# The Impact of the Syrian Refugee Crisis on the Civil Society Sector in Lebanon | Laura El Chmali [±]

## Abstract

*This article is driven by an interest to explore the role of local Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) that deal with Syrian refugees in Lebanon seeing the void left by the Lebanese weak state to cope with this situation. How the Syrian conflict has affected the civil society landscape in Lebanon and how the inflow of international aid has affected the work of this local CSOs, as well as, their relationship with Lebanese state authorities on the national and local levels are examined. To this extent, the ways in which the management of Syrian refugees by local CSOs and CBOs has been affected by external factors, including the Lebanese government policies and the role of international organizations (EU, UN) in managing the crisis in Lebanon are examined. Since the beginning of the Syrian conflict and the influx of millions of refugees into Lebanon, the civil society sector in Lebanon has undergone significant transformations. To cope with the overwhelming number of Syrians living in Lebanon, Lebanese civil society has expanded with the creation of new CSOs as well as the introduction of additional programs and projects in existing CSOs to assist refugees. These civil society organizations fill a void created by the Lebanese government in its unwillingness or inability to assist with the refugee response in the areas of healthcare, education and vocational training.*

***Keywords**: Syrian refugees; NGO networks; Lebanon; weak state*

## Introduction

In March 2017, the Syrian conflict entered its seventh year, continuing to trigger unprecedented humanitarian, demographic and geographical problems with far reaching consequences for Syria and its neighbouring countries. With 6.5 million internally displaced persons and at least 4.8 million Syrian refugees who have fled the country since 2011 (Sirkeci, 2017: 128), Syrians have become the largest refugee community in the Middle East (Moms&Asaf, 2014). Over the course of the conflict, Lebanon, which has a population of approximately 4 million, has received more than 1

± Laura El Chmali, PhD candidate in the Department of Political Sciences, Université Saint Joseph de Beyrouth, Lebanon. E-mail: laurachemaly@hotmail.fr.

million Syrian refugees (UNHCR, 2017). Lebanon has neither been able to mitigate nor to respond to this high-impact and vigorous influx of Syrian refugees, acting as a weak host state. Despite the fact that prior to the Syrian refugee crisis, Lebanon had received millions of refugees from Palestine in 1948, Lebanese state authorities have failed to implement a coherent national strategy for the management of the Syrian refugee crisis in their country. Considering the highly elevated needs in combination with a persistent underfunding, as well as, the absence of sustainability in the various sectors, such as electricity, health care, education, waste management or water. Though the Lebanese government participated actively under the umbrella of the United Nations in elaborating a "Lebanon Crisis Response Plan" to respond to the Syrian refugee crisis, voices within the Lebanese political elite remain reluctant to allow Syrians to integrate properly into Lebanon's socio-economic life (Zeinab, González&Castro Delgad, 2016). This is related to a deep fear within the Lebanese society that Syrians might stay in the country on a long-term basis. The attitude of the Lebanese state towards the Syrian problem is characterized by feelings of compassion and fear of importing the Syrian war to Lebanon with long-term effects on the Lebanese state system. In this tensed political and socio-economic context, especially local communities in cooperation with NGOs took over the management of the Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon.

With the arrival of Syrian refugees to Lebanon the country has witnessed an important inflow of foreign aid, causing a rapid diversification of local non-governmental actors. This multiplication of local actors happened often with the support of international donations, most of all by the European Union and the United Nations, which is sometimes negatively perceived as a process of externalization of the refugee problem (Spijkerboer, 2017). In the absence of functioning state institutions confessional actors and non-confessional organizations are usually identified as the main providers of public services in the country (Karam, 2005; Kingston, 2011; Cammett 2016; Geha, 2016). In the run of the Syrian crisis, existing non-governmental actors emerged newly or experienced an unprecedented outreach to cope with the situation of refugees in Lebanon, representing an additional burden for the country's infrastructure and social system. Lebanon was already highly affected due to the Lebanese civil war between 1976 and 1990. Civil Society Organization networks began to develop even prior to the refugee crisis in Lebanon to assist the Lebanese society in times of war and conflict. NGO networks are here understood as horizontal and effective tools of solving problems evading the states, working to reinforce existing institutions and social systems (Ohanyan, 2012). Among these non-governmental actors are confessional and non-

confessional organizations, that repeatedly played an important role in the reconstruction of Lebanon following the Lebanese civil war 1976-90, the 2006 July war between Israel and the Hezbollah and lastly the Syrian refugee crisis (Bayat, 2002; Harb, 2008; Bennett 2014). This article aims to examine the political and social effects of local non-governmental organizations in the case of the Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon by analyzing their relationship with international organizations, the Lebanese *weak* state, as well as, their impact on the Syrian refugee population in Lebanon.

**Research Design and Theoretical Framework**

I wish to measure the impact of the Syrian refugee crisis on the development of local confessional and non-confessional civil society actors in Lebanon, and question the prospective emergence of a political consensus among these local actors, by involving themselves in this highly political issue opposing different factions within the Lebanese state and society. Moreover, I would like to investigate how this network of NGOs can be used to respond to governance gaps. Considering Ohanyan's actor-centred NGO network theory that considers the specific conditions under which NGOs are empowered and/or constrained, while offering a concrete methodological and conceptual framework (DeMars and Dijkzeul, 2010), I would like to analyze the interactions between the Lebanese state, international donors and local actors dealing with Syrian refugees, to assess their impact on institutional arrangements (e.g. democratic structures and economic growth) in a specific environment ('weak state' or absence of functioning state institutions). According to Ohanyan there is a lack of a thorough understanding of the network conditions within which the interactions between international governmental institutions and non-state actors take place, and the effects of this conditions on final global policy outcomes. First of all, Ohanyan's network aid theory opposes positive and negative theories of NGO studies. Meanwhile, the theory of negative NGO studies that remains a field, that is largely underexplored, tries to explain the stability, conformity and adaptation of local actors and is affiliated with low levels of institutional innovation and change, the theory of positive network agency, rather explains change and organizational learning of local actors and is referred to high levels of institutional innovation change. Secondly, Ohanyan's network theory considers NGOs as "institutional entrepreneurs" and makes a major distinction between service and advocacy NGOs while referring to Keck and Sikkink's (1998) study on advocacy networks that provides a nuanced understanding of the ability of non-state actors to shape or alter state preferences and policy

outcomes. In my study, I would like to interrogate whether the actions of local CSOs dealing with Syrian refugees can be explained under the positive of change and organizational learning to fill the gaps of the Lebanese central state or the negative theoretical approach of stability, conformity and adaptation. Who are these local actors and what are their motivations in helping Syrian refugees? What kind of services do they provide? What is their relationship with the Lebanese state? Who are their major donors? What are their strategies of adapting or bypassing state policies towards the Syrian refugee population in Lebanon? These objectives will be pursued by virtue of empirical study of the managerial role of a selected number of local CSOs, and will be built upon a theoretical framework situated at the crossroads of network of institutionalism, inter-organizational cooperation in conflict and post-conflict situations, NGO studies and the paradigm of *failing* states.

**Methods of Data Collection and Analysis**

This research project is based on fieldwork of 16 interviews and desk research conducted between August 2015 and December 2015 as well as July and September 2016. I have used an established network of contacts with international humanitarian organizations, especially with the UN and its specialized agencies: UNHCR, OCHA, UNDP and the European delegation in Beirut, Lebanese ministries: Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA), Ministry of Public Health (MPoH), academics, social workers and most importantly with staffs of most of non-governmental organizations dealing with Syrian refugees in the sectors of health care, education and vocational training. I chose to analyze the role of confessional and non-confessional actors in dealing with Syrian refugees in Lebanon to question the importance of the Syrian refugee influx on the role and interaction of different community and non-community organizations in Lebanon, as well as, to assess different variables in the efficiency of the action of local actors.

My empirical study is based on an exploratory field work conducted between December 2014 - August 2015 and between July 2016 - September 2016 in the regions of Akkar (North Lebanon), Beirut and Tyre (South Lebanon). The observation will be used to grasp the elements of NGO's attitudes towards the crisis and the way they interact with other actors to design new strategies of adaption or change to cope with the situation of Syrian refugees (Emerson & al., 2001; Ohanyan, 2009). A questionnaire was designed with about 20 questions to ask the respondents about the organizations historical background, their relationship with other local NGOs, the Lebanese government, international organizations and sponsors,

the activities and programs they provide and the challenges they face currently in their work, as well as their attitude towards Lebanon's refuse to sign the Geneva Convention of 1951 on the status of refugees. The results of the interviews are analysed in the wake of reports and literature on the Lebanese civil sector. The selection of local CSOs was based on experts' advice and UNHCR's Syrian regional response portal outlining its major local partners in Lebanon (http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/ partnerlist.php). Then a snow-ball effect applied and one organization referred me to another partner organization. Most of the interviews were conducted in the offices of the CSOs, like in Beirut and its suburbs, where a great part of national NGOs are located. Some organizations, like Basmeh&Zaytooneh (B&Z) have their office directly located in one of Lebanon's oldest and most important refugee camp intrinsically created for Palestinian refugees: Sabra and Shatila, but where today Palestinian refugees accepted also to host through informal networks numbers of Syrian families (Sharif, 2017). B&Z, for example, started to open up new offices in other regions in Lebanon, like in Tripoli (North Lebanon) in order to expand their area of intervention. Further interviews were conducted in Tyr (South Lebanon) and in the Akkar region (North Lebanon) close to the Syrian border. The NGOs interviewed have a very diverse background on the one hand, they were long established organizations active in Lebanon since and prior to the Lebanese civil war, like Amel (1979), Arc en Ciel (1985), Al Majmoua (1994) or Dar el Fatwa (1922) and its satellite charities. On the other hand, I interviewed more recently established organizations, but which have grown to important partner organizations of the United Nations or the European Union and its Member States, like the organization SHEILD that was established by a group of Lebanese NGO workers in 2006 in South Lebanon, in the context of the July War between the Hezbollah and Israel, but which today expanded its services to Syrian refugees; similarly as the organizations Makhzoumi (1997), Himaya (2009) or Basmeh&Zaytooneh that was established in 2011 by a group of Syrian expats in Lebanon, specifically in the context of the Syrian refugee crisis to provide direct humanitarian services to refugees especially in those areas where international organizations are not present because of security reasons (Thanassis, 2015). All interviewed organizations have either a confessional profile: Dar el Fatwa, Young Men Christian Association (YMCA) or a non-confessional profile: Amel, Arc en Ciel, Al Majmoua, Himaya, ABAAD, KAYANY or Basmeh&Zaytooneh. This is important to underline, especially in a country like Lebanon, where the political system and the society are confessionalized, but where Syrian refugees are to the majority of Sunni origin and only 5% are Christians affecting the demographical

balance in the country (Mitri, 2015). The collected data from the interviews will be used in order to assess the impact of the Syrian crisis on the civil society sector in Lebanon, the relationship between CSO's, with international organizations and with the Lebanese government.

## Contextualization of the Syrian Refugee Issue in Lebanon

Over the course of the conflict, Lebanon, a country of a population of approximately 4 million (Worldmeters, August 2017), has received more than a 1 million Syrian refugees (UNHCR, June 2017). Nevertheless, Lebanon is not a signatory party of the Geneva Convention of 1951. The Lebanese state has neither been able to mitigate nor to respond to the high-impact and vigorous influx of Syrian refugees, acting as a weak host state (Zeinab, et al., 2016). Carmen Geha (2016) refers to a "No State of No Policy". Despite the fact that prior to the Syrian refugee crisis, Lebanon had received thousands of refugees from Palestine in 1948, Lebanese state authorities have yet failed to implement a coherent national strategy for the management of the Syrian refugee crisis in their country. Considering the highly elevated needs in combination with a persistent underfunding, as well as, the absence of sustainability in the various sectors, such as electricity, health care, education, waste management or water (Verdeil, 2016). Though the Lebanese government participated actively under the umbrella of the United Nations in elaborating a "Lebanon Crisis Response Plan" voices within the Lebanese political elite remain reluctant to allow Syrians to integrate properly into Lebanon's socio-economic life (Verdeil, 2016, p.33). The discourse of the Lebanese government insists on the return of Syrians to so called save zones in Syria (L'Orient le jour, 2017). This is related to the concern within the Lebanese society that Syrians might stay in the country on a long-term basis. As this has been the case with Palestinian refugees, who came to Lebanon after the first Palestine war in 1948 (the so called "Nakba") and who remained in Lebanon, with an important impact on the country's demographic balance, security and social situation (Verdeil, 2016). The consequences of the Palestinian refugee influx deeply marked the Lebanese society's and politicians' perception and handling of the current situation of Syrian refugees in the country. Consequently, local hospitality is a controversial issue, meanwhile, in the beginning of the crisis Lebanese opened up their houses and offered their help, Lebanese host communities are said to be no longer able to absorb new flows of refugees in their homes. According to field observations, hospitality is mostly provided when relying on financial

assistance in the form of remittances or cash payments by NGOs (Carpi, 2015).

Moreover, Lebanese-Syrian relations are a significant factor when considering the current situation in Lebanon. While Lebanon and Syria have strong religious and community ties, there also exists a decade-long political division between the two countries that has impacted the response of the Lebanese government towards the refugees (Picard, 2016). Lebanese society is polarized between supporters and opponents of the Syrian regime, which is a result of the role that Syria and the army played during the Lebanese civil war from 1975 to 1990 and also during the Syrian occupation from 1976 to 2005 (Hourani, 2013).

## Lebanon's Policy of Disassociation and Impartiality towards the Syrian Conflict

Initially, the Lebanese government agreed on policies of "no camps" and of "impartiality or disassociation" in order to avoid an implication of Lebanon in the Syrian conflict (Zucconi, 2017). However, due to the increasing number of Syrian refugees who were seeking asylum in Lebanon, the Lebanese authorities began to place more restrictions on their admission and movement inside Lebanon. In October 2014 Lebanon's Council of Ministers adopted a comprehensive policy on Syrian "displacement". This decision mentions social, economic and security dangers facing Lebanon, and posits three objectives: the reversal of the influx of Syrian nationals, the reinforcement of security measures, and the reinforcement of the law to protect Lebanese access to jobs (Alsharabaty, et. al. 2017). The overall aim of this policy is being to decrease the number of Syrians in Lebanon by reducing access to territory and encouraging them return to Syria. This target is currently being implemented through the authority of the General Security Office's (GSO) new set of entry requirements for Syrians and new rules for Syrian nationals already in Lebanon applying for and renewing residency permits in December 2014 (Janmyr, 2016). Those requirements entail a $200 renewal fee, a rent contract, a sponsorship ("kafeel") by a Lebanese national, and a commitment not to work (Alsharabti, et. al., 2017). Syrians with a "kafeel", however, were (and still are) allowed to work in 3 sectors: construction, agriculture and cleaning.[1]   Indeed, unregistered Syrians who wish to work within these constrained sectors have to obtain a "pledge of responsibility" by a Lebanese sponsor (kafeel), who is then held accountable for the Syrians' legal (and thus, criminal) acts.

---

[1] Lebanon Support, "Formal Informality, Brokering Mechanisms, and Illegality. The Impact of the Lebanese State's Policies on Syrian Refugees' Daily Lives," 2016.

[2] The pledge of responsibility can be signed by a Lebanese national, or by an employer.[3] This is a major contrast to the time before Lebanon's 1975-90 Civil War, when Lebanese officials allowed Syrians fleeing nationalization programs under the Baathist regime to set up businesses within the Lebanese borders, many of these business grew into some of Lebanon's biggest firms.[4] In February 2017, General Security issued a statement waiving the $200 residential permit renewal fee for all refugees registered with UNHCR before 2015 (Alsharabaty, et. al., 2017). This decision was expected to improve refugee access to services, including schools and health, as well as registration of births and deaths. However, the implementation of this decision may be questionable seeing the lack of available data and documentation on the legal status of refugees. Moreover, some studies show that the impact of legal status on livelihood is not clear as refugees can work in the informal sector where law enforcement is loose, while other studies reveal that legal status is a social exclusion mechanism, and that policies leading to limitation and control increase refugee vulnerability (Alsharabaty, et. al., 2017).

Internal Lebanese politics, weak economic performance and the tenuous implementation of policies relating to the legal status of refugees in the country have played a key role in impacting the transformation of the civil society sector in Lebanon. Moreover, the impossibility of the Lebanese state to elect a new president between May 2014 and November 2016 has paralyzed many state institutions that are in charge of social services and refugee management, leaving many refugees without the protection of the state. The Lebanese "power sharing" system has led to a distinct division between different sectors of Lebanese civil society, as many CSOs and community organizations are affiliated with a specific political party or religion. These affiliations have made the formation of a unified response towards the refugee crisis incredibly difficult (Geha, 2016). Moreover, Lebanon is currently facing an enormous economic challenge as well as it does not have sufficient resources and capabilities to host the great number of refugees in the country. In conjunction with the lasting effects of the Lebanese civil war, the Syrian crisis has intensified the deterioration of

---

[2] General Security, "Instructions for the Entry of Syrians," General Directorate of General Security, available at: https://perma.cc/CC7J-NGL8 [last accessed 13 July 2017].

[3] Lebanon Support, "Syrian Refugees' Livelihoods. The Impact of Progressively Constrained Legislations and Increased Informality on Syrians' Daily Lives", Beirut, Civil Society Knowledge Centre, 2016, available at [accessed 16 August].

[4] Syrian exiles in Lebanon seek a refuge in work. Syrian exiles in Lebanese camps are offered vocational training — but no jobs, Financial Times, 22 November 2016, available at: https://www.ft.com/content/1d4b1ec6-9a9e-11e6-8f9b-70e3cabccfae,[last accessed 16 August 2017]).

infrastructure and inadequacies of the education, sanitation, security and electricity services in the country (Geha, 2016). Currently, public debt in Lebanon is 138% of its GDP, which is much higher than the estimated 122% (Berneis&Darcey, 2016). Due to the fact that Lebanon is heavily dependent on foreign aid, a reduction in this aid could have disastrous effects on both the Lebanese state, as well as the refugees. The 2015 Syria Regional Refugee and Resilience plan appeal, for example, has only received 64% of the requested $4.3 billion in aid (London Conference, 2016).

However, despite the funding shortfalls, the greater challenge regarding refugee aid is the efficient management and distribution of resources to the refugees. In Lebanon, the majority of Syrian refugees settle in some of the poorest areas, where state services and funding barely have a presence (Berneis, 2016). Regarding the long history of Lebanon being a host state for Armenian, Iraqi, Palestinian and Syrian refugees, the Lebanese government has opted against the instauration of camps for Syrians to avoid security problems, criminalization and violence, as it was the case, for example, in 2007 in the Naher el-Bared camp, when Palestinians clashed with the Lebanese army. The risk currently facing Lebanon is that local state capacities are being pushed to a breaking point, especially regarding health and education facilities, as well as, access to clean water. As Dayla Mitri (2015, p.15) put it:

*"Beyond the traditional problem of dealing with very heterogeneous actors within the humanitarian space, the issue of coordination happens to be strongly influenced as well by the specificities of the Lebanese terrain. The endemic weakness of the Lebanese State, the latest government crisis, and the somewhat fuzzy Lebanese open-door policy towards Syrian refugees, certainly do not help humanitarian actors in dealing properly with the Syrian crisis."*

## Emerging NGO Networking Structures Dealing With Syrian Refugees in Lebanon

In this tensed political and socio-economic context, local CSOs took over the management of the Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon often with the support of international organizations, mainly the United Nations and the European Union trusting more these local structures than the Lebanese government alleged for corruption and misuse of development aid (Leenders, 2016; Moukheiber, 2017). The action of civil society organizations in the Lebanese case can be seen as a form of informal adaptive institutions, which are defined as "regularized patterns of interaction and characterized by informal coping strategies and novel

operating arrangements devised by actors to replace or extant formal institutions that are no longer effective" (Gretchen&Levitisky 2006). I will interrogate this new form of activism by non-governmental actors in Lebanon as way of empowering the civil society landscape in Lebanon, that is historically affected by confessional divides, co-optation and political clientelism (Karam, 2005; Geha, 2016).Which is particularly important in the Lebanese case, and which differentiates Lebanon from other host countries in the region, is that compared to Turkey or Jordan, Lebanon has not a strong unified government, but is fractionalized by the sectarian state system on which its political and social system is based on. Lebanon is a country of 18 different ethnicities and official state functions within the Lebanese government are redistributed between the major religious communities in the country: Shias, Sunnis, Druze, Maronite and Orthodox Christians based on the National Pact of 1943 (Corm, 2007). According to Henry Lawrence (2017) in Lebanon there is also no civil society in the European sense of the term but confessional societies, where civil actions are practised within confessional lines with an important impact on the integration or rather non-integration of Syrian refugees affecting the confessional balance in the country. However, Lebanon has a very diverse and strong civil society landscape which helped to support historically the resilience of public institutions (e.g. Ministry of Healthcare, of Higher Education and the Ministry of Social Affairs) also in the response of the Lebanese government to the Syrian refugee crisis and sometimes even to improve public services (Ammar, W. et. al., 2016).

## History and Definition of Lebanon's Civil Society and Civil Society Organizations (CSO's)

In this article, civil society is referred to as those activists, movements and organizations, business men and even politicians working to promote intra-sectarian cooperation, civic participation, and inclusion in the governance and political order in Lebanon. We will use rather the commonly referred term of Civil Society Organizations (CSO's) than of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's). The fundamental difference between both terms is that CSO's are defined as organized civil society and can have the forms of informal and some as formal entities such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), faith-based organizations (FBOs), among many others. This when a group of individuals come together for a common purpose, as in to fulfil a particular mandate driven by need. CSO's have a constituency, as they have a clientele/beneficiaries whom they serve and ideally should represent that

clientele (Moeti, 2012). Lebanese CSO's belong to Lebanon's civil society, while defining themselves as "non-profit, voluntary citizens' group" which are organized on a local level, national or international level. This definition includes only a subset of a broader civil society sphere that incorporates partisan organizations, faith-based organizations, unions and others (Mapping Civil Society Organizations in Lebanon, 2015). It was selected as a definition to be used when sampling CSO's for this research.

Lebanon has a vibrant civil society landscape. Its creation dates back to the Ottoman empire and the law of 1909. After the Lebanese, civil war (1976-1990), local actors assumed a key role in the reconstruction of the country and the rehabilitation of the society (especially regarding the resettlement of internally displaced war refugees). The concept of civil society is well-suited to the Lebanese context for two interrelated reasons. Firstly, the concept of civil society focuses on reconstructing of societies that have been through major crises and wars. The second consideration is the strength of "civil" constituencies in Lebanon. This was especially the case during the war, when different non-governmental groups took charge of public services, including healthcare and education (Lebanon Support, 2016; Karam Karam, 2006). The beginning of a strong civil society during the war was symptomatic of the inability of Lebanese authorities to provide social and economic services and to regulate the workings of social, cultural, and economic institutions. As Harik points it out: *"In Lebanon ... civil society is stronger than the government"* (Harik, 1994). Until today a great number of local civil society organizations have a contractual relationship with the Ministry of Social Affairs, Education or Health to assure public services to vulnerable Lebanese citizens that cannot afford the good quality of the highly privatized education and healthcare system (Lebanon Support, 2016). These programs were expanded to Syrians, but not through the Lebanese government but mostly via contracts between international organizations (e.g. UNESCO, World Health Organization) and local civil society actors (Interview Project manager, KAYANY Foundation, Beirut, 10th of November). Only a few other in the Lebanese civil society landscape re-known CSOs, like Le Mouvement Social Libanais, Amel or Arc en Ciel actually succeeded progressively to develop from service organizations to advocacy and lobbying groups impacting governmental policy-making and national legislations (Chapuis, 2012).

Five important moments can be identified in the consolidation and transformation of Lebanon's civil society sector: the development plan under President Chéhab in the 1960's, the Lebanese civil war between 1976-1990, the post-war reconstruction phase, the recurrent confrontations with Israel in southern Lebanon, since the end of the

Lebanese civil war in 1993, 1996 and during the July War of 2006 and lastly, the Syrian refugee influx since 2011.

Historically, Lebanon's civil society has been dominated by communally based organizations. While interest-based NGOs did exist prior to the civil war, many were rendered inoperative during the war years (Kingston, 2013). This resulted in a strong *mujtama ahlī* (communal society) and a weak *mujtama madanī* (civil society) (Clark, J. A., & Salloukh, B. F., 2013). The continued vibrancy of *al- mujtama al-ahlī* was also fed by the growing sectarian group autonomy institutionalized in articles 9 and 10 of the Lebanese Constitution and subsequently in the Personal Status Law (PSL), which relegated personal status matters to the jurisdiction of sectarian rather than civil courts, and in Decree 60 of 13 March 1936, which recognizes sectarian groups as corporate entities (Clark, J. A., & Salloukh, B. F., 2013). Next to this "first generation of associations" (Kingston, 2000) other actors of political character emerged – often laic and supported by intellectual elites that will find in the developmental movement initiated by President Chehab, in the end of the 1950's, new themes of mobilization contrary to traditional structures. Benefitting from the ambitious plan of development; this new dynamic resembles the public and the private sector (political and associative). Consequently, these associations, newly integrated in process of public decision-making and action, join the logic of trans-communitarian collective action and cooperatives and adopt the issue of development and social justice rather than charitable work (Kingston, 2000).

It is worth mentioning that prior to the end of the Civil War in 1990, there have been some disparate civil society efforts in peacebuilding work which revolved around a popular response aiming to end violence. Since 1975, demonstrations by Lebanese belonging to different religions and regions called for an end to the fighting. These initiatives grew to form an organization called the "Non-Violence Movement" that challenged sectarianism, lobbied for an end to the killing and argued for a mending of the religious divide in the country (Oussama, 2007). The Mouvement Social organized demonstrations and petitions to illustrate that the people were against the war that was being fought by militias and political leaders (Oussama, 2007). Following the cessation of hostilities and given the painful job of trying to put the country on track towards sustainable peace, civil society was faced with the monumental task of exploring and utilising alternative dispute resolution mechanisms with which to face the increasing demands for rebuilding cross-communal relations, particularly in areas hit hardest by violence. With the weakening of the central authorities (the Parliament and central administrative bodies maintained their

mandate) during the war, civil society found itself at the helm of trying to respond to people's basic demands and provide for the needs of the population, replacing interrupted government services. It is in this movement of the promotion trans-communitarian dialogue and balanced and sustainable development that NGOs, like Arc en Ciel or Amel were born in 1979, in a context of trans-communitarian need for humanitarian and development aid (Chapuis, 2011). Throughout the Lebanese Civil War and after, local organizations proved to be capable to hold together Lebanon's fragile welfare system at a time international aid declined and Lebanese leaders and society were factionalized. By the early 1990, the Lebanese NGO forum, the largest NGO forum in Lebanon's history. In the context of post-war Lebanon, this forum demonstrated to be able to conceptualize independently important ways of operating and cooperating in complex emergencies and development processes (Bennett, 1995).

By definition CSOs are task oriented and driven by people with a common interest, CSOs perform a variety of service and humanitarian functions, bring citizen concerns to governments, advocate and monitor policies as well as encourage political participation through provision of information. Some are organized around specific issues, such as human rights, environment, human health or around delivering humanitarian services and vocational training to people in need or/and refugees.

*"Civil society has by definition the task to reach a common understanding of the fundamental rights of citizens, such as the right to a free and honourable life; the right to work in return for an income that provides an acceptable standard of living; the right to individual and social equality under the law and in practice; and the right to knowledge, education, and participation... This is in addition to a range of other rights stated in national constitutions and laws and in national, regional, or international agreements. All of the above emanate from humanity itself, transcending political, intellectual, religious, and territorial divisions. The main objective of developmental intervention by civil society is to enable citizens to enjoy their rights; and this should be independent from any political position, cultural bias, or economic ability".*

## The Lebanese Civil Society and the Influx of Syrian Refuges

Since the beginning of the Syrian conflict and the influx of more than a million of refugees into Lebanon, the civil society sector in Lebanon has undergone significant transformations. In order to cope with the important number of Syrians living in Lebanon, Lebanese civil society has expanded

with the creation of new CSOs as well as the introduction of additional programs and projects to assist the refugees in existing CSOs. These civil society organizations fill a void created by the Lebanese government in their unwillingness or inability to assist with the refugee response due to different political and economic reasons. Compared to other conflict zones and host countries in the Middle East, Lebanon has a very strong civil society tradition, and with respect to the political struggle in Lebanon and the lack of a strong centralized state, civil society actors in Lebanon have historically assumed an important role in filling the gaps and shortages created by the public sector in Lebanon, especially regarding education, health care services, and vocational training, but also with regard to development projects and the reconstruction of the Lebanese state in the aftermath of the Lebanese civil war (1976-90) and the recurrent clashes in South Lebanon between Israel and the Hezbollah (1993, 1996, 2006). Which allowed these local actors to gain an important experience in the provision of humanitarian assistance and assuring social cohesion in a very hybrid society (Mohanna, 2015). In the context of the Syrian crisis, long transitional phases from one government to another and the absence of political will to manage the crisis left a void, within which international agencies, their local partners and social networks have been operating constantly and relatively freely, managing the refugees' presence (Dionigi, 2016). Seeing the political and economic problems and the failure of the Lebanese government to create an effective and comprehensive humanitarian response system to the Syrian refugee problem, Lebanese CSO's have supported the Lebanese in absorbing the effects of the Syrian influx on the Lebanese state system and strengthen its resilience.

Not only has there been a significant increase in the amount of programs offered to Syrian refugees, but existing CSOs have begun to offer programs catered to the Syrians' needs, new NGOs have been formed, and local CSOs have established partnerships and public forums in order to better coordinate their efforts. Lebanon had always had hundreds, and recently thousands of associations dedicated to working on issues of governance, development and democratization. In 2007, the number of associations registered, according to the Law of Associations, was 5,623 (from this figure are excluded political parties, clubs, scouts and family ties) (Al Akhbar, 2015). Today, the number is even estimated of about 8000 organizations. According to recent studies, there are 1,3 associations per 1,000 inhabitants in Lebanon. Official records issued by the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities suggest that, as of March 2013 there were 8,311 registered non-governmental organizations (Mapping Civil Society Organizations in Lebanon, 2015). The political scientist Traboulsi (2017, p.3) speaks of a

*"professionalization of social contention movements"* in Lebanon. Though according to the researcher, this process, should not be mistakably understood as *"genuine political reform movement"*. Indeed, despite this dynamism accurate and reliable information on the nature of these organizations, their functions, membership, scope of work, and overall influence over governance and policy-making would be highly limited. Access to, and understanding of this information is necessary for any actor wishing to promote and support civil society in Lebanon (Mapping Civil Society Organizations in Lebanon, 2015). There are hundreds of civil society organizations operating on the ground to deal with the Syrian refugee crisis, most of which cooperate with the United Nations. However, amongst approximately 100 actors involved in assessing needs and identifying response mechanisms for Syrian refugees, only 16 would be national Lebanese CSOs (Mohanna, 2015, p.48).

While the focus of CSOs during the first few years of the Syrian crisis was on the rapid delivery and immediate impact of humanitarian aid, there has recently been a more pronounced development to education and employment projects. This is mainly due to a shift of the UN's priorities in Lebanon trying to convince the Lebanese government to allow Syrian refugees to learn an occupation, and to run their own business. In this regard, CSOs play an important role to help Syrian refugees to gain access to education and to obtain vocational skills. Paradoxically, most politicians are concerned about that Syrians will permanently stay in Lebanon, if they learn a profession and acquire a certain socio-economic stability (Moukheiber, 2017). According to these political opinions, Lebanon is not ready yet to integrate an additional population to its already very weak and fractionalized political and social system, in addition to the about 200.000 Palestinians, who came to Lebanon after the first Arab-Israeli war, but who were never allowed to work in Lebanon (Janmyr, 2017). Seeing the fact that there are not sufficient jobs for Lebanese themselves and least of all enough access to qualitative health care, education and social welfare services. This fear of overstretching national state capacities and of importing further ethno-religious conflict into the country are the most important reasons, why Lebanon has not signed yet the Geneva Convention of 1951 on the status of refugees (El Chemali, 2016; Janmyr, 2017), in combination with the fear to be left alone by the international community in dealing with issues related to the Syrian crisis (Kagan, 2011). In order to respond to these anxieties within the Lebanese society and political spectrum, another important criterion of international organizations and local organizations dealing with refugees becomes designing projects, that address simultaneously the Syrian refugee population and the poor

Lebanese host communities that often face the same struggles in Lebanon as Syrians with regards to gaining access to education, health care services and jobs.

## The Role of the European Union and the United Nations in the Response to the Refugee Crisis in Lebanon

The European Union (EU) and the United Nations (UN) as well its specialized agencies (UNDP, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNRWA, OCHA, ESCWA) have traditionally helped to support the development of Lebanon's civil society organizations in multiple sectors, such as child protection, women rights, electoral reform, infrastructure, development aid, humanitarian assistance, and recently refugee protection. The relationship between CSO's with offices and agencies of the United Nations system or the European Union differs depending on their goals, their values and the mandate of the particular institution (Mapping Civil Society Organizations in Lebanon, 2015. The European Union is Lebanon first trade partner and financial contributor (El Chemali, 2012). In February 2016 at the occasion of the London Conference, the EU decided to allocate 639 million Euros to Lebanon in form of assistance to refugees and vulnerable communities for the period 2016-17 in addition to the 219 million that were allocated in form of bilateral cooperation under the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument (total of 839 million Euros, EU Commission, 2016). Germany is one of Europe's first donor countries with more than 90 million US dollars for the World Food Program, US$ 50 million for the 3RP (Syria Refugee & Resilience Plan) and more than US$ 100 million since 2014 for the education programme RACE – Reaching all Children with Education (OCHA, 2017). Meanwhile funding is generally lacking to cover the effects of the Syrian refugee crisis on Syria's neighbourhood countries, Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon, it is an important factor of the development and transformation of the civil society sector in Lebanon.[5]

On the one hand, aid allocation to Lebanon run unprecedented high in Lebanon's history of conflicts[6] allowing to the most important civil society

---

[5] In September 2013, a World Bank report estimated the total cost of the crisis on the Lebanese economy of 7,5 billion, of which 1,1 billion was increased expenditure due to the high demand of public services, available at: https://www.reuters.com/article/us-syria-crisis-lebanon/syria-war-refugees-to-cost-lebanon-7-5-billion-world-bank-idUSBRE98I0T320130919,[last accessed: 11.11.2017].

[6] In the end of the year 2016, Lebanon had received 1,12 billion US$ to respond to the Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon. See: Inter-agency - LRCP funding update available at: http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=122 [last accessed 2 May 2017]. However, it is wort mentioning here that the UNHCR's database updated on Jan.1, 2017 shows also that 45% of the funding requested has not been granted yet, while the Lebanese Government is covering the gap indirectly. While 55% of refugee costs are funded by the UNHCR & sister agencies, this 45% gap

organizations to multiply their staffs, programs and services. [7] With more than 1 billion US dollars, Lebanon has received 10% of the world's international humanitarian aid contributions in 2017.[8][9][10]

On the other hand, the EU and the UN have been also much criticized by voices of the Lebanese civil society for shifting away national state responsibilities with regards to the management of the refugee crisis in Lebanon (Mohanna, 2014, Abdel Zamad, 2016). According to the Lebanese civil society specialist, Ziad Abdel Samad, "country ownership" would be one of the most important principles of the Paris Declaration[11] on aid effectiveness (Skype Interview, 27 July 2016). The state should play an active role in coordinating between diverse actors. It should also adopt a multi-dimensional, multi-sectoral and long term national strategy, taking into consideration the challenges and opportunities for responding to a humanitarian crisis. Such a strategy ought to define and clarify the roles of all actors. Accordingly, partnerships established between these different actors should not be selective, as which commonly occurs between one or

---

(approximately $850.46 million) of refugee-related costs was left to be tackled primarily by the local Lebanese government as indirect social and infrastructure costs. By doing so, the Lebanese economy has maintained a certain degree of stability. See: The Economic Burden of Lebanese Hospiality, Bloombank Invest, 17 February 2017, available at: http://www.databank.com.lb/docs/ The%20Economic%20Burden%20of%20Lebanese%20Hospitality%20-Blominvest-2017.pdf, [last accessed 14 November 2017].

In the aftermath of the 2006 July war Lebanon has spent 42 Million US$ to rebuild southern Lebanon. See: http://www.rebuildlebanon.gov.lb/english/f/Page.asp?PageID=46 [last accessed 02 May 2017]; and in 1990 in the aftermath of the Lebanese civil war, when the whole country was affected by the war the Horizon 2000 Plan of Prime Minister Rafic Hariri spent 7 billion US$ between 1993-2002, available at: https://www.econstor.eu/bitstream/10419/63472/1/500825963.pdf, [last accessed 02 May 2017].

[7] As it will be explained later on, those NGOs that have a certain "technicity" in applying for funding benefit greater from the international aid allocation system than other NGOs.

[8] Intervention of Rabih Shibli, Center for Civic Engagement and Community Service, during the "Innovative Responses Syrian Refugee Crisis," AUB Forum, 27 January 2017, American University of Beirut, Beirut, Lebanon.

[9] At the supporting the Future of Syria conference in Brussels in April 2017 – a follow up conference of London, more than 6 billion was pledged by various donor countries. At the follow up conference in Brussels in April 2017, governments pledged another 6 billion, but refused to improve refugees access to legal protection, including by increasing resettlement and other admissions in third countries.[9] The European Union promised about 560 million euros (597.8 million USD) in 2018 for Syria, Lebanon and Jordan coupled with the opportunities of loosened trade regulations that open preferential access to markets in Europe as a result of recent compacts with the EU. Though details on how much was pledged for 2017 or part of previous pledges and commitments are yet missing. For more information on funds pledged at the Brussels conference: *Idem.*

[10] Nazih Osseiran, *op. cit.*.

[11] The Paris Declaration (2005) was endorsed in order to base development efforts on first-hand experience of what works and does not work with aid. It is formulated around five central pillars: Ownership, Alignment, Harmonisation, Managing for Results and Mutual Accountability, available at: http://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/parisdeclarationandaccraagendaforaction.htm, [last accessed: 24 August 2017].

more ministries and one or more international organizations) but rather comprehensive, enabling, inclusive and participatory in process. In turn, the Lebanese government should abide to the normative standards by respecting four main rights of refugees as minimum requirements for decent conditions: legal status, livelihood, access to health, and education. These four minimum requirements should become mainstream for the protection of vulnerable groups including women, children, youth and people with disability (Abdel Zamad, 2016). Indeed, UNHCR was historically criticized for being a surrogate state that alleviates the Lebanese government and other Arab states from their responsibilities to protect refugees (Kagan, 2011). Which explains partly, also why Lebanon has not signed the Geneva Convention of 1951 although it participated in drafting document (Janmyr, 2017).

The primary analytical tools of refugee law are state-centric and most of the country's in the Middle East insist on managing the refugee and migrant crisis on a national level, refusing a shift in responsibility from the national to the international level. Formal international law often highlights a stalemate between the principled recognition of rights and norms and strong state sovereignty that makes norms difficult to impose or enforce directly. Despite this paradox, according to Michael Kagan (2011) there would be possibly more adaptability built into the international system. For example, there is already sufficient flexibility built into UNHCR's mandate to allow for a departure from the premise that states alone must deliver refugee protection in all circumstances. The assignment of responsibility for protecting rights should be to the institution best positioned to carry out the duty. As a default rule, the state should usually be responsible because in the international arena states are presumed to have the clearest ability and authority to act.

However, due to strong political and economic problems, the Lebanese government was unable to create an effective and comprehensive humanitarian response system to the Syrian crisis. In this context, international organizations as well as Lebanese CSOs, and CBOs have largely taken over the role of the central state in the context of the LCRP (Lebanon Crisis Response Plan). The EU, UN and its specialized agencies took a leading role in the management of the Syrian crisis in Lebanon, in conjunction with international and local CSOs. However, it appears to distinguish between traditional and non-traditional actors, as solid data only exists for the latter. Despite the "Financial Tracking System" provided by the UN agency OCHA and the OECD, recent solid data exists only for these international organizations and does not take into consideration aid flows from Saudi Arabia, Qatar or Iran, although they appear to be the largest contributors

to the crisis in Syria's neighbourhood countries (Mitri, 2015). Moreover, the lack of coordination and overview with regards to where and how international aid is invested (Moukheiber, 2017) is putting different actors involved in the management of the crisis in competition for funding, especially governmental ministries and local civil society organizations (Mastrodonato, 2014).

It is also worth mentioning here, that the UN created a legal and social protection gap by providing different mandates for Syrian refugees, on the one hand and for Palestinian refugees, on the other hand (Erakat, 2014). As the mandate for Syrian refugees and Palestinian refugees is divided between the United Nations Higher Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and United Nations Relief and Work Agency (UNRWA). Meanwhile Palestinians and Palestinian Refugees from Syria (PRS) fall under the mandate of UNRWA, UNHCR offers its services to those who meet the definition of a refugee according to the 1951 Geneva Convention 1951, which includes Syrians. The separation in the protection schemes provided to Palestinian and Syrian refugees impacts also the relationship and power imbalances between the "new" and "established" refugees in Lebanon (Sharif, 2017) as well as the role of civil society organizations that started to expand their services to both vulnerable groups and to poor Lebanese.

## The Effects of the Syrian Refugee Crisis on the Civil Society Sector in Lebanon

As a result, of the Lebanese state's inability to provide a direct and quick response to the Syrian refugee influx and international organizations selectivity[12] in supporting local actors, local civil society actors in Lebanon started to organize themselves in conjunction with these international actors, but also independently with different effects on the CSO landscape in Lebanon. There are three major tendencies among these local actors: the formation of new partnerships between local actors, the emergence of new organizations and the growth or outreaching of existing organizations on the national and international levels.

### Partnering & Inter-religious Help Initiatives

Mainly to obtain funds local CSOs in Lebanon tend to form new partnerships or consortiums with each other and foreign CSOs. For

---

[12] Due to the „technicity" of applying to international funding and the EU's conditionality in supporting civil society organizations (e.g. Shia organizations are excluded as they are not conform with European values), (Interview Programm Officer Relief and Recovery, EU delegation in Beirut, 10 April 2017).

example, the Sunni organization Makhzoumi and the "*non-religious*" and *"non-political"* organization ALMEE (Lebanese Association for Energy Saving and For Environment) have partnered together to foster civil society action regarding sustainable development by raising public awareness, empowering peoples' capacities and skills, and enhancing energy efficiency solutions in different communities in the Bekaa area (Makhzoumi, 2016).

Moreover, the program director of the organization Himaya, which was created in 2009 and which is engaged with the protection of children rights underlined also the importance of case referring. Meaning that if an organization is confronted with a case it has no expertise in or does not have the adequate equipment, it refers a refugee to another local organization, which has more experience in this specific area, such as psychological support for children. This willingness to cooperate with another CSO implies more trust between CSOs (Tsai, 2006).

Another aspect of this new interactions are cross-religious and intra-religious help initiatives. Meanwhile, several help organizations are Sunni affiliated, such as Dar el Fatwa, Makhzoumi or the Hariri Foundation, one can also observe cross-religious help structures, such as Christian organizations, like the Middle East Council of Christian Churches, Caritas or the Shia organizations, like the Musa As-Sadre Foundation or Al Marrabat that are closer to a more "secular" conception of humanitarianism and aimed at alleviating and comforting human suffering." Despite the fact that these Shia organizations have also a political goal to pursue, which is the combat against Israel and the Zionist movement, in the view of these organizations, the most important motivation behind human life is identified with the "moral commitment of doing good". Providing and benefitting from social services is part of these organization's struggle against Israel perceived not "as a war to kill, but as a war to exist" (Abild, 2007). Accordingly, "doing good" would be equated with the idea of guiding individuals. Local humanitarianism provided by organizations, such as al-Marrabat or As-Sadr, would be close to charity. In the perspective of the As-Sadr foundation, humanitarianism should trigger empowerment by making continuous efforts and equalising Lebanese society. The way Shia organizations started to promote social activities and humanitarian aid in the context of *the July War 2006* and its aftermath is supposed to contrast with the "generalized emergency driven logic of the international aid industry" (Carpi, 2016). This would be an important difference to the Geneva Convention based form of humanitarianism that is aimed at caring out longer-term sustainability exclusively in the context of emergency crisis leading consequently to the dismantle of local projects once domestic sustainability is reached (Carpi, 2016). In the framework of this research, it

important to underline that Shia organizations, such as those in Beirut's suburbs, do not deal with Syrians as "refugees", or as "victims of political repression", who deserve assistance. In contrast to international organizations that recognize Syrian refugees as "victims of man-made crisis", these Shia organizations treat Syrians in Lebanon as political agents, as *de facto* citizens rather than "objects of charity" (Carpi, 2016). Consequently, Shia humanitarianism has become increasingly a constitutive part of social assistance. As injustice is not only related to the context of the conflict with Israel and the Zionist movement, but to any situation of social injustice including poverty and the lack of education. Public activism and social engagement are perceived as way to strive to live on a day-a-day basis (Carpi, 2016). However, these Shia organizations show a certain willingness to cooperate closer with foreign NGOs and universities, although not always well perceived by local communities. Consequently, their tendency not to rely on external actors also depends on whether or not their strategies and agendas will meet local needs (Carpi, 2016).

**Increased National and International Outreach of Local CSO's**

Another observation is that, existing Lebanese CSOs, such as Al Majmoua, Makhzoumi, AMEL or SHEILD as well as the new emerged CSOs have grown significantly since the beginning of the Syrian crisis. Especially with regards to job training, health care and education services, local CSOs play a crucial role in integrating the Syrian refugee community.

The organization AMEL was created by Dr. Kamel Mohanna after the first Israeli invasion in 1979. Today, AMEL focuses on raising awareness for equality and social justice, and has expanded its operations all over Lebanon, especially in areas that have been neglected by the Lebanese central state. The Arabic expression Amel means "the worker", who is initiating change (Interview with Kamel Mohanna, 26 October 2017, France 24). The organization claims to be totally apolitical and non-confessional (Mohanna, 2015). With regard to the Syrian refugees AMEL provides emergency help, most of all mobile health care clinics in southern Lebanon, educational awareness sessions and handcraft professions for Syrian women for producing soap, jewellery and food products (Interview Project Manager AMEL Association, Beirut, 20.08.2016). Recently, AMEL has started an outreach program by opening a number of offices in different European countries, and in the United States. Moreover, in 2016 the organization was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. AMEL is one of the most important local NGO in Lebanon that has established good relations

with international organizations, despite its critical attitude towards the involvement of foreign actors in Lebanon. Moreover, AMEL is a founding member of the local NGO forum in Lebanon that was established in order to strengthen cooperation between local CSOs.

Other examples are the CSOs known as "*SHEILD*" or "*LOST*" both organizations are most of all active in southern Lebanon. SHEILD was created by a group of humanitarian workers in southern Lebanon in the aftermath of the 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah. Speaking about SHEILD's relationship with the refugee crisis, the executive director stated, "the Syrian refugee crisis is one of the biggest humanitarian catastrophes in the history though paradoxically it helped us as a humanitarian organization to develop important skills in order to assure help to people in need" (Interview, Executive Director SHEILD). Within only a few years after its founding, SHEILD has acquired the necessary knowledge in order to deal with the humanitarian catastrophe, so that today, SHEILD has been able to apply the same knowledge and experience to other regions outside Lebanon in order to help victims of war. Interestingly, when asking the director of the organization whether he would advocate for that the Lebanese should sign the Geneva Convention of 1951, he argued that as a "humanitarian he would support the signatory of the 1951 Convention, but as a "Lebanese" he would have his reserves seeing the impact the crisis had on Lebanon's already highly affected infrastructure (Interview, Executive Director SHEILD).

**Emergence of New Actors**

In addition to the developments of expansion, internationalization and partnering of local NGOs in Lebanon, new NGOs were founded, such as "Basmeh and Zeitooneh" *("Smile and Olive"*) in order to respond to the lack of services and care provided to Syrian refugees in Lebanon. Basmeh and Zeitooneh is an CSO that was founded in 2012 by a group of Syrian expats living in Lebanon. Their main objective was to take care of children and women victims of the Syrian civil war, but has now expanded to provide other services as well, and is now a registered CSO under Lebanese law. Additionally, it has expanded its operations, and now operates within Syria, Turkey and opened further offices in North Lebanon.

Since its founding, the main objective of Basmeh and Zeitooneh has been to allow Syrian refugees to live a life of dignity, and to fill in the gaps of other humanitarian organizations (Thanassis, 2015). In this sense, it has launched an initiative that responds to these gaps of major humanitarian organizations, which is a result of highly bureaucratic institutions, and their

work is aimed at refugees who are not eligible for aid from international organizations.

Basmeh and Zeitooneh also offers education programs for the children of refugees, as well as workshops for young adults in order to learn vocational skills or how to run small businesses. Moreover, it organizes workshops for women, children and young people, where they can learn, among other things, handcrafts, movie-making, tea time for women, and theatre activities for children, all which serve to break the social barriers facing Syrian refugees in their host communities. The activities of the organization are especially important in Turkey, where the language constitutes a major barrier to the further integration of Syrians to their host communities (Interview with Communication Officer, Basmeh&Zeitooneh, Shatila, Beirut, 26.7.2016).

In order to establish a framework for the enforcement of refugee rights, Basmeh and Zeitooneh has started to focus on building partnerships with a number of Lebanese organizations. Today, Basmeh and Zeitooneh is responsible for 15,000 refugees in Beirut, and has 66 full-time employees (Thanassis, 2015). Basmeh and Zeitooneh has been classified by UNHCR as one of the most active and efficient organizations managing the refugee crisis in Lebanon. In fact, due to partnerships with local actors, like Basmeh and Zeitooneh, international organizations, mostly the European Union and the United Nations, have been able to better identify the locations and the needs of refugees. Another initiative is the organization SAWA that was established in 2011 by a group of students, individuals, professionals, academics, and business men, Syrian, Lebanese, and of diverse nationalities and multiple backgrounds, united for the aim to assure humanitarian relief and development aid to raise living standards of Syrian refugees, and the families in need from other nationalities (Coquelet, 2017)). Also the foundation Kayany was established in 2013 in the run of the Syrian refugee crisis in order to assure educational support to refugees. However, it's relationship to the government is limited to its registration as civil society organization (Interview, Project Coordinator, Lamia Al Masri, Beirut, 10.10.2017). Another organization that was established in 2011 and which grew to an important partner organization of UNHCR is the organization ABAAD that is promoting sustainable and social and economic protection. All these organizations where founded in the beginning or in the run of the Syrian refugee crisis by Lebanese or Syrian activists mostly with the support of private donations from Lebanese or Syrian businessmen.

**Increasing Autonomy of Local NGOs**

Consequently, not all CSOs in Lebanon are dependent on international donations. According to a representative from Arc en Ciel, another apolitical and non-religious Lebanese organization, that deals with a wide range of issues from the protection of disabled people to medical waste management, Arc en Ciel is able *"to afford what [they] want"*, as the main revenue of the organization comes from private donations or fund raising initiatives (Interview with Arc en Ciel, Beirut, Lebanon, 30.08.2016). However, fundraising and reaching out to potential donors would be incredibly time consuming, and so many CSOs are forced to spend more time on these activities than on their actual programing. The organization of fundraising events or dinners is a general habit of local Lebanese CSO's which helps them to generate their annual budget independently from the fluctuation of international funding.

Also, the Lebanese organization Al Majmoua, a "free", "independent" and "non-partisan" organization which was created as a microfinance program in 1994 by providing group loans to low-income women entrepreneurs, tries to stay as independent as possible from international sponsors. It finances its programs through the interests on their loans, which it distributes to its clients. Because of these loans, Al Majmoua is now able to auto-finance its programs. The organization only accepts funds from international organizations for its non-financial programs and services to refugees (Interview with Al Majmoua, Beirut, 25.08.2016). Today, Al Majmoua is an internationally known institution in the domain of microfinance.

However, the executive director of the organization SHEILD was complaining that the majority of Lebanese CSOs are currently only focused on short-term humanitarian aid, however, as the number of refugees is not declining and funds have been reduced, a long-term plan should be designed: *"a transition phase is needed from humanitarian aid to development aid. No one is thinking of projects with long-term effects." Job and business trainings are offered, but simultaneously you need to also to prepare the Lebanese job market for this new labour force, which would need at least 2-3 years"* (Interview with Executive director of SHEILD, Tyr, Lebanon, 15.09.2016). Also Kamel Mohanna, the director of the organization Amel underlines the problem of the "donor fatigue" and is complaining that there would be a general tendency to work more for the visibility of actions than for efficacy (France24, 2017).

**Political Tensions and Hidden Interdependencies between NGOs and Governmental Institutions on the Local and National Levels**

As the Syrian refugee crisis is highly politicized, it does not have a significant impact on the Lebanese government regarding institutional or political reform. Even though the Lebanese government, international and local CSOs try to work closer together through monthly organized inter-agency meetings under the umbrella of the United Nations, mostly these meetings cause further confrontations between the policies of the Lebanese government and CSOs. The most sensitive topic is regarding the issue of job training programs offered by CSOs and the participation of refugees in the Lebanese labour market, as government representatives of the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) state that this is against Lebanese law. Accordingly, MoSA has the authority to cut CSO's funding for their job training programs, if these organizations allow Syrians to enter the job market illegally in the future. Syrians are only allowed to work in certain sectors, and with a work permit (Zucconi, 2017). Though mostly their Lebanese employers do not provide them with a work permit seeing the additional costs for their businesses. On the other hand, Lebanese state authorities rely on local CSOs with regards to funding. As international organizations tend to support rather local initiatives than the Lebanese government, that is often institutionally inefficient and accused of political corruption (Leenders, 2015). Consequently, the inflow of international aid to Lebanon has created new hidden interdependencies between the Lebanese government and local CSOs.

On the local level, local CSOs try to cooperate with the Lebanese authorities through a bottom-up approach by consulting with municipalities and identifying their most important needs and eventually teaching them how to acquire certain skills in order to find solutions for the pertaining problems affecting Lebanon. Though some municipalities complain that some CSOs, especially international voluntary organizations (e.g. ACTED, DRC) aiming to implement a project to improve water or sanitary systems come to their region with the aim of implementing a project in a certain geographical area without consulting them in advance and without foreseeing a durable way *(e.g. "capacity building")* to guarantee the continuation of the project implemented, after that the CSOs have completed their projects and leave again (Interview with the major of the Municipality of Ehden, North Lebanon, January 2017).

## Gaps and Challenges of Local CSOs in Coping with the Syrian Refugee Issue in Lebanon

The boom of the civil society organizations in Lebanon also risks to provoke a further fragmentation of the civil society sector. While international and local CSOs do generally provide a great number of services targeted at refugee populations, the question is whether these kind of activities actually benefit the needs of refugees in Lebanon or rather serve to ensure the survival of the CSOs. As the Lebanese government only allows Syrians to work in specific sectors and under specific conditions,[13] CSOs risk to establish a new, but artificial labour force that is entirely dependent on external, international funding and cannot legally participate in the Lebanese labour market (Fischer, 2011). While it may be argued that the development and expansion of the civil society sector in Lebanon has created new job opportunities for the Lebanese youth, often more "qualified" jobs are offered to expats and not to locals. Which in turn has impacted the housing and renting prices, especially in Beirut, where most of the offices international and Lebanese organizations are located. Moreover, job opportunities are limited by the durability of a project. Some positions risked to be cut out after a certain period due to a lack of funding (Interview, Project assistant Makhzoumi foundation, Beirut 19 September 2017). Indicating that the insecure work environment in Lebanon that existed prior to the crisis has not necessarily improved and there is still a strong tendency of among the Lebanese youth to migrate out of the country (ILO, 2015).

Also, the increase in CSOs has not necessarily resulted in a greater cohesion among Lebanese civil society actors. On the one hand, some major Lebanese CSOs, such as Makhzoumi, AMEL and Al Majmoua have gained more importance, have a multi-confessional profile, and aim to seek political and social alternatives to the shortcomings of the Lebanese state and of international organizations in helping refugees. On the other hand, organizations with ethnopolitical or religious affiliations still exist, and do not necessarily work to overcome divisions within Lebanese society, such as the Sunni organization known as Dar Al Fatwa. Dar al-Fatwa is a

---

[13] On 2 February 2013, the Council of Ministers, in Resolution No. 1/19, excluded some professions from the list of those available only to Lebanese (on a full-time or part-time basis) and allowed Syrians to work in the following fields and jobs: Technical professions in the construction sector, commercial representative, mechanics and maintenance personnel, gatekeeper and guard, tailor, works supervisor, and metal work and upholstery. On 16 December 2014, Resolution No. 1/197 annulled these exceptions and stated that the following professions and positions were exclusively open to Lebanese: administrative positions; banking; insurance and educational work of all kinds; etc. See: The Lebanese Center of Policy Studies, Asylum Crisis or Migrant Labor Crisis?, May 2015, in: http://www.lcpslebanon. org/featuredArticle.php?id=42 (31.08.2016).

government institution that was created in 1922 and charged with issuing legal rulings specific to the Sunni community, administering religious schools, and overseeing mosques, all in the context of Lebanon's confessional state system in which each sect deals with its own internal affairs (Lefèvre, 2015). Some other organizations are also directly affiliated with major political blocs or big influential families in Lebanon, such as the Hariri and the Mouwad Foundations. International organizations (such as the UN or the EU) generally tend to underestimate the influence of such traditional civil society actors (Fischer, 2011). Indeed, according to a study by Melani Cammett (2014) the role of sectarian organizations in social provision in Lebanon exceeds by far the numbers of their centers. Beyond the direct provision of services in affiliated institutions, sectarian parties provide aid for health and educational needs, food and financial assistance, and act as intermediaries to facilitate access to citizen "entitlements".

Funding and financing remains another major challenge for these local NGOs. International humanitarian aid for the Syrian refugee crisis has decreased over the past two years and many NGOs are no longer able to run all of their programs. While during the beginning of the conflict, there was a major increase in the allocation of funds, in 2015-16 funds decreased due to the political situation in Europe and the emergence of other conflicts. Consequently, several CSO's in Lebanon were forced to stop some of their services and to reduce their staffs. In addition, the application processes' to obtain funding and grants from international organizations, especially from the EU or the UN, are very complex, and many of these local Lebanese NGOs do not have the knowledge or experience to complete these applications. A representative from the European delegation in Beirut said, *"There is a certain technicity and very strict guidelines to apply for EU funding. Therefore, it would be recommendable that an organization has an employee that is familiar with the writing style and has already some experience in drafting a project description for a call for proposals of the EU"* (Interview with EU delegation in Beirut, Beirut, 10.08.2016). Not only is there a shortage of funding allocated towards the refugee crisis, but many CSOs are unable to access and receive the available funding due to a lack of skills in grant management.

Moreover, the United Nations or the European Union, prefer often to do contracts with bigger international CSOs and a certain network of CSOs that shares similar values and having general knowledge and international experience in coping with humanitarian issues, such as the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) or Caritas, than with a number of small local CSOs or religious organizations that do not share the same vision and have less expertise (Interview director of SHEILD, Tyre,

September 2016). As this involves less administrative work for the sponsors and a better overview of their projects.

Similar to other local organizations, the above introduced organization Basmeh and Zeitooneh faces significant financial problems. According to Fadi Halisso, the founder of this Syrian organization, the problem is partly related to the media, which focuses increasingly on other themes, such as ISIS. As a result, the attention of the international public on the Syrian refugee conflict has declined (Thanassis, 2015). This development has contributed to a decrease in humanitarian aid forcing numerous CSOs to reduce their services. Also Basmeh and Zeitooneh was obliged to stop several programs, including an initiative that aimed to support Syrian women in creating small handcraft enterprises. But, which is even more problematic, according to Halisso, is the reduction of funds for primary urgency services, including food, clothes, and shelter. Nevertheless, the organization refuses to accept funds from every donor, but only from those, that agree with Basmeh and Zeitooneh's objectives and principles. The organization gets funding for its projects mainly though fundraising campaigns. This aspect indicates an important aspect of the effects of the Syrian refugee crisis on the civil society sector in Lebanon, which is an observable increased autonomy of local CSO's vis-à-vis international donors, on the one hand, and the Lebanese government, on the other hand. This process of gaining politically and economically more independence from other international actors and the Lebanese government is referred to by the international scholar Ohanyan (2012) as "*positive learning process*" meaning CSO's ability to learn from previous crisis situation and to better adapt their strategies accordingly.

## Conclusions

This article aimed to analyze the impact of the Syrian refugee crisis on the action of local confessional and non-confessional civil society actors in Lebanon, and question the prospective emergence of a political consensus among these local actors, by involving themselves in this highly political issue opposing different factions within the Lebanese state and society. It aimed also to investigate how this network of NGOs can be used to respond to important governance gaps. This was done by combining my field research with Ohanyan's actor-centred NGO network theory that considers the conditions under which NGOs are empowered and/or constrained in their actions to assess their impact on institutional arrangements (e.g. democratic structures and economic growth) in a specific environment ('failing or weak state' institutions). By looking at the interrelations

between the work of local NGOs, the Lebanese government and international organizations the article was aiming to respond to the following questions: Who are these local actors and what are their motivations in helping Syrian refugees? What kind of services do they provide? Who are their major donors? What is their relationship with the Lebanese government? What are their strategies of adapting or bypassing state policies towards the Syrian refugee population in Lebanon?

The collected data of the interviews indicates that in the absence of a strong national government and the prevailing role of the United Nations, its specialized agencies (UNHCR, OCHA, UNDP) and other international organizations (e.g. EU), local NGOs in Lebanon turned into important actors and partners of INGOs in the response and administration of the inflow of Syrians refugees in Lebanon. Moreover, when looking at the map of intervention it is beyond any doubt that the Syrian refugee crisis impacted the action of Lebanese local community organizations, as those organizations that were primarily active in South Lebanon, e.g. SHEILD, B&Z, Amel, have today projects all over the Lebanese territory. Meanwhile, local CSOs are often referred to as "implementing partners" of international organizations only few studies actually highlight the historical experience of the local organizations (Lebanese Civil War, Israel attacks in 1993, 1996, July War 2006) with emergency and development aid as, for example, the local NGO forum that was set during the Lebanese Civil War in order to deal with issues, such as internal displacement and reconstruction.

The Syrian situation in Lebanon can be regarded as another critical moment in Lebanon's history, because it gives impetus for reflection concerning Lebanon's current asylum and migration regime. Lebanon is not state party to the Geneva Convention of 1951 on the status of refugees nor did the Lebanese government do any remarkable affords in providing socio-economic opportunities for Syrian refugees. In this particular context, once again local civil society actors proved to be reliable actors in assuring a minimum of socio-economic stability by providing basic services to Syrian refugees as to poor Lebanese to work towards feelings of discrimination, isolation and exclusion. The need to provide a rapid and urgent response to the Syrian influx resulted in the emergence of new actors, like Basmeh&Zitooneh, the multiplication of inter-organizational relations to attract funds and to increase the efficiency of the action of local actors (e.g. Lebanese local NGO forum-(LNGO)) as well as in the expansion of services (e.g. SHEILD), the geographical area of intervention within the country, increasing voice and outreach of local NGOs on the international level (e.g. Amel). Despite repetitive complaints, especially by newly created CSOs (B&Z, SHEILD) or community-based organizations (e.g. Dar el Fatwa) that

funds decreased, were not enough or difficult to access, elder and more established local CSOs, such as Al Majmoua or Arc en Ciel seemed financially more stable and independent from international aid flows. Moreover, by circumventing state policies and cooperating rather with the local level than with the national government, these CSOs were able to maximize the efficacy of their action. However, the dispersion of funds to local actors created not only an atmosphere of increased competition between the national government and local actors for funds, but also an uncoordinated response to the Syrian refugee crisis, which makes it difficult to track, where and how efficient international aid is invested.

Lastly, local NGOs seem not only to bridge the gaps of Lebanon's asylum policies but also of the United Nations and its specialized agencies (UNRWA and UNHCR) that created protection gaps with its differentiation of the status of Palestinian and Syrian refugees. Due to the historical experience local organizations gained through out Lebanon's history of war and conflict, their familiarity with the history and traditions, as well as, their closeness to the situation of refugees, these local CSOs have the ability to bridge existing disparities in the perceptions of the situation of refugees among policymakers and the Lebanese hosting society. Despite the fact that most of the interviewed organizations were rather engaged with the delivery of services than in advocacy work by providing a more inclusive and integrative approach, local CSO's were able to compensate the void left by the Lebanese government and international organizations. Nevertheless, local actors have the legitimacy and potential to advocate for reforming the country's policies towards the situation of refugees and migrants in general, and therefore their role and actions in providing protection schemes to refugees and migrants deserve to be analyzed more closely not only in Lebanon, but in the whole Middle East.

## References

Abild, E., (2007), Hezbollah. A Contextual Study focusing on Human Freedom, BA Thesis in Development Studies, University of Oslo.

Barnes&Darcey, J. (2016), The War Next Door: Syria and the Erosion of Stability in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey. Policy Brief European Council on Foreign Affairs, July 2016, EPCR/182.

Bennett, J., (1995), *Meeting Needs: NGO Coordination in Practice*, Earthscan.

Carpi, E., (2016), "Politics of Care and Social Responses in the July 2006 War: a Special Focus on Local Faith-Based Organisations", Civil Society Knowledge Center, Lebanon Support, August, 2016, available at: http://cskc.daleel-madani.org//paper/politics-care-and-social-responses-july-2006-war-special-focus- local-faith-based-organisations, available on 20.04.2017.

Chapuis*, J., (2011),“L'affirmation d'une société civile libanaise par les guerres: études de cas,” La Revue des Champs de Mars, Paris, Presses de Sciences Po, 2011, Vol. 21, Retrieved from : http://www.grotius.fr/l%E2%80%99affirmation-d%E2%80%99une-societe-civile-libanaise-par-les-guerres-etude-de-cas/          , available on 21.07.2017, (in French).

Cherri, Z., et al.. (2016), The Lebanese–Syrian Crisis: Impact of Influx of Syrian Refugees to an Already Weak State, in: Risk Management and Healthcare Policy 9 (2016): 165–172. PMC, Retrieved from: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4948691/, available on 19.01.2017.

Clark, J. A., & Salloukh, B. F. (2013). Elite strategies, civil society, and sectarian identities in postwar Lebanon. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, *45*(04), 731-749.

Corm, G. (2007). *Le Proche-Orient éclaté: 1956-2007*. Gallimard (in French).

Crisp, J. (1997), Review of UNHCR Implementing arrangements and Implementing Partner selection. Retrieved from: http://www.unhcr.org/research/evalreports/3ae6bd42c/review-unhcr-implementing-arrangements-implementing-partner-selection-procedures.html, accessed on 01.08.2016.

Dionigi,F., (2016), Crisis in Lebanon. State Fragility and Social Resilience, in: London School of *Economics Middle East Centre Policy Paper* 15 February.

El Chemali, L. (2012), “La Politique Européenne de Voisinage au Liban: partenariat ou simple géostratégie économique et commerciale?”, Mémoire de Master, Presses Universitaires de l'Université Saint-Joseph de Beyrouth, Liban (in French).

El Chemali, L. (2016), “The Arab Refugee Paradox. An overview of refugee legislations in the Arab Middle East”, Retrieved from: http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas_47311-1522-2-30.pdf?161206102730, accessed on: 17.03.2017.

Erakat, N. (2014), “Palestinian Refugees and the Syrian Uprising: Filling the Protection Gap during Secondary Forced Displacement”, International Journal of Refugee Law, 2014, Vol. 26, No. 4, 581-621.

Fischer, M. (2011), Civil Society in Conflict Transformation: Strengths and Limitations, p. 301. In: B. Austin, M. Fischer, H.J. Giessmann (eds.). *Advancing Conflict Transformation.* The Berghof Handbook II. Opladen/Framington Hills: Barbara Budrich Publishers.

Frangieh, G. (2015). “Lebanon Places Discriminatory Entry Restrictions on Syrians.” Legal Agenda, 22 January, Retrieved from: http://english.legal-agenda.com/article.php?id=679&folder=articles&lang=en, avaialble on: 10.08.2016.

Geha, C. (2016), *Civil Society and Political Reform in Lebanon and Libya, Transition and Constrain*, Routledge.

Harik, J. (1994), “The public and social services of the Lebanese militias,” Papers on Lebanon, Oxford, Centre for Lebanese studies, 1994, Vol. 14, p.51, Retrieved from: http://www.lebanesestudies.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/6ea83fe14.-The-Public-and-Social-Services-of-the-Lebanese-Militias.-Judith-Harik-1994.pdf, available on: 21.07.2017.

Henry, L., (2017), “Le Liban à l'ombre de la guerre”, Affaires étrangères, France Culture, Interview par Christine Ockrendt, 28 Octobre 2017, Source:

https://www.franceculture.fr/emissions/affaires-étrngères/le-liban-a-lombre-de-la-guerre, available on 30 Octobre 2017, (in French).

Hourani, G. (2013), Syrian Refugees in Lebanon - The Heavy Burden of the Open Border Policy Retrieved from: http//:en.qantara.de/The-Heavy-Burden-of-the-Open-Border-Policy/20673c22840I0p9.Index.html, available on: 14.08.2015.

Janmyr, M. (2016), The Legal Status of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, Working Paper March 2016, American University Beirut, Retrieved from: https://www.aub.edu.lb/ifi/publications/Documents/working_papers/201603 31_Maja_Janmyr.pdf, available on: 01.07.2016.

Kagan, M. (2011), "We live in a country of UNHCR" The UN surrogate state and refugee policy in the Middle East, Research Paper No. 201, UNHCR Policy Development and Evaluation Service.

Karam Karam (2006), *Le mouvement civil au Liban: revendications, protestations et mobilisations*, Paris/Aix-en-Provence, Karthala/IREMAM (in French).

Kingston, P. (2000). Understanding governance in Lebanon: the case of disability policy-making. Governance and Civil Society Project, Institute of Development Studies, Sussex University.

Kingston, P. W. (2013). *Reproducing sectarianism: Advocacy networks and the politics of civil society in postwar Lebanon*. SUNY Press.

Lefèvre, R. (2015), Lebanon's Dar al Fatwa in the Search of Moderation, Retrieved from: http://carnegieendowment.org/2015/01/05/lebanon-s-dar-al-fatwa-and-search-for-moderation-pub-57627, available on: 08.08.2016.

Mastrodonato, L., (2014), „Coordination horizontal de l'aide humanitaire dans une situation de faiblesse étatique. Le cas de la gestion de la crise des réfugiés syriens au Liban", Mémoire présenté en vue de l'obtention du grade de Master en Sciences de la population et du développement, Année académique 2013-2014, Faculté des Sciences Sociales et Politiques, Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium.

Mohanna, K., (2014), Intervention at the occasion of the annual conference of the Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), Show me the money! Pour des ressources axées sur les principes humanitaires « Le cas d'Amel Association International» ["For resources centred on humanitarian principles"] (in French).

Moms, Nir.&Hazani, Asaf, (2014), "Israël déconcerté par la guerre en Syrie", [Israel deconcentrated by the War in Syria], *Le Monde diplomatique*, N 722-61, (in French).

Naufal, H., (2013), Syrian refugees in Lebanon: the humanitarian approach under political decisions, in: *MPC Research Report*, Robert Schuman Center for Advanced Studies, pp.1-25.

Ohanyan, A. (2009). Policy wars for peace: network model of NGO behavior. *International Studies Review*, *11*(3), pp. 475-501.

Oussama S. (2007), Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation in the Arab World: The Work of Civil Society Organizations in Lebanon and Morocco, Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management, July 2007, available at: http://www.berghof-

foundation.org/fileadmin/redaktion/Publications/Handbook/Articles/safa_handbook.pdf, available on 23.07.2016.

Picard, E.&Ramsbotham, A. (2012), "Reconciliation, reform and resilience - Positive peace for Lebanon", An international review of peace initiatives, Issue 24, London, pp.64-66.

Picard, E., (2016), Liban-Syrie, intimes étrangers. Un siècle d'interactions socio-politiques. Sindbad (in French).

Sharif, H., (2017), Taking it to the next level: refugee humanitarianism: "Case of Syrian-Palestinian Refugees Interaction in Lebanon", pp.25-27, in: Syrian Refugees in Lebanon Between Resilience and Vulnerability, Université Saint Joseph de Beyrouth, October 2017.

Sirkeci, I. (2017). Turkey's refugees, Syrians and refugees from Turkey: a country of insecurity. *Migration Letters,* 14(1), 127-144.

Thanassis, C. (2015), "Syria's Humanitarians Are Going Broke", Foreign Policy, 29.06.2015 Retrieved from: https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/06/29/syria-lebanon-refugees-basmeh-zeitooneh/, available on: 22.05.2016.

Ziad Abdel Samad& Bihter Moschini, "Humanitarian Assistance in Lebanon: Overview, Challenges and Recommendations. Revisiting the Humanitarian System: The Call for Country Ownership in the Case of Lebanon", Lebanon Support, Civil Society Knowledge Centre, October 2016, Retrieved from: http://civilsociety-centre.org/sites/default/files/resources/ humanitarianassistancelebanon-overviewchallengesrecommendations-ls2016.pdf, available on: 15 August 2017.

**Reference to an article in a periodical or newspaper:**
NGOs in Lebanon: Abusing Their Workers in the Name of Human Rights, (6 March 2015) *Al-Akhbar.com*, Retrieved from: http://english.al-akhbar.com/ node/9604, available on 11.11.2015.

Lebanon Support, Access to Healthcare for Syrian Refugees. The Impact of Fragmented Service Provision on Syrians' Daily Lives, Beirut, Civil Society Knowledge Centre, 2016, Retrieved from: http://civilsociety-centre.org/sites/default/files/resources/accesshealthcaresyrianrefugees-ls2016.pdf, available on: 16 August 2017.

**Reference to a special issue (when the special issue itself has a title):**
Mohanna, K., (2015), International and local NGOs, equal partners?, p.48.

Coquelet, D., (2017), Assessing UNHCR's Resettlement Practice: Uncertainty and Expectations of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon, in: Syrian Refugees in Lebanon Between Resilience and Vulnerability, Ocotber 2017, Université Saint Joseph de Beyrouth.

**Electronic References**
Al Majmoua Foundation, Webpage: https://www.almajmoua.org, available on: 10.08.2016.

Amel, Wepage: http://amel.org, available on:14.07.2017.

Arc en Ciel, Webpage: http://www.arcenciel.org/who-we-are/, available on: 10.07.2016.

Dar El Fatwa, Webpage: http://www.darfatwa.gov.lb/, available on: 10.08.2017.

European Commission (2016), "Managing the Refugee Crisis. EU Support to Lebanon", Retrieved from: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/ homeaffairs/ files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/ background-information/docs/20160316/eu_support_to_lebanon_en.pdf, available on: 01.11.2017.

Himaya Organization, Webpage: https://www.himaya.org, accessed on: 08.08.2016.

Kamel Mohanna : Accueil des réfugiés, l'expérience libanaise en France, TV5 Monde Direct, Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/ watch? v=5xY7Vj_fifc&sns=fb, available on: 28.10.2017.

Kayany Foundation, Webpage: http://kayany-foundation.org/team/lamia-al-masri/, available on, 10.11.2017.

Le Liban à l'ombre de la guerre par Christine Ockrendt, France Culture, 28.10.2017, Retrieved from: http://french.amel.org/le-liban-a-lombre-de-la-guerre-par-christine-ockrent/, available on: 01.11.2017.

LONDON CONFERENCE – LEBANON STATEMENT OF INTENT", gov.uk, 4 February 2016, Retrieved from: https://www.gov.uk/government/ uploads/ system/ uploads/ attachment_data/file/498026/Supporting_Syria__the_ Region_ London_2016_-_ Lebanon_Statement.pdf, accessed on:10.07.2016.

New Project..."Civil Society in Action for Sustainable Development", Retrieved from: http://www.makhzoumi-foundation.org/media/1286, available on: 08.08.2016.

OCHA, Financial Track System, Tracking humanitarian aid flows, Retrieved from: https://fts.unocha.org/countries/124/flows/2017, accessed on: 01.11.2017.

Spijkerboer, T. (2017), Nostalgia and Legitimacy: Understanding the Externalization of European Migration Policy, Annual Elizabeth Colson Lecture, Oxford Centre of Refugee and Forced Migration Studies, Retrieved from: https://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/events/nostalgia-and-legitimacy-understanding-the-externalization-of-european-migration-policy-annual-elizabeth-colson-lecture-2017, available on:17.03.2017.

Syria Regional Refugee Response, Inter-agency Sharing Portal, last update: 30 June 2017, Retrieved from: http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country. php?id=122, available on: 15.08. 2017.

UNHCR, Syria Regional Response Plan: Lebanon, List of Partners, in: http://www.unhcr.org/syriarrp6/docs/syria-rrp6-lebanon-response-plan. pdf#A, available on: 14.07.2016.

Worldmeters (2017), Lebanon Population, http://www. worldometers.info/world-population/lebanon-population/, available on: 15.08. 2017.

"Instructions for the Entry of Syrians," available on the website of the General Directorate of General Security, Retrieved from: http://www.general-security.gov.lb/ available on August 2016, (in Arabic).