Higher education was the next step in advancing in education. Admissions to higher education were highly competitive, based off test results as well as the educational preferences of subject. At higher education, students can choose which program to pursue including Bachelor, Master, or Doctorate degrees. Training teachers is an important component of a good education. Prior to the crisis, teachers had to complete a two-year program after completing their basic education.

The educational system was designed by the government for the government to stay in control of the educational material. The government took these steps to become a more united Syria and control what is being taught in schools by controlling textbook and teaching methods. First, the government did not want private schools to have better standards than public schools. Government officials would be sent as administrators to private schools to monitor teaching methods and ensure it was following government regulations. School diversity became limited during the governments centralization policy, which lead to many directors and principals of private schools to quitting or leaving their jobs. The people were concerned that there would be a discrepancy between the rich and poor, which is another reason why the government wanted to standardize the education material at private schools to match public schools. The government limited the number of classes being offered to strengthen nationalism by limiting the amount of learning materials provided.[5] The

government wanted to ensure that the people learned about Syria and didn't focus on other subjects such as foreign languages. The limited quantity of education was that the government preferred a smaller amount of education provided, however have equal material be accessible for all. The main government's focus was for students to have access to school. Even though this is good to have free access however because of the government's control which lead to a filtered education that was taught throughout the schools. This system was the beginning of an educational reform which earned Syria one of the top enrollment rates in the region due to the free education, however still needed room for quality improvement that would not be as filtered.

Current Crisis

Figure 6.1: Change in enrollment in public education [6]



Current access to education is now limited due to the ongoing crisis. Since 2011 and the onset of the Syrian conflict, education in Syria has worsened. There are 5.4 million children in Syria and 2.1 million of them currently do not have access to education.[7] The enrollment rate has dropped to 39%, which is the lowest it has been since prior to the crisis. More than 6,000 schools can no longer be used for education.[8] More than 1000 schools are being used as shelters and 3,465 schools have been destroyed and damaged beyond use.[9] This makes up to 30% of schools that are no

longer accessible. There has been a complete drop in education enrollment putting many children at risk. There are children today who have grown up without any schooling at all due to the crisis and an inability to access schools. This is referred to as the "Lost Generation", which are those that are born, and because of the crisis have not had the opportunity to enroll in a formal education.

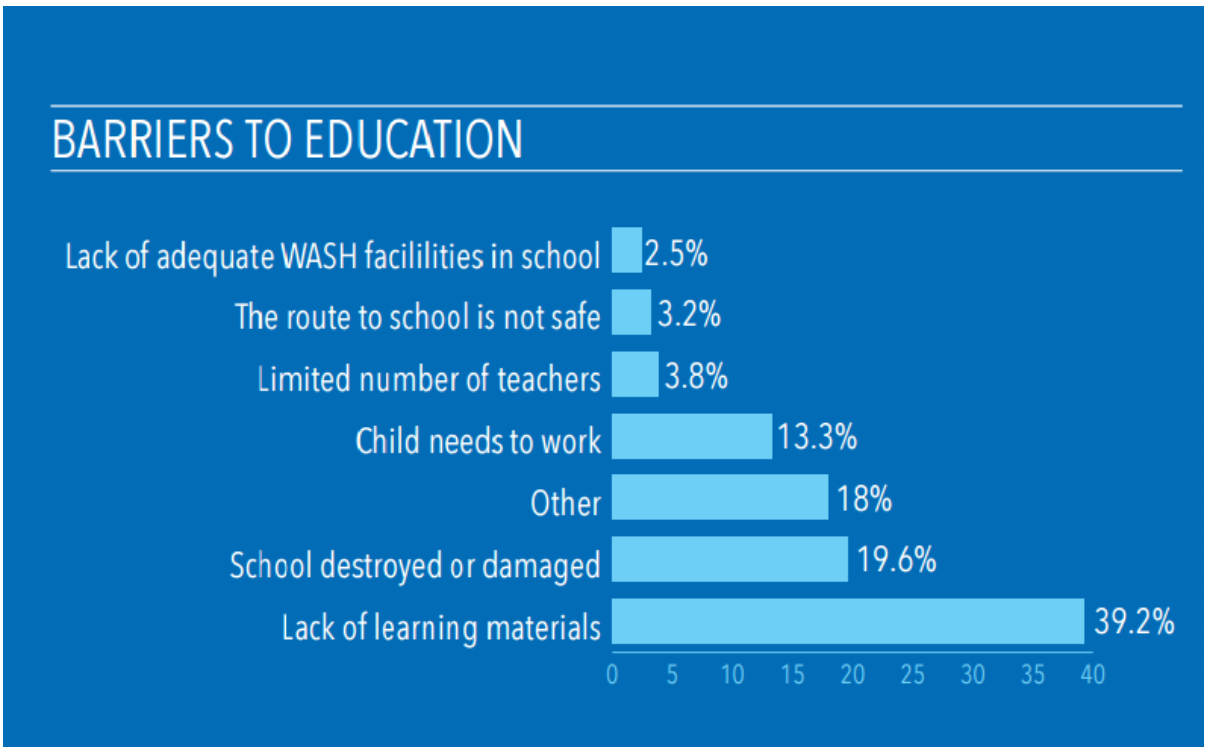
Figure 6.2: Syrian education statistics[10]

Education Statistics	Pre- Crisis	Crisis
School Access	22,000 schools open	7,400 schools now closed
Attendance	97%	>30%
Higher Education[11]	659,394 students enrolled	100,000 qualified but not enrolled

Barriers to Education

There are several barriers to accessing education for children in Syria today. Children's lives are impacted from the crisis, which in turn leads to their education being disrupted. Displacement, violence, family separation, recruitment into armed groups and economic exploitation have negative outcomes on children leading to disrupted education, child labor, and early marriages.[12] Education for children is neglected due to these factors.

Figure 6.3: Barriers to education in Syria[13]



Beseiged Areas

The main problem for children is getting access to schools. Armed forces or bombs are destroying schools. In besieged areas, the priority for people is getting the family to safety; thus, many families do not have time to worry about sending their children to school. There are 18 communities in Syria that are besieged.[14] In terms of what defines a besieged area are Tiers 1 and 2. Tier 1 is more severe and prevents access to any aid. At Tier 2 there is limited aid access of food and survival essentials and they still experience violence.[15] The same amount of violence affects children regardless of being in Tier 1 or 2. The besieged areas affect the health, infrastructure, school resources, and teachers because aid is not accessible to receive aid.

Economic Security

Economic security also complicates family matters, which in turn affects how education is prioritized. The conflict shifted a lot of the roles of families and what they needed to do to survive. There were the rising costs of basic needs such as food, living expenses, and unemployment increases.[16] Many fathers and men left to fight in the war, were taken prisoner, or killed. This led to female headed households which, in turn, led to the women having to change their customary roles, such as going back to school and taking vocational training to provide money and food for their children. What many mothers are also doing for their children is finding a new livelihood. This usually differs between boys and girls. Customarily boys were prioritized in receiving formal education and to continue in school. However, with no longer a breadwinner in the family, or the mother not making enough, the son now must leave school. The consequences lead to child labor or to become a part of an armed forces group. Mothers also believe that it would be better off to have their daughters married off. The hope of marrying a daughter off earlier is to improve her financial situation. Without proper education, both boys and girls put their own futures at risk. Investing in Syria's education will benefit their future to have an educated workforce.

Violence

Violence has negatively impacted the lives of people leading to higher dropout rates in the Syrian education system. There have been approximately 10,000 children killed between 2011 through 2013, although there is no official total.[17] There are many types of violence such as killing, maiming, child recruitment to the armed forces, abduction, arrest, denial of humanitarian aid, and attacks on schools, hospitals, and places of worship. These violent situations are causing children to stay out of school at higher rates. Schools are supposed to be safe spaces however they are now being

used as a refuge for internally displaces persons, or as targets in the crossfire of the conflict. The violence is keeping children out of school.

One major factor that has kept kids out of school is child recruitment. It begins with mostly boys being recruited into joining by the offer of a gift and a salary. The reality is that they are getting beaten and abused, being forced to commit crimes, and then get murdered.[18] With this type of violence, it takes away the opportunity away from these children to go to school.

Safety

In besieged areas, it is very difficult for children to go to schools. Due to the violence, and the bombings, children do not feel safe. Just by deciding to venture out to go to school is putting their lives at risk. The violence occurring in the besieged areas affects the mental and physical health of children who are surrounded by it. Leaving home is a risky commute where they could possibly be attacked. Schools are also the most dangerous targets since they frequently get bombed. Fear detracts students from their learning environment as well. Due to the constant bombing and violence children also imagine worse case scenarios and it makes it difficult to focus on their studies. While in school, some students cannot focus on the lessons, because they fear bombings.[19]

Infrastructure

Inadequate infrastructure is another major concern for these students who are trying to get the Basic Education Certification through the government exam process. The exam is held annually at certain exam centers, usually government schools. The exam is comparable to an entrance exam for college, without it, they cannot continue to higher education to attend secondary school or vocational schools.[20] The school system needs certification as proof of documentation that students are qualified and passed the exam, and are ready for the workforce or to enter college. It can be compared to applying for college without a high school diploma or a GED.[21]

However, the problem is that the testing centers are only at certain locations. This causes difficulties for those living in besieged areas or non-besieged areas because the obstacles to reach the testing centers are too dangerous.[22] Since the exams are only offered once a year, getting to the exams requires many students to cross dangerous lines of conflict. Crossing the lines of conflict still needed students to pay bribes at checkpoints, travel and food costs, along with the risk of getting bombed along the way.[23] Crossing across active lines of conflict, and the costs of traveling through checkpoints is as much as 15,000 SYP, which is equivalent to about 35 USD. A trip that would normally take only four hours to complete, might now take over 13

hours due to the conflict. Due to the difficulty of taking the exam it led to many people deciding to dropout.[24]

School Resources

The schools that are still in session are facing difficulties in operating. There is not enough funding to equip local schools with enough supplies to teach the children. Syria has lost more than 52,000 teachers including some being relocated to a non-besieged area, or others who have been killed.[25] The Ministry of Education also tightened the standards of teacher training compared to before the crisis. Before 1999, teachers only needed a two-year program, but now they require teachers to complete a bachelor's degree, which includes learning teaching methods, subject specialization, and practical training.[26] Even with the new training implementation with the conflict going on in Syria, teachers are fleeing or being killed. Therefore, the new methods cannot be fully used. Furthermore, there is a lack of desks, tables, chairs, boards, and school supplies for children to use during lessons.

Non-Besieged Areas

The education programs in the non-besieged areas have also been affected by the Syrian crisis. Even though they have not experienced as many bombings, there are still significant problems affecting schools in these parts. The schools that remain open are lacking school resources as well. There are many children who already live in the area and there are also many children and families that have been internally displaced that also now need to attend school in this area. There is overcrowding in schools and class sizes exceed maximum capacity. Since there are not enough schools and not enough space or resources, the quality of education has decreased in non-besieged areas as well. There have been so many people moving, that it becomes even more difficult to have a set curriculum. Everyone stopped his or her education at a different point and each person has a different level of learning. Due to the constant movement of students, children just end up dropping out of schools instead of re-enrolling.

Another difficulty is the correct documentation. Since the main reason why families and children move is due to the violence, procuring the proper documentation from a children's previous school is not a huge priority. Many children are unable to attend school due to missing paperwork that is needed to allow them to enroll.[27]

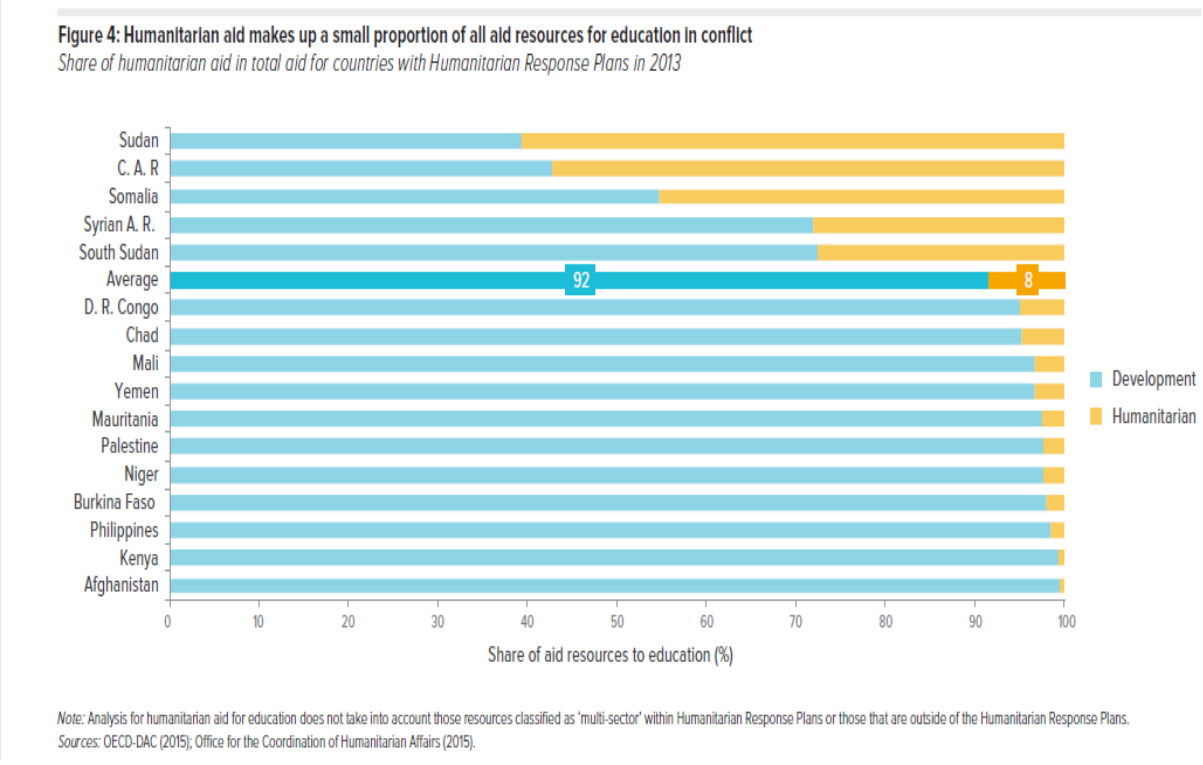
Non-besieged areas have many children worried as well about the violence. Many of the students just came from a besieged area and are internally displaced. There are health concerns since they cannot focus in class, cannot sleep well, or have family problems at home. Access to healthcare is still difficult in non-besieged areas,

which leads to even more problems for children to now attain a good quality education.

Aid

There are many types of aid in Syria being offered to help with the educational crisis. There is assistance from a lot of non-profit organizations such as the Malala Fund, 3RPG, UNICEF, UNHCR and Save the Children as well as many other organizations. Aid reached 3.6 million children with formal and non-formal education supplies and services in 2016.[28] According to UNICEF, "This was achieved through 45 implementing partners comprising 29 national NGOs, seven international NGOs, five UN agencies, the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) and the Palestinian Red Crescent (UNICEF, Syria Report).[29] The organizations primarily try to assist in building schools, sending supplies, and providing monetary aid to the affected locations in Syria as well as assisting those that are in the refugee camps. Educational aid is important and is often overlooked. There are two types of aid often given, which is development and humanitarian aid. When aid is donated from foreign countries or organizations, if it's not specific to education, it can mostly go to other needs such as water, food, and healthcare related needs. Education does not get as much media coverage as other types of aid, which is also why it is easier for organizations to not focus on funding education as much.[30]

Figure 6.4: Aid distribution comparison between countries and Syria [31]



In London, 2016 there was an education conference held to discuss the crisis in Syria and what should and must be done to protect this generation and provide them with an education. The London Conference aimed increase awareness to the international community of the importance of education to Syria. The goal of the conference was to make sure that there could be access to formal and non-formal education for children to obtain. There are already several initiatives such as Syrian Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP), and the No Lost Generation (NLG).[32]

There are different methods of aid that are provided by different organizations. UNICEF is in cooperation with the Ministry of Education in supporting the Back to Learning campaign, which is to reach one million primary schools in the conflict areas. UNICEF also provides prefabricated classrooms to help deal with large classroom sizes, and tents provided as temporary classrooms when it is necessary. UNICEF provides "each child [with] a UNICEF school bag that contains learning supplies: notebooks, ballpoint pens, pencils, erasers, coloring pencils and a set of rulers."[33] UNICEF opened 401 schools that benefitted 189,000 children, providing 324 prefabricated classrooms. Teachers are also being trained on active learning and Early Childhood Care.[34]

Save the Children is another organization that has given aid towards educational goals. They focus on rebuilding walls for schools, fixing water supplies, providing meals, train teachers to react promptly in emergency situations, and provide free remedial classes for those that need to catch up in classes.

Conclusion

Education has been directly impacted from the Syrian crisis. The Syrian enrollment rate plummeted from 90% enrollment prior to the crisis, to now a low 30%. Enrollment is not the only direct impact from the crisis. The major barrier to education is the classrooms and resources available. Without safe classrooms, children are not able to continue their education. Aid organizations such as UNICEF and Save the Children are working towards temporary solutions to provide children access to education and have a sense of normalcy. Pre-fabricated classrooms such as class sessions held in tents, an emergency backpack of school's supplies, school materials and resources along with additional teacher training for new teaching methods to deal with the current crisis being provided for with aid. Aid is helping Syria face the current problem of having a lack of education accessible, however these are short term solutions and Syria should still realize the importance and need to strive for futuristic, long-term goals as well.

Education should be a priority and not overlooked in helping determine and rebuild Syria's future. Rebuilding Syria can happen with improving the quality of

education. Syria's educational quality has fallen due to the crisis. Syria needs to focus on returning to the quality and access of education to its prior state before the crisis. Improving the quality of education will in turn benefit the country. Syria's future economy, democracy, and peace depends on educating Syria's children. [35] Giving aid towards investing in Syria's education will help build Syria up in the future. The economy would be able to build up stronger, with a new workforce that is educated and can contribute. The GDP can be built back up. There will be a more peaceful Syria. Studies show an increase in school enrollment rate reduces war by 3%.[36] Studies have also shown that those who receive a secondary education are three times more likely to support a stronger democracy as an outcome. These are the reasons why education is such an important priority in rebuilding the future for Syria.

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PART C:

SITUATION IN REFUGEE HOST-COUNTRIES

Demographic Analysis: Syrian Refugees

Abstract

Following the onset of protests in urban areas and the subsequent government reprisals within Syria, those who were able to escape the state fled to neighboring states, most notably Jordan, Iraq, Turkey, and Lebanon. On average, approximately 80% of the refugee populations in these states consist of women and children under the age of 18. Contrary to popular belief, most refugees are relocated in host communities as opposed to camps. Due to the sectarian nature of the Syrian refugee exodus, Jordan, Iraq, and Turkey harbor populations with similar religious affiliations to the host communities in which they are relocated. This pattern excludes Lebanon. The Lebanese Maronite Christian government has received a significant number of Sunni Muslims from South West Syria. Host communities have verbalized discomfort with the presence of Syrian refugees. They cause tensions in host communities for three common reasons including stressing already weakened economies, a lack of support in caring for the populations, and cultural tensions.

Introduction

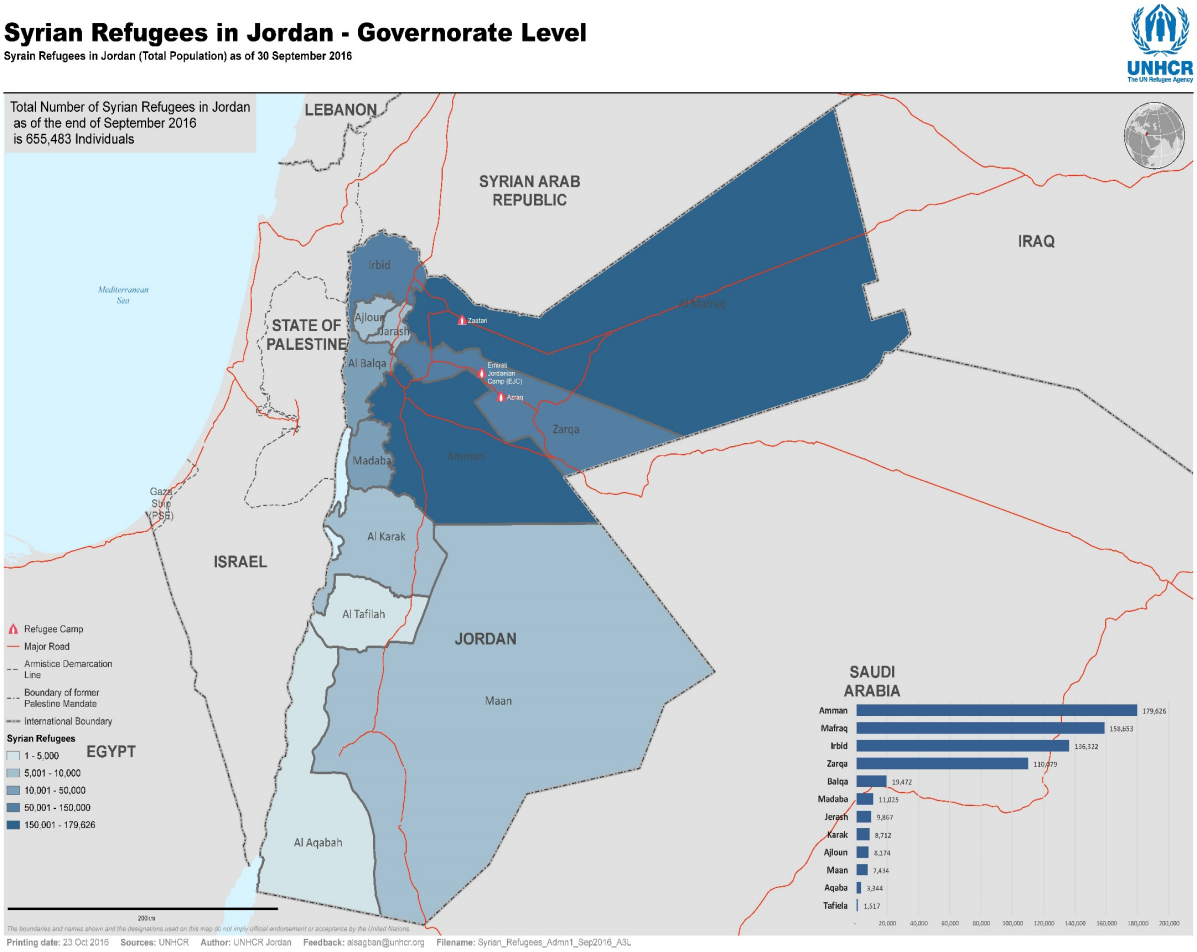
The Syrian Refugee Crisis began to extend beyond its borders around 2012. Much like the IDP situation, Syrians fled from besieged areas in every governorate into nearly every nearby state in the Middle East, notably, The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, The Republic of Turkey, The Lebanese Republic, and The Republic of Iraq. Collectively these states have housed, formally or informally, around 7 million Syrian Refugees. Syrian Refugees have expressed doubt in the hope that their homeland will return to a habitable state in the near future.[1] Consequently, temporary settlement in host countries has been an overwhelming preference. Refugees are predominately relocated in urban areas with host families as opposed to the camp setting. Relocation of host families inside cities has exacerbated tensions between natives and refugee populations as each of the aforementioned states are struggling internally. These states' skepticism of the refugee population has bred an atmosphere heavily focused on men who may be a threat. Thus, women and children are left out of the equation regarding resource allocation in the refugee context. This section will seek to identify the Syrian refugee populations, providing insight into the kinds of solutions that may alleviate the struggles Syrian women and children experience abroad.

Refugee Demographics

Jordan

Jordan was a logical destination for Syrian refugees in the south given its geographic relationship to Syria and its ethnic and religious makeup. As of January 15, 2017, the UNHCR has registered 655,167 Syrian refugees in Jordan. The majority of the refugees (42%) migrated from Dar'a, a primarily Sunni governorate, followed by Homs, a mixture of Shi 'a and Sunni Muslims (16%), then from rural Damascus, which is predominately Sunni Arab (11.9%), and lastly Aleppo, which is a combination of Sunni and Christians (10%).[2] Similar religious convictions add simplicity to the range of recommendations and tactics the international community may provide. With 78.5% registered in urban areas and 21.5% are located in camps, religious harmony is increasingly desirable.[3] Host family values also act as a barrier to potential solutions. Shared values and gender role understanding prevents internal conflict. Collectively, 51% of Syrian Refugees in Jordan are children between the ages of 0 and 17, while 50% of the entire population is female.[4] Urban relocation is concentrated in Irbid and Amman. Mafraq is home to the largest refugee camp, Zaatari.

Figure 7.1 Syrian refugees in Jordan by governorate[5]



Zaatari

Currently, the camp cares for 79,559 Syrian refugees; 79.1% of the population is from Dar'a while the next largest group is from Rural Damascus at 13.9%. Both Governorates are overwhelmingly Sunni which eases sectarian tensions. Zaatari is also home to displaced Palestinians, many of whom are Sunni Muslims. The camp is not without issues that plague the Syrian refugee population as a whole. Like Syrians in Lebanon, Iraq, and Turkey, Zaatari's population is overwhelmingly young. Within the camp, 57% are under 24, while 19.9% are under 5 years old.[6] The need for comprehensive education programs to reach the 8,000 children unable to attend classes within the camp is clear. This gap in coverage may be a result of the households within the camp that are headed by women (1 in 5), as they have been noted to be less capable of sending their children to school due to the needs of the family.[7] Boys are more likely to drop out of school to work, while girls are tasked with domestic chores.[8] Jordan, along with its refugee population is aware that it cannot sustain its newly acquired Syrian population. That said, both groups are working with repatriation in mind. Without an educated population to facilitate and participate in state rebuilding, critical industry will not thrive. The lack of education among Syrian youth is endemic of Syrian refugees in every location they are permitted to settle. Irbid, Jordan's Western Governorate faces similar issues.

Irbid

As of December 2016, UNHCR Irbid reports 110,372 Syrian Refugees who registered with the field office. Much like the population in Zaatari, they are predominately from Dar'a (76.65%) and Rural Damascus (6.30%).[9] The population is almost entirely women and children (75%).[10] Only a fraction of a percent (.003) of the population has been resettled in a camp. Given Dar'a's ethnic and religious homogeneity, conflicting religious ideologies will likely be less prevalent. This reality is not reflected in Jordan's most heavily populated governorate, Amman.

Amman

Despite its location further south than Zaatari and Irbid, Amman hosts significantly more Syrian Refugees (281,000).[11] While the entire population is 50% women and 45% are under the age of 18, significant numbers of Syrians in Amman come from multiple Governorates in Syria. From October to December 2016, 21% came from Dar'a, 14% from Damascus, 16% from Rural Damascus, 14% from Aleppo, and 19% from Homs.[12] From a religious perspective, each of these governorates are located in central to Eastern Syria, making them predominately Sunni. Much like IDP migration patterns, refugee populations also fled to areas of extreme homogeneity

responding to the civil war. The migration patterns of Syrian Refugees to Northern Iraq further exemplify this thinking.

Iraq

The Kurdistan Regional Government has identified 235,000 Syrian refugees in need of assistance in the state. Of these, 160,644, or 68%, are women and children. Northern Iraq is split into 3 governorates: Duhok, Erbil, and Sulaymaniyah. Syrian refugees from Northern Damascus (9.68%), East Aleppo (24.56%), and Hasakah (57.62%) fled to these areas and, as of December 31, 2016, 89,276 people live in 10 camps and 141,560 live in urban areas.[13]

Duhok

Despite the area's investment in camp structure, about 39% of the 93,000 Syrian refugees are living outside of camps.[14] Of the Syrian refugees in the area, 71.3% are women and children.[15] Semel is the most attractive district for Syrian refugees as it offers lower costs of living, space, and affords families two economic centers as a result of proximity. These areas are characterized by extreme ethnic and religious diversity much like Syria itself. Luckily, "the vast majority of Syrian refugees are Kurds, thus sharing the same ethnic belonging as the host community."[16] This is a commonality across each of the Iraqi Kurdistan governorates. Syrian refugee families within Duhok average five individuals with 15% of the refugee community having been born in displacement. Despite its context, children born in displacement may be more willing to embrace less static gender roles, leaving room for more progressive solutions for Syrian women and Children.

Family size is also smaller in Duhok. Younger heads of household with an average age of 39 accompany this smaller family size. Host community members have voiced discomfort with arrival of Syrian Refugees but they take issue with the insufficient levels of support the community has received rather than the refugees themselves. Male focus groups in Duhok claim that "psychologically people are tired, not because of the IDPs [and refugees], but because nobody is engaging with us properly. Questions are not answered."[17] Social tensions are in part, a result of inadequate aid supporting the host population. Women and children's integration into the urban population creates a reality in which providing them aid without addressing the legitimate qualms of the host community, would only worsen their standing.

Additionally, some correspondents noted discomfort with foreigners in their territory, but the roots of the problem are economic. Culturally, women are not expected or encouraged to work, with around 9 out of 10 unemployed.[18] The lack of encouragement to work is likely a result of many factors, one of which being the

weakness of the job market to begin with. Stimulating the local economy with sustainable businesses may move the Duhok's attitudes towards women in the workforce forward. Erbil only slightly deviates from the patterns seen in Duhok.

Erbil

Erbil's urban versus camp demographics are similar to those of Duhok. 72% have been settled in host communities while 27% live in the four refugee camps in the area.[19] Of the 111,739 Syrian refugees in Erbil, 66.2% are women and children.[20] As 40% of the refugee population is between 20 and 39 years of age, it comes as no surprise that most Syrians are driven to Erbil's central district in an attempt to join a stronger economy.[21] Syrian refugee's youth is also reflected in the average age of the head of household, which is 34 years old.[22] Erbil differs from Duhok in that 50% of families cited arriving without all of their members.[23] Consequently, household sizes are smaller: 19% of refugee households include only 1 person, 17% include 2 persons and 18% include 3 persons. Because militant groups recruit men and boys, these smaller families are likely comprised of women and children. Lebanon and Zaatari provide insight to potential issues these households may face.

Female-headed households in Zaatari and Lebanon engage in child labor due to the inability of the woman to work. In both areas, the practice is positively correlated with a decrease in elementary education participation. Erbil follows this trend. Only half of Syrian refugees ages 12-14 are attending school, severely hampering their integration into the workforce not only as they age but also as Syria begins to rebuild.[24] The absence of men in addition to conservative cultural values creates an atmosphere inhospitable to scholarly pursuits. Aid should focus on formalizing the informal economy in which women participate to alleviate children of the breadwinner's burden. Sulaymaniyah presents a similar issue.

Sulaymaniyah

Sulaymaniyah's refugee population is a fraction of the size of Duhok and Erbil. The 31,000 Syrian Refugees in the governorate constitute 1% of the total population.[25] Contrary to the other governorates, Sulaymaniyah relocates a notable number of Syrian refugees to rural areas. 23,205 refugees or 75% of the population live out of camps while the remaining 7,519 (25%) live inside a camp.[26] 74% of the refugee population consists of women and children under 15 years of age.[27] In sum, Syrian refugees in Sulaymaniyah are a major minority, overwhelmingly women and children, and located in rural host communities. Because rural populations tend to engage in conservative practices, data collection is necessary to identify how rural Sulaymaniyah differs from its urban counterparts.

Turkey

The scarcity of comprehensive demographic information for Syrian refugees in Turkey is surprising. As of January 12, 2017, the government of Turkey has registered 2,854,968 Syrian refugees, of whom 70.1% are women and children. Ethnically, Syrian refugees in Turkey are either Arabs from Aleppo, or Kurds from Hasakah. Both groups are predominately Sunni and 90% have integrated into host communities.[28] Syrian Refugees are dispersed throughout all 81 districts in Turkey. This likely complicates data collection efforts. Thus, comprehensive reports are nearly impossible to identify. To provide feasible recommendations to defend and develop the short-term and long-term conditions for Syrian women and children, aid groups must work with local agencies that understand the nuance of the areas in which they reside. The camp profiles face similar data gathering issues.

The Sanliurfa camps house the vast majority of refugees (115,134) due to their proximity to the Syrian border, and to Aleppo itself.[29] The uncertainty of demographic information may also be a reflection of Turkey's efforts to promote Turkish identity to the Kurdish population in its southern region. Recognizing diversity may be counterproductive from the Turkish government's perspective.

Lebanon

Lebanon is arguably in the worst position politically and economically to aid Syrian refugees. Due to the sectarian nature of the Syrian exodus, many Christians located in Tartus and Western Homs fled to Lebanon. Already dealing with periodic influxes of Sunni Palestinian Refugees, Lebanon was less open to the second group of predominately-Sunni Refugees from Damascus. As of 2016, Lebanon housed around 1.2 million Syrian refugees, 80% of that population being women and children.[30] The families in Lebanon are increasingly female-headed. As of June 2016, females led 34%, while 61% of these female-headed households have nobody working.[31] Additionally, these households are 62% more likely to engage their children in work, depriving them of an education. Currently, the reported child labor rate is over 7% for Syrian children. Lebanon is in desperate need of assistance in providing necessities to not only Syrian refugees, but also its own population. Working with the Lebanese government is the only way to begin transforming Syrian women and children's position within Lebanon, and in the uncertain state that Syria will become.

Conclusion

Low participation in elementary school education and women's participation in the workforce are predictable issues in Jordan, Iraq, and Lebanon, based on precedent. The dearth of data on Syrian refugees in Turkey is a barrier to inference. Given the state's relative stability, women and children may face entirely different issues than those in the aforementioned states. Ethnic, religious, and gender diversity of the Syrian Refugee population limits the range of policies that may be implemented, but this analysis does not take into account host governments attitudes and responses to the recent influx of Syrian Refugees. Ultimately, the governments of Turkey, Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon will employ their own laws determining how many refugees will be accepted, for how long, and what services will be provided to in their respective states. The following section will address the legal frameworks through which host governments will tackle the Syrian Refuge Crisis.

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Responses to the Syrian Crisis: Key Host Governments

Introduction

Most Arab countries are not party to the 1951 Convention on Refugees, which forms the basis of the UNHCR's work, or its 1967 Protocol. The core of this convention is the principle of non-refoulement, which asserts that a person classified as a refugee should not be returned to a situation in their home country where they face credible threats of persecution or where their life may be in danger. This convention has been ratified by 145 state parties and is now considered a customary rule of law in the international community.[1] The fact that many Syrian refugee host countries, specifically Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon in this case, are not a party to the convention presents a serious problem in the enforcement and monitoring of refugee rights in the region. To circumvent this issue and to secure some services for refugees without forcing a country to become party to the 1951 Refugee Convention the UNHCR will typically sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), a non-legally binding agreement that carries with it a degree of seriousness, with a host country in order to enforce some kind of domestic action specifically pertaining to refugees, their rights, and their access to services.[1] The fact that these countries typically do not have any domestic laws specifically governing the status of refugees compounds this problem. In addition, the few laws, policies, and institutions that do exist in order deal with refugees were set up almost exclusively to handle to issue of Palestinian refugees and do little, if nothing, to address rights for asylum seekers from Syria or anywhere else.[2]

When reading, it is important to keep in mind that the policies and agreements between local and international actors in the region do not necessarily reflect how these policies are implemented or enforced with respect to the Syrian refugee population, or what the individual experiences have been for Syrian refugees since fleeing their homeland and begun interacting with the regional response apparatus.

Iraq

Situation

In December of 2011, full state sovereignty was transferred back to Iraqi authorities and oil production boomed while foreign companies scrambled for lucrative

contracts. However, with a weak state and high unemployment combined with political divisions, Iraq remains one of the most unstable countries in the world. Still reeling from the devastating effects of the 2006-2008 sectarian violence that gripped the country the GoI was wholly unprepared to confront the rapid rise of ISIL and subsequent conquest of much of their territory beginning in earnest with the taking of Fallujah and parts of Ramadi in December of 2013. The spillover of the Syrian Civil War into Iraqi territory has essentially erased the border between Syria and Iraq and has brought entrenched armed conflict and masses of Syrian refugees, most of which have fled into the KR-I (Kurdistan Region of Iraq).[3]

Refugee Law/Policy

Iraq is not a party to the 1951 Convention on Refugees but has enacted two pieces of legislation relating to refugees in Iraq. These are Law 21-2010 which established the Ministry of Migration and Displacement and is intended to extend assistance and services to IDPs as well as foreign refugees living in Iraq; and the Political Refugee Law of 1971, which specifically addresses political refugees, authorizes benefits such as the right to work and access to the same education and health services as Iraqi citizens but does not apply to refugees who have fled their home countries for any other reason such as economic failure.[4] In October 2016, an MOU was signed between the UNHCR and the Government of Iraq (GoI) which stipulates that the GoI will provide documentation and registration services to persons of concern as well as refugees while the UNHCR will advise and offer support to the Permanent Committee for Refugees in order to properly manage refugee affairs in Iraq. [5] The KRG (Kurdistan Regional Government) has kept to a policy of "open borders" to refugees with some security checks that prevent very large numbers of individual male adults to enter the region. Both IDPs and Syrian refugees, almost entirely of Kurdish ethnicity, have been granted the right to stay, the right to attend public school, and the freedom to find work.[6]

Response Efforts

Beginning operation in May 2015, the Joint Crisis Centre in Iraq has been the hub of coordination of government actions in order to respond to the crisis and to act as the intermediary between the international community and the GoI as well as the KRG. Under the leadership of the UNHCR the humanitarian community, composed of 10 UN sister agencies as well as 34 partner organizations, has coordinated with the GoI and the KRG to provide an ample response to the access and protection needs of Syrian refugees living in Iraq. The main government partner with respect to the GoI is

the Ministry of Migration and Displacement while the Ministry of Interior is the key partner for refugee response efforts specific to the KR-I.

Going forward, the strategy for protection prioritizes provision of services for the most vulnerable refugees in out of camp locations including capacity building for local authorities (particularly in the KR-I), expanding mobile teams with cooperative registration efforts with authorities, protection monitoring, border monitoring, and the expansion of the Refugee Assistance and Information System (RAIS). In 2017, humanitarian assistance will focus on reaching the most vulnerable populations of refugees and building the resilience capabilities of impacted communities by building self-reliance and social cohesion, encouraging actors within the private sector to assist the population in need, and increasing the capability of local institutions to extend services to both camp and non-camp refugees.[7]

Jordan

Situation

At the onset of the conflict the Government of Jordan (GoJ) was already grappling with a serious potential debt crisis as well as a major divisive issue relating to refugee rights and recognition: that of Palestinian refugees. Today, these problems have compounded into a very serious threat to stability. In 2016, Jordan received $1.27 billion in foreign aid which was expected to help offset the tremendous cost of hosting Syrian refugees estimated by the World Bank at around $2.5 billion. The Jordanian government has maintained that while these funds are necessary, they are not enough to meet the growing demand of services by the refugee population. The Jordanian infrastructure has been heavily taxed by the influx of refugees and struggles to provide subsidized electricity and water services to the most vulnerable portions of its population.[8]

Refugee Law/Policy

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is not a party to the 1951 Convention on Refugees or the related 1967 Protocol but instead operates under the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between Jordan and the UNHCR in 1998. The Jordanian Constitution prohibits the extradition of "political refugees" but does little to define when this designation is applicable. Article 31 of Law No. 24 of 1973 on Residence and Foreigners' Affairs requires that persons entering the country as political asylum seekers must register themselves with a police station within 48 hours of their arrival and grants the Minister of the Interior sole authority to determine whether persons that have entered illegally will be deported but does not specify the conditions under which individuals would be eligible for asylum. The GoJ does not automatically grant rights of

residency, public education, healthcare, or employment to refugees and since foreigners cannot live in the country without a residency permit many Syrian refugees are left without a clear legal framework for acquiring these rights and services. The Jordanian Ministry of Labor publishes a list of industries and professions that can only be staffed by Jordanian citizens, further restricting refugee's opportunities to enter the workforce. However, with the signing of the Jordan Compact at the London Conference this has begun to change.

The vague and underdeveloped legal definitions pertaining to the status of refugees allows the Jordanian government to avoid their recognition and usually refers to Syrian refugees as "guests, Arab brothers, or visitors," which has no legal weight and means nothing under domestic laws. The UNHCR states that the Kingdom of Jordan has yet to enact sufficient domestic legislation to deal with refugees, particularly Syrian refugees, and the International Labor Organization (ILO) has repeatedly confirmed the dearth of adequate legal protection for refugees in Jordan.[9]

Response Efforts

In response to the needs of both refugees and the Jordanian economy the government has adopted a policy of putting Syrians to work within the labor force. Once politically untenable, the Jordan Compact stands as an agreement between the Jordanian government and the international community that it should be provided an additional $2.1 billion in aid from 2016-2018 on the condition that Amman develop jobs for Syrians who had been legally barred from working in the kingdom. As of October 2016, about 32,000 work permits had been issued to Syrian refugees; however, the grace period for these issuances was set to expire on 31 December 2016.

Led by the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation partnering with United Nations agencies, NGOs, donors, and the GoJ at large the response effort has, in the last year or so, taken major steps toward building a long-term resilience based refugee policy. Known as the Jordan Response Plan (JRP), the response effort going forward will seek to integrate resilience and refugee responses into a single platform and will focus on the resilience of national systems and institutions in an effort to produce a higher degree of stability within society.[10] Efforts such as these combined with the lack of clear legal protections for refugees present a dichotomous environment for Syrians living as refugees in Jordan. As they seek to secure better access to basic necessities, employment, education, and healthcare the Jordanian government has made cooperative agreements with the international community intended to ease restrictions on Syrian refugees but have not demonstrated their steadfast commitment to the MOU instead presenting an attitude indicative of their reluctance to include Syrians in their society.

Lebanon

Situation

Lebanon had been dealing with difficulties of maintaining political stability within its own borders for quite some time before the onset of the Syrian crisis and is not new to the unique challenges of hosting a marginalized refugee population. Hezbollah, a Shia Islamist political and military organization that holds notable power in Lebanon, is seen by the Lebanese population either as a grave threat to national stability or as the answer to the divisive problems within Lebanese society depending on where one's religious/political affiliations lie.[11] Palestinian refugees in Lebanon comprise about 10% of the Lebanese population and 90% of those currently live below the poverty line.[12] These factors combined with the economic and social impact of the Syrian crisis have tested the resilience of Lebanese social cohesion as well as the country's national systems well beyond what they have been designed to withstand. The straining of Lebanese public finances, service delivery, and many other sectors has increased poverty among the citizenry as well as widened the income gap. The World Bank estimates that 200,000 Lebanese citizens have been forced into poverty while an additional 250,000 to 300,000 have become unemployed. Lebanon is a state currently reliant on foreign aid but is taking steps to improve the resilience of their systems with the aim of encouraging development in the long term.[13]

Refugee Law/Policy

Although, in 1950, the Lebanese government created the Central Committee for Refugee Affairs, Lebanon is not a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention. In absence of a national refugee law the UNHCR and the Lebanese government signed an MOU in September 2003 which is intended to provide a mechanism for the issuance of residence permits to asylum seekers. Under this MOU the UNHCR makes the formal decisions on claims for asylum and the Lebanese government, in turn, issues a temporary residence permit. Usually, these permits are for a period of three months but can be extended to six or nine months which is supposed to provide enough time for the UNHCR to find a concrete and longer term solution for the refugee in question.

Traditionally, there have been restrictive policies in Lebanon preventing refugees from entering the workforce in a variety of fields, however, in early 2013, the Lebanese government implemented Resolution No. 1/19 which opened up some professions to refugees that were previously withheld solely for Lebanese citizens. The Lebanese government does allow refugees to enroll in universities and access healthcare once they have registered with the UNHCR. In January 2015, Lebanon ended its policy of "open doors" which had allowed for Syrians to enter the country

without a visa and renew their residency permits at the border crossing without a fee and replaced it with a far more restrictive and expensive residency renewal regulation.

The General Directorate of General Security has published instructions on the entry of Syrians into Lebanon which state, among other things, that, "No Syrian shall be permitted to enter as a refugee save in exceptional circumstances as shall be later determined in coordination with the Ministry of Social Affairs," and that, "a notarized commitment not to seek employment shall be provided when renewing temporary residency permits . . . by Syrian refugees holding UNHCR certificates." These instructions do not mention the renewal of residency permits and there is no evidence that these instructions were adopted and issued by the Council of Ministers.

The legal status of refugees living in Lebanon is unclear and the existing apparatus for dealing with the issue are inadequate. The Lebanese government has yet to enact any domestic legislation addressing specifically the status of refugees and therefore refugees hold very few, if any, legal rights within Lebanon.[14]

Response Efforts

The Inter-Ministerial Committee on Displaced Persons, established by the Government of Lebanon (GoL) serves as the highest national authority for international actors supporting the response to the crisis within Lebanese territory while the Ministry of Social Affairs oversees the response to the crisis on the part of the Government. Similar to the coordination efforts in Jordan the United Nations, NGOs, and the GoL have jointly produced the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) which focuses heavily on ensuring the stabilization of the country given the immense burden that the Syrian crisis has placed on Lebanese infrastructure. The plan is specifically designed to respond to the needs of Lebanon as a nation as well as vulnerable populations by emphasizing support to Lebanese national capacities in combination with aid and assistance management efforts. Recently, in an effort to expand pathways for mobilization of large-scale financing at the international level, the GoL and its partners in the response established the Concessional Financing Facility (CFF) in order to address the development priorities of long-term planning in Lebanon.

Essentially, there are three key priorities for the response efforts to the Syrian crisis in Lebanon. First, to restore and build economic opportunities and extend them to vulnerable groups, second, to strengthen resilience and access to sustainable public services, and third, to reinforce social stability within Lebanese society.[15]

Turkey

Situation

Since the beginning of the Syrian crisis, Turkey has experienced a shifting array of geopolitical alliances and economic shocks that have produced an unstable political situation and leaves the futures of many Syrian refugees uncertain. After years of sequential growth Turkey's economy is set to contract almost 3% this year and could even be worse. This contraction is due to the "perfect storm" Turkey experienced during 2016 which has dramatically affected the tourism industry beginning with the shooting down of a Russian warplane, then a failed coup in July, followed by an increase in the intensity of terror attacks within Turkish territory. All of this comes on the back of an already difficult economic situation compounded by the massive numbers of Syrian refugees Turkey is hosting.[16]

Refugee Law/Policy

Compared with other refugee host countries in the region Turkey has a robust legal framework for dealing with refugees and has enacted domestic legislation specifically addressing Syrian refugees and their plight. Most asylum seekers in Turkey today are placed under "temporary protection" with the intent of eventually resettling Syrian refugees in another country rather than accepting them as candidates for permanent settlement in Turkey. Indeed, MIPEX (Migration Integration Policy Index) has stated that, "Turkey's legal framework hinders the integration of migrants and is failing to integrate migrants amid an increased flow of refugees from Syria."[17]

Refugees living in Turkey legally have access to basic needs, translation services, ID documents that are issued after a person is granted refugee status, education services, and can apply for work permits. However, due to the number of refugees that have entered and are entering Turkey the process of obtaining official refugee status as well as registering for international protection can be slow and many of the refugees do not have an identity card. This presents a host of problems, for example, when applying for a work permit most Syrian refugees cannot provide ample documentation of previous employment or professional expertise and are either accepted into the "unqualified" labor force or rejected altogether.[18]

Response Efforts

The UNHCR, in a 2016 report, stated that since the beginning of the crisis in Syria in 2011, Turkey "has maintained an emergency response of a consistently high standard." Turkey's approach to the Syrian crisis with respect to refugees has differed from other host countries in the region in two ways. First, the Government of Turkey (GoT) has implemented a "non-camp" approach in which only 10-13% of Syrians under

Temporary Protection (SuTPs) are currently living in temporary shelters and tents while the remainder are settled into host communities in urban areas where they secure their own work opportunities and accommodation. Also, the GoT has implemented a government-financed approach. While accepting international aid, the GoT has also spent billions of dollars funding its own response to the Syrian crisis, in large part because they are able to do so, and has dedicated funding for the 2017-2018 period. Essentially, Turkey's response to the crisis has been to get ahead of the problem rather than simply react to it and has made the shift to long-term planning from emergency response. The GoT has also worked closely with civil society groups and international organizations and the UNHCR is in the process of handing over their operations to the Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM). [19]

Conclusion

The structure of host government policies, response efforts, and priorities will continue to determine the situation for Syrian women and children living as refugees in the four countries analyzed in this chapter. Feasible policy recommendations intending to secure services to Syrian refugees will be contingent upon how well such recommendations can be incorporated into these exist structures. Syrian women and children living as refugees today generally face a serious lack of access to basic legal rights, employment, healthcare, and education. Addressing the challenges to the provision of services to the most vulnerable refugees, women and children, is the first step toward developing a comprehensive plan to ensure their resilience over the long-term as well as to secure a higher quality of life for Syrian refugees.

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Women's Political Rights and Gender-Based Violence in Host Countries

Abstract

Women and children residing in host countries often lack legal protections as a result of their status as refugees. Many Arab countries are not signatories to The UN Convention on Refugees, and thus have little official obligation to abide by international refugee norms. Women and children are particularly vulnerable due to this lack of recognition. GBV in host countries is at very high levels with most women expressing fear of GBV in their lives. Early and forced marriage has increased from 13% in pre-crisis Syria to nearly 50% in many host communities. There has been a significant increase in the frequency of sexual violence as well with upwards of 25% of women in certain host communities reporting having experienced rape or threats of sexual abuse. Most Syrian women residing in host countries have reported a significant increase in violence and conflict within the home. Human trafficking in host countries has increased significantly as many nations in the area, including Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Syria and Iraq neglect to enforce anti-trafficking legislation.

Gender-Based Violence in Host-Countries

Introduction

Gender-based violence remains a significant setback for refugees relocating to neighboring countries despite the fact that for some, it is the primary reason they are leaving in the first place. While the violence that women and children face varies by host country and individual circumstances, women and children who relocate to areas in Lebanon, Turkey, and Jordan are particularly vulnerable to violence, due to a multitude of circumstances. As in Syria, women in camps and host communities are often subject to sexual and physical violence and girls are often forced into early marriages. Violence may be experienced within households as domestic violence or in the host community at large, particularly public settings. These forms of GBV can be linked to the stress and insecurity that comes from moving to a new place and not having economic stability or a male protector. Nonetheless, as the crisis continues to

unfold and host countries receive an influx of refugees, these issues need to be addressed and adequately monitored. This chapter seeks to report cases of GBV in Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Iraq while also offering potential solutions to mitigate these issues.

Iraq

GBV remains prevalent among refugees who have resettled in Iraq. Due to cultural stigmas regarding sexual and gender based violence, rates remain underreported. Nonetheless, sexual harassment and physical violence is common in host communities and refugee camps. Honor killings remain a particularly prevalent issue among refugees in Iraq. Early marriage has also increased significantly in the area. Overall, most Syrian refugee women in Iraq who participated in the survey and focus groups reports some degree of sexual harassment, honor killings, or physical violence in their communities.

Sexual Violence

Because of the negative connotation attached to victims of sexual violence in Syria and Iraq, as well as inefficient data collection on the prevalence of GBV among refugees, official data on GBV in Iraq is lacking[1]. However, many reports show high levels of GBV especially outside of formal camps.[2] Among those surveyed, one in five Syrian women in Iraq reported having experienced rape or the threat of sexual abuse indicating that it remains commonplace.[3] Like their counterparts in other host countries, refugee women in Syria report higher rates of intimate partner violence than they had in pre-conflict Syria.[4] Further, women, especially in non-camp areas reported very high incidence of sexual harassment. The perpetrators were often reported to be employers, taxi drivers and other men in the community that women are forced to rely on for survival.[5] Syrian refugees in KRI also reported an epidemic of survival sex and forced prostitution in the area with most men and women reporting knowing of women and girls selling sex in camp and non-camp settings in KRI[6]. In addition, almost all women reported feeling unsafe in their host communities due to GBV with 54% of women believing that there is a very high risk of being sexually harassed in their community in the KRI.[7]

Physical Violence

Honor killings remain very common in Iraqi Kurdistan. It is estimated that after "natural causes," honor killings are thought to be one of the leading causes of death among young women.[8] In the first 6 months of 2013, the UN reported 40 honor related

murders of women in Iraqi Kurdistan and 163 cases of self-immolation.[9] They recognize that these numbers are likely much higher as 85% of women in the area report knowing or having heard of a woman being killed in order to preserve the family's honor.[10] In addition to honor killings, many women report an increase in violence at home and in their communities. Nearly half (45%) of the women surveyed report an increase in violence in the home since leaving Syria indicating a high rate of domestic violence in Syrian refugee families residing in KRI.[11] In addition to violence within the home, 68% of women report knowing someone in their community who has been or is being abused and 82% of Syrian women in Iraqi Kurdistan say they live in daily fear of abuse or aggression.[12] Further, 35% of women said that they were forbidden to leave their homes due to expected aggression in the host community or camp.[13]

Forced and Early Marriages

Forced and arranged marriages of Syrian refugees is reported to be fairly commonplace, though international organizations lack accurate statistics about the scope of the problem. In a focus group study conducted by the UNHCR in several refugee camps across Iraqi Kurdistan, 15 of 19 informants listed forced/arranged marriages as an issue of concern with many citing examples of friends, family and community members who were forced to marry non-Syrian men significantly older than them.[14] This concern was particularly prominent in young women (18-25). Similarly, a senior Police Officer in Iraqi Kurdistan reported that Syrian girls and women are increasingly being married to Iraqi Kurdish men as second wives.[15] While taking a second wife is legal (with some restrictions) in Kurdistan, many report that these marriages are often unofficial and not registered at civil courts, putting women in these marriages at significant risk in the case of divorce or separation.[16] Most women report financial concerns as the main reason for early marriages, though maintaining the honor of the family was also frequently cited as a reason for forced or early marriages.[17]

Jordan

Gender-based violence in Jordan, especially in the Zaatari refugee camp, is extremely prevalent yet a very private matter. Most cases of GBV are handled within the household, despite the support services that are currently provided to victims. In 2013, a case study in the Zaatari camp demonstrated that while 75% of refugees interviewed were registered with UNHCR, 83% of them were unaware of available services for GBV victims.[18] The study also showed that those that were victims were more likely to report GBV to family members or local religious officials rather than service providers or the police to keep the matter private. Nonetheless, cases of sexual

violence, physical violence, and particularly forced and early marriage remain high amongst the Syrian refugee community in Jordan. In the 2015 annual report by the Gender-Based Violence Information Management System on Syrians in Jordan, they broke down the reports of GBV and found that 5.9% were for sexual assault and rape, 26.8% were for physical assault, and 32.7% were for forced marriages.[19] While forced marriage remains the most highly reported, this is often because cases of rape and assault have negative stigma attached to them and go underreported.

Sexual Violence

In Jordan, there is a widespread culture of shame surrounding sexual violence resulting in many cases of SBVG going unreported. Article 308 of Jordan's penal code encourages rapists to marry their victims for at least five years to avoid prosecution since the law does not address spousal rape.[20] Because of this lack of protection from sexual assault, Jordan and its refugee camps have become a hub for SGBV. Since the Zaatari refugee camp grew so rapidly, it has been difficult to manage and provide services to everyone throughout the camp, leading to an increase in sexual assault victims. Although most women are unlikely to discuss their sexual abuse, they often report sexual harassment in the forms of touching or disturbing verbal attention. Many have stated that they avoid attending school or going to the marketplace alone because of this harassment, and have said that they were treated differently than Jordanian women in public spaces.[21]

Survival sex and sex trafficking have also become prominent in Jordan. UNHCR's Participatory Assessment testified that Syrian women in northern Jordan who experience SGBV are targeted by their husbands, Jordanian men, and service providers from various Community-Based Organizations and often reported that they had to exchange sex for aid.[22] This kind of SGBV is often known as "survival sex" and has become increasingly popular; women and children can be coerced into sexual relations with men in order to obtain housing, food, water, and other necessities. Syrians residing in Jordan have reported that the most common perpetrators of survival sex are the owners of houses and businesses that the refugees rely on, followed closely by neighbors and community members.[23] Similarly, sex trafficking and prostitution have unfolded throughout Jordan with the influx of Syrian refugees. Through "temporary marriages" on behalf of men from the Gulf, girls become vulnerable to abandonment and are often sold into prostitution rings. Because these refugees are often in places of precarious legal and social status within Jordan, they are much less likely to report SGBV and find legal support. In fact, in 2015 almost 74% of SGBV survivors declined referrals to legal services to bring justice to their situation.[24]

Physical Violence

The most commonly reported form of GBV in Jordan is domestic violence both within the camps and outside. In a breakdown of genders reporting domestic violence in 2015, 85% were from women, 8% were from girls, and only 7% were from both men and boys. This demonstrates that the victims of physical assault are typically females.[25] According to UNHCR, in 2014 more than 50% of survivors – including both genders - seeking support services were victims of domestic violence, suggesting that this issue is incredibly pertinent within the refugee community in Jordan.[26] Survivors state that domestic violence occurs because their husbands are under immense amounts of stress resulting in violence against either the wives or the children. Although physical violence is often domestic, it is more likely to be reported when it occurs in open public spaces or at school. In a study ranking the places with the highest risk for physical violence, open public spaces had 21.5%, school had 20.3%, and home had 15.7%.[27] Physical violence against children has also been reported as higher-than-usual, especially in the home. Reports suggest that mothers mistreat their children because of stress, lack of opportunities to leave the house, and witnessing violence themselves.[28] One survey cited that one in seven interviewees felt that children under twelve years were at significant risk of physical violence and that this decreased with age.[29]

Forced and Early Marriages

While CEDAW suggests that the legal age for marriage should be eighteen years and Jordan has signed onto this, the majority of Syrian refugee girls in Jordan are married before then. While comprehensive figures on these marriages are unavailable because they are conducted by local shikhs and not legally registered, the number of registered marriages of children to older men went from 42 in 2011 to 737 by 2013.[30] A 2013 study conducted by UN Women found that 51.3% of girls and only 13% of boys were married before the age of 18 within the refugee camps.[31] This is particularly devastating considering the number of girls living in Jordan in general that are married before the age of 18 is 8%.[32] This demonstrates that early marriage in camps is roughly 43% higher in the camps than in Jordan's entirety. Further, 44% of the study participants stated that they believed the average age of marriage of girls was between 15 and 17 years. While early marriage existed in Jordan before the influx of refugees because judges could issue a waiver to legalize particular cases, they have increased drastically. In fact, UNICEF states that about 32% of refugee marriages within Jordan involve a girl under the age of 18.[33] Situations where girls that are forced into marriages at younger ages are often because families want to protect girls from rape and sexual assault which become common in these provisional living spaces where laws are more difficult to enforce.[34] However, CEDAW suggests that rape before the age of 18 can actually lead to the exact opposite as girls become victim to sexual and domestic

assault from their spouses. Another reason for early marriage is to ease financial burdens on families with little to no income, resulting in marriage between a young girl and an older man. Nonetheless, this only creates more long-term issues as females often halt their education to get married, making it more challenging for them to enter the workforce. Though early marriage is a culturally accepted norm for many Syrian refugees in Jordan, it ultimately makes women and girls more vulnerable to other forms of GBV.

Lebanon

Though Lebanon is recognized for its relatively progressive laws regarding GBV compared to the rest of the region, Syrian girls and women are still vulnerable to this form of violence. The root of the issue stems from the harsh economic reality for refugees in Lebanon. Because residency permits are expensive, many refugees work in the informal job market and are under a great deal of stress, often times leading to violence. Forced and early marriages have also increased in Lebanon as girls attempt to alleviate the financial burdens on their families or marry a wealthier older Lebanese man for economic security. While rates of GBV amongst the refugee community tend to be lower than those in Jordan, they still must be addressed and stopped.

Sexual Violence

While many women and girls flee Syria to get away from SGBV, they find little relief from this in Lebanon. Under article 522 of the Lebanese Penal Code, rape was excused if the rapist married the victim. However, this law was recently abolished on December 7, 2016. Similar to the criminal laws in Syria, spousal rape is also not recognized despite CEDAW's attempt to enforce more prosecution of rapists. Because of the lack of support for victims of SGBV, both Lebanese citizens and refugees often suffer from cases of sexual violence but remain silent. Because of this silence, one in four cases of GBV reported by Syrian refuges is sexual violence.[35] Because many Syrian women often cannot afford expensive residency permits in Lebanon, they do not report instances of SGBV in fear that they will be detained.[36] Additionally, the economic instability in Lebanon leads women towards survival sex. As in Jordan, this makes women vulnerable to sexual exploitation by aid workers. Nonetheless, a 2016 UNHCR report states that there have been about 76,000 at risk of SGBV or survivors of SGBV having received either psychosocial, medical, or legal services within Lebanon.[37] This results in an average of 100 new individuals - with 70% of those being Syrian – receiving SGBV services in the country. Nonetheless, SGBV is one of the least-funded sectors regarding the Lebanese refugee situation, so the quality of services is not quite at the level necessary to treat all victims.

Physical Violence

Regarding domestic violence, Lebanon is known for its relatively progressive legal stance. In 2011, the Lebanese parliament annulled the criminal code provision that excused crimes in the name of honor. Nonetheless, physical violence against Syrian refugees still exists in Lebanon. One study found that women and girls who reported physical violence in Lebanon claimed that the main perpetrators were neighbors and that the violence took place in public spaces.[38] They also reported that spousal violence was often in the form of being hit or slapped and due to stress, financial issues, and cramped living conditions.[39] Because residency permits are incredibly expensive and the labor market is challenging to enter leading to lower incomes, rates of financial stress increase, and thus physical abuse. Though the law officially protects women and girls from physical abuse, the harsh economic reality for many refugees only makes them more vulnerable.

Forced and Early Marriages

Because of the dismal economic situation for Syrian refugees in Lebanon, many girls are forced into marriages at a young age. According to research conducted in 2013, about 23% of Syrian refugee girls were married in Lebanon before they turned eighteen years old.[40] This compares to the official statistic that 6% of girls in all of Lebanon are married by age 18.[41] While much of early marriages take place to protect girls from sexual assault, they are mostly to achieve economic security since many women face extreme poverty with limited options to earn income in Lebanon.[42] Marriage with a Lebanese man would allow these girls to achieve Lebanese citizenship, leave the camps, and gain more economic stability. However, when these girls are forced in marriages with non-Syrian men, it can lead to isolation from their families and culture and make them more vulnerable for trafficking. Additionally such marriages would not allow women to return to Syria with their children for resettlement due to Syrian citizenship laws.

Turkey

Overall, data on the number of Syrian women who experience GBV in Turkey is particularly under researched and underreported due to cultural barriers in reporting as well as the relative lack of active NGOs focused on GBV.[43] Refugees in Turkey are particularly prone to sexual violence and exploitation by non-Syrian men. A study by the UNHCR in conjunction with the Turkish government has reported that domestic

violence, forced/early marriages, and polygamous marriages are the leading issues affecting Syrian women and children in Turkey.[44]

Sexual Violence

Women who have crossed the border illegally and arrive with no passport are at high risk of being kidnapped and sold as prostitutes or sex slaves.[45] Despite the epidemic of human trafficking in the area, and laws outlawing human trafficking and forced labor, the Government of Turkey has demonstrated negligible enforcement of anti-trafficking legislation.[46] While many women are forced into the sex trade within Turkey, they are also trafficked from Turkey to other states in the region.[47] The discrepancy in power of refugee women and Turkish men has created a booming forced sex industry.[48] Survival sex is common especially among younger women with several reporting knowing someone who engaged in some form of survival sex especially with employers and homeowners.[49] Though data on sexual violence in communities in Turkey is not widely reported, many women report feeling unsafe in their host communities. A significant percentage of women report not being allowed to leave their home without male accompaniment due to fear of sexual harassment indicating that sexual violence, or the threat of sexual violence pervades many communities in Turkey.[50]

Physical Violence

Women attempting to escape violence in Syria often find little relief in Turkey. Due to a lack of legal protections in Turkey, women are at increased risk of physical violence.[51] Like their counterparts in other nearby host countries, Syrian women in Turkey report an increase in violence and conflict within the home, a belief that is confirmed by a 2014 study by the IRC. However precise statistics on domestic violence and GBV is difficult to account for.[52] In addition to violence within the home, many women in Turkey report physical and verbal harassment by Turkish men and women in their communities.[53] Syrians in non-camp settings report higher rates of violence in their communities than Syrians residing in refugee camps, though both groups report having experienced or witnessed violence in their communities.[54]

Forced and Early Marriages

Early and forced marriage remains one of the main GBV concerns in Turkey. Despite legal restrictions on child marriage (the legal age of marriage is 18), the practice continues albeit often unofficially.[55] Since the conflict, there has been an increase in early marriage in Turkey especially among communities that lack full legal recognition.[56] Girls are commonly forced to marry men that are significantly older than

them with almost half (48%) of Syrian girls marrying someone who is 10 or more years older than them.[57] It has become increasingly common for men to take second or third Syrian wives often without officially registering them as polygamy is officially outlawed in Turkey.[58] Unofficial marriages do not give the same protections as official marriages, as a result, unofficial wives lack legal status in Turkey and are at an increased risk of GBV and abuse.[59] Like their counterparts in other nations, the most common reason cited for early marriage was economic security. Also, similarly to other nations, there has been a significant increase in "temporary marriages" of Syrian refugees to non-Syrian men.[60] This form of "legalized sex work" is not officially reported in Turkey, but interviews among Syrian women have shown an increase and even normalization of the practice in Turkey.[61] The Government of Turkey, supported by The UNHCR has reported that early marriage and polygamous marriage are two of the leading issues affecting Syrian refugees in Turkey.[62]

Solutions and Barriers

Similar to in Syria, the fight against GBV in host countries begins with empowering women and giving them the tools to do so. Creating mobile safe spaces and clinics is incredibly important, especially when navigating the entire camps. Further, additional training on how to address GBV and provide protection for women is essential. And finally, legal amendments are necessary in these host countries for long-term protection of women from GBV.

Creating mobile spaces is incredibly important for women and girls facing GBV especially because victims are usually spread out throughout large camps or within the host countries. Currently in Jordan's Zaatari camp, there is an interagency project that has created mobile health clinics to treat victims of sexual abuse and is able to reach those most marginalized. Not only has this been beneficial to victims, but it has increased awareness of GBV and improved data collection. While health clinics are incredibly important, so is establishing mobile safe spaces for women and girls to come together, discuss their abuse, and change the negative stigma associated with sexual abuse. This is also more effective than shelters since many countries have laws in which shelters for GBV can only be run by the state rather than NGOs and are ultimately ineffective. Particularly in Iraq, it is against public policy for NGOs to manage shelters and women's groups that do secretly are subject to police raids, violence by extremist groups, and are sometimes even perceived as brothels. For this reason, safe spaces rather than shelters are considered less evasive and more likely to effectively protect GBV victims.

Formal training on GBV is also necessary to combat GBV in host countries. While UNHCR has created training modules to prevent GBV, this initiative must be more

widespread and implemented stronger. Since public abuse is a common phenomenon in refugee camps, aid workers must be trained on how to address this, especially since they are sometimes perpetrators themselves. Also, because women and girls are more likely to turn to a religious official rather than the police, religious leaders should also be trained on how to combat GBV and handle particular cases. Since many early marriages are executed by religious leaders, they need to understand the risks associated with early marriages and the laws against them.

Finally, policy change is pertinent for the longevity of diminishing GBV. Though Lebanon is not a haven for women's rights, its fairly progressive laws regarding domestic and sexual violence have a direct correlation with its lower numbers of abuse than other host countries. Funding must be focused towards groups like CEDAW that create commission reports to implement policy change. While the process is slow to get countries on board and to actually follow CEDAW's articles, it is a crucial step. Policy change regarding GBV is also only effective if the victims understand their human rights and what the current state of the laws are. For this reason, legal education is required and should be spread throughout the camps via the mobile safe spaces and trained aid workers.

Conclusion

Gender-Based Violence is a serious issue not only in Syria, but in the neighboring countries hosting these refugees such as Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey. Because there is a negative stigma associated with sexual or domestic abuse, cases go incredibly underreported and most victims are silenced out of fear. Nonetheless, these issues need to be addressed in order to empower women and for them to achieve the rights they deserve. The impact of GBV goes beyond their experiences in the host countries, but will carry with them when they choose to return to Syria or wherever they go. Several organizations like CEDAW, Girls Not Brides, Save the Children, and more target cases of GBV and identify the long-term consequences for GBV victims. Nonetheless, it is important that these host countries implement mobile safe spaces into the refugee camps, create additional training modules for workers regarding GBV, and follow CEDAW's articles to abolish certain laws that discriminate women and lead to further violence. If these are not implemented or continue to lack, the refugee camps will continue to fill and overflow available services, allowing GBV to thrive.

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Economic Conditions for Refugee Women and Children

Abstract

After being forced out of Syria and relocated to Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Turkey, Syrian refugees now face concerns about the future of their livelihoods in these new countries. However, due to the strict residency and labor laws in the hosting countries, refugees are unable to gain the legal status required to live and work. Thus, a larger work burden has been put on the women and children to provide the support that the men are unable to meet because the local police are closely monitoring the men. Data from NGOs' reports reflect a trend of women and child labor participation rates rising across refugee hosting communities. Since most women and children are mostly unskilled in areas that offer stable incomes or higher pay, the only options left available to them are largely informal positions in insecure environments with long work hours and low wages. As a result, although the Syrian refugees work hard in to support their families, their efforts fail to improve their living conditions. In 2016, at least 70% of the refugee population in Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey were reported to be earning income wages below the poverty line. Currently, NGOs have been providing aid to refugees in the forms of financial relief and job opportunities. However, due to insufficient funding, weak local economies, and the difficulty of obtaining work permits, the chances for refugee women to land formal jobs and their children to gain schooling opportunities is still largely limited.

Introduction

Fleeing Syria is only a small step closer to rebuilding a normal life after the outbreak of the Syrian crisis for Syrian refugees. Unfortunately, most Syrian refugees who arrived in Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Turkey failed to obtain a legal residency and work status. As Syrian refugees continued staying in these countries without a legal status, women and children in particular experienced changes in their patterns of economic participation. On the one hand, since jobs available for these illegal residents boil down to seasonal and low-paid ones, women and children play a larger role in the labor force, as the men's income cannot solely support the household. On the other hand, language barrier, skills-to-task misalignment, and rigidity in the male-

dependent habit keep women from landing jobs. Thus, statistics on key economic indicators of women and children reflect a tiny but significant growth in women and children's employment in refugee hosting nations.

Employment Opportunities for Female Refugees

Figure 10.1 Key economic indicators of women's participation in refugee hosting economies, 2016

	Lebanon	**Jordan**	**Iraq**	**Turkey**
Women Labor Participation Rate[63]	19%[64]	Below 10%[65]	-	-
Women's Employment Rate	6%[66]	-	In camps: 2%[67] Outside camp: 5%[68]	-
Women's Participation Economic Sectors	Service and sales Agricultural, forestry and fishery, Elementary occupations, and Professional.[69]	Service and sales, Professional, skilled agricultural forestry and fishery, Plant and machine operation, and assembly, and Craft and related trades.[70]	In camps: mainly engaged in household-level or gender-specific jobs including tailoring and hairdressing.[71] Outside camp: -	-
Women's Unemployment rate	68%[72]	80%[73]	-	-

Figure 10.1 presents women's economic participation in the four countries in detail. Overall, the low female labor participation rates reflect that most female refugees were not formally employed or actively looking for a job. Interestingly, a growth in women's labor participation rate was found when comparing Lebanon (19%)

to Syria before the crisis (12.9%). One of the possible explanations for this small growth is that refugee households needed more members working to earn income. Nonetheless, barriers to women's employment still limited their actual participation in the labor markets and if they do participate, they work in the service sector. Women in both Lebanon and Jordan experienced high unemployment rates.

It is important to note that these statistics, except for those under Iraq, do not give insights to the contextual difference in job opportunities between camp and non-camp settings. However, by comparing employment rates of women living in and outside camp in Kurdish Region of Iraq (KRI), it is probable to believe that women living in hosting communities in general enjoy better access to jobs. The report by Support to Life also suggests that economic opportunities are often concentrated in urban centers rather than border provinces and refugee camps.[74] Further, these indicators do not show the significance of women and children's employment status (employed formally/informally/unemployed) to individual households, i.e. how high unemployment rates correlated to household financial well-being. Thus, it is necessary to look at the tables below.

Figure 10.2 Female-headed and widowed households in Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Turkey, 2016

	Lebanon	**Jordan**	**Iraq**	**Turkey**
Female-headed Households	17% [75]	40%[76]	Duhok governorate: 6%[77] Camps: 22% Outside camps: 7%[78]	12%[79]
Widow-headed Households	3% [80]	**-**	-	**-**

Figure 10.3 Syrian refugee population/households living below the poverty line, 2016

	Lebanon	Jordan	Iraq	Turkey
Refugee Population	71[81]	93%[82]	37%[83]	80%[84]
Male-headed Households	70%[85]	-	-	-
Female-headed Households	77%[86]	-	-	-

Note: Poverty line is at US$ 3.84 per person per day for Lebanon.[87]

Figure 10.2 and Figure 10.3 together provide an overview of poverty among Syrian refugees and its significance on different types of households. A majority of the Syrian refugees relocated to the four countries lived below the poverty line. Due to the lack of data, no comparison could be made between different types of households of different countries. Data from Lebanon indicate that there was a higher percentage of female-headed households living in poverty than male-headed households; Female-headed households in general represented less than 20% of the households except Jordan. However, CARE International research in Jordan believed the proportion of female-headed households is increasing. While poverty among Syrian refugees is problematic, poverty amongst female-headed households should also be highlighted. In addition, Figure 10.3 can go in parallel with Figure 10.1 to illustrate Syrian refugees' desperate situation – high unemployment rates accompanying with dire poverty.

Child Labor

Figure 10.4 Overview of child Labor in Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Turkey

	Lebanon	Jordan	Iraq	Turkey
Child Labor Rate/Trend	8%[88]	Increasing. A rough estimation of 30,000 Syrian children working in 2013 in the territory.[89]	KRI region in whole: 4% Sulaymaniyah governorate: 10% Khanaqin district 27%[90]	Increasing[91]
Children's Participation Economic Sectors	agricultural work, selling goods, cleaning and even construction, manual labor, and metal work.[92]	About 50% work in hotels and restaurants, 12% in wholesale and retail, and 9% in repairing vehicles.[93]	-	50% work in textile sector, 29% work in service sector, 18% work in Industrial production.[94]

Child labor was on the rise across the four countries. One cause to this rising trend was the decrease in the NGO aid and livelihood opportunities. To boost family income, child refugees are sent to work. Another reason for child labor is the absence of breadwinner in refugee households. According to the ILO, many men stayed in Syria to either run their businesses and houses or join the fighting forces. 15% of the Syrian working children stated this as their reason to work.[95] Child refugees usually work in low-skilled industries due to their lack of experience and skills. Figure 10.4 suggests that the majority of child refugees worked in agricultural, service, and manufacturing sectors.

Barriers to Women's Employment

Legal Barriers Restricting Residence and Employment

Residential and working restrictions not only increase the level of difficulty for Syrian refugees to settle temporarily in hosting countries, they also strengthen refugees' vulnerability to workplace exploitation resulting in lower wages, longer working hours, unfair treatment, and hazardous working environments. Although many Syrian refugees fail to overcome those residential and working restrictions of their host countries, they still decide to stay and work illegally, risking the possibility of getting caught and sent back to Syria. Thus, without legal status, refugees are exposed to exploitation under zero-protection by the law. Work conditions can be particularly worse for women and children As a result of cultural norms and stigma, women and children normally do not bear much of the responsibility to financially support the family. Facing financial pressures in the refugee context, Syrian households' first coping mechanisms are spending savings and selling off jewelries and household assets.[96] When every method is exhausted, working illegally is their last resort. As police in host countries are less likely to focus on chasing children and women than males, women and children often become assigned to larger roles in making money for their families. Yet because women and children's wage levels are often low, households suffer from working poverty and have to rely heavily on foreign assistance. In order to earn more money, women have to work longer hours and more children are pulled out of school for work. In short, the crisis has opened up women and children to exploitation and torn away children's education opportunities. Further, as desperate refugees are willing to work in lower wages and longer hours without social benefits, this creates a negative competition in labor markets that leads to decreasing wages, a reduction of job opportunities and discontent of local workers.[97]

Lebanon

In Lebanon before January 2015, Syrians could stay and work in certain sectors such as agriculture, construction (excluding engineering), porterage, under a bilateral agreement between the two countries. In other words, Syrian refugees experienced limited freedom to work in Lebanon as they fled their country after the outbreak of the crisis. Restrictions on non-citizens' employment in Lebanon have only tightened over the years as the Lebanese government adopted a new policy in the beginning of 2015 making work permits necessary for any sort of employment.[98] Syrians applying for work permits need a work contract or a sponsor and have to pay work permit fee depending on the type of job they are doing. Acquiring a work contract and paying additional fees are challenging for many Syrian refugee workers because most participate in the

informal job market and already earn barely enough income to support themselves. In addition, Syrian refugees in Lebanon must renew their residency annually along with the provision of several documents, including a housing commitment, a notarized pledge not to work, proof of financial means and so on. Again, as many Syrians fail to provide these documents due to poor financial conditions, they cannot extend their residency permit and stay legally in Lebanon. In effect, this further limits Syrian refugees' ability to move around publicly and engage in any kind of formal economic activities. In 2016, 21% of refugee households reported that all members owned legal residency permits while only 18% of female-headed households reported so. 97% of households cited financial cost as their impediment in obtaining a residency permit.[99] The ILO reported that 92% of Syrian refugee workers do not have a contract.[100] In 2014, the average monthly income of females was 43 % less than males.[101] Akkar and Tripoli had the lowest average monthly incomes, whereas the highest monthly income was in the South.[102] Although this distribution of average income among these roughly defined regions does not give us insights on rural versus urban areas income difference, it still serves as a guide in showing where vulnerable households usually live.

Jordan

In Jordan, Syrians are identified as any other foreigner and have to apply for work permits in order to legally participate in the local labor market.[103] Meanwhile, since obtaining a work permit implies high costs and long administrative procedures, many failed to do so. In 2014, only 6,000 Syrian refugees work with a permit,[104] while in contrast, there were about 160,000 Syrians working illegally in the country.[105] Moreover, the Jordanian government has imposed strict restrictions intended to regulate people leaving formal refugee camps to live in elsewhere.[106] In other words, refugees living outside the camps have to be able to fulfill the requirements of the system in order to stay in where they want. In some ways, it helps to identify refugees in the local communities and to ensure that they can also receive aid outside of camps. On the other hand, it is putting the Syrians, who failed to register in the system but wanted to leave the camps, at risk of involuntary relocation to refugee camps or even Syria.[107] In 2015, at least 45% of the Syrian refugees living outside the camps did not meet the requirements of the system. Since April 2014, Jordanian police have relocated more than 11,000 Syrian refugees to Zaatari and Azraq camps mainly because they were found working without a work permit or they left formal refugee camps and live in other parts of the country without updating their refugee status.[108]

Kurdish Region of Iraq

In the Kurdish region of Iraq, Syrian refugees are granted the right to work in the region if they have residential permits.[109] Unlike other neighboring countries, UNHCR pointed out that the KRG had a more open attitude in issuing residency permits to Syrian refugees.[110] Nevertheless, another joint agency's paper argued that the accessibility to residency permits varied a lot between governorates.[111] Refugees living outside camps in particular faced various obstacles to obtaining a permit. In 2015, 80% of the refugees in Dohuk and Dohuk-administerd Ninewa owned a residency permit, while only 31% in Erbil and 18% in Sulaymaniyah were registered.[112]

Turkey

In Turkey, registered Syrian refugees can apply for a work permit in the province where they registered after staying for at least six months in the country since January 2016.[113] Employers of the refugees with work permit have to pay the employees at least the minimum wage. This policy is meant to ensure refugees' basic rights during their integration into local labor market. Nevertheless, as Syrian refugees have to get a contract before applying for the permit, many Turkish employers, who are unwilling to hire Syrians at the minimum wage, refuse to offer contracts. As a result, it seems impossible for Syrians to obtain a workers' permit. In April 2016, less than 0.1% of Syrians in Turkey were enjoying the right to work.[114] Those who could not get a permit still often work and they are heavily exploited. One of the factory owners whom Senay Ozden interviewed stated, "Thanks to Bashar al Assad, we now have cheap labor." [115]

Language Barrier

Syrian refugees residing in Turkey, where Arabic is not the official language, found language barrier holding them back from job searches. Although they were willing to learn the Turkish language, there were few formal institutions that support their learning.[116] In effect, in a survey asking refugees about daily life problems, 17.4% of them reported on the lack of Turkish language.[117]

Skills Mismatch

When women are trying to integrate into job markets of hosting countries, their accessibility to jobs not only depends on their education and skills level, but also the jobs available locally. Researchers concluded that refugees in general tend to prefer working the same kinds of jobs they used to do before the crisis.[118] According to data, some of them are lucky enough to be able to stay on their own industry, but many

could not. Therefore, the crisis has affected women in particular as it further restricts women's employment opportunities.

Figure 10.5 Employment by sector as a percentage of total employment in Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon, 2009[119]

	Agriculture	Industry	Services
Syrian Arab Republic	15.2	32.5	52.3
Jordan	3.0	19.5	77.5
Lebanon	6.3	21.0	72.6

Pre-crisis statistics by UNHCR show that the Syrian labor market had been structurally different from Jordan and Lebanon's. Although Syria's labor market was similar to Jordan's and Lebanon's as its 'services' sector was the most dominant, Syria's agricultural sector notably accounted for 15.2% of its total employment, while Jordan's and Lebanon's only accounted for 3% and 6.3% respectively in 2010. On top of that, based on HIES 2007 and ProGres data, about 40% of the Syrian female working population in 2007 belonged to the "skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers" category, while the rest of them fell onto "Technicians and associate professionals", "Clerical support workers", "Professionals", "Service and sales workers", and "Craft and related trades workers". Comparing pre-crisis employment distribution of Syrian female workers to that in Jordan and Lebanon in 2014, there is an obvious shift in Syrian female refugees from the primary industry (agriculture, forestry, and fishing) to tertiary industry (service industry). This implies that women who are comfortable in service industry are more likely to be employed. Thus, Syrian women who previously worked in primary industry might suffer from a large skill-to-task misalignment while entering hosting countries, limiting their chances of getting hired.

Beirut Research and Innovation Center conducted a survey that reflected on Syrian refugees' perception of Lebanon's labor market. Although the way that this survey was conducted is not gender specific, its result supplement the above UNHCR source in justifying Syrian female refugees' skill-to-task misalignment in Lebanon. Respondents of the survey reported that they were unable to fully apply their skills in their jobs.[120] Less than 1% of those who were working thought that they had gained new skills or had improved their skills working in Lebanon while the majority felt completely opposite.[121] Furthermore, 23% of all said that they were under qualified to find jobs.[122] These results suggest that Syrian female refugees seeking work find

themselves in irrelevant job positions, jobs that require low skills or fail to find employment completely because they lack the experience.

Comparison between pre-crisis Syrian and current Turkish and Iraqi labor market is lacking because data on the composition of Iraq and Turkey labor market are unavailable.

Households' Inflexibility in Adjusting the Male-Dependent Habit

Despite that women from those widowed female-headed household have to assume the responsibility to support the family, low female refugee labor participation rate across Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Turkey reflects female refugees' inability to turn away from the male-dependent habit. As previous sections have mentioned, reasons to this inflexibility are countless. Beside from the aforementioned cultural stigma to this issue, demographic issues are significant as well. In general, the Syrian refugee population is young, implying that women may need to spend more time in the home taking care of their children. In effect, women find it difficult to focus on working while dealing with household affairs. There are individual cases where women experienced a complete shift from being a stay-at-home mother to becoming the breadwinner of the family, but the crisis overall has not significantly changed women's male-dependent habit nor actual labor participation.

Jordan

In Jordan, a REACH initiative survey revealed that 57% of unemployed and economically inactive women expressed their desire to work if they had the opportunities to.[123] Nevertheless, their desire to work did not translate to actively searching for jobs mainly because of family related reasons, i.e. childcare, household responsibilities and family objection.[124] This suggests that household affairs remain a large contributor to women's male-dependent tendency and low labor participation rate.

Further investigation is needed to learn about the perceptions of Syrian women refugees in other neighboring countries towards employment.

Aid

Aid supporting Syrian refugees' livelihood comes from two levels – the International and local communities. As previously mentioned, household incomes

have a positive correlation with the well-being of women and children. When a household cannot sustain itself by having only the male earning the income, women and children often times will have to work informally and are likely exposed to workplace exploitation. Therefore, assistance offered to refugees that relieves their financial burden and maximizes their income-generating opportunities is directly helping women and children by reducing their working hours. Since the following health and education sections will address aid programs related to health and education, this section will not cover those. Yet, it is important to note that those aid programs would also help share refugees' daily expenditure and therefore reduce pressure on women and children to work. Actors who run assistance programs aiming to ease refugee households' financial needs in the international level include UNHCR and IHH Humanitarian Relief Foundation. On the other hand, organizations such as CARE and UNFPA focus on vocational training and actual formal employment possibilities of women and children. At the local level, hosting governments and urban neighborhood have cooperated with international actors and offered the best they can do. The following will briefly illustrate how aid has reached to refugees. Then, a short analysis of the shortcomings of aid available follows.

To alleviate financial stress and enhance basic daily needs of Syrian refugees, UNHCR has introduced the UNHCR cash assistance program and the World Food Programme (WFP) food voucher program in Lebanon and Jordan. Regardless of whether or not refugees are living in camp or outside camp, as long as he or she is registered, they can qualify for support from UNHCR. In Jordan, UNHCR provided JD 50 per month to households including up to 2 members, JD 100 to households with 3 to 5 members, and JD 120 to households with more than 5 members in 2014.[125] The WFP is a food voucher program that targets Jordan and Lebanon as well. Bi-weekly vouchers provided by the program allow households to redeem food in 652 designated stores covering 12 governorates in Jordan. By January 2014, the program covered 440,000 refugees living in the country.[126] E-cards with US$30 per person per month were issued to households in Lebanon. By May 2014, the number of beneficiaries reached 732, 318 (about 70% of Syrian refugees).[127] Apart from these two, the UNHCR has also implemented programs that specifically address certain locations with special conditions. In Lebanon, it launched a winter cash program that aim to keep people warm during the cold season. In essence, eligible households will receive an extra amount of cash from this program to cope with any expenses.[128] 36% of Syrian refugee respondents in a survey reported that they rely mainly on alternative sources of income on top of their low wages in Lebanon. Of these alternative sources, 50% of the households living on alternative sources of income rely on UNHCR assistance.[129] In Turkey, the majority of Syrian refugees have received no financial support from the Turkish state and had to provide for themselves.[130] Additionally, Turkish authorities had

not allowed any third party assistance in entering refugee camps. Luckily, the IHH Humanitarian Relief Foundation has been able to step in since March 2011. 45% of their aid to basic necessities such as shelter, food, and healthcare has been distributed to Syrians in Turkey while the rest directs to Syria.[131] At the local level, Syrian refugees arriving prior to 2012 in Iraq has the privilege to receive food assistance and a Public Distribution Card funded by the Iraqi government.[132] Sporadic kind offerings were also seen across host communities who offered temporary shelters and daily supplies to Syrian refugees as well. By the end of 2012, international organizations and local charities have supported more than 6,000 households with housing assistance including access to collective centers, the rehabilitation of empty houses or cash assistance.[133]

To help women and youth with getting skilled jobs, UNFPA not only organized vocational training on beauty-related services, but also provided women with internship opportunities in salons in Mount Lebanon, which successfully enabled several trainees to start working afterwards.[134] Similar programs could also be found in Jordan, where women receive training from UNFPA's partner organizations such as the global YPEER network on various skills.[135] What is more, CARE offered classes that teach about mobile phone repair, computer maintenance, and hairstyling in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey.[136]

The most profound shortcoming of all the programs is the lack of funding. Despite that these programs have already prioritized resources in helping the refugees who were particularly in need, evaluation reports of the programs highlight insufficiencies in the amount of funding provided. In fact, all these programs face various degrees of funding gaps as donor support has faded away over time. Consequently, programs from UNHCR, which meant to be universal, are applying monetary and nonmonetary criteria to target refugees. Amount of cash issued to each person has also reduced, i.e. value of WFP cash voucher has dropped to US$17 per person per month.[137] Complaints from the beneficiary end in Lebanon had also revealed similar problems. Refugees criticized UN's lack of a transparent process that decides who is receiving aid out of all the registered refugees. In addition, they reported on the declining value of assistance, disruptions in receiving the food card, and the rude staff working for the UN.[138]

What is more, programs that train female refugees' skills are definitely helpful for them in finding jobs. However, having the skills alone do not ensure refugees in getting jobs. They need accessibility to jobs as well. Refugees believed that their illegal residential status had prevented them from moving freely searching for jobs.[139] Besides, restrictions on refugees' mobility in travelling in and out refugee camps limit refugees' accessibility to areas where economic activities are more concentrated. Thus, without extra support in accessing to work permits or job opportunities, these training

programs have little effectiveness in really helping refugees landing jobs. Further, insufficient capacity of labor markets in refugee hosting countries in absorbing job-seeking Syrian refugees often upset refugees' employment. For instance, the World Bank suggested that the Lebanese economy would need to have six times as many jobs just to accommodate the local population.[140] In other words, Syrian women may still find getting a job difficult even if she has a permit. In short, increased funding is the highest priority right now since all existing programs will need additional funds to run more effectively and widespread. On top of that, extra attention is needed in addressing the lack of job opportunities in refugee hosting economies and refugees' lack of access to jobs.

Conclusion

This section covers the current involvement of refugee women and children in Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Turkey's economies. Comparing statistics of women and children's pre-crisis economic involvement in Syria, a growth in participation rate is found for both. Women in the refugee context have taken up a greater share in financially supporting the family when the men are absent or the income of men cannot solely cover the household expenditure. Besides, since many refugees failed to obtain residential and work permit in their residing countries, women can work more actively than men because they are less to be targeted by police in the public. However, factors such as language difference, skills mismatch, and inflexibility in male-dependent habit have been keeping women away from landing their ideal jobs. In the end, the growth in women's economic participation is visible but not huge. Many of them were working in service and agricultural industries. On the other hand, child refugees also play a larger role in earning household income mostly because they are unlikely to be targeted by the police as well. They usually worked in low-skilled industries such as agriculture and construction. Without legal protection, women and children are heavily exploited. Although there are programs created to help with refugee households' financial needs and to provide skills training, their effectiveness has been declining due to the decreased funding. In addition, these programs do not address the refugees' lack of work permit and job opportunities, which are critical gaps that upset women's employment.

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Women and Children's Health in Host-Countries

Abstract

The experiences of Syrian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, and Turkey are not far off from those that are internally displaced inside Syria. Common trends in these four countries include limited access to health services, minimal amounts of water, and overwhelmed sewage systems. Camps lack the resources to provide adequate psychosocial support for people with mental health disorders, while pregnant women cannot obtain prenatal care for the entire duration of their pregnancy. The availability of contraceptives and the use of contraceptives have both decreased. Injury and trauma require special services, which are not always available in the camps. In addition, refugees are at risk for water-borne and food-borne illnesses from the large amounts of sewage and waste.

Sanitation

Although sanitation's impact on the health of people in Syria is crucial, sanitation plays an equally large role in the health of Syrians in surrounding countries as well. Countless Syrians have migrated to Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, and Turkey over the past six years. These countries have comparable sanitation circumstances that impact the refugees very similarly.

Bordering Syria, Jordan has been heavily hit by the migration of refugees since the beginning of the crisis. Jordan is arid and "has one of the lowest levels of water resource availability, per capita, in the world."[1] In addition to a dry environment, water management is not optimized to support its citizens and the influx of hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees. The outdated water infrastructure in Jordan loses approximately 50% of usable water because people steal water from pipes out of desperation and water leaks out of the pipes before reaching the people.[2] The loss of all this water combined more people means that water availability per person has dropped from 80 liters a day to a mere 30 liters.[3] In conjunction with limited and contaminated water, sewage is also a major problem that affects refugees, especially in camp sites, such as the Zaatari Refugee Camp. Sewage facilities in Jordan are working

over capacity and cannot handle the additional burden from refugees.[4] The overwhelmed sewage system pollutes the limited water supply in Jordan.

Lebanon struggles with similar sanitation issues to those of Jordan. Water resources are limited and the sewage system is not efficient to handle the increase in population that it serves. Sewage is pumped directly back into the natural bodies of water, making water undrinkable because salinity and contaminants have increased.[5] Approximately 30% of refugees in Lebanon are living in poor conditions with inadequate housing and clean drinking water.[6] The unsanitary living conditions that Syrian refugees experience in Lebanon puts them at risk for diseases such as cholera, typhoid, and jaundice.[7]

Iraq and Turkey have almost identical problems with water and sewage. The Domiz Camp is severely overcrowded with refugees, which results in pressures on food, water, and sanitation.[8] The amount of water allocated for each individual in the Domiz Camp should be 15 to 20 liters, but some individuals are only served 4 liters a day.[9] Sewage in the Domiz Camp runs directly through the camps and communal spaces, which festers with vectors carrying disease.[10] In Turkey, the sewage management and the supply of water are of major concern because of the dramatic increase in the number of people.[11] Camps within Turkey that host Syrian refugees are producing levels of waste that are beyond the capacity of the sewage systems for the respective camps.[12] Overwhelming the sewage system leads to sewage being dumped into natural streams, which once again, pollutes the water and leaves citizens at risk.[13]

The shortage of water in these host countries translates to trouble for Syrian refugee women and children for several reasons. Within Syrian culture, women are in charge of the home, so when water supplies are insufficient conflict ensues with the spouse.[14] Female-headed households particularly have a tough time obtaining water for their families because of the limited employment opportunities and the social stigmas associated with being a single mother.[15] The stigma tied to these women force them to send their children outside of the home to get water.[16] An additional obstacle for female-headed households is that men delivering water in trucker tanks prioritize providing other men with water first.[17] This gives women less opportunity to obtain water for their families. There are also issues accessing restroom facilities for women and children. Within refugee camps, accessing bathroom facilities is a problem because they are communal and scattered across the camp.[18] These facilities are too far for some families and are dangerous at night, so the families must create their own private latrines in or near their tents. These personal latrines drain into the ground and contaminate groundwater.[19]

Obstacles with clean water access, adequate hygiene, and efficient sewage systems are not limited to Syria. There are evident problems in Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, and Turkey, which are all hosting Syrian refugees. The focus of humanitarian efforts cannot solely focus on Syria because the crisis has expanded well-beyond Syria. Sanitation, infrastructure, and overall hygiene may seem like far cries from the health of Syrians, but inadequate living conditions have detrimental repercussions on long-term health.

Physical and Mental Health

Since the eruption of the crisis in Syria, millions of Syrians have been displaced into several refugee host-countries and those most affected are women and children. Among population of registered internally displaced persons, 49% of IDPs are women and 75 % of the refugee population consists women and children.[20] Moreover, 70,000 refugees were pregnant women.[21] Women and children's health status depends on which countries they are displaced to because each host country has a different healthcare system towards refugees. Nonetheless, most of Syrian refugees live in too poor and inadequate environments to have healthy life.

Among neighboring refugee host-countries, Turkey hosts the largest number of Syrian refugees, which is approximately 2.8 million refugees according to 2017's data.[22] The refugee camps in Turkey are state-run by AFAD which is responsible for providing basic needs to Syrian refugees.[23] Compared to other neighboring refugee host-countries, Turkey has superior refugee camps in terms of humanitarian support. According to AFAD, 90.7% of females inside the refugee camps benefitted from the healthcare services in Turkey in 2014, while only 59.5% of females outside the camps benefitted from state's health care services.[24] Moreover, 71.6% of female inside the camps were able to access medicine, while only 54.6% of female outside the camps were facing restraints when trying to access medicine.[25] Humanitarian support within Syrian refugee camps in Turkey is relatively prominent, however, the majority of Syrian refugees are outside camps and struggle to maintain their health and receive support. Additionally, programs of psychosocial support are provided inside the camps, but those programs are not effective because of insufficient supports and language barrier, so many refugees are still suffered from deprivation, codependence and insecurity.[26]

Lebanon currently hosts the second largest number of Syrian refugees at approximately 1.2 million. In Syrian refugee camps in Lebanon, specialized staff members are insufficient, particularly uneducated in reproductive health fields,

affecting pregnant women and women of reproductive ages requiring appropriate support. For instance, a recent study found that 65% of women in reproductive age were not using any form of contraception, and 16.4% were pregnant.[27] Furthermore, a recent study found that "51.6% of all women surveyed reported dysmenorrhea or severe pelvic pain, 27.4% were diagnosed with anemia, 12.2% with hypertension, and 3.1% with diabetes."[28] Moreover, within Syrian refugees in Lebanon, malnutrition is huge threat. Malnutrition rate among Syrian refugee children grew from 4.4% in 2012 to 5.9% in 2014, which is approximately 10,000 Syrian children.[29] In addition, a report found that more than 2,000 Syrian refugee children in Lebanon are suffering from severe acute malnutrition and are facing risk of dying without immediate treatment.[30]

Jordan currently hosts approximately 655,000 refugees, 21.5% live in camps, and 79.5% live outside camps.[31] 18% of the total refugee population are children under 5 years of age, and 25% of refugees are women of reproductive age. While family planning services and birth control are provided to those in refugee camps, they are only provided to married couples. While these services exist, there are only available to 1 in 3 women of reproductive age.[32] Refugee camps in Jordan are also facing nutrition-related problems. From 2012 to 2014, Syrian refugees have improved in the acute malnutrition situation both in Zaatari camp and outside the camp, so became an acceptable rage as per WHO classification.[33] However, still micronutrient deficiencies are prevalent, 44.7% of women in reproductive age and 48.7% of children aged 6 to 59 months in Zaatari camp shows anemic issues.[34]

Another refugee host country is Iraq, which currently hosts about 235,000 Syrian refugees, and 68% are women and children.[35] Compared to Syrian refugees in other countries, Iraq is hosting relatively small number of refugees, but still Iraq's refugee camps are overcrowded and have poor living conditions, which led to deterioration in the health.[36] Because of the overcrowded and poor situation, some communicable diseases such as measles and meningitis have been reported. Global organizations have been trying to prevent spreading of communicable diseases by vaccinating refugees.[37] In Iraq, primary and secondary health care is free to refugees, but health care capacity is too small to cover increasing numbers of Syrian refugees.

Because of the prolonged crisis in Syria, the number of Syrians suffering from mental disorders continues to increase. The mental health of Syrian refugee children is also problematic as they continue to experience trauma and loss as the crisis unfolds. The most common mental disorder that refugee children face is post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which often leads to depression.[38] Moreover, refugee children tend to suffer higher levels of behavioral and emotional problems, such as aggression and other affective disorders.[39] Psychological services for children are necessary at any cost,

because these mental health issues can last for long-term and often bear negative consequences, deepening their conditions.[40] According to the survey proceeded in Turkish refugee camps, 45% of surveyed refugee children experienced PTSD symptoms and 44% experienced depression.[41] Additionally, many Syrian refugee children have psychosomatic problems, in which mental disorders begin to turn into physical health problems.[42] Despite the increasing number of mental health disorders, support services to address these issues are insufficient in most refugee camps. Turkish authorities reported that more than half of the Syrian refugee population needs psychological supporting services, but only 5% of the needed services is provided in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan.[43]

Depending on refugee host countries, refugees get different level of health care and basic support systems. However, the influx of millions of refugees has burdened refugee host countries, and most refugees still are not able to get basic support regularly. Syrian refugees were able to escape from direct physical danger from the crisis, such as bombing and fire, but they are still facing life-risk problems. They are suffering from injuries, diseases, mental disorders, food shortage and malnutrition. Especially, women and child-held households are the most vulnerable group. Lots of humanitarian organizations, such as UN, WFP, Save the Children, World Bank, and other NGOs are providing various forms of aid, but current aid doesn't seem effective improving health among Syrian refugees. For better physical and mental health for refugees, more effective and efficient aid is urgently needed.

Access to Healthcare

In Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq and Jordan, the Syrian refugees continue to require access to healthcare. Refugee camps and re-settlement communities throughout the Middle East share similar obstacles to those inside Syria, but emerge ahead in other areas with the help of the host countries' Ministries of Health and international aid. Host countries are still met with an increasingly high demand for health services and the effects of the increasing flow of Syrians, but are better equipped to provide superior security of services and specialized medical treatment.

First, hospitals and clinics in Syrian refugee camps and re-settlement communities face high numbers of individuals seeking medical attention.[44] Due to the destruction of the health system in Syria, when Syrian refugees arrive in Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq or Jordan they are often severely over-due for medical treatment.[45] The swell of patients and their serious medical needs significantly strains hospitals and their ability to provide medical resources within host countries.[46] Refugee health facilities

continue to struggle with shortages of medical supplies and continuing operation under harsh conditions.[47] Hospitals and clinics in camps that are unable to attend to patients with serious illnesses or injuries will refer patients to Lebanese, Turkish, Iraqi or Jordanian hospitals.[48] Even though refugee facilities are over capacitated, the existing health systems in the host countries are able to take in additional patients and provide the necessary services.

Second, refugee health facilities and services are often hindered when providing consistent care because displacement brings a constant influx and out-flux of patients and medical staff members. This challenge is similar to the healthcare system inside Syria. Syrian refugees in need of medical assistance are constantly moving, as well as physicians and nurses, who are occasionally refugees themselves. This causes issues when either party is forced to re-locate to a different camp or community, causing physicians and patients unable to continue medical visits over an extended period of time.[49] The perpetual displacement of all Syrians disrupts stable access to healthcare and in consequence affects the outcomes of medical treatment.

Third, although refugee healthcare services face significant challenges, the health systems inside refugee camps and host countries often provide higher quality care and safer environments. Refugee camps and communities within Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq and Jordan have access to the work staff, supplies, equipment and tools available in their public health systems.[50] The already existing health infrastructure is able to offer treatments and services not currently available inside Syria.[51] Each host country's Ministry of Health assists with Syrian refugees' access to healthcare, contributing funding, hours and workers.[52] Additionally, because healthcare facilities outside of Syria experience fewer threats of violence, hospitals and clinics operate under lower levels of stress.[53] A safer environment allows healthcare workers to perform at a higher level and encourages patients to access available health services.

Fourth, because the healthcare systems of host countries do not prioritize responding to the immediate effects of violent attacks and physical injuries, health services become highly specialized in other areas. Programs implemented for Syrian refugees consistently focus on the health of women and children. For women, health services prioritize reproductive services, prenatal and postnatal care, safe spaces for gender-based violence, and family planning programs.[54] For children, vaccine campaigns and malnutrition testing are prevalent and consistently widespread.[55] Jordan's health ministry, with the assistance of the WHO, UNICEF and UNHCR, was able to provide vaccinations to 98% of 90,000 refugees between 6 months and 30 years inside camps and lead a measles campaign outside refugee camps in 2013.[56] These specialized services are able to meet the needs of Syrians that have been ignored for months and sometimes years. A comprehensive healthcare system is

helping to place the health of Syrians, especially women and children, as a priority when addressing the crisis. Even though healthcare access for Syrian refugees is still flawed and requires many improvements, the health situation in host countries is far superior to the conditions inside Syria.

Aid

Delivering aid in refugee host nations, such as Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, and Turkey, is a much simpler and safer process in comparison to Syria. Overcrowding and lack of resources for all refugees in these countries are barriers to healthcare access, but they are ultimately available. The governments of these countries are more cooperative with other institutions and organizations to collaborate on helping Syrian refugees. Efforts to improve health in the Syrian refugee population include improving sanitation, increasing access to water, increasing availability of healthcare services, and decreasing malnutrition. By addressing health from multiple angles, the Syrian people can improve their health outcomes or prevent further deterioration.

Overcrowding and poorly managed water and sewage systems lead to terrible sanitation in refugee host nations. Fortunately, there are organizations and governments that are willing to support Syrian refugees in various countries. One of the major projects that UNICEF has begun to implement in the Zaatari Camp in Jordan is creating an internal water system through borehole production, which reduces costs of transporting water into the campsite.[57] UNICEF has also created a wastewater management system for the Zaatari Camp, which dramatically reduces the costs of transporting and managing sewage by 60%.[58] In Lebanon, UNICEF is researching potential strategies to restore groundwater with surface water.[59] UNICEF has had difficulty creating a more sustainable water system to reach all refugees in the Domiz Camp of Iraq.[60] Pumps lack adequate pressure to get water to everyone in the camp, so UNICEF is currently researching solutions to this problem.[61] An additional organization that has been helping Syrian refugees is World Vision. World Vision has aided Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, and Syria with supplies and services, and helped build water and drainage systems in the camps.[62] The help from humanitarian organizations reduces negative health implications by improving sanitation and living conditions.

For healthcare access, various organizations have partnered with host-nations to provide resources for Syrian refugees. In Lebanon, the tremendous influx of Syrians has made healthcare a priority. Donations from prominent institutions, such as the European Union, has allowed Lebanon to provide psychosocial support, reproductive

services, vaccinations, and primary care to Syrians and Lebanese citizens.[63] Jordan's health sector has also been overwhelmed from the arrival of Syrian refugees, but the UNFPA is working to provide services for women in the camps. The healthcare services provided from the UNFPA and partnered organizations range from routine check-ups to labor and delivery to post-natal care.[64] Within Iraq, MSF has provided numerous services for Syrian refugees in the Domiz Camp. Aid from MSF include "primary health care, sexual and reproductive health care, care for chronic diseases, and mental health assistance".[65] An additional organization aiding Syrians is Direct Relief. Direct Relief provides vital medical supplies in order to provide healthcare services to Syrians in Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Turkey.[66] Direct Relief is supporting the Republic of Turkey Disaster and Emergency Management Authority to aid Syrians living in Turkey's twenty-three refugee camps and those living in urban areas.[67] These efforts allow Syrians who are injured, or pregnant, or sick to obtain the essential care that they deserve.

Aside from water, sanitation, and healthcare access, food insecurity is another concern that is addressed by humanitarian organizations. Shortages in funding and overcrowding in host nations make the provision of food extremely difficult. The WFP fights against food insecurity for Syrians in Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Turkey.[68] Not only does the WFP provide direct food assistance to refugees in these countries, it has crafted strategies to help refugees become more self-sufficient and to help the host nations.[69] For instance, refugees are provided with e-cards to purchase food within the local community to boost the local economy.[70] Another strategy of the WFP is to train Syrians to become skilled in agriculture to cultivate their own food.[71] This reduces the stress on Syrian families to find money to purchase food. Furthermore, the WFP provides professional training to refugees to maximize their chances of obtaining employment opportunities.[72] The WFP's plan is to help Syrians immediately, but to also help them in the future through education and training.

Humanitarian efforts to help Syrians cannot be targeted to one area of concern. Aid must be distributed to various issues to comprehensively help because supporting one issue may allow another one to worsen. With the Syrian crisis, there are multitudes of organizations, governments, and people helping Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, and Turkey aid Syrians. From building water networks to handing out food rations to agricultural training, the multifaceted approach of the humanitarian regime needs to be admired for the work that has been achieved. However, the regime needs more support. With the current minimal funding, only a fraction of what needs to be accomplished can actually be done in refugee host nations.

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Women and Children's Education in Host-Countries

Abstract

Six years of unrelenting conflict in Syria have produced the largest displacement crisis in recent decades; among the nearly 5 million Syrian refugees that have poured into the neighboring countries of Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq, the effects of displacement have fallen hardest on the shoulders of the more than 1.5 million school-age refugee children. Despite ongoing efforts of host country governments, institutional constraints and economic barriers continue to limit access to education for upwards of 700,000 of these children, who now join the millions of children within Syria for whom education has become a casualty of war. Unlike children still in Syria, refugee children are increasingly confronted by a different set of challenges in accessing quality education at a regional level, where there remain significant and systemic impediments to the incorporation of Syrian children into the formal educational systems of each of the four primary host countries. Principally, host nation governments across the region lack the resources and space necessary to accommodate the continuous influx of school-age children, while numerous economic, cultural and political obstacles continue to hinder refugee children's access to education.

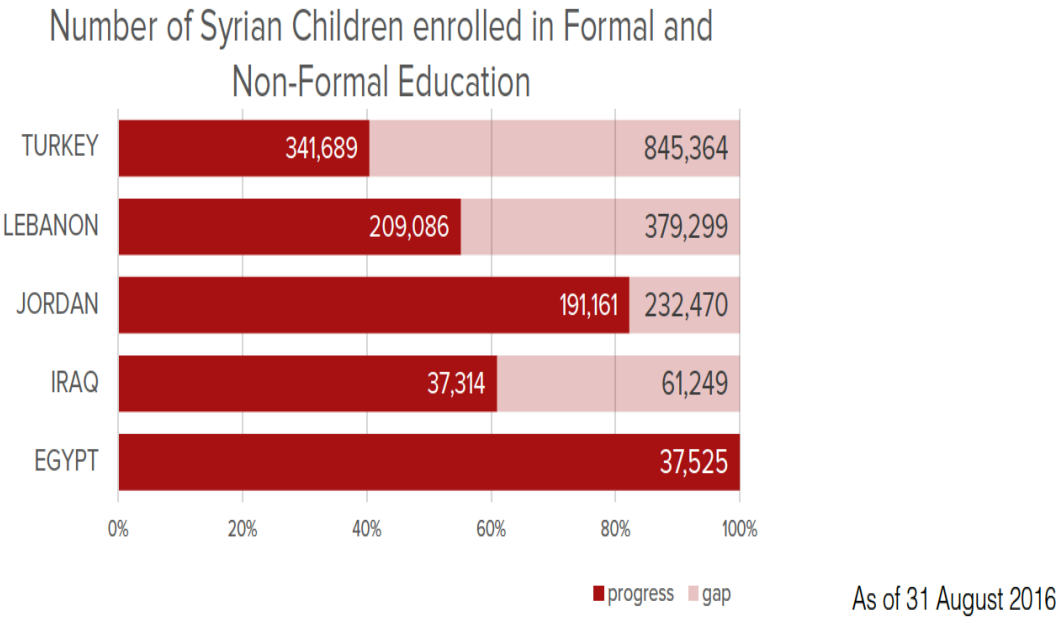
Introduction

This report will document the current state of refugee education at the primary, secondary and university levels, as well as the principal barriers preventing school enrollment for refugee children; furthermore, it will highlight some of the varying approaches and strategies that have been adopted by host nation governments and international organizations in response to the educational crisis.

Current Regional Situation

Across the host countries of Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq, the number of school-age Syrian refugee children (age 5-17) has grown to more than 1.5 million at the beginning of 2016; the number of refugee children enrolled in formal education has increased nearly 3.5 times since 2013 due to the generous and continuing efforts of host nation governments and international partners, including waiving enrollment fees and opening up enrollment to children regardless of legal status. Nevertheless, the percentage of out-of-school refugee children regionally has consistently remained at or near 50% as host nations have encountered a range of difficulties both accommodating such large numbers of children into limited capacity public school systems, as well as addressing policy barriers and economic disincentives to enrollment for struggling refugee families. The 3RP Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan estimates that only 52% of the nearly 1.6 million Syrian refugee children, approximately 820,000, are accessing educational opportunities for the current 2016-2017 school year; the remaining 48%, approximately 740,000 children, are not accessing either formal or informal education across the four host countries.[1] Statistics indicate further that the collapse in educational enrollment is particularly pronounced for children of secondary school age, with enrollment among 15-17 year olds consistently below 20% and as low as 5% in some urban areas of Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq.[2] The chart below by UNHCR depicts the breakdown of refugee school enrollment by host country at the beginning of the 2016-2017 school year.

Figure 12.1: UNHCR regional statistics chart[3]



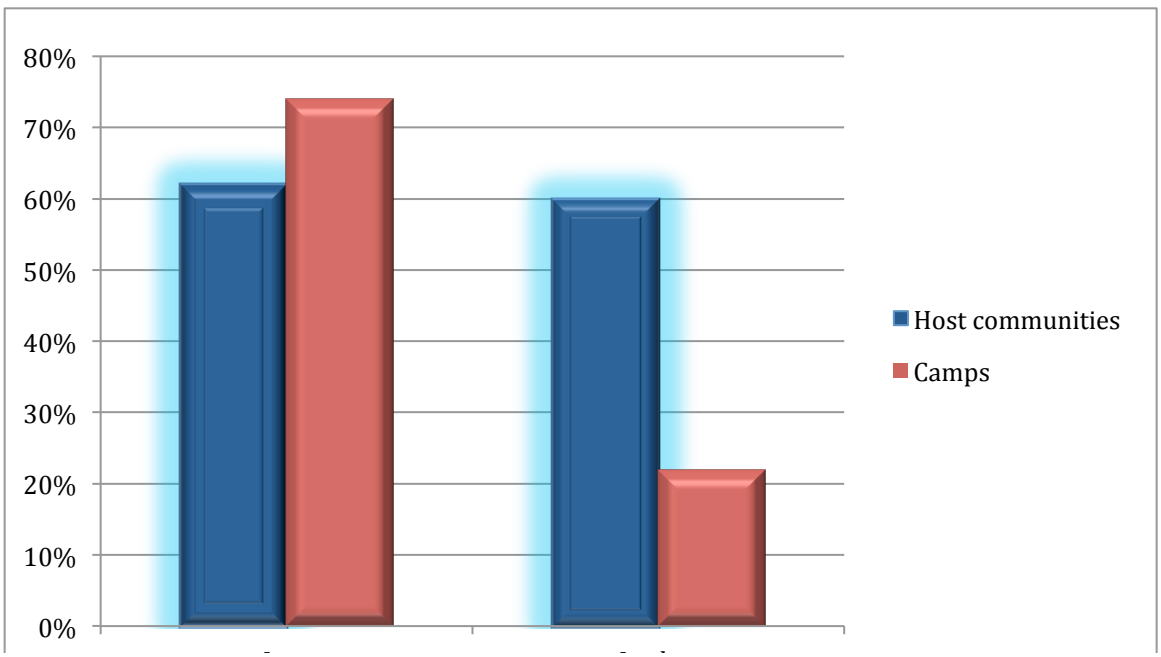
Jordan

Relaxed barriers to registration in school and an increase in afternoon shifts have allowed 170,000 refugee children to enroll in formal education for the 2016-2017 academic year, but an inter-organization report by Oxfam and Save the Children estimates that 90,000 children are still lacking access to the formal Jordanian education system.[4] Among the 80% of refugee children that live outside of camps in host communities, enrollment rates remain considerably higher for primary education (ages 6-11), at 70% for both boys and girls, than for secondary (ages 12-17), at 47% for boys and 54% for girls.[5] Moreover, the situation is considerably worse inside camps, principally the Zaatari Camp, where 80% of boys and 76% of girls between the ages of 6 and 18 are not attending formal education centers established by the Jordanian government.[6]

Iraq

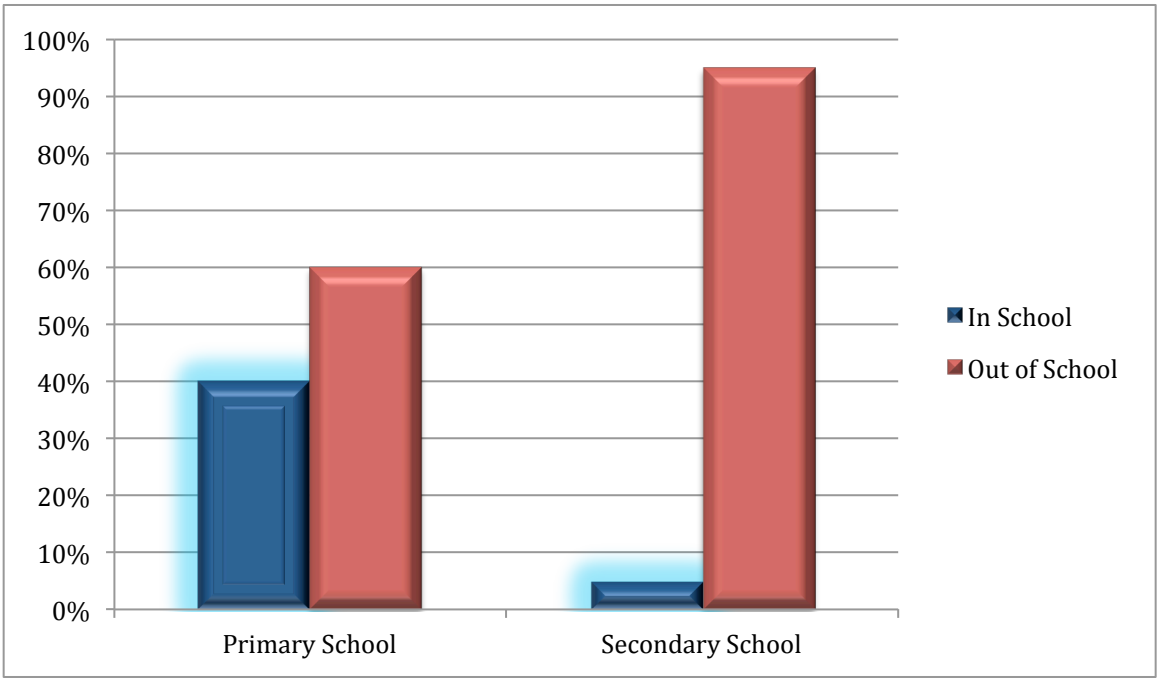
Approximately 60,000 school-age refugee children are residing in Iraq, nearly all (98%) of them in the region of Iraq administered by the Kurdistan Regional Government. Enrollment rates in primary education are 63% and 64% for boys and girls, respectively, while enrollment rates in secondary education are 0% for boys and 22% for girls. Moreover, 74% of children in camps are accessing education, compared to only 62% of those in urban, peri-urban and rural host communities.[7] Difficulties accessing education are exacerbated by huge numbers of Iraqi internally displaced persons.

Figure 12.2: Percentage of refugee children in Jordan and Iraq enrolled in camps and host communities[8]



Lebanon

Figure 12.3: Percentage of Syrian children in Lebanon enrolled in primary and secondary education[9]



Lebanon is currently hosting more than 500,000 school-age Syrian refugee children, of whom approximately 200,000 are enrolled for the current academic year, an increase of 30% from 157,000 the year before. However, more than 250,000 children are still not accessing formal or informal education at all, including upwards of 90% of secondary school-age children. Indeed, of the 82,000 registered refugees aged 15 to 18, less than 3% were enrolled in public secondary education for the 2015-2016 school year. The problem of lack of access is compounded by uniquely high drop out rates of nearly 20% for Syrian refugee children, twice the national Lebanese average and more pronounced in children above the age of 12.[10] Data indicates that up to 10% of children enrolled for the 2016 school year had dropped out by December of 2016.[11]

Turkey

Turkey's Ministry of National Education has registered 840,000 school-age Syrian refugee children between the ages of 6 and 18 by December 2016, while UNHCR estimates suggest the actual number of school-age children may be as high as 990,000.[12] At the end of the 2015-2016 school year, 490,000 children were enrolled in the public education system, 160,000 in public schools while another 330,000 are accessing education in Temporary Education Centers (TEC) established by the Turkish government that teach a modified Syrian Curriculum with instruction in Arabic.[13] More than 80% of refugee children living outside of camps are not accessing education.

Major Barriers to Educational Access

Limited Capacity

The scale of the refugee crisis has overwhelmed the resources and public services of the four host countries, who are dependent on international funding that has consistently fallen short of what is necessary to accommodate refugee students in public educational systems. The vast majority of refugee children, 84%, are living in host communities that are incapable of absorbing them all into school for reasons of lack of space and resources. In Lebanon, 30% of refugee families cited lack of space as a reason for having a child out of school; many children who have tried to enroll in already overstretched public schools have been turned away, while regionally those who have successfully enrolled are sharing limited resources and infrastructure with huge numbers of students from host countries, driving down the quality of education and increasing drop-out rates for Syrian students. Moreover, access for Syrian children to accelerated learning programs is necessary but highly limited through host country public school systems, which often cannot afford to implement such programs. In Lebanon, there were only 200,000 spaces for refugee children in the 2015-2016 school year, which is less than half of the number of Syrian children in the country in need of education.[14] In Jordan, more than 120 schools are operating at full capacity in efforts to absorb thousands of refugee children, and many of those schools lack the financial resources to implement double-shifted systems to accommodate greater numbers.[15] Overcrowding is putting extreme strain and pressure on host country educational systems, leading to increases in incidences of discrimination and violence against Syrian students, particularly in Lebanon, where the government is struggling to

incorporate nearly 500,000 refugee children into an educational system equipped to serve only 300,000 Lebanese children.[16]

Restrictions on Work and Economic Insecurity

Host-country governments have generously offered Syrian refugee children access to public schools at reduced price or for free, but the poverty that a vast majority of Syrian refugee families experience is complicating children's ability to access school and moreover making even small costs associated with school prohibitive. Governments have exacerbated the problem by imposing restrictions on the ability of many refugee families to gain employment or legal status. In Turkey, the number of work permits made available to Syrian refugees accounts for less than 0.5% of the total refugee population, while in Jordan, stringent requirements for obtaining lawful work that include paying fees and getting sponsorship from employers have made it nearly impossible for most adults to find work and have left 90% of the refugee population in poverty. In Lebanon, more than 2/3 of Syrian refugees have been unable to maintain legal residency status due to restrictive and costly residency requirements, with severe effects on the freedom of movement of adults to travel and access work; around 70% of the Syrian refugee population in Lebanon is below the poverty line.[17] At the same time, the large numbers of Syrian refugees has increased competition with already impoverished local host communities, driving up rent costs while lowering wages for informal work. Such restrictive access to work for adults has created great economic insecurity for refugee families, driving an increase in child labor among refugee children who are working to supplement the incomes of their parents. A 2015 UN Assessment found that 97% of Syrian children in Jordan are at risk of dropping out due to financial hardship,[18] and 47% of refugee families are directly reliant upon their child's supplemental income.[19] Acute financial pressures are consistently the biggest factor preventing refugee children from accessing education; economic hardship has even pushed some refugee boys to return to Syria to join armed groups, while statistics show that it is fueling a dramatic increase in the prevalence of child marriage for refugee girls, with the number of refugee girls being married before the age of 18 rising 25% between 2013 and 2014 in Jordan.[20] Moreover, refugee families are choosing to keep their children out of school to avoid education-related costs, while those families who have enrolled children are often unable to pay the excessive transportation costs to schools or even minor costs for books, bags and stationery, driving high dropout rates.

Admission Regulations and Documentation

Many refugee children encounter documentation and admission barriers when attempting to access public schools. Large numbers of children have been unable to verify their previous education or lack documentation such as birth certificates or ID's required to enroll, while others who have not registered with UNHCR are sometimes unable to verify their refugee status. Host country governments have further aggravated the situation by actually erecting numerous admission regulations that restrict access to formal education. New registration and screening barriers imposed by the Turkish government in March of 2016 have led to backlogs of six months to obtain ID cards necessary to enroll in school. Meanwhile, Jordanian law prohibits children who have been out of school for more than 3 years from enrolling in the public education system, effectively severing any potential for many refugee children to access formal and accredited education. Furthermore, refugees in Jordan must obtain service cards to access public schools, but nearly 40% of refugee children without birth certificates and most refugees who have left camps since such regulations were enacted in 2014 are ineligible to receive them.[21] While governments have recently made some efforts to relax such documentation requirements for younger children, lack of official documentation remains a strong barrier for adolescents and secondary school-age children. There are, in addition, reports of individual school directors turning away refugee children with identification or demanding additional documentation in both Turkey and Lebanon.

Language of Instruction

Lack of familiarity with the language of instruction is preventing thousands of Syrian refugee children from enrolling in school across the region, and public school systems continue to offer insufficient language support. In Turkey, the language of instruction particularly hinders access to public schools for adolescents and secondary school-age children, who are not only slower and face much greater difficulty in adjusting to the new language but who also receive stricter consequences during the period of adjustment than their younger counterparts. The establishment of Temporary Education Centers that teach a Syrian curriculum with instruction in Arabic and are supervised and accredited by the Turkish government has enabled much greater numbers of refugee children to gain access to certified learning, but for many more, language remains an impediment to enrollment. In Lebanon, English and French are the official languages of instruction for math and sciences in primary school, while no secondary school shifts are taught in Arabic. Human Rights Watch estimates that 95% of secondary school-age children are not accessing education in Lebanon,[22]

while many younger children are being placed in lower grades due to lack of familiarity with the languages of instruction.

Failure to Accredit Informal Education

Large numbers of Syrian refugee children have suffered protracted displacement, and many of them have been out of school for years. Such children require specialized and accelerated schooling that is often not available to them through public schooling systems. Moreover, refugee children often struggle in public schools to adapt to new curricula, languages of instruction, and social and cultural context. Limited capacity and the lack of access to specialized learning in public schools has limited many refugee children's educational opportunities to enrollment in informal and often unaccredited schools. In all four host-countries, non-formal and informal education programs are serving around 10% of refugee children,[23] many of which are delivered by non-governmental organizations. However, host governments have failed to consistently and formally recognize or accredit such programs, impeding student's ability to receive certification of their learning and re-enter into the formal education system. Host country governments, particularly in Turkey and Lebanon, have begun to make greater efforts to recognize informal education; problems, however, remain in standardizing and monitoring different informal programs, such as in Lebanon where the Non-Formal Education Framework continues to lack standard operating procedures.

Treatment in School

Syrian students are struggling not only to access education, but also to stay in school once they have been enrolled. There are widespread reports of ongoing bullying and physical and emotional harassment against Syrian refugee children in local schools in all four host countries; Save the Children has reported on many incidences of refugee children being targeted on the way to and from school, as well as being intimidated and ridiculed by other students and teachers. Corporal punishment and verbal abuse are common, as is discrimination. Compounding such problems is that many teachers have been untrained to deal with incidences of bullying or to give psychosocial support to already traumatized refugee children. In Lebanon and Jordan, overcrowding of public schools has strained local relations, with many parents blaming refugee children for lowering the quality of education and for outbreaks of infectious diseases, increasing incidences of discrimination, harassment and even violence against Syrian boys. There have been reports that some teachers in Lebanon have divided classrooms by Syrian and Lebanese students. The ongoing bullying and harassment

directed at Syrian students contributes to very high drop-out rates, more than 20% in Lebanon, while UNICEF reported that nearly 2000 Syrian children dropped out of school in 2016 in Jordan.[24]

Higher Education

The Institute of International Education has estimated that around 450,000 Syrian refugees are of university age (18-22), 100,000 of whom are eligible for continuation of education at a university level. Nevertheless, very small percentages of university-age youth are enrolled in university across the region, owing similarly to factors such as lack of funding, economic constraints, and issues of language and documentation. Developments in Turkey, which is hosting approximately 40,000-50,000 university age refugees, of whom only 3% are enrolled in Turkish universities, have been at the forefront of efforts to increase university enrollment.[25] Three new institutions have been proposed that cater specifically to Syrian university students and remove the types of constraints that impede their enrollment in Turkish universities. Zakat University, Turkey Qatar University, which is a collaboration of the Turkish and Qatari governments, and The Middle East Peace University are proposed academic institutions with instruction in Arabic that endeavor to give refugees the education necessary to make them competitive in the Turkish job market. However admirable such steps may be, insufficient funding to maintain such institutions and the Turkish government's failure to accredit them continues to hamper access and raises concerns surrounding the potential employability of students enrolled in them. Nevertheless, higher education must be considered strategically as an important resource in giving Syrian refugees the kinds of tools that will be necessary to rebuild the nation's destroyed infrastructure and institutions, as well as foster peace and social cohesion.

Resource Gaps & International Aid

Efforts by host country governments to increase refugee children's participation in schools through increasing classroom sizes, building and renovating schools, hiring and training teachers, and developing programs to reach greater numbers of children have been dependent on insufficient funding from international donors. The 3RP Regional Refugee Response Plan was only 61% funded for the year 2016; the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan was only 62% funded in 2015.[26] Nevertheless, host nations have partnered with international organizations and donors in implementing new programs to reach and incorporate greater numbers of refugee children into school, including opening double shifts for Syrian students in the afternoon. At the February 2016

London Conference, donors pledged more than $11 billion USD in aid over several years to assist host governments in meeting a number of goals for refugees, including increased school enrollment.[27] The Jordan Compact, introduced at the conference, includes $97.5 million to open and run 102 double shifted schools in Jordan for the current academic year, in addition to 98 already operating double shifted schools; the increased funding intends to reach 50,000 Syrian children and is providing some resources for vocational training for youth. Furthermore, the Jordan Compact also establishes an accelerated and accredited program for 25,000 children between the ages of 8 and 12 who have experienced protracted absence from school, but so far has only reached a little over 1000 children.[28]

UNICEF has been a particularly important actor in the provision of educational aid to refugees through a variety of mechanisms. They are currently working with Jordan's Ministry of Education to establish kindergarten access for refugee children, but access remains limited to several hundred girls in Zaatari Camp. Moreover, their Learning For All program, which contacts Syrian families to discuss the importance of education, has reached more than 15,000 families, with 80% now enrolled in school. UNICEF is also currently financially supporting more than 220 Makani centers in both camps and urban settings in Jordan; such centers have provided life skills training to over 50,000 refugee youth children, while more than 60,000 have been referred to formal education through partners.[29] The Lebanese government has similarly partnered with international donors to establish the Reaching All Children with Education in Lebanon (RACE) program, opening up space for 200,000 refugee children in public schools and opening second shift classrooms in 238 schools. Lebanon's five-year plan intends to enroll 440,000 children in schools by the 2020-2021 school year.[30] UNICEF has furthermore reached 40,000 Syrian refugee youth with life skills training in Lebanon. In both Lebanon and Jordan, UNICEF is providing school supplies such as backpacks, pencils and pens, and stationery with aid from international donors. In Turkey, international funding through UNICEF sponsors 330,000 refugee children in Temporary Education Centers, and aid has also been used for the maintenance of school resources, such as tables, desks and chairs. 33,000 Syrian children in Iraq are able to access formal education through UNICEF funding, while 55,000 overall receive educational supplies to relieve costs.[31]

Across the region, governments are taking necessary steps to accommodate refugee children, but nearly half of the 1.5 million refugee children remain unable to access education; such shortcomings point to a need for greater international funding, although a number of factors outside of lack of resources, as outlined above, continue to limit access to educational services. Furthermore, lack of financial resources not only limits access to education but also hinders its quality. Considerably more funding will be necessary to confront the systemic problems surrounding quality of education and

to implement programs sensitive to the specific needs of refugee children, such as training for teachers in psychosocial and language support.

Conclusion

It is evident that there remain significant impediments to education for Syrian refugee children; while host governments have worked to address these impediments by lowering admission regulations and providing greater resources, it is important to remember that many such barriers are a product of the rising social tensions that inevitably accompany the large-scale influx of refugee populations, and that host governments must be supported in balancing their efforts to help refugees with the needs of their own populations. As such, the inability to accommodate refugee children into public schooling systems in host countries and the social and economic tensions that doing so inflames should perhaps lead us to consider alternative means of reaching refugee children with education. Methods such as temporary education centers in Turkey have demonstrated success at avoiding many of the cultural and legal barriers that inhibit access to quality education while also minimizing strain placed on public schooling systems and lowering social tensions between refugees and local host communities. Reaching Syrian children with education in this way can relieve immediate problems such as lack of access while also giving refugee children the long-term tools and skills that will be necessary for Syrian reconstruction.

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PART D:
GAP ANALYSIS

Figure 13.1: Gap breakdown

Subtopics	Syria	Host Countries	Long-term
Rights	Increase in sexual and domestic violence Increase in honor killings Increased human trafficking Increased state-sponsored violence	Lack of monitoring for violence Lack of legal representation	Lack of constitutional rights and protections Relaxed laws regarding sexual violence and ----honor killings Citizenship laws causing statelessness
Economic	Loss of trained professionals Lack of secure jobs and safety Physical destruction of business and Lack of water, power, fuel Lack of child protection and labor law	Lack of work permits Shortage of employment opportunities Punishment for prostitution and informal work No child labor protections Discrimination	Lack of anti-discriminatory laws and enforcement Lack of unemployment compensation of social supports at state level Increased burdens of household chores
Health	Only 48% of hospitals functioning Decreased prenatal care One-third of healthcare workers remain in Aleppo 12.8 million in need of healthcare assistance 770 healthcare workers killed 7 million in need of food assistance Sewage treatment decreased from 70% to 35% Down to 25L water per person per day from 50L Waste and garbage management has ceased Vaccinations down from 100% 50%	Costly health care in some host countries Limited water access Limited or nonexistent pre-natal care Lack of specialized medicine Decreased vaccinations Limited mental health resources Short staffing	Public health infrastructure (water, sanitation, hospitals) destroyed Shortage of qualified healthcare workers in Syria Gaps in vaccination may lead to resurgence of certain diseases PTSD and trauma related health issues will be a bigger issue
Education	6000 (25% of all schools out of use) 2.2 million without access to education Safety in schools and surrounding areas has deteriorated Overcrowding has driven down quality of education. Aid organizations and deliveries cannot access many areas Many teachers have fled or been killed	700,000 not accessing education due to documentation issues Employment Restrictions forcing children to drop out Overcrowding in schools and lack of supplies Syrian children struggling due to language barriers and social issues Syrian teachers have fled or can't work in host countries	Previously has 90+% enrollment rates Education was free and compulsory through secondary school

: Infrastructure : Laws, Policy & Enforcement : Funding : Brain Drain

Gap Analysis

Introduction

The following section focuses on how current efforts are addressing gaps between pre-crisis and current conditions, and what areas need to be given more focus in order to achieve the greatest net benefit to women and children. By establishing these benchmarks, this report is able to evaluate the progress of current efforts and establish tangible goals in which to anchor our recommendations. Our gap analysis also begins to diverge from the previous sectoral approach to begin identifying overlap between the four sections. The recurring themes which the Task Force has identified throughout were as follows: 1) policies, laws, and enforcement, which includes women and children's rights and the capacity of police or communities to uphold them; 2) destruction or overburdening of physical infrastructure, ranging from lack of adequate housing and amenities to overcrowding in schools and hospitals; 3) lack of funding, or the inefficient/unequal deployment of humanitarian and development aid; and 4) the implications of brain-drain on the current and future conditions of Syrian women and children. Some of these sections contain overlapping issues, which help to inform our recommendations. These overlaps are illustrated in Figure 13.1.

With regards to structure, the Gap Analysis is arranged into both short term and long term goals. Short term focuses on the most pressing issues affecting Syrian women and children in Syria and host-countries, while the long-term analysis focuses on aspirations for the rehabilitation of the Syrian region. The return of Syrians is a pivotal assumption on the part of the Task Force, as it is on the basis of return to Syria that we prescribe our policy recommendations. Some Syrians have already begun to return as a result of the ceasefire and government victories in urban centers like Aleppo, and surveys of Syrian refugees indicate a strong desire to return to the homeland either post-conflict or following a political settlement.[1] The strain placed on host-countries, both financial and political, and the increasing tensions with local populations make integration or protracted residence untenable. Likewise, the pushback from Western countries on Syrian immigration makes resettlement an unsustainable strategy. Given the dire implications that poorly planned refugee-response frameworks have had on women and children, identifying and addressing pressing issues in ways that promote long-term development and stability are a priority. Some of the immediate humanitarian efforts actually address this, though

many fail to embrace the long-term needs of this population or how current problems will impact Syrians as they return to their homes.

Short Term

Syria

Law, Policy and Enforcement

The shift in women and children's relationship with laws and enforcement in Syria is not easily quantified given the lack of credible information, and the underreporting of certain offenses. However, the existence of discriminatory laws and social practices pre-crisis offer a good baseline for inference. In terms of domestic and state-sponsored violence, limited protections for victims of domestic abuse and rape pre-crisis were quickly discarded in wartime, with rape and violence towards women and children becoming a pervasive psychological and physical weapon. SGBV and incidents of honor killing continue to go underreported, though many women and children in refugee camps have cited these acts as the reason they fled Syria. Data taken from the Women Under Siege Project on reports of Sexualized violence between 2011 and 2013 showed that the largest percentage of such acts were suffered by women, and that the vast majority of cases which were reported were perpetrated by government forces[2]. Women and children's economic opportunities are also impacted by this violence, as their jobs may require them to enter dangerous regions of rural or urban areas. The lack of regulation or formal punishment mechanisms for abusers within the armed forces and in society provides little recourse for vulnerable populations. Establishing a system for monitoring and addressing these acts, as well as providing programs to support and protect the victims will be necessary to bring sexual violence and honor killing levels down to at least pre-crisis levels.

The lack of compliance with humanitarian law and several Security Council Resolutions on the part of government forces and its allies has also jeopardized women and children' access to healthcare and aid. Targeting hospitals is a direct violation of the fourth Geneva Convention, and has severely handicapped the national health infrastructure. Currently only around 48% of hospitals within Syria are functioning[3], and attacks on aid convoys –in violation of Security Council Resolution S/RES/2139[4] demanding the cessation of attacks on urban areas and aid convoys- have placed intolerable limitations on women and children's access to medicine, food and basic necessities in besieged areas. Protection of civilians and equal access to aid and services is the stated duty of the Syrian government, though aid blockades and attrition tactics have deprived over half of the population remaining in Syria along sectarian or

territorial boundaries[5]. Ensuring that women and children's rights and access to aid is enforced will be a key challenge for the maintenance of the ceasefire, and these services should be able to reach all Syrians irrespective of their gender, geographic location, or their cultural or political identity. The Security Council has already touched on this issue, specifically referring to the need for a UN monitoring mechanism for aid distribution within the country in S/RES/2165[6], though it will be important for the UN to take a leadership role in assuring accountability for aid operations during the ceasefire.

Infrastructure

The quality and integrity of Syria's public infrastructure affects many of the problems facing Syria today. In terms of health, pre-crisis infrastructure was already strained due to mismanagement and poor planning, but damage to basic infrastructure, such as hospitals, sewage treatment and water supply systems, has even further exacerbated the deteriorating health of Syrian women and children. Many more now live without reliable access to clean drinking water, vaccinations, or basic medical assistance for illness or injury. Having previously possessed one of the more advanced healthcare systems in the Middle East- offering access to 99% of urban residents and roughly 95% of rural residents- the collapse of Syria's healthcare system has been a drastic setback. Maternal mortality rates have jumped back from 49 to 68 per 100,000 births, people with chronic conditions are forced to ration medication if they can get it at all, and previously controlled diseases like polio have experienced a revival amongst unvaccinated youth. Today the majority of functioning healthcare infrastructure lies in government controlled areas.[7] Restoring healthcare infrastructure to the besieged areas will require a longer-term political settlement, though the conditions may be alleviated there through improved access to basic aid.

Housing also plays a vital role in the general health of Syrian women and children. With 4.3 million currently in need of shelter,[8] short-term responses will demand an effort to provide quick, cheap and adequate housing to IDPs and returning Syrians. Closely linked to housing is water and sanitation. In Deir Ez-Zor and Damascus, pumped water has dropped by 90% and 20% respectively,[9] and water has become an expensive commodity in some cases as private vendors seek to capitalize on scarcity. Sewage treatment has dropped from 70% to 35%,[10] which is a direct threat to public health when it leaches into the water supply. In the short, the lack of safe, sanitary locations for Syrians to access medical care threatens a protracted health crisis while the lack of shelter, water, sewage treatment, and waste disposal threatens to increase the demand on an already strained health system.

The destruction of schools also falls under infrastructural damage. The absence of facilities in which to educate Syrian women and children complicates their ability to obtain the vocational and civic skills required to rebuild a democratic and economically

viable society. Syria's education system pre-crisis boasted an enrollment rate of 95% for primary education and 72% for secondary.[11] In marked contrast, the percentage of children enrolled in school has dropped to 39% since the start of the crisis.[12] The physical destruction of schools leaves Syrian children without a safe environment to learn, and for those who continue use the remaining schools there is always a risk as long as militant groups target these institutions. Of the 5.4 million school-aged children in Syria, 2.1 million do not have access to basic education.[13] Efforts to alleviate this situation have taken a back seat within Syria due to the prevalence of more life-threatening issues, and the reconstruction of schools will likely play out on a much longer timeframe. However, finding safe and adequate spaces for learning to take place will need to be a priority in the short-term. One way in which this is already being addressed is UNICEF's partnership with the Ministry of Education on the Back to Learning campaign, and in its provision of prefabricated classrooms to help deal with large classroom sizes, and tents provided as temporary classrooms when it is necessary. UNICEF opened 401 schools that benefitted 189,000 children, providing 324 prefabricated classrooms.

Brain-Drain

Syria has lost the majority of its skilled workers, and with them the backbone of their economy. The ceasefire and the gradual normalization in parts of Syria may lead some professionals to return, though it will be insufficient given that many of the most skilled have been killed or managed to secure livelihoods in other countries. As low-skilled workers and children return to their homes, how will Syria begin to restore its middle class and fill more technical positions? With half of all Syria's physicians forced out of the country or killed, health is a particularly troubling area of focus. Provided that NGOs and UN agencies can gain access to besieged and underserved areas, finding healthcare workers to address more specialized needs will be a challenge, particularly of surgical needs or addressing mental health. A recent report from the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs cited 30,000 new conflict-related trauma cases per month.[14] In order to supplement Syria's dwindling numbers of healthcare professionals there will likely be reliance on outside help, and a possible need for long term partnerships until Syrians can be trained to fill the gap.

Without trained teachers for primary, secondary, or university level education Syria is also at risk of perpetuating the skills deficit. Overcrowding in schools is not just an issue of building sufficiently large classrooms, but also having enough teachers to provide education that is both accessible and of a high enough quality. More than 52,000 teachers have been displaced or killed,[15] leaving most Syrians without access to an accredited teacher or a standard curriculum. To remedy this gap, it will be necessary to find opportunities for returning teachers and to strengthen programs for teachers

and vocational trainers. Additionally, the shift in teacher accreditation requirements since 1999[16] - requiring a specialized bachelor's degree rather than a two year program - is impractical given the inaccessibility of college education within the country and a massive demand for teachers. The void created by the destruction of schools and the displacement or death of many teachers will make bridging this gap too difficult for Syrians to address on their own in the short-term.

Funding Gaps

The 2017 Humanitarian needs overview claims 13.8 million are in need of livelihood recovery with 10 million experiencing acute humanitarian need.[17] Supporting economic recovery is vital in de-incentivizing recruitment to armed groups, and in ending reliance on negative coping mechanisms. As humanitarian aid is focused on emergency supply of basic needs, there are very limited programs that provide early recovery and livelihood support in Syria. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has been implementing its Humanitarian Livelihoods Program, which revives industrial facilities to create jobs and to provide emergency employment.[18] The program established sewing workshops employing more than 200 women.[19] Also, the World Food Program has integrated "gender equality and empowerment" into its Livelihood and Resilience Strategy targeted from 2015-2017.[20] However, as identified in the strategy report, barriers to women's employment have existed before the crisis and are hard to overcome. In order to support the livelihoods of women-headed households and to incorporate women in the economy, more practical resolutions and larger-scale programs need to be in place.

Food security is also heavily influenced by the presence or lack of sufficient funding. With 2.5 million starving in Syria,[21] many have been forced to beg for food and ration their meals[22]. The World Food Program has been trying to address this problem by Supplying Syrians with food and electronic food vouchers, and there has been a bit of progress towards restoring jobs in the food sector.[23] Funding will be important not only to insure that Syrian families have enough money to purchase the food that they need, but so they can begin to pursue sell-sufficient means of food production through agriculture. As stated earlier in this report, cash and food assistance are bandage solutions for the ripple effects of the crisis, but they are not sustainable. Reliance on food aid is not food security, and there is only so much which can be achieved by flooding markets with free food. This can have dire implications for local economies, perpetuating the reliance on such aid, and often food aid doesn't address all of the nutrient needs of women and children.

Aid for education within Syria takes a number of forms, with support coming from a broad range of UN organizations and international NGOs like the Malala Fund, 3RPG, UNICEF, UNHCR and Save the Children as well as many other organizations. Aid

was able to reach 3.6 million children with formal and non-formal education supplies and services.[24] According to UNICEF, "This was achieved through 45 implementing partners comprising 29 national NGOs, seven international NGOs, five UN agencies, the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) and the Palestinian Red Crescent."[25] The organizations primarily try to assist in building schools, sending supplies, and providing monetary aid to the affected locations in Syria as well as assisting those that are in the refugee camps. Educational aid is important and is often overlooked. There are two types of aid often given, which is development and humanitarian aid. When aid is donated from foreign countries or organizations, if it's not specified to education, it can mostly go to other needs such as water, food, and healthcare related needs. Education does not get as much media coverage as other types of aid, which is also why it is easier for organizations to not focus on funding education as much.[26]

Refugee Host Countries

Laws, Policies and Enforcement

Legal protection for refugees is contingent on the recognition of their host country, and as none of Syria's neighboring countries have officially acknowledged the status of Syrians as such there has been sparse legal or political representation available to Syrians in Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq or Turkey. This limits the capacity of the UN to invoke international law when dealing with host-countries, and leaves the Syrian population vulnerable to a number of increasingly stringent policies. These policies largely impact the economic outlooks of Syrians and their access to services, while other issues like sexual and gender-based violence are hardly addressed by local law enforcement. For sexual and gender-based violence there is little protection, both in camps and urban settings alike. One in five Syrian women in Iraq have reported rape or threats of sexual violence,[27] and 82% said they fear for their safety on a daily basis.[28] In Jordan and Lebanon there are similarly high levels of sexual and gender-based violence, and in all host countries the prevalence of child marriage, human trafficking and honor killings is disturbingly high. Even though UN agencies may offer support to victims of sexual and gender-based violence, many are unaware of such programs[29] or feel endangered in trying to seek help. Finding ways to bring these issues out of the dark will be important in addressing them, and without sufficient data on the degree to which SGBV affects Syrian refugees it will be extremely difficult to remedy. Likewise, informing women and girls of the resources available to them will help to build community among victims of violence and develop a greater rights-consciousness among refugee communities.

The lack of employment opportunities, largely owing to the denial of work permits for Syrians has a huge impact on women and children's access to healthcare,

education and economic stability. Jordan has taken steps to provide industrial opportunities for Syrians through the Jordan Compact,[30] and even looked towards involving women in water management projects.[31] Meanwhile, increased regulations on Syrian's residency permits have effectively banned them from working in the country.[32] Likewise, Turkey's decision to open up work permit applications to Syrians has not led to a large increase in Syrian employment because it requires applicants to be sponsored by an employer and many are still unaware of the law. A recent study showed that less than 0.1% of Syrians in Turkey had applied for work permits.[33] The cheap and unregulated labor of Syrian women and children is often preferable to host-country industries as well. Especially in cases where men are unable to find work, women and children have become the breadwinners of refugee families. For female-headed households this puts an intolerable burden on the woman, and even in families where the man is present it can lead to increased domestic violence as men begin to feel their traditional roles as the provider being subverted. The lack of substantial or reliable income makes finding accommodation, healthcare, or food even more difficult and children are often forced to drop out of school to provide for their families. Meanwhile, for those who receive aid from UNHCR or other organizations there is the risk of aid-dependency, which is dangerous given the unreliability of this aid.

Regulations in host-countries can also prove prohibitive when it comes to surgical procedures and medications. While Turkey issued a policy in 2013 that opened access to health care for Syrians at no cost, many have reported issues in obtaining the treatments they need in urban centers owing to their status.[34] Meanwhile, refugees in Lebanon[35] and Jordan[36] have cited the cost of healthcare as their biggest problem. Much of this issue relates back to restrictions on employment and the poverty which work restrictions have brought upon Syrians, though additional policies like Jordan's decision to levy new fees in 2014 has left at least 58.3% of Syrians with chronic conditions without treatment.[37] These policy decisions are only widening the gap in Syrian women and children's access to healthcare and leading to even greater demands on the host-country's health infrastructure. Closing the gap in access to healthcare that results from costs and documentation issues should be prioritized.

Lastly, Syrian children's access to education has been cut off as a result of economic hardship - mentioned above - and issues of documentation, discrimination and other issues that host-country policies have either created or neglected to respond to. One such issue is documentation, because despite the relaxation of regulations by some host-countries for younger children, many children trying to enter secondary school or higher education are not being afforded the same leniency. This further contributes to a brain-drain, as Syrian youth find themselves unable to access the levels of education that are necessary in developing professional skills. Other problems include language barriers, as seen in Turkey and Lebanon where Turkish, French and

English are commonly used in classes, or the failure of the education systems to monitor discriminatory behavior amongst students and teachers.[38] These pressures have led many Syrian parents to pull their children out of school, putting them at greater risk for being unable to reintegrate into school.

Infrastructure

The burden of Syrian refugees on the public infrastructure or Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Iraq is straining the logistical and political limits of these countries. Not only is funding an issue when it comes to providing these refugees with the medicine, food and shelter that they need, but sentiments of resentment have been building amongst the host populations as Syrians become a source of competition over already scarce services and resources in places like Jordan and Lebanon[39]. Given that the majority of these refugees live in urban settings, the strain of unplanned urbanization pushes the demands on housing, water and sewage, healthcare and other resources to the limit. In camps, the water and sewage systems are far worse. Across host countries, the issue that is most adversely impacted by insufficient infrastructure is healthcare.
While refugees have better access to healthcare and reliable aid delivery than those living in besieged areas of Syria, many problems arise from the overburdening of the host country's healthcare system. Turkey's state-run camps have managed to provide a relatively high standard of healthcare and service access, but a lack of trained staff and funding for camps in Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq have hobbled efforts to provide health care. Mental health has proven an even trickier issue to address, with only 5% of children with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and psychosomatic issues have received any kind of treatment.[40] Furthermore, the inundation of healthcare services by Syrian refugees has raised tensions in cases where refugees are seen as taking away access from citizens and lead to the kind of policies mentioned previously. Water and sewage systems have been especially hard hit, as systems that were managed similarly to Syria's have led to tremendous waste and health concerns from polluted water. In Jordan the supply of water has dropped from 80 liters per person per day to 30 liters,[41] while in Lebanon 30% of Syrians live without adequate shelter or regular access to clean drinking water.[42] These conditions are worse in camps like Zaatari and Domiz, where water must be trucked in, sewage is often left in the open, overcrowding leads to increases in communicable diseases.

Brain-Drain

In host countries, efforts to address the problem of brain-drain have involved cash-for-work programs and community mobilization.[43] However, the lack of work permits leaves many skilled Syrians looking for temporary employment at low pay.

These constraints leave the skills of many Syrians underutilized in the areas of health, education, and business, while Syrian children are denied the opportunity to develop themselves intellectually and professionally due to economic hardship. Compounding this issue is the fact that Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Iraq already struggle with brain-drain amongst their own populations. In fact, Turkey's ban on University-degreed Syrians leaving the country has been seen as a means of supplementing their own loss of trained workers.[44] Thus, the issue of brain-drain in host countries requires a much more comprehensive approach which can tackle the economic hardships of both the local population and refugees.

To prevent the continuation of brain-drain, education is of vital importance for Syrian refugees. Particularly because their counterparts within Syria lack the relative stability or host-countries, finding ways to train and educate the refugees before they return will ease the burden on the reconstruction of the school system as they return to Syria. In Jordan, 90,000 children still do not have access to formal education, with children in camps being the most disadvantaged (80% out of school). In Lebanon the numbers are even worse, 250,000 school-aged children not accessing formal education and a dropout rate of 20%. In Turkey, access to education was actually the worst according to UNHCR data (only 40% had access), largely owing to language barriers and economic constraints. The GoT has set up some temporary schools with a Syrian curriculum and Arabic instruction, though the Syrian teachers employed there are listed as "volunteers."[45] The situation in Iraq runs counter to many of the other host-countries in that girls are accessing education more than their male counterparts, and overall the access to education in camps (74%) exceeds that of peri-urban and urban areas (64%). Another important gap in the response to brain-drain has been the lack of discussion over university enrollment and Syrian scholars.[46]

Funding Gaps

Funding can improve the conditions of Syrian women and children in terms of access to medicine or education, as well as through non-material supports like psychosocial assistance and legitimizing women's movements or community-led programs to address SGBV. At the 2016 Supporting Syria and the Region conference, $12.1 million dollars were pledged towards helping the UN and host-country governments begin to implement both immediate and more long-term plans for addressing Syrian refugees.[47] One such goal was to provide access to education for all refugee and host-country children by the end of the 2016-2017 school year.[48] While this goal may be far-reaching, it is important to strive towards. The conference also specifically stated that the money would be used to provide women and girls with safer access to healthcare and education. Fortunately, $4.7 billion has actually been disbursed already. However, the funding for the long-term ($6.1 billion pledged) has

been slower to materialize. The reliability of such pledges will be paramount in maintaining the security of the region, and making sure that women and children actually get the aid that they need.

Providing greater funds to address the economic needs of Syrian families- such that children do not feel they must drop out to supplement their family's lack of income- would help to raise Syrian enrollment rates and limit reliance on negative coping mechanisms like begging, survival sex, or involvement in the black market. Parallel efforts are needed to hire more teachers -especially women- and to provide schools supplies to these students. There are currently not enough financial supports for Syrian women to pursue teaching and other community services, and microfinance options like those provided by CARE[49] will be needed to jumpstart small businesses like community childcare centers or schools. Childcare, cash-for-work programs, and subsidies for medicine and food are other ways in which international donors could channel their funding into more efficient programs. Programs like the Jordan Compact have shown potential in helping host-countries identify and establish economic opportunities for refugees by using international aid, though they are dependent almost entirely on funding from foreign governments.[50] Channeling funding through local economies and national response plans would also help to ensure that inequalities between Syrians and the local population did not become significant enough to cause hostilities.

Long Term

Syria

Laws, Policy and Enforcement

Our research into women and children's rights and representation in Syria has revealed significant discrepancies in the translation of CEDAW and the Syrian constitution into the lived experiences of Syrian citizens. Syria's decision to place reservations on key elements of CEDAW has impeded the evolution of women's status within Syrian society. With regards to women's political representation, pre-crisis political involvement was largely contained to the Baath party's hierarchy and with little support for grassroots civil society. Today women have become involved in the conflict in many ways, serving as fighters for all sides of the conflict and engaging in peace-building and humanitarian processes. Reconstruction should recognize the evolving status and political consciousness amongst women. However, the lack of women's presence in the first Geneva talks, Astana, or the most recent round of talks reveals that

women's roles in the long-term planning are not commensurate with the large and integral role they play in Syrian society.

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence is another issue which pre-dates the crisis, and which must be addressed in the long-term. Leniency on rape and honor killings did not provide the necessary deterrents pre-crisis, and with the massive increase in SGBV and honor killings throughout the conflict there will need to be a concerted effort to protect victims and criminalize these acts. Women and children's economic rights will also require a closer examination during any constitutional or legal reforms, as the current laws to do not provide the necessary protections against discrimination or child labor that would facilitate the goals of economic revival and restoring education to pre-crisis levels. In the absence of international monitors and NGOs, the current framework for women and children's legal and economic rights is insufficient to support their lasting protection and empowerment.

In the long-term, women and children's access to health and education will also rely on government funding and supports. Supporting the pre-crisis commitment to compulsory education and universally accessible healthcare will help to alleviate many of the barriers currently facing women and children, particularly in female-headed households where additional support is most badly needed. In addition to facing workplace discrimination, many women now struggle to fulfill both domestic and financial responsibilities without the traditional support systems. All Syrians will need broader access to social and economic programs as they begin to rebuild their lives, but the strains placed on female-headed households require special consideration.

Infrastructure

Much of the infrastructural damage has already been discussed in the short-term section, though efforts to restore them to full capacity will require a longer time frame and greater involvement on the part of foreign donors and the private sector. The destruction of schools, hospitals, homes, and industry will have lasting effects on Syria, though reconstruction offers an opportunity to address some of the issues that were identified pre-crisis. For instance, agricultural methods used pre-crisis involved flooding fields instead of more modern usage of drip agriculture or sprinklers. This wasted an already scarce resource, and has made the effort of restoring water security to Syria that much more difficult. Sanitation is another area in which pre-crisis conditions were insufficient, as only 45% of rural areas were connected to sewage treatment. Treatment of waste water and the disposal of garbage play a large role in maintaining the overall health of Syrian women and children, and addressing these gaps will produce a ripple effect throughout the other sectors. For example, the large number of women formerly employed in the agricultural sector will likely need support to restore their livelihoods. Restoring this sector will, in turn, remove food aid-dependency and restore food

security to women and children in both rural and urban areas. The destruction of infrastructure also increases the burden of household work for women. Without decentralized water and sanitation, or the necessary transportation to reach jobs and services, women must work twice as hard to accomplish their daily tasks. Especially in female-headed households, providing these supports will be critical in allowing women and children the freedom to pursue education and employment opportunities.

Restoring public spaces for civic engagement, education, and economic participation will also be important in fostering a more socially cohesive society. Schools, roads, government buildings, and other structures which facilitated economic, social and political interactions will be important in reversing the atomization which fear, paranoia and violence have created. Safe, clean and equally accessible places to learn, work, and live will help all Syrian women and children provided that they are managed properly. Infrastructure reconstruction will also provide a significant source of employment. Ensuring that Syrian women and children benefit from the jobs and economic benefits of reconstruction will be important in securing their economic stability, and in helping young Syrians to integrate into sustainable peacetime occupations. As examined previously in this report, unemployment is one of the largest drivers of recruitment into armed groups- particularly amongst children.

Brain-Drain

The economic impacts of brain-drain are felt throughout the public and private sectors. As discussed in the short-term section on Syria, brain-drain will be a hard issue to overcome. Even if the ceasefire is able to facilitate more substantive political discourse, doctors and teachers who have been targeted by militant groups will be slow to return if at all. The Supporting Syria and the Region Conference set goals for providing all Syrian children with access to education by the end of the 2016-17 school year, and while this will be a herculean task to accomplish in host-countries it will be an even greater challenge to reach children in Syria who have not had the level of stability or visibility to receive educational aid. As mentioned in the brain-drain section for host-countries, addressing the issues of education- both the reintegration of students and the training of teachers- will need to be addressed in the short-term so as to not place a greater burden on the education efforts in Syria short-term. However, in the long-term the governing bodies will need to address the huge gaps in levels of education and the kind of curriculum that Syrian children have been relying on during the crisis.

Restoring women's participation in the labor force will also be necessary during reconstruction, both as an economic imperative and a necessary step towards empowering women and female-headed households. In the pre-crisis era, women were employed in healthcare, education, service industries, and agriculture, with some progress being made towards promoting female-run businesses in the private sector.

However, the heavy reliance of women on their spouses, the state, and their families has left them in financial ruin as their homes, businesses and assets have been destroyed. With many men either dead or wounded, female-headed households now comprise 12-17% of Syrian families. Economic opportunities for women through internships or vocational training will be especially beneficial to these families, allowing children to return to school and helping women to support their families off of their income. Participation in the informal economy and reliance on international aid will not be sustainable in the long-term.

Funding Gaps

Funding in the long term will require much more dependable sources of aid, and strong mechanisms to ensure the equitable distribution of funding. Countries like Russia, China and Iran have already expressed an interest in providing reconstruction assistance. Harnessing these funds to improve the Syrian economy and create jobs for the local population will be necessary to avoid economic disenfranchisement and greater inequality, but these projects should also involve women in the planning and execution of national infrastructure projects. As per UN Habitat's documents on Gender and Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Jordan's involvement of women in water-management projects through the Jordan Compact, women in Syria should be represented in the process of financing and implementing reconstruction.

In terms of providing efficient and timely responses to the crisis, partnerships with private donors and businesses have also proven to be valuable sources of humanitarian and development assistance. One such example was the partnership of UNHCR and the IKEA foundation in developing new temporary shelters for refugees through the Better Shelter project. Within Syria there have been signs that Assad's government is looking towards such partnerships as it plans for reconstruction and post development efforts, such as the passing of a 2016 law promoting and codifying the contractual nature of public-private partnerships with the Syrian government, and establishing a special Public-Private Partnerships Council to oversee these relationships. No matter how the crisis is resolved, the reconstruction will likely rely heavily on the ability of the private sector to rehabilitate infrastructure and livelihoods for the Syrian people. These funds will need to address agricultural and industrial technology shortages, housing and road construction, and much more.

On the level of households and individuals, providing seed funding and startup capital to women and young Syrians will be important in jumpstarting a diversified economy. Several organizations, including some organized by Asma al-Assad, provided micro loans to women to help start their own businesses and enter the private sector before the crisis. In addition to including women in the higher-level operations of public works, reconstruction efforts should also aim to revive grassroots

entrepreneurship amongst them. To complement this effort, the UN and regional actors should look towards funding and supporting women's civil society organizations. Pre-crisis funding typically focused on groups which had ties the Baath party, so focusing money towards a broader range of groups would help legitimize their efforts in providing emotional, financial, and logistical support to Syrian women.

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PART E:
RECOMMENDATIONS

Policy and Aid Recommendations

Introduction

Based on the preceding Gap Analysis, the Task Force identified two sets of recommendations, according to the different stages of reconstruction Syria will face. Correspondingly, the following recommendations are split into two categories. The "Short-term: Ceasefire" category lists recommendations to be implemented immediately, assuming that the current state of ceasefire holds. These recommendations apply either to Syria, to host-countries, or to both. If the active military and political groups in Syria were not in a ceasefire, some of these recommendations would not be as appropriate or even possible. The second category, titled "Long-term", lists recommendations to be implemented as refugees and IDPs return to Syria or to the towns they had been displaced from, respectively. Even if refugees and IDPs have not returned to their original hometowns, this category of recommendations assumes that Syrians are generally settling back into the country. It also operates under the auspices of relatively peaceful conditions; most areas in Syria are non-violent and infrastructure has been somewhat restored at this point. Furthermore, these recommendations have been written assuming that there exists at least one recognized government, if not more. This "long-term" category refers to the next 2 to 10 years, when Syria is recovering from the crisis and is in the process of reconstructing its government, infrastructure and social institutions.

This Task Force recommends that:

Short-term: Syria and Refugee Host-Countries

- The UN Security Council provides security for public facilities, by authorizing a UN peacekeeping mission to monitor the ceasefire.

- UN Women and the UNDP encourage Syrian women to be a part of peace negotiations and political restructuring by subsidizing the costs of their transportation and accommodation. In this way, the UN can contribute to Syria achieving UNIFEM's recommendation of having a 30% female participation rate in peace negotiation processes.[1]

- The UNHCR and UN Women, in conjuncture with regional authorities, work to protect women and children from sexual and gender-based violence through law-enforcement training, educational programs for women and children, and the promotion of community-based enforcement mechanisms for dealing with abusers.

- Host-countries adopt stricter policies towards the crimes of sexual and gender-based violence in accordance with CEDAW, and modeled on the UN's Handbook for Legislation on Violence Against Women.

- UNDP coordinates with local and international women's groups to provide civic training for Syrian women. Workshops on leadership and political participation, both in refugee camps and at home in Syria, could give thousands of Syrian women the drive to exercise their rights and use their voices after the war.

- The UN partners with local authorities to facilitate aid delivery and the distribution of medical supplies, medical care, and food aid. This aid is especially important for women and children IDPs, who are not currently receiving the same level of aid as refugee camps in neighboring countries are.

- The UN devotes funds to renovate and rebuild destroyed or partially functioning health care facilities in Syria.

- International donors help ensure equal access to healthcare by providing greater financial assistance to the healthcare infrastructure of host-countries. Progress to be monitored by the WHO.

- Donors of food and nutritional aid acknowledge the needs of women and children, particularly in preventing micronutrient deficiencies and attendant health complications.

- The UNDP partners with innovative water companies such as Watergen LTD, which has created a technology that can turn air into water, even in the driest climates. The UNDP, local Syrian NGOs, and Watergen can together provide Large-Scale Atmospheric Water Generators to set up in villages and towns; these are capable of providing up to 3000 liters of fresh water daily.[2]

- UN Women, UNCDF, UNFPA, and the WB combine efforts and resources to provide microbusiness loans and funding for women. The UN agencies and the WB can partner with local micro-loaning programs already in place in Syria.

- The UNCDF implements the MicroLead Expansion global initiative in Syria, as a reconstructive measure for both the urban and rural economy. The microfinance program can benefit from renewed and increased funding from the program's current partners (The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and The MasterCard Foundation).[3]

- The UNDP creates and executes an emergency employment plan, as explained in detail in a UNDP publication titled "Livelihoods and Economic Recovery in Crisis Situations."[4]

    - Specifically, the UNDP can scale up livelihood assistance programs for female-headed households. Syrian women would benefit from skills training for basic work, such as work in textiles. This program could be managed by the UNDP, but carried out on the ground by NGOs and local community organizations.

- The UNHCR encourages and partners with refugee host-country governments, as well as with the Syrian Refugee Affairs Directorate, to support Syrian labor-force participation by expanding access to residency and work permits for both men and women.[5]

- International donors and host-countries use the Jordan Compact as a model to strengthen host-country economies, thereby creating more jobs for Syrians and local residents and supporting.

- The UN hosts and organizes an international conference on the dire education issue that Syria is facing. The conference will cover education issues both inside of Syria and in refugee host-countries. Top NGOs involved in the Syrian Crisis can attend the conference and leave knowing their specific roles in addressing education. This is to avoid duplicate programs or types of aid, so that funds can be directed in the most efficient manner.

- All host countries, plus Syria, adopt the model of Temporary Education Centers. Unlike Turkey's TECs, these TECs can be funded and managed by UNICEF, #NoLostGeneration, The Malala Fund, and other international NGOs, so as to take the resource burden off of host-countries. It is advisable that these groups try to find Syrians to teach in these centers.

Long-term:

- The WHO restores the health care workforce by attracting potential medical personnel with guaranteed salaries paid by the WHO.

- The WHO provides potential medical personnel with job training coordinated and funded by the WHO.

- The UNDP partners with innovative and sustainable agro-technology firms like Netafim to implement drip and sprinkler irrigation systems throughout Syria, which can control water flow, pressure, and quantity.[6]

- Local NGOs assist the UNDP in implementing these aforementioned sustainable agriculture projects, and provide training in the use of new technologies and current best practices in farming and water conservation.

- The UNCDF, UNDP, and the UN Women lead The Inclusive and Equitable Local Economic Development Programme. Expanding this program into Syria could be especially helpful for women and their families, considering that they tackle the same obstacles that this program currently works to overcome. A large feature of the already-established program involves investing in female entrepreneurs to help them grow their businesses, thus employing more men and women.[7]

- The UNDP and local NGOs follow the Eight Point Agenda for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality in Crisis Prevention and Recovery because it gives direct guidance on advocacy and gender-conscious responses, which would be beneficial to women living in post-Crisis Syria.[8]

- UN Women and UNDP team up to provide skills training programs for Syrians; these programs could teach medical, agricultural, educational, and financial skills. This could address the loss of professionals, skilled workers, and teachers in the health, economic, and educational sectors. These skills training programs could aim to reach women, in addition to men. The program could aim for 50-70% of the Syrians they work with to be women.

- The UN encourages the recognized Syrian government(s) to enact legislation that protects children. Syria's laws protecting children can align with the international standards laid out in Convention on the Rights of the Child.[9] Specific articles that could be addressed head-on in Syria include, but are not limited to:

    - Article 7, which states, "Children have the right to a nationality (to belong to a country)."[10] As a child's nationality is currently tied to Islamic law in Syria, the UN could strongly suggest a change, but by no means force it.

    - Article 11, which states, "Governments should take steps to stop children being taken out of their own country illegally."[11] For Syria, this means that child prostitution across national borders would be illegal, and those who facilitate and participate in it would be prosecuted.

    - Article 19, which states, "Governments should ensure that children are properly cared for and protect them from violence, abuse, and neglect."[12] This means that recognized governments in Syria could take steps to mitigate the occurrence of violence—especially war-related violence—because it endangers children's lives, and also harms children's overall health.

    - Article 28, which states, "All children have the right to a primary education, which should be free."[13]

- Article 32, regarding child labor, states, "Children's work should not jeopardize any of their other rights, including the right to education, or the right to relaxation and play."[14] In Syria, it would be the recognized government's responsibility to adopt this article. The UN could use this article to pressure Syria into passing a law that sets a practical minimum age for employment.

❖ The UN pressures the Syrian government, via conditional aid, to change Article 113 of Labour Law No 17 to read, "It shall be unlawful to employ male or female juveniles full-time before they complete secondary schooling or before they reach the age of 15, whichever is older."[15] The key difference is that children's employment would not compromise their ability to complete secondary education, whereas before the crisis, the law only protected children from juvenile employment before they completed primary education. Another key difference is that the law would specify "full-time", in order to preserve the ability of a minor attending secondary school or high school to hold a part-time job.

❖ The UN works with the recognized governments in Syria to actually ensure compliance with CEDAW. Particularly, the UN could work with Syria's General Women's Union to write legislation that furthers CEDAW's goals while remaining respectful of Islamic law.

❖ The UN and governments around the world pledge increased funding towards the initiative known as "#NoLostGeneration." The initiative's "three core pillars" are "education, child protection, adolescents and youth." With more funding, the partners who created the initiative (various UN agencies, governments, international NGOs, etc.) can invest more efforts into their long-term strategy of "advocat[ing] for legal and policy reforms to improve national education and child protection services."[16]

❖ UNICEF collaborates with recognized governments to reincorporate "The Lost Generation" back into Syria's public education system. This reincorporation would take into account the years of schooling potentially lost, as well as the emotional burden children have sustained from the crisis. The education system would be reorganized to account for these drastic circumstances.

- ❖ Recognized governments in Syria partner with the UN and WHO to return sewage and waste management to the level of functionality and capacity it had before the onset of the Syrian Crisis.

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