Integration through education programs in Lebanon for Syrian youth refugees

AN ANALYSIS OF HOW INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL POLICIES AND LOCAL PRACTICES SHAPE INTEGRATION

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INTEGRATION THROUGH EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN LEBANON FOR SYRIAN YOUTH REFUGEES

An analysis of how international and national policies and local practices shape integration

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Pictures from the frontpage are own work
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This thesis analyses how current international and local education policies and local practices shape integration. Scientific research revealed that social cohesion is one of the first steps in shaping integration. The scientific purpose of this study is to investigate educational policies and how they contribute to integration. Furthermore, there is the purpose to explore the application of social cohesion in educational programs in the humanitarian sector, in the context of Lebanon coping with the influx of Syrian refugees. The definition and theory of integration, acculturation and cohesion are explored with a specific focus on a framework that is provided by the scholar Jenson. In order to comprehend what enables and barriers social cohesion Jenson designed this framework. Hence this framework will be analyzed further in the research findings. Current international humanitarian strategies as response to the Syrian crisis will be explored aligned the national strategies regarding education. Humanitarian agencies need to strengthen research regarding social cohesion to facilitate integration. It is important to test, improve and build tools. In order to facilitate integration it is of utmost importance to mainstream social cohesion in humanitarian response strategies and operational plans, especially regarding education. Increasing interaction and building mutual respect in schools is key to enhance reconciliation and build a stronger society where there is equal access to resources.

Key words: humanitarian response, education, integration, social cohesion, acculturation, social distance, Lebanon, Syria
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>Accelerated Learning Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>BLN</td>
<td>Basic Literacy and Numeracy</td>
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<tr>
<td>CERD</td>
<td>Center for Educational Research and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOG</td>
<td>Department for Orientation and Guidance</td>
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<tr>
<td>GoL</td>
<td>Government of Lebanon</td>
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<tr>
<td>IS</td>
<td>Islamic State</td>
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<td>LCRP</td>
<td>Lebanese Crisis Response Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEHE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education and Higher Education</td>
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<td>MSNA</td>
<td>Inter-agency Multi-Sector Needs Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>NFE</td>
<td>Non-formal education</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>RACE</td>
<td>Reaching All Children with Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>RPP</td>
<td>Regional Response Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>PMU</td>
<td>Program Management Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>UN High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
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In front of you lies my master thesis, entitled ‘integration through education programs in Lebanon for Syrian youth refugees’. An analysis of how international and national policies and local practices shape integration in Lebanon. Since the November 2015 until December 2016 I have worked on this thesis.

When I heard at the start of my master program about the possibility to conduct research in Lebanon I was immediately excited. With my longstanding interest in refugees and education my topic was found easily. I am grateful for this opportunity and think of myself as fortunate when I was selected for the third mobility semester to Beirut. During my time in Lebanon I enjoyed the Lebanese lifestyle, experienced the amazing food, made new friends, explored the hidden natural pearls and got to know a different culture.

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My time in Lebanon has been highly valuable. From a close-up in the field the other side of the spectrum of the humanitarian world I am currently working in Geneva. I am looking forward to my future and to start a new phase. Then, it only remains me to wish you much pleasure reading my thesis.

Rivka van Mastrigt

Geneva, 31st of December 2016
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1. INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC

This chapter will introduce this thesis by giving a short introduction that describes the current situation in Lebanon. Furthermore the implications of the Syrian influx in Lebanon will come to the fore. The foundation of this research is formed by the subjects of integration, social cohesion and social distance. These concepts will be explained in a later stage of this chapter. This chapter will give a practical tool, the Jenson’s framework, which identifies the barriers and enablers to social cohesion. This framework is necessary to analyze how educational policies in Lebanon shape integration. In the final conclusion of my thesis this framework is used to analyze the research findings, revealing the barriers and enablers in current practices to social cohesion and consequently to integration.

1.1 PROTESTS THAT SPARKED PROLONGED CHAOS

Protests demanding a change of regime and political reform in March 2011 started the unrest in Syria and has increasingly transformed into one of the most brutal conflicts after the Second World War. The violence in Syria led to large-scale displacement of the civilian population. Over seven million Syrians were internally displaced at the end of 2015, and over four million refugees are residing in neighboring countries Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq and Egypt. Lebanon maintained its open border policy since the start of the unrest and received the largest number of Syrians who fled the violence. As of 30th of June 2016, 1,033,513 Syrians are officially registered with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). However, the unofficial number is substantially higher; when the unregistered and labor migrants are included. In addition, UNHCR in Lebanon has suspended new registration of refugees ordered by the government of Lebanon as of 6th of May 2015. Hence, individuals who are waiting to be registered are not included in UNHCR’s

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2 The term refugee is used to define a person who was forced to leave and live outside their country of origin because of fear, threat, violence or persecution and war. - What is a refugee. n.d. http://www.unrefugees.org/what-is-a-refugee/ (accessed July 12, 2016).
number of persons of concern. It is safe to state that the total number of Syrian refugees in Lebanon has exceeded over a quarter of the Lebanese population of 4.4 million.

Although the country has not signed the 1951 Refugee Convention and despite the restrictions at the borders, the country has set up inter-ministerial crisis management and is actively involved in accommodating the refugees. However, there are no official refugee camps set up to host the Syrian refugees. Despite the inter-agency response, the Syrian refugees become more vulnerable. Their savings are depleted while the situation is not improving; therefore their socio-economic vulnerability increases overtime. Demonstration of solidarity and support is crucial for Lebanon, support for the refugees as well as for the vulnerable Lebanese population. The ability to respond to the Syrian crisis is severely tested. Many Syrian refugees in Lebanon are not able to return home as long the conflict in Syria continues. For them it is important to integrate in local Lebanese communities to build a new life. Thorleifsson argues that Syrians are demonstrating strength and resilience, but that they do not consider Lebanon as a safe zone. Due to the influx of refugees and the temporary suspended registration of UNHCR there an increase in competition over resources and job opportunities. This competition is partly stimulated through the lack of official camps; refugees are self-settling across the country. Refugees need to exploit their social networks and rely on aid and work opportunities, by self-settling new livelihood systems are created to secure their well-being.

How they socially experience Lebanon is influenced by the sensitive sectarian balance between Shia groups and Sunni groups. The actual threat of violence is influencing the daily life of Syrian refugees in rural and urban settings. Local practices of hospitality in Lebanon are widespread; however Syrians are simultaneously blamed for insecurity economically and politically.

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1.1.1 Problem Statement

This thesis will focus on Syrian youth in Lebanon and their integration within the host community. By the term youth the population between the age of 3 and 25 is meant.

As mentioned before, protests demanding a change of regime and political reform in March 2011 started the conflict in Syria. Lebanon has been a haven for people who fled from the violence. This influx is bringing Lebanon increasingly economic, social, demographic, security and political challenges. Nonetheless, the host communities continue to provide basic services and refugee support, such as healthcare, education and shelter. As there is a large community of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, despite the challenges three populations are living side by side in this small country.

Due to the humanitarian situation in Lebanon there has been a population growth of more than 30% in the last five years. Therefore, it is important to focus on conflict prevention. Education can be used as an agent to prevent conflict in such situation. As no country can be expected to handle such situation on its own it is significant to review global education and regional policies, analyzing the role of the international community and the government. In addition, it is significant to look at the role of civil society and grassroots movements, as these actors can offer educational support.

Education can be the kick start to start the process of integration. Through education children learn languages and socialize and interact with their environment. Furthermore, children learn to cope with group dynamics and authorities. Another important aspect of educating refugee youth is the danger of an uneducated “lost” generation that someday needs to rebuild a country.

For the process of integration, it is important to understand what enables or hinders social cohesion and the role of education to facilitate the integration of Syrian refugees in Lebanon. Education can have a role in fostering tolerance and inter-group understanding and promotes healing and reconciliation, these factors benefit Lebanon’s socio-economic settings in the future. In view of that, it is linked to the

formation of attitudes, perceptions and intergroup understanding. To improve the integration course of refugees in their host communities, it is significant to review the processes and structures that influence and shape social attitudes of children. Attitudes describe the favor or disfavor of one person towards another. Sidanius and Pratto argue that attitudes are formed early in childhood, and that once positive or negative biases are formed, they tend to increase over time\(^8\). This information highlights the need to understand the development of tensions and the relation to negative social attitudes. This is a dual perspective from the Syrian refugees towards the host community and vice versa.

The other dimension that will come to the fore is interactive social distance which will focus more on interaction between the two groups in classrooms and school premises; Syrian and Lebanese youth.

Lebanon is characterized by multifaceted, dynamic, divers and interconnected communities. These are underlined by structural vulnerabilities which can intensify the level of inequality in the country. Those vulnerabilities can increase due to scarcity of resources and limited opportunities, leading to competition, social conflict and protection challenges during emergencies\(^9\). It is no surprise that tensions have emerged between refugees, host communities, local communities and local authorities. The Lebanon Crisis Response Plan mentions the fear for a potential tipping point that is pushing the protection and enhancement of a fragile stability into key strategic objectives. These objectives are acknowledged by national, international and local actors. The subject of integration and particularly the formation of social cohesion are critical for humanitarian action in protracted conflict situations.

A rise in social tensions and a decrease in social cohesion between Lebanese communities and the Syrian refugee population can generate a secondary struggle. Lebanese are concerned to become victims of crime or to fall into poverty as their perceptions about security threats are impacted by the influx of Syrian refugees and\(^{10}\).


There is a strong need for intergroup understanding and to start tolerance reconciliation. Operationalizing integration in the Lebanese education response plan as a tool for participatory planning processes for education interventions is significant to increase social cohesion. As the education sector offers a big opportunity to increase social cohesion between Lebanese and Syrian youth. However, lack of access to education and quality of a lower quality for refugees is an obstacle for this process. It is significant to not only look at the students of primary, secondary and higher education, but as well to the teachers and the public system. This research is of utmost importance as this is not yet studied in the Lebanese context.

1.2 OBJECTIVE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The first research objective is to describe and understand how global education policies and national policies shape the integration process for Syrian refugees in Lebanon. The second objective is to describe the perceptions\textsuperscript{11} of Syrian refugees and the Lebanese population towards each other’s, and their self-concept\textsuperscript{12} towards integration process as related to their livelihood strategies and conditions. This research aims to explore the start of the integration process as described by social cohesion, and how this process is perceived by experts in the educational field and the Syrians and Lebanese. In the intersectionality analysis, religion is the starting point, other interconnected social identities are taken into account; recognizing intersectionality\textsuperscript{13} of the target populations.

The research question central in this report is as follows:

\textit{“How do global education policies, national education policies, and local schooling practices intersect to shape refugees’ social integration in Lebanon?”}

\textsuperscript{11} In this thesis perceptions are defined as interpretations and views based on understanding, religion, beliefs, gender, age, ethnicity, but as well experiences of people, information and received services J. Wolf, S.C. Moser. “Individual understanding, perceptions and engagement: insights from in-depth studies across the world.” Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews 2, no. 4 (2011): 547-569.

\textsuperscript{12} Self-concept is a collection of beliefs about oneself, it includes gender, sexuality and racial identity. People’s self-image will influence their response, understanding and willingness towards integration of another group. J. Wolf, S.C. Moser. “Individual understanding, perceptions and engagement: insights from in-depth studies across the world.” Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews 2, no. 4 (2011): 547-569.

\textsuperscript{13} Intersectionality will be discussed in chapter 1.4
To answer this main research question, two sub-questions need to be asked. The first question regards the concept of integration. The second question concerns the global and national educational policies in Lebanon.

I.  “Which assumptions are relevant for integrating Syrian refugees in Lebanese society?

This question aims to understand the process of integration and the importance of perceptions in inter-group understanding. Also, the role of social cohesion will be clear and how this is relevance to start the integration process. The concept of social distance helps to understand the distance between the two populations and creates a rich image of the situation in Lebanon where integration needs to occur. The current circumstances in Lebanon might not be able to foster any integration process through education. Therefore, it is significant to understand the history of Lebanon, and its context. Questions that can be asked are related to the impact of violence of the past to the situation of today, or the impact of the Syrian crisis on Lebanese society. After understanding the Lebanese population and Syrian refugee population, and practices of these people regarding education in Lebanon, the perceptions and experiences towards each other and education can be studied. Why Syrian and Lebanese children enroll in to school or drop out, what parents consider the benefits and disadvantages and what their overall experience is, will be discussed.

II. Which policies exist that are relevant for the education sector in Lebanon to facilitate the integration process?

To answer this question, it is important to analyze which policies exist and how they impact educational practices in Lebanon. It will be reviewed for all forms of education: formal, non-formal, primary and higher education. Another aspect that needs to be reviewed is the role of education in social cohesion and ultimately in integration.

After answering these two sub-questions, the aim of this study is to understand the Lebanese environment where integration should take place, and how this is connected to global and regional policies; and thus, answering the main research question.
1.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.3.1 What is integration?

The term integration is often used in practices, policies and academic literature; it has various meanings to different actors depending on their perspectives, interests, norms and values\(^\text{14}\). Social psychologists argue that integration is a process that over time both migrant groups and host societies are changing and form new identities\(^\text{15}\). Integration is only one part of the acculturation process. Integration follows when an individual has interest in both maintaining their culture of origin and taking part in daily interactions with other groups. Integration is a multidimensional process, where individuals, migrants and refugee communities, institutions and society all play a role\(^\text{16}\). Fyvie et al. reviewed literature regarding integration and highlighted the functional dimensions of integration, emphasizing on the importance of education and training, employment, health and housing as these areas are necessary for the integration process to take place\(^\text{17}\).

1.3.1.1 Local integration as a ‘durable solution’

Along repatriation and resettlement local integration is a durable solution. It is a mean to end exile by allowing refugees to become members of host communities. It is a significant way to give refugees more autonomy and a sense of belonging. Lucy Hovil argues that integration rather is a “forbidden” solution than a “forgotten” solution\(^\text{18}\).

As an official policy; local integration equals receiving citizenship of the country of exile. This policy is established similarly in the international refugee law described in the 1951 Refugee Convention. This convention emphasizes the importance of citizenship as a durable solution: art. 34 of the Convention “the contracting states shall as far as possible facilitate the assimilation and naturalization of refugees. They shall in particular make every effort to expedite naturalization proceedings”\(^\text{19}\).


\(^\text{19}\) Article 34 of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, Adopted on 28 July 1951 by the United Nations Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Status of Refugees and Stateless Persons convened under General Assembly Resolution 429 (V) of 14 December 1950; entry into force 22 April 1954, in accordance with Article 43.
As stated before, Lebanon did not sign the 1951 Refugee Convention; therefore, the country is not bound to work on this process of citizenship. However, in practice integration is far more than the acquisition of citizenship. This paper will describe two categories of local integration; *de facto* and *de jure* integration.

**De Facto integration**

This is an informal process of integration and takes place at the local level. With *de facto* integration refugees negotiate in groups or as individuals belonging to the community where they are living. Integration works on different levels and is strongly context related. These levels can be economic, cultural, political or social. For refugees to be able to integrate at a local level it is important that they have a relationship with the host population, this may include the local authorities. Refugees’ legitimacy to live in a certain area might be built on local understandings of belonging that exceeds national identities. Integrating locally can be recognized by the host population when refugees are viewed as potential assets. It is argued that local integration is considered informal, illegal and often of temporary nature. It is important to note that these points are not always the case. Local integration should not be romanticized; the process demonstrates to be resourceful but it also leaves families in vulnerable positions and with lack of protection.

**De Jure integration**

This process of integration is mostly about national belonging; therefore *de jure* integration focusses rather on national than on the notion of local. Obtaining new citizenship by a formal process is the representation of *de jure* integration and is clearly political. In theory, this acquisition of a new national identity represents “*the right to have rights*”. From a legal perspective, *de jure* local integration is a durable solution. However, this approach is often evaded by governments as they prefer a rather exclusive and protective approach. Hence, by means of naturalization to end exile is rather the exception than the rule. More notably, formal citizenship does not guarantee that refugees are included in local contexts. The legitimacy to belong to a certain place is a complex process. But it is important to note that local belonging is unstable when people are not recognized on a national level. When external circumstances, such as the crisis in Syria, changes localized forms of integration the situation gets destabilized.

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Discussing de jure local integration; national citizenship cannot guarantee better living conditions for refugees when individuals, or refugees as a group, are not accepted within the locality. Because of this delinquent and the fact that Lebanon did not sign the 1951 Refugee Convention this research paper will focus more on de facto integration, bearing in mind that local integration in practice needs to occur both at a national and local level.

1.3.2 Acculturation strategies

When one is researching in a cross-cultural context the term acculturation is highly relevant. Acculturation refers to the process of adjustment, when people start living in another culture then their own. A model to review this process is designed by the scholar Berry\(^{22}\). This model supports understanding of the strategy people choose in the acculturation process. There are four types of acculturation strategies. The first one is integration; the individual keeps their own cultural identity while being a participant in the host community. Assimilation is the second strategy; the individual is losing their own cultural identity and gets absorbed in the host community. Thirdly there is separation, this is when one keeps their identity and rejects involvement in the host community. Marginalization is the fourth strategy; when one does not identify with their own cultural identity and neither with their host community.

In Berry’s model the host community too adopts an acculturation strategy. The first strategy is the one of multiculturalism; when a society values multiple cultures, fosters diversity and adopts an integration approach. Secondly, there are societies that become a melting pot; one that seeks assimilation as acculturation strategy. Segregation is a strategy that forces separation; people are parted into racial groups which is a daily pattern. On the other hand, the last strategy exclusion imposes marginalization. After the research findings are discussed, the acculturation strategy of the Syrian refugees will be reviewed in the concluding chapter, along with the acculturation strategy that fits the approach Lebanon best.

To study the acculturation process, bearing in mind that this thesis focuses on integration, it is significant to assess the boundaries between refugees and the

Lebanese in terms of social cohesion and social distance. Therefore, the concept of social distance plus the enablers and barriers for social cohesion are explored below.

1.3.3 What is meant by ‘social distance’?

Distance is a compatible concept according to sociologists, used in various ways and obtains various meanings. In sociology, distance is used to refer to class differences\textsuperscript{23}. The concept of distance is also viewed in a psychological perspective. Within social interaction everyone presents a configuration of characteristics that identify their social backgrounds, their role, temperament, class or status. A person’s position in social space is identified by several factors; income, educational level, school, occupation, family, sex, race and age. This social space is his or her location in a web of social relationships. The sociologist Rummel argues that people’s similarities and differences are captured by their objective and subjective distance based on these characteristics, this is his concept of social distance\textsuperscript{24}. Social distance is a force that builds social relationships. From another perspective relationships reflect distances. Rummel identified three subtypes of social distance which are status, power and distances in class.

Status-distance is the first subtype that is discussed. People are differently located within patterns of esteem and domination, which put one in position within the stratification system of society. This means society’s categorization of people, where people are located is depending on their status; which is based upon their wealth, prestige and power. Therefore, this subtype is centered on people’s objective differences in these three matters.

Secondly is power-distance which is also objective. To understand conflicts this type is important. This type is dependent of the distribution of power among people and groups. Besides it is significant to note what role power plays in perceptions, expectations and the behavior of people.

Class-distance is the third subtype. This is a dichotomous classification of people: who is commander and who is ruled in society. This distance is correlated with class interest and related to the in- and outgroup, “us versus them”, “those who have


and those who want”. Class distance is the objective probability that individuals will be on the same side or will oppose each other.

Another description of social distance is formed by the scholar Karakayali: the grades and degrees of understanding and intimacy which characterize personal and social relations can be understood as social distance. Karakayali points out that when social distance increases negative affections can control social relationships.

Karakayali categorized social distance in three dimensions. The first one is affective social distance; this approach is linked with affection and is formed by the amount of sympathy that members of one group feel for another group. It is based on the idea that when people who are socially in a close relationship are also feeling close to each other. In this category, social distance is treated in a subjective manner. When an individual forms an emotional response towards another group, this person is already able to dissimilar this group as a distinct category.

Secondly there is normative social distance. This dimension is linked to the expressed norms about who should be included and excluded; it is strongly related to the feeling of us versus them and social attitudes. Kinship relation is the most obvious example of such normative system of social distance. This normative concept heavenly impacts the integration process and can be viewed as an objective, structural aspect of social relations. All normative social distance systems distinguish different levels of membership to a certain group, when these differences intersect with subjective feelings of the group members the relationship ‘works’. When this is not the case the ‘group’ might dissolve.

The third dimension concerns the interactive social distance. This dimension focuses on interactions between two groups, on frequency and intensity. How higher these factors, the closer the groups get socially and the better the integration process evolves. This dimension is closely linked to the development of social networks.

When relationship between social distance and education is assessed, social distance can be a significant predictor of attitudes towards refugees. This research will focus on normative and interactive distance. It is important to note that the concept of social distance is subjective; it is a group’s conception of its relation to another group

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also named an out-group. In the case of refugees in Lebanon, the Lebanese population is the in-group while the refugees are the out-group. When two groups and their intergroup relationships are studied, it is significant to use the concept of social cohesion as this gives a clear picture of the three dimensions. Social distance and a framework that helps to analyze social cohesion in practice will be reviewed in the section below.

1.3.4 Needing social cohesion in the process of integration

Social cohesion is critical for the process of integration; therefore, this will come to the fore. In this literature review it became clear that regarding the concept of social cohesion there is no clear definition that is theoretically driven, clearly written and operational. Applicable to the refugee-host community I will use a working definition of social cohesion.

“Social cohesion is the nature and set of relationships between groups and individuals in a certain environment, this is horizontal social cohesion. Vertical social cohesion is between individuals and groups and the institutions that govern them in this certain environment.”

There is high social cohesion when relationships are strong, integrated and inclusive, a positive form of social cohesion. Negative, weak and fragmented relationships are perceived as a low level of social cohesion. Social cohesion, an ambiguous concept makes it multifaceted and not simple to be theoretical driven. However, later in this thesis on a more practical note there will be looked at the enablers and barriers of this concept.

Social cohesion constitutes of changing and multiple identities. These identities exist on fields that can be political, ethnic, religious or social related. Lyytinen and Kullenberg are pointing out the importance of social networks to build social cohesion between refugees and host communities. Not only internal bonding in groups is significant but as well between groups, which is known as bridging. These two concepts of bonding and bridging are important for the process of integration. Other notions that are relevant are social capital, social stability and social networks. Social capital

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26 This working definition is derived from the following: REACH. „Understanding Social Cohesion and Resilience in Jordanian Host Communities.” Assessment Report, 2014.
consists of social networks and relationships, in addition to norms and resources that members of communities contribute and build upon\textsuperscript{28}. Social capital is considered a crucial element of society to become more cohesive\textsuperscript{29}.

To indicate social cohesion: personal, political and developmental human safety needs to be taken into consideration. Furthermore, within a group there must be trust in institutions, satisfaction and participation in the community. Between groups it is important to be aware of intergroup perceptions and perceived threats. This is closely linked to social distance which also refers to inter-group interactions. Concepts that need to be analyzed to indicate low social cohesions are social tensions, social fragmentation and situations of social instability. Violence between groups can be an indicator or negative communication, like spreading negative stereotypes, blaming, anxiety, threats and perceptions. Since social cohesion is a concept with a multidimensional nature it is practical to use a framework that will identify factors that contribute or disrupt social cohesion. Jenson’s framework offers a suitable framework for this research\textsuperscript{30}.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{28} Edwards, R. „Introduction: Themed section on social capital, families and welfare policy.” Social Policy and Society 2, nr. 4 (2003): 305-308.
\end{itemize}
1.3.5  Jenson’s framework for social cohesion

This framework consists of five dimensions that are adopted widely in research and policies. The first domain is *belonging* build out of shared values and identity. Secondly there is *inclusion* which means equal opportunities for access. The third domain is *participation*; engagement in structures and systems. *Recognition* is the fourth domain entailing respect and tolerance. The last domain is *legitimacy* linked to pluralism.

![Figure 1: Jenson’s Framework for social cohesion](image)

*Belonging* is fundamental for social cohesion and is highly complex. This domain refers to the range in which members feel or express a sense of connection to “the community” and/or pride, as well to a larger nationwide extend. Of most definitions of social cohesion belonging is part of it, however it is the most disputable aspect of Jensen’s framework, especially concerning the subcomponent of shared values and identity. Nevertheless, to most definitions belonging and trust in fellow members of one’s community is essential to social cohesion. Measuring this dimension of belonging is done via the strength of identification with certain social groups.

The extent to which community members have access to resources refers to *inclusion*. Education is one of those resources. Literature that is written regarding inclusion is mostly referring to the concept of social inclusion, linked to opportunities
and equality. Social inclusion has a multidimensional character; the concept includes providing individuals with opportunities that will maximize their social, political, cultural or economic rights.

Engagement in structures and systems relates to participation. Individuals can participate outside the formal employment sector, in voluntary work but the concept also includes political participation like voting, protesting or disagreement. The scholar Spoonley notes that education as social behavior is also a form of participation under this dimension. Comparable are cultural activities, sports or leisure happenings. Therefore, this dimension can be seen in two perspectives; political participation and community participation. However, these two perspectives can be mixed for example in arts events that occur as a political protest statement.

Mutual respect and tolerance among community members are of utmost importance and falls under the dimension of recognition. When community members are respected and accepted, there is a sense of recognition. However, when there is a sense of rejection members feel they are not recognized by the rest of the community. Measuring this dimension can be heavily subjected because indicators include self-reported experiences of prejudices, discrimination or perceived vulnerabilities. Attitudes within the group that are of a discriminatory and prejudice nature are indicators of rejection. Mutual respect and joined perceptions are indicators for recognition towards one another.

Legitimacy is not always included as a separate part of social cohesion. In some literature legitimacy is included as it is part of acceptance and rejection. Legitimacy is more included in formal institutional levels, for example in policies relating to multiculturalism and pluralism. It also reveals the public confidence in institutions that reflect the government and political system. Therefore, there is a need for institutions at the macro-level that can manage possible conflicts in a pluralist

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society. According to Jenson this includes government departments, parties but also NGO’s, advocacy groups and social movements that work on social inclusion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jenson’s framework for social cohesion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Belonging</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared values and identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sense of connection to the community (or nation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sense of pride</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Measure: strong identification towards groups, closeness to the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inclusion</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access; equal opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Extent of equal access for community members to resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provides opportunities for individuals to increase their rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Measure: participation in the labor force, income, social support, wealth, education and occupation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement in structures and systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Civil or political participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Social or community participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recognition</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect and tolerance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mutual tolerance and respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Feeling of acceptance or rejection by other community members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How to measure: attitudes within an intergroup, level of discrimination/prejudice/racism, perceptions and extend of tolerance and mutual respect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legitimacy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pluralism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Formal institutional level factors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Public confidence in institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Need for institutions on a macro-level in pluralist societies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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1.3.6 Enablers and barriers for social cohesion

In this section the drivers for social cohesion will be discussed. The factors that enable or increase cohesion and factors that increase rejection, reduce cohesion and enhance exclusion.

**Belonging: enablers and barriers**

As mentioned before, belonging is central in most definitions of social cohesion. According to Jenson belonging is considered a basic human need. Literature regarding social cohesion shows that interpersonal aspects are a key. Examples are positive interactions among members in the community with regular contact, sharing of certain sports, arts or cultural events. A spiritual bond on a religious level is too an enabler for social cohesion in a multicultural society. For individuals from ethnic, religious and/or cultural minorities to gain a sense of belonging it is critical that they sense a connection to one’s religious, ethnic or cultural community. However, it is important to note that people can belong and identify themselves within varied, multicultural communities. According to Wetherell, these numerous possibilities of belonging can strengthen communities. Individuals can co-exist instead of competing; this counts for example for ethnic minority and national identities. Though, multiple identities can be a struggle within a society when there is friction between religious and national identities. Social groups and categories of people can be tricky when their boundaries are too firm. This can lead to an “us versus them” mentality.

When diversity and multiculturalism is encouraged by the social and political environment this contributes to the sense of belonging at national and local levels. Media and education plays a big role in the development of belonging. In addition, there is need for social trust to enhance belonging. This topic will be addressed in the section regarding participation. Barriers to the development of belonging are discrimination and prejudices within society. When groups or individuals are shamed

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or humiliated in their communities, or when interactions between community members are unresolved and vague this creates a barrier. Cultural exclusion is as well a barrier; exclusion can get heightened by public expressions of nationalism. Barriers to belonging lead to social division and conflicts.

**Inclusion: enablers and barriers**

Inclusion is about equal access of members to resources in their community. To enable social inclusion one has to look at employment, social relationships and capacity building. Opposing stereotypes plus respecting and protecting cultural values and treasure heritage will develop and strengthen the community. Social networks in communities support social inclusion which is built by relationships. Capacity building and strengthening the community are interventions to promote inclusion. By tackling problems that relate to policy and development, capacity is build, while the potential needs and limits of the community members are taken into consideration. Capacity building occurs on different levels; individual, institutional and societal according to UNDP. Another important aspect is preserving values, heritage and culture. This is too an important aspect in the section regarding recognition. An enabler for inclusion is employment; however the focus is rather on barriers to participation in the workforce before we can speak about inclusion through employment. Leisure interventions; for example sports, are an enabler for inclusion and to participation.

**Participation: enablers and barriers**

Engagement in structures and systems outside the workforce, voluntary or political participation, belongs to the dimension of participation. Government policies and programs are focused on enhancing community participation. Effective participation is supported by networks and “social spaces”. Bi-culturism and valuing diversity needs to be fostered along volunteering and capacity building. In addition to leadership and training skills that must be developed together with anti-racism practices. This can be done via local initiatives and activities as music, arts and sport.

To enable participation social spaces and networks are crucial, these include friendships and family who connect to the community in a broader sense. Spaces that qualify are cafés, sport clubs, parks, beaches and prayer rooms. In addition, there is a

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role for social spaces online; e.g. Facebook, Twitter and Snapchat. When participation is enhanced through social network and spaces it is important to keep in mind cultural customs. Other enablers are volunteering that enhances networks and social well-being. To promote participation mentoring and leadership development is crucial. Leaders and trainers help others to develop their skills, which creates a higher participation level. Minorities can increase recognition by participation, e.g. in radio or sports. Participation in sports has been connected to reconciliation strategies which denote that relationships are restored. Churches and religious activities are rated among one of the highest types of social participation.

Especially for minority groups perceptions or experiences of marginalization and social/economic exclusion are barriers to participation. Other barriers are lack of resources, support, knowledge and language issues. When community members do not trust the institutions, this leads to inaccessible services which is a barrier for them to participation. Experiencing (political) discrimination affects one’s participation and his or her feeling of belonging to a community. Participation is also depending on the openness of a community to newcomers e.g. migrants. When the aim is to increase participation, it is important to take into account this can be more difficult for women due to religious or cultural issues, family obligations or clothing necessities. Other barriers are; lack of knowledge (concerning rules), accessibility, financial and/or time constraints, low-confidence and self-esteem problems for participants.

Recognition: enablers and barriers

To what extend differences and diversity are respected within the local community is depending on the level of recognition. Key enablers for recognition are positively influencing prejudices, creating tolerance towards age, education, empathy and knowledge and limiting discrimination. In a group it is important that individuals identify with the group, have regular contact and have limited perceived cultural distance. Society factors such as social norms, the political environment, unemployment levels and immigration numbers are significant for recognition. In order to develop a strategy or initiative that will increase intergroup recognition it is important to consider the factors that are amenable to change.

Negative relations or competition between groups are the opposites of the factors mentioned above and will decrease recognition. Factors as unemployment or an environment that fosters discrimination are weakening the sense of recognition on a broader socio-economic level. In the context of this research it is important to note that education can foster this sense of recognition. Highly educated individuals tend to have fewer prejudices as prejudice is a result of a lack of knowledge. A tendency to depend on stereotypes and false views about minority groups is a consequence of lack of knowledge. On a higher intergroup level, it is significant to note that intercultural interaction is by far the most effective in reducing prejudices. Regular contact between groups creates high benefits that reduces prejudices, improves mutual understanding, decrease anxiety and lessen perceived threats between groups.

**Legitimacy: enablers and barriers**

The last dimension of Jenson’s framework’s legitimacy rather concerns formal institutions rather than factors on a local level. Jenson argues that the Club of Rome led to the formation of legitimacy which reflects the need for managing pluralism. Naturally encouraging pluralism in the society leads to differences in beliefs, opinions and values. Macro institutions, NGO’s and social movements need to step up in mediating or managing potential conflict between those differences. For this dimension it is difficult to focus on enablers, because it occurs on a societal level instead of an individual one. Markus and Spoonley point out the importance of civic society that needs to have public trust in institutions and confidence in societal processes. When one has negative experiences with institutions this can decrease the sense of trust and confidence. Correspondingly, when there is a negative political environment and/or a general unrest towards the government this leads to a minimum level of support and therefore low levels of confidence and legitimacy.

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1.4 **Intersectionality in Research in Lebanon**

"Intersectionality is a theoretical framework that posits that multiple social categories (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status) intersect at the micro level of individual experience to reflect multiple interlocking systems of privilege and oppression at the macro, social-structural level"\(^{49}\).

This study, looking at the way education policies shape social integration in Lebanon, wouldn’t be complete without taking the Lebanese adopters into account. The population has many characteristics that may or may not influence the possibility for any integration process of Syrian refugees. To paint a picture of the country; religion, gender, and migration are taken into account. Taking different characteristics of people into account is named intersectionality\(^{50}\). Intersectional research is not merely looking at characteristics of people as separate categories, but assumes that all is interrelated. To make research understandable a few categories stand central. It would be impossible to take all heterogeneous aspects into account. This study aims to include all main relevant heterogeneous aspects that are significant for studying a refugee population and a host population. Here religion, gender, and migration as a livelihood strategy will be discussed.

It is not specific about what people *are* but about what people *perceive* to be, because religion and gender affects one’s identity. Identity consists of “*social categories in which an individual claims membership as well as the personal meaning associate with those categories*”\(^{51}\). Identity is not what people are but is about self-reflection and self-image; how persons claim and perceive to be. Shields notes that certain intersectionality can be a disadvantage for one group while for others an advantage\(^{52}\). For example, children who join public schooling may be disadvantaged in status among Lebanese people who enjoyed private schooling, whereas this person who enjoyed public schooling may be privileged in her own family due to other reasons\(^{53}\).

\(^{49}\) Bowleg, L. “The problem with the phrase women and minorities: Intersectionality - an important framework for public health.” *American Journal of Public Health* 102, no. 7 (n.d.): 1267-1273.


1.4.1 Religion in Lebanon

Lebanon has several main religions; it is religiously the most diverse country in the Middle East as it has 18 recognized sects. Islamic (54%) and Christianity (40.4%) are the two main religions of the Lebanese. With Islam constituting of Shia and Sunni Muslims and the Christianity of Maronite Church, Catholic Church, Armenian Apostolic Church and the Melkite Greek Catholic Church. Around 5% of the population is following the Druze religion, which part of one of the five Muslim communities; Sunni, Shia, Alawi, Druze and Ismaili).

The Shia presence dates to the seventh century, after that time the Muslims split into Sunnites and Shiites. The Shia reduced to the status of dissidents, while the Sunnites claim authority because they represent the more orthodox Islam. In Lebanon, Sunnites have a key position on political and social fields because they constitute mostly the urban population while the Shia’s have a higher representation in rural areas. Druze played a big part in the country’s history that still holds a strong feudal structure. Within the political and business spheres Druze still hold a small but elite role in the communities.
While there are still mixed neighborhoods, the civil war between 1975 and 1990 caused mass movements of populations leading to the informal segregation of areas per confession and religion\textsuperscript{54}. The distribution of Muslims is as followed; the Shiites are mostly living in Southern Lebanon, the Baalbek district, Hermel District and the southern parts of Beirut. The Sunnites are mainly living in major cities; they live in the western part of Beirut, in Saida and Tripoli. However, a small part of the Sunnites lives in rural areas like Akkar, Ikleem al Kharoub and the western Beqaa Valley. The Druze population lives in Mount Lebanon; the Chouf and Hasbaya district. The Christian Maronite’s live in the northern part of Beirut, north of Mount Lebanon, parts of the Beqaa Valley and in the south of Lebanon. Orthodox Lebanese live mostly in the northern part of the country upwards from northern Beirut. The Protestants are concentrated mostly in the Greater Beirut area.

Lebanon is known as a secular country which means there is a parliamentary democracy with a confessionalist framework. Lebanon has a National Pact that forms an agreement between the political and religious leaders. The Pact ended up as a compromise between the Christian and Muslim population in 1943. The National Pact is a non-written agreement that gives an Arab image to Lebanon\textsuperscript{55}. Lebanon is a member of the Arab League, dividing governmental and administrative power between the three main religious communities. This division is done according to population size. The highest offices are reserved for representatives from religious communities. Therefore, the president of the country needs to be a Maronite, the prime minister a Sunnite and the speaker of the parliament must be Shiite\textsuperscript{56}. In the year 1943 the

Christians outnumbered the Muslim communities. Nonetheless, there is an increase in resistance against this confessionalist system arguing that there is a clear need to install a new system without religious influence in state policies. This new system is named Laïcité, which also prohibits the involvement of government in religious affairs. The increase in popularity of this system is too a response to Hizb ut-Tahrir’s growing demand to re-establish an Islamic caliphate.

Family matters such as inheritance, divorce and marriage are typically handled by religious authorities. Civil and multi-religious marriages are rejected by the religious authorities. When someone wants to have a civil marriage, it is possible to conduct one in another country as this is recognized by the Lebanese state.

**Religion of the Syrian refugees**

Islam is the majority religion in Syria, covering 87% of the population\(^{57}\). The Sunnis make up 74%, while 13% is Alawi, Shia or Ismaili. Around 10% is Christian, mostly Orthodox, Nestorian or Uniate. Around 3% is practicing Druze.

Sectarian dimensions are causing conflict between those religions based on religion association. People who are assumed to be Alawi are presumed to be pro-Assad, causing tensions between opposite groups. Even though Lebanon is one of the most social and political liberal Arab country, religion is still the fundamental layer of society and politics.

### 1.4.2 Gender in Lebanon

An actors’ gender can influence the level of access to certain resources. This is caused by social norms within the society, leading to a limited sphere of activity for women and therefore influencing their access to resources. These resources can

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include different capital; human, social, natural or financial\textsuperscript{58}. Different roles among families are based on gender. Generally, men hold a superior status and within the barriers of sect. As religion plays a large role within Lebanon gender roles are strong related to the religion one’s affiliated with. From an economical point of view, the father is the core, as he is owner and producer on which the family heavily depends. Even in rural areas with a large agricultural sector, where women work more, the men prevails its central position. The inferior status of women is legitimized by various religious statements, where the role is mostly limited to stay at home and be a mother. Nonetheless, since 1970 the women hold a more active role, this increased due to men working in other countries. The percentage of women in the labor force increased, although this number is declining among Muslim communities. Traditional values developed more central among these communities; thus, veils and hijabs became more common among Muslim women. The Civil War enabled more Christian women to have independent roles, because of the absence of male family members who were fighting\textsuperscript{59}.

Regarding political decision-making there are 0% women involved in the cabinet, interestingly they hold up to 23% in in the Palestinian Authority. However, women are often responsible for ‘soft’ topics, focusing on social policy issues related to the traditional female role with limited access to economic position. Access to public office remains a challenge for women\textsuperscript{60}. Only 27% of young women are currently working, 60% plans to work in the future while 13% has no intention to work. Nevertheless, most women intent to work in the future but only a minority of Lebanese women is currently working\textsuperscript{61}. The most common reason for women to not work is their responsibility as a housewife or being a student.

In the region, there is an increase in educational rates of women, improving gender equality. Literacy rates jumped more than 10%, with most improvement in Lebanon and Egypt\textsuperscript{62}. Of both men and women large majorities hope to attend higher education. There is a significant higher possibility that women face obstacles to higher education. Norms and obligations are reasons why women don’t have higher educational aspirations. Between the age of 35 and 55, four out of ten women complete secondary school education. Among women older than 56 only 15 percent has completed secondary school. There is a clear trend of women attaining education, nonetheless 45% of young adult Lebanese women achieved less than secondary education.

For the Syrian refugees, gender roles changed since fleeing out of Syria. Both for men and women; roles, values and identities changed. Men are not automatically appointed the role of breadwinner. Men are facing threats and discrimination when they apply for jobs by members of host communities. Some women feel empowered in Lebanon as they have more responsibilities. But simultaneously, women reported that the feeling of losing their femininity when they support their family; going to the market, running shops, decision-making and working in the informal sector, besides

caring for the family\textsuperscript{63}. This feeling is also caused by lack of resources and services women used to have in Syria. They are now working more often outside the house, struggle to cook proper food or dress nicely. For girls, it is harder to attain school as some fathers are reluctant to send their daughters to mixed schools. Additionally, girls are working often for potato farmers or in the vineyards of the Beqaa valley. Young boys are as well prevented from studying when they must support the household. These dynamics within the family can cause tensions as income generating traditionally is the role of the father\textsuperscript{64}. In addition, men feel guilty they aren't fighting in Syria, creating a sense of stress and powerlessness. Breadwinners are now unemployed and cannot provide and/or protect for their family. Unfortunately, these feelings can lead to domestic violence\textsuperscript{65}.

1.4.3 Migration as a livelihood strategy
In Lebanon migration is a livelihood strategy. In 2012 over 600,000 Lebanese lived outside Lebanon\textsuperscript{66}. But when the term Lebanese diaspora is used, the number is between the 8 and 14 million, including migrants and their descendants. During the Civil War emigration increased to all regions and included people from all socio-economic backgrounds\textsuperscript{67}. As to the gender profile, around 54% is men. Lebanese have a highly skilled profile when they are living in OECD countries, the number of high-educated Lebanese increased due to the increase of women in education.

Nowadays the government is trying to slow down the emigration but outward flows keep on being substantial. In 2015 around 34% of Lebanese were looking to emigrate\textsuperscript{68}. Efforts to counter brain drain are still lacking. The governmental strategy to sustain links with Lebanese diaspora is to encourage relations among confessional


\textsuperscript{65}Women’s International League for Peace & Freedom. Changing Gender Roles Among Syrian Refugees in Lebanon. 31 October 2013.


Lebanese groups residing abroad through a policy of ‘concord’, encouraging the Lebanese to establish unions, associations and events. The Ministry of Emigration also wants to benefit from development and technology abroad, encourage remittances and the movement of social capital by encouraging Lebanese to return to their home country regularly\(^{69}\). Currently 15.9% of GDP is of received personal remittances, which is one of the highest percentages in the region\(^{70}\).

The reason why many young Lebanese want to emigrate is the difficulty in career progression. During informal talks, many young Lebanese explained that in e.g. Dubai one can get a good paid job easily due to multinationals and Dubai’s economic stability. Another issue that was mentioned often is the work environment; treatment of employees by employers is very un-respectful, stimulated by a culture that is based on superiority. The garbage crisis of 2015 is too a reason why many Lebanese want to leave due to fear for their health and lower living conditions\(^{71}\).

1.5 Structure of the Paper
This thesis consists of six chapters. In the next chapter the data collection methods and process will be reviewed. An overview of the research process will be given and the sampling methods to collect data. There will be background information about the research site with a focus on the political environment in addition to information concerning the background of Syrian refugees. The third chapter will review the international humanitarian strategies with a focus on regional plans regarding responses to the crisis. National humanitarian strategies will be reviewed in chapter four with a brief overview over the Lebanese law that is relevant for education and a brief needs overview. After the needs are reviewed, this chapter will consider the response strategies regarding education from a governmental perspective and an NGO perspective. At the end of this chapter there will be a section regarding social cohesion as a focus point in response planning. In chapter six the main findings will be discussed by first considering the main challenges in different education levels. Secondly are the

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Lebanese-Syrian perceptions debated while discussing the influence of politics, the Palestinians and the view towards social cohesion. The findings will be discussed in chapter six where the final conclusions will be drawn. In the same chapter a reflection on this research and recommendations will be given. This research will conclude with a list of references.
2. Methodology

This research is entailed by three main phases: preparation, collecting field data and data analysis and writing process. First the process of this research will be described while afterwards the methods and data sampling are discussed. Subsequently, this chapter will describe the context of Lebanon, giving insights in the political environment. Information regarding the Syrian refugees concerning their background and educational strategies will be provided as well.

My research is in the research arena of the social facts, or emergent properties problem. This problem comes from an argument that is made by Durkheim, social facts occur outside of individuals and are not reducible to psychological facts. Social forces are influencing individuals, emerging from interactions of humans and transcending individuals. This is relevant because this research is analyzing the influence of organizational forms on human behavior and thoughts, in this case the integration process. Social cohesion is useful in guiding research on this topic and providing interpretive strength.

2.1 Research Process and Methods

The process started in November 2015 when I was brainstorming about a topic for my research. At the end of January, it became clear I could perform my research with Saint-Joseph University in Beirut in Lebanon. On the 14th of June I flew to Beirut where I started my qualitative research. I spend the first month discussing and organizing my research plan with Houwayda Matta Bou Ramia, research supervisor from Université Saint-Joseph in coordination with my supervisor Chris Lambert from the University of Groningen. During these first weeks, I started with consulting Houwayda and meeting with humanitarian workers to get a first impression besides my online secondary sources. I furthermore attended a seminar regarding education at the American University of Beirut and a program launch about gender roles in

73 Urban Refugee Access to Quality Education, Policy Center of American University in Beirut, 28th of June 2016
74 Launch Program Ra, ABAAD–Resource Center for Gender Equality, 14th of July 2016
Lebanon. These visits gave me a lot of insights regarding the education policies and challenges in Lebanon.

After the first four weeks, I started with collecting and processing as much data as possible before I returned to the Netherlands on the 16th of September. After my stay in Lebanon I scheduled a few Skype meetings with respondents to address issues which were not clear. The total data collection took place between mid-June till the end of September, after which the writing process took place in the Netherlands in October and November. The collected data will be reviewed in chapter 4, 5 and 6.

Throughout the research process, published data and scientific articles have been used to support my research. Quantitative methods are used to give a clear overview of the context and understand the dynamics in this field. In Lebanon, in-depth interviews, informal interviews and friendly discussions were held with many experts and workers in the field. Furthermore, I attended several meetings that provided expert knowledge regarding my topic, and additional field trips gave an impression of projects and programs. The produced data was either recorded (with consent), or noted.

2.1.1 Data collection

In Lebanon, several sampling techniques are used; convenience sampling, respondents who are conveniently available. Snowball sampling (backward and forward), finding additional respondents based on certain characteristics. Snowballing is a non-probability form of sampling and is a constant method of collecting, searching and aggregating references.

*Specialized informants: competence in a certain domain.*

Method used: semi structured interviewing, usage of the interview guide. This method is chosen because specialized informants are accustomed to use their time efficient, gives form of control but leaves the respondent and the interviewer to follow new leads.
Informants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational system</th>
<th>Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UN-agencies</td>
<td>UNICEF, UNESCO, UNRWA</td>
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<tr>
<td>International NGO's</td>
<td>AFD: Agence Française Developpement</td>
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<td>Asmae</td>
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<td>Dutch Embassy: educational specialist</td>
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<td>Teachers</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key informants:
I used unstructured interviewing and informal interviewing. Informal interviewing is used to build a greater rapport, uncovering new topics of interest in the beginning of my research that otherwise might have been overlooked. This method is mostly used at the start of connecting to informants. The next step is unstructured interviewing; parents want to talk about a wide range of topics. This method is useful to let people open and express themselves in their own ways and their own pace. The beneficiaries are Syrian and Lebanese families.

2.1.2 Instruments
The instruments used with key informants are informal semi-structured interviews. A question guide of 7-10 questions is used to direct the conversation towards certain topics and issues I wanted to address. All interviews are recorded or written down, this protects against bias by providing a permanent transcript of what
was said during the interview. Field notes helped to write down my observations, ideas and thoughts about the interviews and my meetings. This supported the process of data analysis.

A literature review is done to examine which programs exist in the region and in Lebanon and forms the basis for my theoretical framework. In addition, there is secondary data used which consist of media, reports and data that is provided by the Lebanese government and international organizations. Observation during field trips and meetings provided additional information that is used to write this thesis.

2.2 LIMITATIONS TO THE STUDY AND STUDY BIAS

Methods that are qualitative contain a lot of value, however they also have drawbacks, and a lot of research is subject to biases\textsuperscript{75}. My own position as a researcher may influence the study and steer the respondent in a certain direction. When personal attributes of a researcher like age, gender or background may influence the collected data this is named \textit{positionality}. My profile as a Western, young woman can impact the quality of my findings and ability to answer my research question. Therefore, it is significant to reflect on my position to prevent this to be a weakness to the research. I have done this by reviewing my interview questions with several people, men and women, to avoid that I steered the answers of my respondents. Informal discussions with Lebanese and foreign aid workers revealed insights about my role and my view on the topic which were previously hidden. These discussions showed different perspectives to the refugee influx and revealed my ‘Western’ view and the role of Western media. To be conscious about my position and my background helped to limit biases in this thesis.

2.3 RESEARCH AREA: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

To understand the research area the context of Lebanon will be explained first. Secondly there is a brief overview of the political environment of Lebanon. Hereafter, there is a shift to the context of Syrians in Lebanon with particular focus on education and livelihood strategies.

2.3.1 Context of Lebanon

To fully understand the context that creates the everyday dynamics between Syrian refugees and Lebanese citizens one must review history. Since the Ottoman times and throughout the French colonial rule Lebanon has a political harmonious bond with Syria. Family ties and work relations crossed the border and over time many Syrians worked in Lebanon, seasonally in the agricultural sector or even permanently. From 1976 till 2005, Syrian military was present in Lebanon, their manifestation in addition with the accusation of violating human rights results in many Lebanese holding prejudices against Syrians. During the years after the civil war the resentment against the Syrian regime has substantially grown. Since 2005 there has been a strong polarization between Sunnis and Shiites which is directly linked to the assassination of former prime minister Rafic Hariri at the end of Syria’s controlling power over Lebanon. This event caused the Sunni-led ‘March 14’ movement, claiming Syria to be the perpetrator of Hariri’s assassination. In addition, there is the ‘March8’ movement led by the Shiites who support the Syrian regime.

Mass displacement of Syrians to Lebanon increased in 2011, challenging the fragile balance of politics and religions. When the Syrian crisis started, Lebanon held an official policy of disassociation which stabilized the balance in politics and religion. Since 2013 involvement in the Syrian civil war increased massively due to the engagement of the Shiite movement Hezbollah and Sunni groups. Their involvement reinforced sectarianism in Lebanon. These tensions are noticeable in the city of Tripoli, in the northern part of Lebanon. The population of Tripoli is divided between opponents and supporters of Assad, leading to violence between the Shiite Allawite neighborhood and the Bab al Tabbaneh neighborhood which is mostly populated by Sunni’s. In Beirut violence increased as well between Syrian Sunni’s and Lebanese Shia’s in the southern district of Dahiyeh. The deadliest attack in the capital since the ending of the civil war happened in the southern district of Burj al-Barajne. On 12 November 2015, the Islamic State (IS) targeted the Shia majority and killed 43 civilians.

Lebanese citizens and Syrian refugees are concerned that the civil war in Syria escalate in further sectarian violence in Lebanon, leading to another civil war. Due to

sectarian violence and tensions displaced Syrians settle typically according to their background.

When the number of Syrian refugees increased to over a million in 2014 concerns started to grow. On October 23th of 2014 the Lebanese Parliament approved three goals regarding refugee displacement:

1) Reduce the number of Syrian refugees in Lebanon
   a. Stop refugees’ entry at the border (Exception of unpredicted humanitarian case)
   b. Encourage return of Syrian refugees to their or other countries by all means possible (New General Security regulations introduced in January 2015 to make it more difficult to renew residency for Syrians)

2) Safeguard security;
   a. Strict execution of Lebanese laws and revocation of refugee status from anyone who goes to Syria or violates Lebanese laws and entry terms.

3) Assistance the burdens on the infrastructure
   a. Protection of Lebanese in all field of economic and employment activity.
      In December 2014, Ministry of Labor outlined professions restricted to Lebanese citizens. Syrians can work in agriculture, cleaning and construction. Also, a new condition of sponsorship was introduced for workers to protect Lebanese employment\textsuperscript{77}.

The UN in Lebanon has been so far refused by the government of Lebanon (GoL) to set up formal refugee camps. The reason behind this action is the fear that such camps transform into permanent settlements, becoming spaces for activities that increases the probability for uprisings. Such events occurred at numerous Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon. According to Thorleifsson the Lebanese state is not able to ensure that camps will not fall under opposing factions\textsuperscript{78}.

The absence of formal campsites and the strict regulations make it harder for the international humanitarian community to ensure protection for the refugees and coordinate aid relief throughout the country.


\textsuperscript{78} Thorleifsson, C. „The limits of hospitality: coping strategies among displaced Syrians in Lebanon.” Third World Quarterly 37, nr. 6 (2016): 1071-1082.
2.3.2 Political environment in Lebanon

As stated before Lebanon has a confessionalist system which is a concordance democracy, incorporating 3 religious groups; Christian, Sunni and Shia. The president must be a Christian Maronite in agreement with the National Pact that is signed in 1943. Although the treaty restricts some of the president’s power he holds a strong influential position as he regulates the execution of laws and negotiate treaties. The prime minister is elected by the president and the parliament. The president is voted by a two thirds majority of the parliament. However, Lebanon has been without a president for over 2 years. The former president Michel Suleiman hold his position till May 2014, since then the government is without a president. Every election has been unsuccessful due to boycotts or not enough votes. One of the reasons is that the lawmakers cannot agree on a candidate. This results in a political system deeply deadlocked, hindering reforms and generates tensions within society and between ethical and religious groups. Consequently, the system produces exclusion rather than inclusion and fails to fulfill its ideology as “most democratic country” with consensus democracy. The mandate of the parliament has been renewed twice. In 2014 the parliament extended its own mandate until 2017 due to security concerns. Institutions are unable to act and responsibilities are more difficult to fulfill as parliament is not meeting often and not functioning efficient.

In Lebanon, around 1170,000 people live under the poverty line. Almost 500,000 Lebanese are without a job, with an unemployment rate of 25%. In addition to the density stand of 560 Lebanese per square meters many are afraid that the Syrian influx will inevitably lead to an explosion. The impact of the Syrian crisis is enormously and might cut GDP growth by 2.9 points per year. Demographic estimations show that from 56 cadasters the population has more than doubled, in 84 other cadasters this increased by 50 to 100%.

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2.3.3 Syrians in Lebanon

The legal status of Syrian refugees relies between ‘displaced’ and *de facto* refugee. This is making the situation very complex and comes from a government who is steering away from the notion of ‘refugee’, as this brings obligations. This situation shaped two groups of Syrians in Lebanon\(^{81}\).

First, are the refugees who enjoy sponsorship by a Lebanese citizen. Refugees in this group generally do not face major issues when entering and can stay in Lebanon as long as they provide valid identification and employment status. Their stay in Lebanon is legal as long as they have the funds for renewal of their permits and remain employed. Syrians who are businesspersons, or own real estate in Lebanon or a rental agreement have the same conditions.

The second group concerns the Syrians who fled to Lebanon to escape the conflict. They don’t enjoy sponsorship via employment and do not fall under “special humanitarian case” treatment. Before 2015 this group was subject under the ordinary

visa scheme, and registered with UNHCR through a *prima facie* registration process: “A *prima facie* approach means the recognition by a State or UNHCR of refugee status on the basis of readily apparent, objective circumstances in the country of origin or, in the case of stateless asylumseekers, their country of former habitual residence. A *prima facie* approach acknowledges that those fleeing these circumstances are at risk of harm that brings them within the applicable refugee definition*[^82]*.”

Now that there are new regulations, those who enter Lebanon from Syria need to be divided into ten categories. The first category is: tourism, this visa can be renewed for maximum 1 month. The second one is work, confirmation by a Lebanese company is necessary. The third and fourth category contain ownership or rental of real estate. In the fifth category are those who come for study. Sixth category is entry for shopping purposes and only valid for 24 hours. Traveling for transit is the seventh category and is only for short-term. The eighth category is for medical visits to a Lebanese doctor or hospital. The ninth category is for appointments with foreign embassies. The tenth category explicitly notes that Syrians with the status of displaced are not to be admitted in Lebanon with two exceptions: those previously registered as displaced, and those who meet conditions set by the Ministry for Social Affairs. These conditions are very difficult to meet, they are for minors, disabled and those who need life-saving health treatment[^83].

To conclude, the status of Syrians in Lebanon is multifaceted, making refugee status increasingly uncertain and vulnerable due to the obstructive nature of the regulations.

### 2.3.4 Education in Syria

Prior to the conflict in Syria rates of primary school attendance were high[^84]. This was achieved by free public education. Nonetheless, in rural areas this rate was significantly lower than the average national attendance rate. At secondary schools, the drop-out rates were very high especially among girls. Moreover, Syria’s education

system was used as a political tool to indoctrinate youth with party ideologies, teachers were usually not allowed to express ideas that would oppose the government. Before the conflict around 72% of children was enrolled at the age of secondary school. The current rate is decreased to 6% in some areas due to general insecurity, broken buildings and a lack of capacity. The conflict has taken a severe toll on the Syrian education system.

A mix of public and private institutions existed prior to the conflict to provide higher education for men and women. Nevertheless, there was a high level of restrictions on political and academic independence at these universities.85

2.3.5 Livelihood and education strategies of Syrian refugees

Forced migration present a variety of challenges for the Syrian refugees, influencing the well-being of the Syrian children and on the process of social cohesion. Many refugees find themselves in a situation with loss of livelihood and a decrease in social mobility. For UNHCR and other international and local NGO’s it is difficult to assist the refugees with their needs. Due to lack of resources and inadequate infrastructure it is difficult to cope with this humanitarian situation. As many unregistered refugees are missing entitlement to assistance, these refugees are facing greater challenges. Many arrived empty-handed at the border and relied on local support in host communities. To survive, Syrian refugees applied several coping strategies to support their livelihoods.

First, refugees reduced their consumption and are working in the informal labor market. By reducing meals and buying cheap products, such as potatoes, families reduce their consumption. Another strategy is to reduce health care expenses, as medicines are often not included in aid packages. Another area where expenses are cut is on housing. As there are no refugee camps or formal shelters refugees live with host families in rented housing or they live in improvised shelters.

Refugees reconfigured gender and kinship roles as an adaptation strategy.86 Settling in a new environment reshapes cultural perceptions and reconstruct social


networks. Due to the civil war, many families are scattered across the region or even further. This contributes to a weakened social support through kinship. Social relationships are formed with non-kin individuals, like host families or other Syrian refugees. These new connections provide protection and assistance on living in a new local community. Being displaced in another country brought Syrians together.

This is also visible in the number of NGO’s being set-up in Lebanon for and through Syrians, e.g. the NGO I visited in the Beqaa valley Jusoor\(^{87}\). This NGO provides informal schooling to make Syrian children ready to enroll in public schooling. Jusoor believes that Syrian youth should realize their potential and have access to better opportunities, therefore the motto “Syrians Forward Together”.

The refugees’ living situation in Lebanon creates new social networks and responsibilities, however this does not suggest that traditional gender roles are not playing a part anymore. It is leading to a reconfiguration of gender, power dynamics between men and women are affected. Especially for livelihood opportunities where women often work in the agricultural sector as men stay home to protect their property due to the unofficial settlements\(^{88}\). In some households, the men are traveling back and forth to Syria to fight the opposition\(^{89}\). Women who are left behind take up new

\(^{87}\)Suha Tunji, Jusoor Syria, 15\(^{th}\) of July 2016

\(^{88}\)Eliane Ibrahim, World Vision, Metn Lebanon, 16\(^{th}\) of August 2016

\(^{89}\)Thorleifsson, C. „The limits of hospitality: coping strategies among displaced Syrians in Lebanon.” *Third World Quarterly* 37, nr. 6 (2016): 1071-1082.
responsibilities that are normally for the men. Like income generating activities and handling the local authorities, all in order to provide livelihood security for their family.

2.4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

It is now five years later since the Syrian refugee crisis started and the situation in Lebanon remains volatile and uncertain. The country has shifted from an “open door” policy towards limited access for Syrian refugees, revealing a state of rejection. The international humanitarian community is struggling to help those in need, new legal measures and insufficient funding. The approach chosen by Lebanon; shows unwillingness from the political elite to engage directly with the crisis, fearing an increase in polarization in a political landscape that is already complex enough and in a deadlock.

For Syrian refugees and Palestinian refugees from Syria, serious problems rise because of having limited legal status. Their capability to pursue reparation and access justice is nihil. The need to resolve the legal status and the challenges that come with this, is urgent.
3. INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN STRATEGIES IN LEBANON

This chapter will review the international law that is applicable to refugees or education policies in Lebanon. The relevant articles and paragraphs of International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural rights, Convention on the Right of the Child, Convention against Torture, and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights will come forward. Followed by the regional response framework and plans to cope with the Syrian crisis.

3.1 INTERNATIONAL LAW


Article 13. Paragraph 1: “The states Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to education... They further agree that education shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic and religious groups...”

Paragraph 2: “(a) Primary education shall be compulsory and available free to all; (b) Secondary education in its different forms.. shall be made generally available and accessible to all by every appropriate means.”

Date Lebanon ratified: 3th of November 1972.

Enforceability: State Parties are required to submit periodic reports to the UN Economic and Social Council. The Council can then raise certain concerns to other UN bodies and make recommendations.


Articles 22 (Refugee children): “Children have the right to special protection and help if they are refugees (if they have been forced to leave their home and live in another country), as well as all the rights in this Convention.”

Article 28: (Right to education): “All children have the right to a primary education, which should be free.”

Date Lebanon ratified: 14th of May 1991
Enforceability: States Parties are required to submit reports every 5 years to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, which makes recommendations.

However, Lebanon did not ratify the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict.\(^9\)

3. **Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment (1984)**

Article 3: “No State Party shall expel, return ("refouler") or extradite a person to another State where there are substantial grounds for believing that he would be in danger or subjected to torture.”

NOTE: this provision protects Syrians from being forcibly returned to Syria if they can demonstrate that they would be exposed to the threat of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment there.

Date Lebanon ratified: 5th of October, 2000

Enforceability: States are required to submit reports every 4 years to the UN Committee Against Torture. The Committee may undertake investigations, and the Subcommittee on Prevention makes regular country visits.

4. **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)**

Article 7: “No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment”

Date Lebanon ratified: 3th of November, 1972

Enforceability: States Parties are required to submit reports every 5 years to the UN Human Rights Committee, which makes recommendations.

3.1.1 **Customary Law**

Among the parts of the law that manages international relations there is international custom. This exists because international law goes beyond written rules in treaties and covenants. It is not of a normative nature but is rather inductive. International custom merges from the practices by international actors, and is formed

by two elements; *opinio juris* and *state practice*. These two formulas gather evidence to demonstrate the social effect of the rules. *Opinio juris* denotes an obligation that is subjective, the state believes that it is a legal norm to which it has to obey to. *State practice* is a customary rule that denotes when the practice is followed frequently; it needs to be constant, concordant and mutual. On a general note, in human rights and international humanitarian law, the basic principles are binding to all states. This includes the states that have not signed or ratified international treaties. As Lebanon, did not sign the 1951 Refugee Convention, refugees have limited protection. However, due to international customary law Lebanon is bound to the customary law principle of *non-refoulement*. The country is also bound to the obligation of the human right treaties Lebanon signed, those are combined in the Constitution. The international standards that are recommended to Lebanon are; the adoption of temporary protection procedures to safeguard the safe admission of refugees, protection against refoulement and respect the basic human rights of the Syrians.

### 3.2 Regional Strategic Frameworks

#### 3.2.1 Inter-Agency Syria Regional Response Plan

This Regional Response Plan (RPP) stands for the start of a shift that occurred at the end of 2013. As the crisis continued it became clear that both the Syrian refugees and host-communities needed to be targeted. Therefore, humanitarian response required to be aligned with long-term development actions; a resilience-based approach. To reach stabilization building capacity and resilience became a focal point with a focus on social cohesion as a key objective in a strategic approach. In this report it is written that social cohesion can be improved through support for the local authorities and the populations that are most affected by the crisis and the presence of the refugee population. The RPP developed a strategy to ensure that there will be no lost generation of Syrian children: No Lost Generation strategy. This plan is developed for the whole region, for all Syrian refugee children to reclaim their childhood in a safe

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91 See ICJ Statute, Article 38 (1) (b) (the applied custom must be “accepted as law”)
learning environment. Within the RPP immediate humanitarian response interventions as well as longer term is included to build the resilience of children, with focus on education and protection systems.

3.2.2 Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan
The Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) solidified the Inter-Agency Syria Regional Response Plan into an understandable, tangible longer term regional strategy. In this plan, there is a focus on stabilization-based approaches at different levels; local, national and regional through building resilience. This plan aims to address the needs and prioritizes the most vulnerable population without making a distinction between refugee and host communities. Implementing refugee protection and humanitarian response to create stabilization-based development.

3.3 CONCLUDING REMARKS
The reason why Lebanon did not sign the Refugee Convention of 1951 is often blamed to the protracted Palestinian issue in the country. Thus, the limited protection for Syrian refugees. However, through customary international law is Lebanon bound by leading principles of refugee protection. And is led by the numerous covenants and conventions described above. In addition to the principle of non-refoulement, which is the basis of international refugee law. It forbids refugees from being returned or expelled to places where their lives or freedom might be threatened.

Even though Lebanon is not a party to the Refugee Convention of the United Nations; by other international policies wellbeing of families are safeguarded. However, when UNHCR was no longer permitted to register refugees, the limited protection offered by registration reduced to a minimum. Leaving refugees in an even more challenging situation, with harder accessible services.
4. **NATIONAL HUMANITARIAN STRATEGIES**

The influx of more than 1.2 million Syrian refugees is causing a significant problem for the Lebanese public institutions such as schooling. Due to complicated political conditions and financial difficulties the institutions were already facing difficulties before the crisis. The extensive scale of the emergency intensified the weak governance of the fragile state’s institutions. The challenges have been difficult for the Lebanese government, due to lack of equipment to handle the crisis.

Despite the responses of international and local organizations, the challenges have become more complex. Education as a public service has been affected one of the most. The pressure on education has been a key cause for tension to increase between the host communities and refugees. Public education already suffered from a lot of weaknesses before the Syrian crisis. In the current situation, public education is enormously under pressure by the fact that the quantity of school-aged children among the refugee population is significantly higher than the Lebanese. In addition to the schools being ill-equipped, underfunded and in a bad state. Nonetheless, in primary and secondary education Syrian students are enrolled in public schools. The schools are using two shifts; the usual morning schedule and an afternoon shift that is specially tailored to Syrian refugees. The second shift started as an answer to the first shifts that reached their capacity. The response of the Lebanese education sector to the Syrian crisis will be reviewed in this chapter. But first the national law is discussed, as humanitarian strategies are formed by the needs and by the law.

Therefore, it is important first to consider which law is relevant for the educational sector in addition to the laws that apply to refugees. Firstly, the Lebanese constitution will discuss the legal status of refugees and the right to education. Secondly, it is significant to review the Lebanese Migration Laws. The education law and protection of education will as well be reviewed.

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95 International Alert. „Better Together: The impact of the schooling system of Lebanese and Syrian displaced pupils on social stability.” Background paper, 2015.
4.1 **Lebanese Law**

1. **Lebanese Constitution**

   The Lebanese Constitution explicitly states that Lebanon “abides...by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights [and] [t]he Government shall embody these principles in all fields without exception”. Because the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that “Everyone has the right to education” (article 26), and that “Everyone has the right to seek and enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution” (Article 14), to abide by its own constitutional commitments, Lebanon should be expected to develop regulatory parameters acknowledging the unique legal status of refugees and asylum-seekers. It should also be expected to provide all children, including non-Lebanese children, an education.

2. **Migration Laws**

   a. 1962 Law on Entry and Exit

      i. Article 26. “every foreigner who is persecuted or sentenced for a political crime outside Lebanon, or whose life or liberty is threatened on account of political activity, may apply for asylum in Lebanon.”

   Lebanon does not have formal national refugee legislation; therefore, asylum issues are attended through immigration laws. This is the principle law that governs all aspects of migration into Lebanon. It does not distinguish between asylum-seekers, refugees and economic migrants, and states that anyone illegally in Lebanon (i.e., without a valid residence permit or visa) can be detained or deported. Functionally, this means that many Syrians qualifying as asylum-seekers or refugees under international law cannot pass government checkpoints in Lebanon, for fear of detention or deportation. However, in article 31 provides for *non-refoulement* of a previous political refugee. Article 26 and 31 were mostly visible in the refugee policy of Lebanon at the start of the Syrian conflict when Lebanon operate an “open door” policy. Syrians who entered refugees received an entry stamp and entry coupon, this granted them legal residency for six months, renewal for another six months was free of charge. After one year renewing residency costed 200 dollars per person/per year. Those who entered Lebanon illegally were subjected to arrest, prosecution and deportation. If
Syrians wanted to regularize their stay they could by paying a high fee. As these costs are unaffordable for most refugees these regulations have been problematic. In addition, it is problematic that even with the right documentations refugees have been denied renewal, this practice intensified by the issue that GoL has declared that the Syrian refugee crisis should not be governed by law but by governmental decisions.

Since 2013, restrictions on those seeking asylum in Lebanon increased.


Ten decrees that were described before in section 2.3.3: tourism, work visit, property owner or tenant, student, shopping, transit, medical visits, foreign affairs, displaced and those who have a Lebanese sponsor. These fit in seven categories, all require specified documentation and requirements.

These decrees require Syrians to obtain a visa on one of seven grounds to legally enter Lebanon, none of which are fleeing from war or persecution. The category for “displaced” requires obedience with one of the other categories, or with the “humanitarian exceptions criteria” given by the government. This last requirement is specifically for unaccompanied children, persons with disabilities, with urgent medical needs or those who are resetting to third countries. Therefore, it can be safe to say that this category does not include most persons fleeing the conflict in Syria. This is breaching with Lebanon’s obligation of non-refoulement, discussed in previous chapter under international customary law.

The decrees also require Syrians to maintain a valid residency permit, which requires regular renewal. Confronting Syrian refugees with more serious obstacles in maintaining their legal status. There are two categories for Syrians that want to renew their permits: registered with UNCHR and those who are not registered. In both categories when a Syrian wants to renew their residency for six months, he or she must show proof of housing that is approved by the local Mukhtar, pay 200 dollars.

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who are registered at UNHCR must also sign an agreement not to work in Lebanon, proof of financial means, and agree to return to Syria when required by the Lebanese government. Refugees who are not registered with UNCHR must show a “pledge of responsibility”, this is either through sponsorship by a Lebanese or a work permit. Apart from the 200 dollars per six months, all the documents and pledges need to signed by a public notary which requires additional payments. Subsequently, the new entry requirements that have been established since 2014, are prohibiting people fleeing the conflict in Syria to reach safety in Lebanon. Notably, Lebanon’s humanitarian exception to these regulations does not expressly accommodate persons qualifying as asylum-seekers or refugees under international law.

3. **Education Laws**
   a. Law No. 686 of 1998

   Protects all children in Lebanon, including non-Lebanese, from exploitation and child labor.

4. **Education Protection Laws**
   a. Law No. 422 of 2002 on the Protection of at-Risk Children or Children Violating the Law

   Limits free education provided by the government to Lebanese citizen children under the age of 12.

4.2 **Needs Overview**

Less than a third of the Lebanese school-aged children are enrolled in public schools, thus education in Lebanon is very privatized. Almost 239,000 Lebanese students are enrolled in public schools, with almost 201,000 between the age of 6 and 14. This number constitutes mostly from children from families with low incomes from the most vulnerable areas of Lebanon. These areas are as well inhabited by many Syrian refugees. The enrollment of Lebanese schools declined because of the quality difference between private and public schools, this decrease has been to the advantage of the private system.

The public education sector suffers from low qualifications of teaching and administrative staff in the schools as stated by the Lebanese Ministry of Education (MEHE). This low quality is enhanced due to a mismatch between requirements and
teachers’ specializations. Secondly there is inadequate equipment at the schools and a bad physical infrastructure. Additionally, there is limited reform regulations in place to support improvement of the public system. When I spoke with the education specialist from the Dutch Embassy in Lebanon, this gave insights into these limited regulations. Previously, there was an education development plan in place for Lebanon to improve the public schooling system. However, due to the influx of Syrian refugees and the increasing pressure this plan has been put on hold to start the response plan. This plan will be discussed in the following chapter concerning the strategy: Reaching All Children with Education (RACE).

In Lebanon, there is no cluster system active during the response, the Ministry of Higher Education (MEHE) is leading the working group for education. During an interview with MEHE, the situation before the Ministry took the lead was briefly discussed. Since the crisis started in 2011 the policy response to the influx of refugees progressed. Humanitarian relief interventions by local and international NGO’s provided the immediate response amidst little involvement of the government.

Before MEHE took the lead, each NGO has its own education program with own support. In 2013, the UN Special Envoy for Global Education set up a meeting on the impact of the Syrian conflict on the education system in Lebanon, they were informed by the ‘Education without borders’ report of the Overseas Development Institute. At this meeting, it was concluded that it is crucial that the international community increases their role to provide a response cooperating with the government. Furthermore, it was concluded to be a vital investment on the road to re-building Syria. These NGO’s used curriculums at schools that the Ministry was not of aware. By the end of 2014 the situation changed rapidly to a strong governmental control, through the ministry a centralized strategy was implemented in coordination with UN agencies and international donors. At the beginning of 2015, the minister created the Program Management Unit (PMU), this unit is working on the implementation of RACE.

100 Vida Hamd, Education Specialist at the Embassy of the Netherlands, Beirut Lebanon, 30th of August 2016
101 “Clusters are groups of humanitarian organizations (UN and non-UN) working in the main sectors of humanitarian action, e.g. shelter and health. They are created when clear humanitarian needs exist within a sector, when there are numerous actors within sectors and when national authorities need coordination support” UNOCHA. Cluster Coordination. sd. http://www.unocha.org/what-we-do/coordination-tools/cluster-coordination (accessed 12 18, 2016).
4.2.1 Key statistics of the needs

The estimation of people living in Lebanon is 5.9 million, of which 3.3 million is in need. Out of these are 1.8 million displaced Syrians and Syrian Palestine refugees. For 2016 there are 388.2 billion dollars needed in the education sector for a projected population of 529,933\(^{103}\). The first of December in 2015 there were 221,221 displaced Syrian children between 6 and 14 years old. Higher Education specialist from UNESCO notes the missing statistics around the age group between 14 and 25 years.

More than half percent (52%) of displaced Syrians are extremely poor and have less than 2.4 dollars a day, out of the Lebanese population this is 10 percent.

4.3 Response strategies regarding education

This section will review the different response strategies in order to help all Syrian and Lebanese children to education. First the RACE strategy will be discussed, followed by the Lebanese Crisis Response Plan. These approaches are governmental steered, therefore the perspectives of the UN-agencies, namely UNICEF and UNDP will be reviewed at the end of this section.

\(^{103}\) Ministry of Social Affairs. „Lebanese Crisis Response Plan.” 2015-2016.
4.3.1 Reaching All Children with Education (RACE)

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) is leading the response of UN agencies and development parties to meet the needs of Syrian refugees and Lebanese vulnerable children.

RACE is implemented by the PMU, all NGO’s who are currently working on education need to implement their programs through MEHE. NGO’s are no longer permitted to operate at the level of formal schooling. The role of NGO’s is restricted to provide outreach support and confirming that Syrian children have complementary non-formal schooling. To unify public schooling each NGO works with curriculum that is provided by MEHE.

Reaching All Children with Education (RACE) is a three-year program organized under three main pillars: access, quality and system strengthening. The overall objective is to ensure equitable access to educational opportunities for children in Lebanon, including non-Lebanese children. While simultaneously improving the quality of teaching and learning, strengthening of national education systems, policies and monitoring.

Part of the RACE program is the second shift. Currently there are 238 schools who opened second shifts, another 330 schools will start in 2016 with second shifts. Over 472,000 Syrian refugee children between the age of 3 and 17 were registered with UNHCR in Lebanon at the end of January 2016. For the academic year of 2015-2016, grade 1 till 9, only 157,984 enrolled in formal education. The second shifts of schooling in the afternoon are designed for non-Lebanese. In the first shift, there is a mix of Lebanese and Syrian children, but there is a maximum percentage of Syrian children in this first shift that cannot be over 50 percent.

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### First shift – mixed classes of Lebanese and Syrian refugee children

- Starts at the beginning of the academic year in September
- Regular Lebanese public school curriculum - minimum of six hours teaching per day
- Open to Lebanese children and Syrians who were enrolled in the years before 2015 – taking in mainly the first wave of refugees that enrolled in education
- Set maximum places – number of Syrian cannot exceed 50 percent of the class

### Second shift – only Syrian children

- Academic year started first in February of 2015.
- Curriculum covers the basic courses of the Lebanese curriculum – limited extracurricular activities
- Four hours of teaching with a 25-minute break in the middle
- Generally, all Syrians are accepted

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**Facts and figures of 2016 (January 2016)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of children enrolled in academic year of 2015-2016</th>
<th>157,984</th>
<th>First shift: 65,890</th>
<th>Second shift: 92,094</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School-aged Syrian refugee children who are registered</td>
<td>472,028</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second shift schools 2015-2016</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>Number of Lebanese public schools that are running the afternoon shifts for students in grade 1 to 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Figure 9: enrolled in formal education

MEHE is currently designing program RACE 2, which will be a 5-year plan. This program is designed in collaboration with UNICEF, the document of RACE 2 will be published at the end of 2016 per MEHE. During an interview with Maroun Hobeika, who is responsible for planning, monitoring and evaluation at the PMU, the main differences between RACE and RACE 2 came to the fore. The section below will give an impression of the changes.

The focus of RACE 2 is on non-formal education. The Ministry noted that more than half of the Syrian school-aged children are out to school, this means that non-formal education can be a way to educate this group of children. It is not always known where they are or what these children are doing. The consequences of a high level of drop-outs will be discussed in section 5.1.4 of this thesis. A large focus of RACE 2 will be on outreach together with partner NGO’s of the ministry. Many of these children missed a couple years of school, therefore MEHE is working on non-formal educational programs. One of these non-formal educational programs is the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP), this intense program consists of the Lebanese curriculum which is taught in a short time of period in the Lebanese languages French and Arabic. As teaching a foreign curriculum is illegal in Lebanon or teaching in a foreign language.

108 Maroun Hobeika, Program, Evaluation and Monitoring officer MPU, MEHE, Beirut Lebanon, 14th of September 2016
When Syrian children finish this program, and are old enough they move to formal education which is taught in public schools, and enroll in the second shift.

For students who cannot read or write MEHE is starting a new program: Basic Literacy and Numeracy (BLN). This program is not only for children but as well for youth. BLN will be implemented by partner NGO’s in schools and centers by teachers who are certified by MEHE. In addition to the BLN and ALP programs the Ministry is as well giving homework support.

RACE 2 is more advanced than the current RACE program per MEHE towards more evidence-based interventions and building capacity for the education sector. For example; rehabilitation of schools was already a component but now there is also a focus on construction of schools. The renewed program is designed after carefully evaluating RACE, it is divided the same in access, quality and system strengthening but each component contains more details with a larger focus on curriculum. The program shifted from an emergency response to a more development form.

The curriculum is carefully designed by the Center for Educational Research and Development (CERD). CERD is a national organization that is responsible for the development of education and the planning of education in collaboration with several stakeholders. This organization also designed the ALP and is currently working on the BLN. Through several tests, they developed the curriculum that is now in use in the first and second shifts.

With RACE 2 MEHE wants to improve the public schooling system. Not only to have an adequate response to the refugee influx in Lebanon but also building a better and sustainable school system that will benefit the future of the Lebanese people.

One of the biggest obstacles for MEHE to develop and continue RACE is funding. Each year the ministry needs new funds to cover books and enrollment fees. In the first years of RACE they wanted the public schooling to be free for everyone, Lebanese and non-Lebanese. The funds the ministry wants to use cannot be earmarked for a specific target group.

4.4 **LEBANON CRISIS RESPONSE PLAN (LCRP)**

Part of this plan is to “link vulnerable groups and localities to strengthened basic services and protection”\(^{110}\). Education is a strategic priority in the LCRP as it is a basic service. LCRP aims to strengthen local and national capacity to meet overwhelming service-related needs and increase quality and accessibility. Key priority is to: “ensure vulnerable children can access and learn in a quality learning environment, including by strengthening the absorption capacity of formal and non-formal education and increasing geographic coverage”. The plan contains interventions that are part of the regional No Lost Generation strategy, by supporting the strategy of RACE and investing in protection.

4.5 **ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES**

Progressively since the start of the crisis, the aid community has focused more and more on social cohesion to build stability in Lebanon. Humanitarian organizations have become more sensitive to the impact of the crisis and secondly their operation on the context of the conflict, and thirdly to the relationships between Syrian refugees and their host communities\(^{111}\). Therefore, more programs have been designed for both Syrians and Lebanese beneficiaries. These programs have been adjusted to meet the needs of the refugees and the local population who are burdened by the influx of refugees.

4.5.1 **Strategies of UN-agencies working in the education field**

The Education Sector Plan is led by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE). The coordinating agency is UNICEF. The number of people that is in need is 983,284, this plan is targeting 529,933 which requires 388.2 million dollars. The number of partners is not specified yet.

This plan is aiming for 3 outcomes. Ensuring *equitable access* to educational opportunities for boys and girls, to reach this outcome there is 319.8 million dollars needed. The second outcome is *improving the quality* of teaching and learning, which requires 62.4 million dollars. The third outcome is aiming to *strengthen the national education systems*, policies and monitoring, requiring 5.9 million.


\(^{111}\) International Alert. „Better Together: The impact of the schooling system of Lebanese and Syrian displaced pupils on social stability.” Background paper, 2015.
4.5.1.1 UNHCR

UNHCR is coordinating the overall response in Lebanon, working closely with the government, UN-partners and NGO’s. Their focus is on strengthening the institutional support of protection. Ensuring that refugees are included in the government policies and plans for development. With a focus on increasing the capacity of service providers and understanding the needs.

In line with the strategy of RACE, UNHCR is a big outreach partner; ensuring dissemination of information to refugees on opportunities about education. Through financial support to MEHE, UNHCR helps to integrate as many refugees in public schooling (10.000 children in the first and 47.000 in the second shift). In addition will the UN-agency be a partner in advocacy\textsuperscript{112}.

4.5.1.2 UNICEF

Under 3RP, UNICEF is supporting the No Lost Generation strategy and scales up education in Lebanon while improving the quality of education.

**Unicef 2016 Program targets regarding education**

| Children supported to enroll in formal education     | 233.000 |
| Children provided access to child protection or psychosocial support services | 185.000 |

UNICEF is the implementing and coordinating partner of MEHE to develop RACE. In addition, UNICEF delivers the supplies for formal and non-formal education. To increase the enrollment of Syrian and vulnerable children UNICEF coordinates a huge Back to School campaign. During an interview with Rania Zakhia, the Education Program Specialist from UNICEF, the educational response of the organization to the Syrian influx got discussed. She explained to me the focus and importance of their outreach strategy\textsuperscript{113}. Through mapping the whole country, not by governate but per village every child needs to be aware of the education opportunities. All partners, working groups and volunteers are mobilized, it is not one sector that needs to tackle the problem of children out of school. It also includes health, development and


\textsuperscript{113} Rania Zakhia, Education Program Specialist from UNICEF, Beirut Lebanon, 23th of August 2016.
integration through education programs in Lebanon for Syrian youth refugees

protection. What is different from last year is that it is not a one-time only campaign, UNICEF is tracking the children with case-management and awareness sessions.

Bridging humanitarian response to development through the three pillars approach (assistance, quality and strengthening the system) was UNICEF’s work through a strong partnership with MEHE. Programs of UNICEF are delivered through 54 NGO’s. The collaboration with MEHE surpasses a high number of 120 million dollars a year, embodying a big responsibility. UNICEF offers MEHE the technical and financial support to ensure that the government can improve and enhance the services provided to Syrians and Lebanese. Experts are deployed to work at MEHE; a colleague of Rania Zhakia works 2 full days at CERD and another at the department of Orientation and Guidance (DOG). Training is a crucial part of this collaboration. The department of Orientation and Guidance is the governmental department that observes in the classrooms and provides coaching. To increase the quality of formal schooling UNICEF attempts to bridge between these two organizations and make them collaborate.

Every month the education partners meet to coordinate education activities part of the Syria Refugee Response. These education partners work aligned with RACE and MEHE regarding formal education.

4.5.1.3 UNESCO

Shereen Eldaly, Project Officer for the Syria Crisis Response, explained how UNESCO is scaling up its emergency response\textsuperscript{114}. The organization focus is on youth empowerment and education. By training teachers to work in non-formal settings it is expanding the reach of the organization. Particularly in technical and vocational education, ALP and extra-curricular activities.

Through UNESCO’s framework of Mediterranean Youth, the organization promotes social cohesion among Lebanese and Syrian youth. This framework was explained to me by Mona El Zoghbi working for UNESCO, through workshops and trainings UNESCO aims to enhance skills of youth while inspiring them to interact and cooperate\textsuperscript{115}. These activities fall under non-formal education. By enhancing social

\textsuperscript{114} Shereen Eldaly, Project Officer UNESCO, Beirut Lebanon/Zwijndrecht the Netherlands, 19th of September 2016

\textsuperscript{115} Mona El Zoghbi, National Project Coordinator UNESCO, Beirut Lebanon/Zwijndrecht the Netherlands, 20th of September 2016
cohesion, the goal is to promote tolerance and collaboration between Syrian and Lebanese youth. In addition to support Syrian youth with significant educational and technical skills to build new opportunities.

**4.6 Linking Integration to Education as a Focus Point**

Education is a focus point in the regional plan to strengthen cohesion between host and refugee communities. This has been incorporated through bonding and bridging activities that strengthen social capital.

Social tensions influence the access to education, the quality of teaching and the increase the capacity issues in the education sector. Consequently, social cohesion is important for education programs. To address safety concerns regarding harassment, bullying, violence and discrimination in addition to the concerns about the quality of education; language barriers, overcrowding, staff capacities and diversified learner needs. The regional and national plans both focus on formal and non-formal education by pointing out opportunities, emphasizing on safe transportation and social mobilization. There is also mentioned the growth of teacher capacity to mitigate the risk for rising tensions. Another important issue is monitoring the programs, the communities and the development of deprived areas.

Lack of social cohesion affects large groups of youth and leads to a higher dropout rate at schools due to, among other factors, bullying. Addressing social cohesion in schools is a priority need per the Inter-Agency Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (MSNA)\(^\text{116}\). After the first academic year with the second shifts UNHCR consulted with school principals, MEHE offices and other NGO’s as implementing partners to collect the general lessons learned. This consultation mainly focused on academic issues but some revealing observations were made with regards to factors that are needed to support positive relation and perceptions between Syrians and Lebanese children and consequently Lebanese society\(^\text{117}\).


\(^\text{117}\) International Alert. „Better Together: The impact of the schooling system of Lebanese and Syrian displaced pupils on social stability.” Background paper, 2015.
Racist acts and discrimination happened on some schools but not everywhere. Some parents and children complained about such situations.

On the way to school, on foot or on the bus harassment of children has been reported.

Child abuse and violence on schools through e.g. punishments were reported but schools were not systematically dealing with such acts.

Schools don’t have extracurricular activities for the children in the second shifts and are according to this assessment needed.

None or not enough recess time during the second shift.

School management and teachers have not enough capabilities or/and experience in dealing with refugee children.

Psychologists and psycho social support is lacking in the schools and is needed.

### 4.7 Social Cohesion in Regional and National Plans

The regional and national plan of Lebanon identify social tensions as a key driver for local violence and potentially for larger conflict Lebanon. The GoL is especially concerned about the already fragile stability in the country, particularly in deprived and therefore the most vulnerable areas of Lebanon. According to the LCRP “stabilization of the LCRP, means strengthening national capacities to address long-term poverty and social tensions while also meeting humanitarian needs”.

On a regional level, social cohesion is identified to be an innovative approach for coping with social tensions. By pointing out the necessity for interaction between host communities, social cohesion is integrated in several components of the plan. Additionally, there is a focus on reduction of security and protection risks to increase the possibility for social cohesion.

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MEHE stated that each public school has a head counselor and a psycho social support counselor. The ministry aims to reinforce relations between communities through education120.

4.8 **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

The government of Lebanon designed RACE as an educational response to the Syrian crisis aligned with the national crisis response plan. Integration is not a main goal in these plans but social cohesion which is the beginning of the integration process is. There is attention on the local and regional level on social cohesion in educational plans through events and psychosocial support. In addition to a focus on interaction with the communities. The fieldwork findings in the next chapter review an image of the local reality of these plans. There will also be a discussion about the opportunities and challenges in the educational sector.

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120 International Alert. „Better Together: The impact of the schooling system of Lebanese and Syrian displaced pupils on social stability.” Background paper, 2015.
5. FIELDWORK FINDINGS

This chapter will discuss the findings of this research. With a focus on the challenges in the educational sector for students, teachers and NGO’s. Encounters for primary, secondary and tertiary education will be studied. The significance of non-formal education will indicate what this form of education can mean for Syrian students.

5.1 CHALLENGES FOR SYRIAN YOUTH IN ACCESSING FORMAL EDUCATION

Even though the enrollment rate is increasing, for numerous reasons many children are still out of school. Interviews with several international and national NGO’s gave insights in the most pressing challenges for Syrian students in formal education. This section will first review the biggest challenges in primary and secondary school with specific focus on challenges that hinder accessing education.

5.1.1 Primary schooling

5.1.1.1 Language barriers

In the Lebanese curriculum, several subjects are either taught in English or French. This is a difficulty for the Syrian students as in Syria it is an all-Arabic curriculum. This makes it difficult for Syrians to catch or keep up with their lessons. As reported by MEHE, this barrier is solved. This was more an issue in the beginning of the start of RACE but at this moment it is not a barrier anymore. Yet, during interviews with NGO’s or with Syrian parents it became clear that language is still an important issue.

5.1.1.2 Transportation

Over the past years many public schools opened second shift programs, particularly in areas that are densely populated by refugees. An important barrier for students is transportation, as distances can be long accessing schools can be difficult. Especially because transportation is solely provided for the most vulnerable group of students and those who live more than 2.5 kilometers from the school that is most near to them.
5.1.1.3 Increase in economic vulnerability

As mentioned before, heightened economic vulnerability results in a higher drop-out rate among children. Especially those we are around the age of 14 when they tend to prioritize work over education and need to support their family. Even though enrollment is free; costs of education is the most prominent reason why parents keep their children out of school.

5.1.1.4 Being out of school for several years

Students who missed one or more years of schooling makes it more difficult for them to return to school. To catch up with the Lebanese curriculum the ALP program is launched to help these students enroll back in school.

5.1.1.5 Regulations

The difficulty of enrollment is another reason for parents to keep their children out of school. Due to additional requests from school management like vaccinations proofs or identification it is sometimes too difficult for parents to enroll their children. A big step forward in extending equitable rights to education has been made in March 2016, when the government announced that students at the public schools (grade 9-12) can take official exams without presenting transcripts or documentation of prior schooling\textsuperscript{121}. However, school management must work along with this agreement.

For many NGO’s the regulations and restrictions set up by MEHE are challenging their work. As stated before; since 2014 is access to schools restricted through MEHE. Soledad Alex, project manager of the NGO Asmae, argues that this authorization is difficult to get. To cope with these restrictions the NGO had to set up new programs and rent spaces as they could no longer work on school premises\textsuperscript{122}. It also influenced the trainings they offered to the teachers as they are no longer allowed to work with them directly, some school directors refuse the trainings and block the programs. Another problem Soledad Alex mentioned, is the registration process for the NGO to work in Lebanon. For four years the NGO is trying to register, but it remains difficult to get authorization to work within the education sector. The relationship they


\textsuperscript{122} Soledad Alex, Project Manager of Asmae, Beirut Lebanon, 29th of July 2016
have with the government is good, but mostly because the NGO Asmae is funded by Agence Française Développement (AFD), the French donor agency\textsuperscript{123}.

The second shift challenged NGO’s to continue their education programs, as previously children would go to school in the morning the programs happened in the morning. After the second shift installment, the participation rate decreased and it is more difficult to mix Lebanese and Syrians children. For upcoming year Asmae will move their activities to the morning or to the weekend. One of the NGO’s also claimed that some schools opened second shift for the money of the government but doesn’t \textsuperscript{124}enroll Syrian students.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{reasons_not_enrolled.png}
\caption{Why are children not enrolled in formal education}
\end{figure}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{enrolled_percentage.png}
\caption{Percentage of boys and girls enrolled}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{123} Alix Faddoul, AFD, Beirut Lebanon, 19th of August 2016
\textsuperscript{124} Human Rights Watch. Growing Up Without an Education. 2016.
\textsuperscript{125} Human Rights Watch. Growing Up Without an Education. 2016.
5.1.2 Secondary education: challenges and opportunities

There are 134 education centers in Lebanon who are accredited by MEHE and financially supported by UNHCR that offer vocational training. The number of Syrian student who are enrolled in this education is 1.033 out of 502,000 (aged 3-18), vocational trainings are developed to help youth and young adults acquire practical skills. In Arab societies, this form of vocational and technical training has traditionally been stigmatized due to the poor image of manual work.

An example of a NGO who offers vocational training is AVSI. This NGO argues that there is a lack of skilled workers in Lebanon. Therefore, they work together with the Ministry of Agriculture and the agricultural schools to build capacity, give staff trainings and summer courses for Syrian refugees. Lebanese schools that offer secondary training are not always excepting Syrians, therefore AVSI started their program specially of Syrian youth. They implemented a 2-year program funded by the EU for youth between 15 and 24 years old. Give them skills and graduate them as agricultural skilled workers. In addition, AVSI offers short-term specialized courses in collaboration with the Italian government and UNICEF.

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127 Samar Khalil, AVSI Foundation, Jounieh Lebanon, 17th of August 2016
To enhance cohesion the classes are mixed, in the beginning there was resistance from the Lebanese students to work with the Syrian students. However now the classes are running smoothly and it nationality not an issue anymore. To gain the labor market it is important to focus on offering courses that increase the skills of youth. Especially in rural municipalities they rely on Syrian skilled workers, therefore it is better when they receive good education.

There is not much support for the development of agricultural education from the ministry’s side. Hence, it is a challenge to make the programs sustainable as there is not much funding. Another challenge is to convince the Syrian youth to leave their work and return to school. Because they are missing out on payment it is difficult for youth to commit to their education as they must assist their families. To increase the participation rate AVSI moved courses to the camps, so students can enjoy education without security issues.

5.1.3 Tertiary education: challenges and opportunities

In Lebanon, the enrollment in higher education remains low, this is credited to the restricted availability of public higher education with only one public university. Private universities had rising tuition fees over the past years which negatively affected the affordability of higher education. Especially for non-Lebanese it is difficult to reach higher, with only 14 % of non-Lebanese enrolled in 2012.\(^\text{128}\)

UNHCR implemented in 40 countries the DAFI scholarship program\(^\text{129}\). This program provides qualified refugees with education on a university level. In Lebanon 131 Syrian refugee students are enrolled in this scholarship program who can study at Lebanese universities. The first year of DAFI in Lebanon the dropout rate was 50%, this year (2015-2016) this decreased to 4.5%. This decreased due to the installment of a student committee that follows up on students on daily basis.

In higher education, the dropout among Syrian refugees and Lebanese with a poor background is very high. During a roundtable regarding higher education organized by UNESCO these reasons and measurements got discussed.\(^\text{130}\). First of all,


\(^\text{130}\) Roundtable regarding Higher Education at UNESCO, Beirut Lebanon, 29th of August, 2016
protection issues, schools are not always accessible because of geographically checkpoints where Syrian are refugees to let through. The NGO Spark argued that strong safeguarding policy is needed that is currently missing. This is also linked to family pressure that is leading to students dropping out of their studies. Especially for girls it would be better if there are gender-segregated classes and include family in school activities. Secondly, discrimination at universities towards refugees, DAFI is working on cohesion through sport matches. Through these sport events students get integrated at university campuses. To reach as many Syrian students DAFI opened together with UNESCO an open Syria desk where help is offered to cope with processes and regulations. Unregistered refugees can get registered in 24 hours with help of UNHCR in order to apply for DAFI’s scholarship.

To reach all vulnerable population, Lebanese, Syrians and Palestinians, it is important that NGO’s start to cooperate. This became clear during this roundtable as some NGO’s declined student applications while others have scholarships left. Each NGO has its own target group to offer scholarships. For example, for Syrians there is Jusoor Syria, SPARK, DAFI and Unite Lebanon Youth Project. But for Palestinians there is merely Unite Lebanon Youth Project in cooperation with UNRWA offering university scholarships.

5.1.4 Drop-out rate: what is the cause, consequence and what is done to limit this rate?

Every year around 6000 children drop out of school. Why they drop out can have several reasons, they might go to private schooling, children have to move or they have to work. A humanitarian worker from World Vision mentioned that she is worried about this trend as Lebanese and Syrians don’t consider the school premises as ‘their’ space anymore and how this influences the future of Lebanon.

5.1.4.1 Mobility

One reason for a high-dropout rate is mobility. This can be within Lebanon but also country. When refugees cannot obtain the right papers due to bureaucratic procedures or lack of financial support they decide to return to Syria. Or because they leave outside of the Lebanon because they have the opportunity to go to Europe.

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513 Eliane Ibrahim, Education and Life Skills Specialist World Vision, Matn Lebanon, 16th of August 2016
5.1.4.2 Working instead of going back to school

The GoL made a cautious improvement in 2015 to eliminate child labor by providing free education up to grade 9 for 200,000 children (Lebanese and Syrian)\(^{132}\). Syrian children are mostly subjected to forced labor in agriculture. According to a report of the United States Labor department are Syrian families kept in bonded labor to pay for their transit from Syria to Lebanon\(^{133}\). Another factor are the costs of improvised houses due to the costs provided by the landowners. Many Syrian children work in the Beqaa valley, collecting potatoes or pruning grape vines against very low wage.

Reports suggest that some Syrians don’t want to register in order to be eligible to work, because refugees are officially not allowed to work\(^{134}\). Another strategy is to send refugee children to work as that is more easily concealed than when their parents work. Hence, dodging registration may be rational when one wants to find work. A lot of refugees live in bad living conditions in extreme poverty, particularly the ones (85%) that is hosted in the most vulnerable areas of Lebanon where 68% of poor Lebanese lives\(^ {135}\). A report from the International Labor Organization (ILO) argues that authorities made too many severe restrictions for adults to access the labor market or to legal residency\(^{136}\). Consequently, poverty is forcing families to depend on their children to support their livelihood which leads to a higher rate of dropouts. However, not only Syrians are working on the fields. From 2009 to 2016 the number of Lebanese children has tripled. According to Sonia Khoury, director of RACE, around 10,000 Lebanese children dropped out of school in 2015, most likely to work\(^{137}\). There is a strong correlation between the harvest season and school attendance, during the summer months at least 2000 to 3000 children are absent.


Important to mention is the hazardous nature of this work. This kind of work can lead to long-term health problems and pesticide poisoning\textsuperscript{138}. The ILO warns that national authorities and the international community need to increase and enhance their efforts to increase public awareness around child labor. If not children are unprotected to hazardous working conditions and will miss crucial years of schooling.

5.1.4.3 Measurements to limit the drop-out rate

To limit the drop-out rate it is important to involve parents in the education of their children. UNHCR organized, together with their partners, 83 Parent Community Groups (PCG)\textsuperscript{139}. In these groups parents collaborate to find solutions to problems their children or the family faces in school. Hence, it contributes to the maintenance of their children at schools. Throughout the country there are 101 Homework Support Groups, the students from the second shift come together in the morning to do their homework\textsuperscript{140}. This activity is significant to limit that children drop out because they cannot keep up, in addition it contributes to their participation and enhances bonding within the community. The groups are led by volunteers, parents or community member. There have been 1,365 Community Awareness sessions in different locations, changing from community centers to family houses. These focus group discussions regarding education, aim to inform parents about opportunities for education and enrollment procedures. In 205 around 24,451 parents were informed through this channel\textsuperscript{141}.

5.1.5 Increasing the quality of education: local practices

A big challenge for NGO’s in the education sector is the limited number of teachers and low quality of teaching. Teachers struggle to cope with the specific education needs of Syrian students, in addition to maintaining harmonious relationships between various groups in one classroom\textsuperscript{142}. Many organizations work on a local
level to increase the quality of education. For example, Asmae is training the teachers about pedagogy and crisis management. A common problem is the limited number of available teachers for the second shift. Schools have different schedules, that is why e.g. Asmae has difficulty to create one program that adapts to all school schedules. Teachers are no longer attracted to teach in the public system due to MEHE’s limited budget, that only offers small compensation. Since 2002 schools can recruit ‘contractual teachers’ with lower benefits who only have a basic degree. Due to weaker entry levels and lower financial compensations, the recruitment of contractual teachers led to an oversupply of under-qualified teaching staff in public schools.

The International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC), implemented a project that aims to improve the learning environment. Not only the quality of teaching is important but as well the learning environment when one wishes to improve education. Based on prior assessments they repaired schools including WASH renovations to help schools open second shifts. IOCC aims to offer Syrian students a safe place in schools, with more security and safety to offer a proper learning environment. This is done along the standards MEHE designed; written in the Effective School Profile. Rana Hage, communications officer at IOCC, explained that another way to increase the quality of schools is to set up food support programs. IOCC implemented a school feeding program and is reaching over 4500 Lebanese and Syrian children. Per the program manager from IOCC food support is a way to encourage parents to send their children to school as an incentive. According to Rana Hage, this is also a good method to target the most vulnerable families as they might have financial difficulties to feed their children.

5.1.6 Importance of non-formal education and learning of Syrian refugee youth matters

Previously, challenges to the integration and enrolment of Syrian youth to formal public school have been discussed in previous sections. This section will discuss non-formal education (NFE) alongside the provision of formal schooling. During an interview with World Vision it was stated that formal education is important but just

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143 Soledad Alex, Asmae, Beirut Lebanon, 29th of July 2016
146 Rana Hage, Communication Officer, IOCC, Metn Lebanon, 1st of August 2016
as important as non-formal, “because we all know how non-formal education is helping these kids forward”\textsuperscript{147}. Beyond language and enrollment issues, there are various other socio-cultural challenges resulting in a low level of enrollment and a high drop-out rate in public schooling in addition to the number of out-of-school youth in Lebanon.

To provide the critical support that is needed to stimulate the population to continue developing and learning, non-formal schooling and alternative learning programs might be the right path\textsuperscript{148}. An example is the ALP that MEHE set up in coordination with their partners, for youth who have interrupted their schooling. However, due to lack of funding ALP cannot be provided to a large number of children. Another barrier to ALP is limited capacity of the ministry to deliver such big project as MEHE is reluctant to engage NGO’s as it pursues to create more accountability and insight on the NFE sector. Though, despite the effort non-formal education remains to be diminished without overall accreditation frameworks to assess programs’ quality. In spite of the working groups there is lack of harmonization and coordination among the NGO’s and community centers that provide NFE. Mechanisms to formal acknowledge skills and competences of refugees are absent, though many refugees have former learning, qualifications, work and life experiences. The absence of accreditation of NFE, lack of acknowledged formal competencies and qualifications are hindering refugees in finding decent jobs, mobility and accessing (higher) education.

The difficulties of teachers in NFE are due to stress and overload. These teachers have to cope with tensions within the classroom, sometimes even violence without proper support. Teachers who work in NFE are often Syrian themselves, it is sometimes a struggle for them to deal with psychological problems with children as some of them experienced trauma themselves. Children who have been out of Syria for years are confused per Jusoor Syria, they are feeling lost regarding their identity; Lebanese or Syrian? Suha Tutunji program director from Jusoor explained that Syrians are different than Palestinian children who have a very strong identity\textsuperscript{149}. In the morning teachers discuss this topic with their students. At the schools of Jusoor they don’t

\textsuperscript{147} Eliane Ibrahim, Education and Life Skills Specialist World Vision, Metn Lebanon, 16\textsuperscript{th} of August 2016


\textsuperscript{149} Suha Tutunji, Program Director of Jusoor Syria, 15\textsuperscript{th} of July 2016
discuss politics but they review Syria’s history and major cities as they value the children’s role in rebuilding Syria’s future. Another struggle is the transition of children from NFE to public schools, according to Abir only two or three out of ten children enroll in public schools. Reasons why this rate is so low is because of the difficulty of curriculum, the level of illiteracy is very high in Syria, Syrian parents cannot always help their children or the children have to work to support their families.

5.1.7 Current funding gap
In 2016 Lebanon drew an appeal of 2.48 billion dollars for the LCRP. In July only 726 million was received, leaving a gap of 1.75 billion dollars (71%)\(^{150}\). For education this appeal was 388.1 million dollars, and the received amount was solely 150.8 million dollars.

All the interviewees mentioned the shortage of funding as one of the main challenges. Humanitarian workers are afraid that Lebanon will reach the flat side of donors, meaning that funding will decrease as the crisis continues. This is also mentioned by the word “donor fatigue”. It is problematic for NGO’s and UN-agencies to continue the same level of work when donors are declining. Especially in a fragile political environment it is difficult to ensure sustainability. Competition among NGO’s increases and proposals are writing for “popular” donor topics, sometimes these are not the actual needs of the beneficiaries\(^{151}\).

This is also one of the biggest obstacles for MEHE. Maroun Hobeika, working for MPU, explains that each year the ministry needs new funds to cover books and enrollment fees\(^{152}\). In the first years of RACE they wanted the public schooling to be free for everyone, Lebanese and non-Lebanese. Currently, MEHE strives to cover as many books and enrollment fees as possible, but sometimes schools must ask small admission fees due to lack of funding. The funds the ministry wants to use cannot be earmarked for a specific target group. Earmarking remains a struggle for both the ministry and for NGO’s. Most donors want to fund Syrian children, when most projects are targeting all vulnerable children. Rania Zakhia from UNICEF underpins the importance of better analyzes of the costs, in order to understand how NGO’s can do

\(^{151}\) Eliane Ibrahim, World Vision, Metn Lebanon, 16th of August 2016 / Pamela Sleiman, case worker Makhzoumi Foundation, Beirut Lebanon, 29th of August
\(^{152}\) Maroun Hobeika, Program, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer at MPU from MEHE, Beirut, 14th of September
more with less funding\textsuperscript{153}. The funding gap has a negative input on social cohesion as this is for the government not a priority. Reducing the probability for integration of Syrian youth in Lebanon.

5.1.8 Unregistered babies: increasing the threat of a lost generation

What is important to note is that in 2016 around 50,000 Syrian babies are born in Lebanon who remain unregistered. That means that a high number of Syrian children are facing to be stateless. These children risk to miss out on education, as they don’t have basic rights like education and health care\textsuperscript{154}. Due to the heavy bureaucratic procedure parents are restrained to obtain Syrian citizenship for their child. First, parents need a birth notification from a hospital or midwife. Secondly, they need this notification, their own identity papers and marriage certificate to a local notary close to the birthplace of the child. There the parents should get a birth certificate against a small fee. Finally, parents must register with the local government in Lebanon. This must all be done before the child is one year old, after that the process is more complex and expensive involving lawyers, judges and DNA tests\textsuperscript{155}.

Syrian refugees are required to carry certain documents with them or they risk arrest, in addition they are forced to pay 200 dollars a year to stay in Lebanon. When a family is living in extreme poverty it is difficult to pay this fee for the whole family. Due to this rule parents are afraid to register their babies, as they are afraid to be arrested. During a field trip to the Beqaa Valley I met Abir who is an English teacher, he is 25 years old and from the city of Homms\textsuperscript{156}. He also struggled with the decision to register his 2-year-old daughter, but decided not to because of the bureaucratic procedures. He does not want more children until peace returns to Syria and they can move back. Reasons are the high living costs and high health expenses if the baby needs to be born in the hospital. According to the Norwegian Refugee Council the lack of information, fear for the authorities and high expenses are consequently making refugees give up to register.

\textsuperscript{153} Rania Zakhia, Education Program Specialist from UNICEF, Beirut Lebanon, 23th of August 2016


\textsuperscript{156} Teacher, Jusoor Syria, Beqaa Lebanon, 8th of August 2016
5.2 Lebanese-Syrian Perceptions

Through interviews with teachers, NGO’s, school directors, education specialists and literature review perceptions of Lebanese and Syrian students toward each other will be discussed. In addition, the view of the parents will be discussed and the relations of the students with the school. Within each section first the views from first-shift students will be presented, followed by the second shift segregated classes. It is important to note that Syrian students in the first shift are usually longer in Lebanon and have better connections with the community. This group has frequently relatives who lived previously in Lebanon.

The conditions in the morning shifts are different than the second shift with more support for the student and the teacher. This is more conductive learning than the second shift. The afternoon shift is running much shorter than the first shift and runs thus less smooth. In the afternoon, the curriculum is also more condensed without extracurricular activities for the students, despite the need that is often larger for these students than the ones in the morning.

5.2.1 Student perceptions

Mixed classes

In mixed classes Lebanese students have a better perception of Syrian refugees than Lebanese in segregated schools. Over time perceptions improved after students spend more time together within the context of the school. Daily contact with Syrian classmates allowed Lebanese students to form their own perceptions rather than following negative stereotypes. These stereotypes are shaped by what students heard from their families or in their neighborhood. This stereotype often describes a Syrian as a person who kidnaps and rapes Lebanese women\(^\text{157}\). Syrian students tend to have a better and diverse perception of the Lebanese than the Syrians in the second shift. They have a positive impression of their fellow-classmates. In this case Lebanese students would sometimes stand up for Syrian students who were discriminated. However, not all Syrian students have a positive image and describe the Lebanese as prejudiced and feel sometimes harassed or disgraced as refugees from Syria.

\(^{157}\) International Alert. „Better Together: The impact of the schooling system of Lebanese and Syrian displaced pupils on social stability.” Background paper, 2015.
Segregated classes

Lebanese students who are not in mixed classes have negative perceptions of Syrian refugees. Syrian students were described as people who steal and are against the Lebanese army\textsuperscript{158}. During interviews and informal talks with Lebanese students Syrians were also described as ‘dirty’, polluting the sea water when they go for a swim. Another issue that bothered Lebanese students was the number of children of Syrian families, as it would damage the areas they reside in, in addition to the amount of garbage they produce. Lebanese students in segregated classes often don’t change these perceptions as they don’t encounter Syrian peers, neither in school or in their living environment.

The Syrian students from the second shift tend to have a negative image of the Lebanese students. As they feel that the Lebanese insult them, Syrian students feel less-treated by the Lebanese as stated by some of the teachers that were interviewed. Syrian students would like to have relationships with Lebanese friends but feel they cannot because of the Lebanese attitude towards them. Because of this they tend to stick together, as they live often close to each other this is easier for the Syrian students to build relationships. Teachers revealed that Syrian students feel even frightened sometimes by the Lebanese because they see their parents who feel weaker than Lebanese who are more powerful.

Syrian students from the second shift considered that the Lebanese students don’t want them in Lebanon. Syrian feel less than the Lebanese and reflect that Lebanese think of them as servants. This is stimulated by the Lebanese economy which relies heavily on services, and the situation that many Syrian girls work as maids or in the agricultural sector. Another reason why Syrian students think Lebanese students don’t like them is because Syrians receive a lot of aid while there are also many underprivileged Lebanese children.

\textsuperscript{158} International Alert. „Better Together: The impact of the schooling system of Lebanese and Syrian displaced pupils on social stability.” Background paper, 2015.
5.2.2 Perceptions of the parents

Mixed classes

During the interviews, Lebanese parents expressed a negative attitude towards the Syrian students. This negativity is created by the idea that Syrian refugees take their jobs and aid, thus leading to more competition. Regarding schooling parents think that Syrian children receive privileges like free books and stationary while Lebanese children receive nothing. In addition, Lebanese believe that some parts in Syria are safe and therefore Syrian refugees should move back. But that Syrians are staying to profit from the aid and rights they receive here in Lebanon and not in Syria. Especially in the South of Lebanon Lebanese parents tend to have a negative attitude towards Syrians in general. This is due to many Lebanese men from this area that are supporting or part of Hezbollah and were or are fighting in Syria.

Syrian parents’ perceptions vary between regions. In the North of Syria, Syrians tend to have a better relationship with Lebanese because they share a history with more trade and marriages between the two countries. However, Syrian refugees who arrived recently in Lebanon feel not comfortable around Lebanese as they feel disdained by them. Syrian parents felt that Lebanese parents and teachers considered Syrian students inferior to Lebanese students. In Beirut, this feeling among parents was considered less as Beirut is more diverse.

Soledad Alex working for the NGO Asmae, expressed how difficult it is to organize weekly parent’s discussion groups\textsuperscript{159}. Their aim is to have both Lebanese and Syrian parents to attend but this is difficult. Mostly mothers attend the meetings. To reach the parents Asmae works with the children in an attempt to reach the parents.

Classes with segregated students

Syrian parents of students in the second shift first were surprised when the second shift was introduced. They felt this was a treatment of a discriminating nature, but they got used to this treatment as the teachers stated. Parents of Syrian children would like to see their children befriend Lebanese children if they would be treated in a nice way. However, many Syrian parents feel that the Lebanese in general consider themselves superior to the Syrians.

\textsuperscript{159} Soledad Alex, Asmae, Beirut Lebanon, 29th of July 2016
5.2.3 Relationships within the community between Lebanese and Syrian students

Outside the school there are limited relationships between the Lebanese and Syrian students who mix in the first shift. For the students in the second shift this relationship is already a minimum, this limited contact reflects the tense relationship between the Syrian refugees and the host-communities. This relationship is influenced by historical factors, the political environment, competition over aid and employment opportunities and the tension, due to the high number of Syrian refugees, on services and infrastructure. Observations in the field suggest that daily encounters in an educational environment can ease this tension but that these limited happenstances are not enough to counter the factors mentioned before within the host-community.

Friendships between classmates of the first shift are limited to school, parents are often against interaction with Syrians in public. These parental warnings and limited opportunities that exist of occasional meetings in shops or neighborhoods are preventing the friendships to grow and sustain. For Syrian students limited social opportunities are due to their socio-economic conditions. Additionally, they are often accompanied by their parents or family when they are outside the settlements. When Syrian children who arrived shortly in Lebanon are not leaving their houses in the beginning because of the feeling of lack of security. Room to develop relationships for Syrian students is very small due to these conditions and because of the behavior of some Lebanese outside of schools who have an attitude of superiority. Therefore, not many attempts to build relationships have been made outside the school environments. Other opportunities to construct relationships happen on the bus on their way to school. But these encounters are short of time and do not have the space to develop.

Lebanese students have most of the time no contact at all with Syrian children, because there are a limited number of mixed morning-shifts. Even when they are mixed in the class Lebanese students avoid contact with Syrian students outside the classroom. Lebanese students with no Syrian refugees enrolled at their school avoid contact with them because of several reasons. Parents warn their children for refugees who might carry weapons, and to avoid contact to evade the spread of diseases. Refugees who live in host-communities live in conditions with less hygiene and are considered to be “dirty” by the Lebanese villagers.
5.3 Perceptions and practices regarding social cohesion

This section reviews the attitude of NGO’s regarding integration and if they are working on social cohesion. Do any of the spoken NGO’s work on social cohesion and if they do; how they are working on this concept? If they don’t work on social cohesion, why is that?

5.3.1 Perceptions of Lebanese towards Syrians

The Lebanese organization: Biladi, works on mutual respect. Biladi worked closely with UNICEF, however UNICEF aimed for a social cohesion theme in 2016. Nonetheless Biladi believes that this is not possible, as cohesion is about identity. According to this organization it is too early to work on common roots between Lebanese and Syrian. What is more important is the dialogue about heritage, to create self-esteem and self-respect for Syrian children. Biladi sees Syrian refugees as Syrians discovering Syria, their own heritage, archeology, story-telling, tangible and intangible heritage. Because the Syrian children who now live in Lebanon don’t know Syria, they only know the Syria in times of war. Biladi works to give these children a better image of Syria which they can share with their parents. For some children, this is the first positive aspect they hear about Syria. It would be an idea for the future to run the same project for Syrians and Lebanese, take them on trips to cultural sites. Biladi had a project for Syrian children to work on this self-image together with the organization AVSI. It was a training for 14 days that was very successful. However, this project ended because UNICEF wanted to work more on common heritage and Biladi choose to stop the cooperation because they didn’t believe in this. According to Biladi it is better to take it slow, taking a step back and focus on mutual respect instead of cohesion. It is important to create a dialogue for youngsters. Lebanese and Syrian need to know each other. Lebanese people don’t know how big Syria is and how many heritage sites there are. During the war, Lebanese were not welcome in Syria, in the early years of 2000 Syria became more touristic and Lebanese tourists visited heritage sites in Syria more often. However, this period did not last long enough to give Lebanese another dimension to Syria. That is why there is need to stimulate mutual respect.

The NGO Asmae had likewise problems with the perception of Lebanese people towards Syrians during the implementation and management of their education projects: “the people in the villages don’t want to hear about integration, it is too much
When discussion groups are organized to bring together Syrian and Lebanese it is difficult, especially in the South of Lebanon. Because many men in the South are affiliated with Hezbollah and joined to Syria. Resulting in this tension between Syrians and Lebanese as the latter accuse the Syrians of the death of family members. There is also a religious dimension that increases tensions as in the working areas of Asmae most Lebanese are Shia and Syrians Sunni’s. During the first attempts to mix the mothers it was extremely difficult; the psychologist works with Lebanese and Syrian mothers in separate groups and explains them how they can live together. For 6 months, Asmae has a mixed mother groups. In the groups, they discuss common, mutual problems and about how they can help their children at school.

A lot of NGO’s organize trainings to stimulate cohesion between Syrians and Lebanese, there are also trainings offered within Lebanese communities to release tensions between religious groups. However, there are many providers of trainings and some NGO’s (Asmae and Amel) revealed that the participation rate is low because Lebanese don’t believe it is useful or have already done such trainings. A casework manager that works for the Makhshoumi Foundation explained that this has also to do with the poor living conditions of the Lebanese who live in rural areas.

5.3.2 Political environment
One of the organizations that was interviewed spoke about the problem that Lebanese don’t see a future for their country. Amel Association International argued that before we speak about social cohesion we need to talk about the political situation in Lebanon\(^{161}\). Asmae also argued that we cannot speak about integration as there is no “space”, Lebanon is already overwhelmed due to the refugee crisis. Another reason is that Lebanon does not want to create camps to avoid permanent settlement like the Palestinians did.

5.3.3 Syrians who wish to stay in Lebanon
The movement to Lebanon had an empowering effect on some Syrian women. Therefore, some women wish to stay in Lebanon, due to a higher income and more freedom. However, life in Lebanon is more expensive. During an interview with the Makhshoumi Foundation the attitude from Syrians towards Syria came to the fore. Syrians are taught to love Syria, know its culture and there was a strong focus on Syrian

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\(^{160}\) Soledad Alex, Asmae, Beirut Lebanon, 29th of July 2016

\(^{161}\) Virginie Lefèvre, Amel Association, Beirut Lebanon, 12th of September 2016
heritage at schools. Many of the Syrians therefore wish to go back to Syria, nonetheless have many also experienced the ‘easy’ life of Lebanon where services and places are easy accessible. Some Syrian refugees might be living ‘richer’ in Lebanon than they would in Syria, thus this humanitarian worker was anxious that many will stay in Lebanon. Mohamed, one of the teachers of Jusoor Syria explained that a lot of families lost everything in Syria and thus have nothing to go back to\textsuperscript{162}. The lost their connection with their country of origin once they have no family living in Syria anymore, when they start to build their life in Lebanon they want to invest their time and money in Lebanon instead of going back to Syria.

### 5.4 The role of the Palestinians

Even though the public Lebanese opinion and government has showed structural rejection of permanent settlement of Palestinians, the significant Palestinian presence will continue in Lebanon\textsuperscript{163}. The number of Palestinians is estimated to be around 400,000 which is approximately ten percent of the country’s population. Lebanon was the second country to admit Palestinians in 1948. Due to the refusal of the Israeli government Palestinians are permanent residents of Lebanon (\textit{de facto} integration). They are part of Lebanon’s social and economic life. Most of the Palestinian refugees are Sunni Muslim which can be fatal to the social balance. This is one of the reasons why the Palestinians are not neutralized, as Lebanon feels it cannot absorb such number of Sunni’s. Therefore, Palestinian communities are granted individual and communal rights to protect Lebanon’s pluralist character and political structure. Thus, Lebanon is continuing to deny Palestinian civil rights in the belief that such action would indicate willingness to captivate refugees from Palestine\textsuperscript{164}.

Education is a political area where segregation is existing against Palestinian refugees. Palestinian refugee children enroll at schools from United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)\textsuperscript{165}. An interview with an education specialist with UNRWA provided a clear picture of the situation for

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\textsuperscript{162} Mohamed teacher at Jusoor, Bequaa Valley, 8th of August 2016


\textsuperscript{165} International Alert. „Better Together: The impact of the schooling system of Lebanese and Syrian displaced pupils on social stability.” Background paper, 2015.
Palestinians\textsuperscript{166}. Since 1962 UNRWA is running their educational programs, however these are not accredited by the government. Since 2011 UNRWA is trying to get accreditation for their programs by MEHE, currently they received the first license but are still waiting for the second. According to Haddad and Jamali Palestinians are facing an educational crisis\textsuperscript{167}. Even though UNRWA provides the refugees with primary education it is difficult or even impossible to enter government secondary schools, making Palestinian refugees unable to access university. Another issue that is increasing the problem is the influx of Palestinians from Syria. Those refugees from Syria are not part of the RACE plan from MEHE, which puts pressure on the capacity of UNRWA in Lebanon. For educational programs UNRWA has a capacity for 1200 students per year, however 600 applicants are declined each year due to too high demand. This is only increasing with the Palestinian refugees from Syria.

\textsuperscript{166} Michel Salameh, UNRWA, Beirut Lebanon, 26th of August 2016

5.5 SUSTAINABILITY OF THE INTERVENTIONS

For sustainable development children are key, because they are the future. Especially in this scenario where it is expected that the children of today in Lebanon or the ones that need to rebuild Syria later. When children are safe, health and well-educated this is the basis for a prosperous and just society. They bring sustainable growth and correct management of natural resources. The basic needs and rights of children need to be met in order to develop society in a sustainable way. Especially for social cohesion the wellbeing and education is key.

However, due to dropouts, informal labor, funding issues and the mobility of Syrian families it is difficult to build sustainable educational interventions in Lebanon. Especially for children who lost years of school it is important to stay at school for a longer term. Then, it can be stated that the current circumstances for humanitarian operations are not sustainable.

5.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The challenges Syrian youth faces to access education are various for primary, secondary and higher education; transportation, money, protection, language and the burden of missed school years. It is significant to focus on higher quality and on social cohesion on school premises, only then will schools be a place where integration can occur. Findings show that even when Syrians enroll the perceptions of fellow Lebanese students can be problematic too. But that mixing the two population displays to be beneficial to cohesion, first shift students show more empathy towards each other while second shift students have a higher probability of facing discrimination.

Demonstrating that to increase sustainability, it is of importance to tackle the funding issues and improve non-formal education. This will offer a greater window to social cohesion and in the greater process of integration. The next chapter will conclude this thesis by linking the research findings to the theoretical discourse and offers some reflection and recommendations.
6. **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

This chapter will link the research findings to the theoretical discourse, by starting with social cohesion. The framework that was given in 1.3.5 will serve as a tool to analyze social cohesion in Lebanon and how educational programs are part of this process. Secondly, social distance will be reviewed which is a significant indicator for the next section regarding integration. Finally, this chapter will end with my reflection on the research process and give some recommendations.

6.1 **SOCIAL COHESION IN LEBANON**

How the current education policies are forming cohesion will be measured aligned with the Jenson’s framework that is discussed in the theoretical framework.

Thus, in the Lebanese context, *belonging* is thought of in relation to religious and/or cultural background, as well as identification with being ‘refugee’ or Lebanese. The ethnic background is not considered as Syrians and Lebanese are from the same ethnicity. From immigration and cross-cultural literature often migrants adopt an integration acculturation strategy. What can stimulate the sense of social cohesion between the Syrians and Lebanese is religion as this is a shared value with common values. Spiritual bond on a religious level is a key enabler for social cohesion. Enablers in Lebanon are positive interactions between students. These interactions occur during the first shift and through events organized by NGO’s such as sports. However, belonging on a national level is discouraged through the social and political environment, as the government implemented second shifts the interaction is minimal. This impacted the sense of belonging on a local level in a negative way. The media and education has a big role the development of belonging, when the these two are encouraging a sense of us versus them this decreases the social trust which is key to enhance belonging. A big barrier for social cohesion is the existence of discrimination and prejudices towards Syrians in the Lebanese community. Being excluded, which is an implication of the second shift system, creates a big barrier to belonging. Consequently, this leads to social division and conflict in the country.

It can be concluded that there is a low level of *inclusion*. The extent to which Syrians have equal access and opportunities is lower than Lebanese, however for poor
Lebanese this is as well very low. The inclusion is low because of the high unemployment rate, low enrollment in higher education, opposing stereotypes and a disrespectful environment. Social networks are limited to nationality as Syrian students build relationships with Syrians instead of with Lebanese and vice versa. As a result, poor Lebanese and Syrian refugees have limited opportunities in education that will maximize their social, political and economic rights. The low enrollment rate in secondary and tertiary education is leading to a generation that missed out on many opportunities that would strengthen their livelihood. It is difficult to build capacity as the needs are very high but the capacity is limited on a national and community level. Because of this situation of low capacity, high needs, it is difficult to create inclusion with the current educational system that is in place, as this is limiting the potential of education programs from NGO’s. Social inclusion is stimulated by what kind of society the governments should create. Lebanon should build a fairer society to stimulate integration. One in which Syrians and vulnerable Lebanese can become stronger and more resilient, with respect for all members of the community. Education is a strong resource for building inclusion. Employment and participation in education is an enabler for inclusion, nonetheless is workforce and higher education participation for Syrians discouraged by limited opportunities.

*Participation* of Syrian students increased because of the second shift system. More shifts resulted in a higher capacity for teaching children and in a higher rate of enrollment in basic education. The massive “Back to School” outreach strategy led by UNICEF enhanced the community participation. School premises is a social space that supports social networks. Churches and mosques is very important in social participation on a community level. However, to increase the participation rate in education there are still big challenges regarding language issues and lack of knowledge and resources to cope with. These issues are limiting the parents to enroll their children, because of lack of finances some parents need their children to work or because of a lack of information. A big barrier for participation is the lack of trust in institutions. Because of the political environment, the confidence in politics is low, in addition there are some Syrian refugees who don’t trust NGO’s or the UN because of corruption. Or vulnerable Lebanese who feel marginalized and ‘forgotten’ by the system. This lack of trust leads to inaccessible services such as schooling.
Because of the competition for resources and opportunities in Lebanon there is overall a negative relation between the Lebanese and Syrians, this is decreasing recognition. On a broader socio-economic level, recognition is weakened because of discrimination and tensions in society. Education can increase the frequency of interaction. In addition, education has the power to increase knowledge, decreasing prejudices and stereotypes about Syrian refugees. More interaction and knowledge will reduce false views about Syrian refugees, increasing mutual understanding and respect and lower anxiety and perceived threats. Nonetheless, the current situation regarding education programs is not fostering recognition but has a decreasing effect.

There are not many direct interventions in the education sector that focus on encouraging pluralism in society. Public trust in institutions and confidence in societal processes is little, leading to a low degree of legitimacy. The unrest on the political dimension and general unrest results in insufficient support, confidence and low legitimacy. NGO’s and social movements designed many programs that focus on conflict management, because of the civil war and history a lot of attention goes to creating stability in Lebanon and limiting division between different Lebanese groups. However, the number of this kind of programs to foster relations between Lebanese and Syrians is small. To use education for this purpose is a missed opportunity because of the fostering ability.

All dimensions of the Jenson’s framework indicate a low level of social cohesion, creating a negative weak and fragmented relationship between Syrian and Lebanese. When zoomed in on the concepts of bridging and bonding, there is certain bonding internally. Within the two populations: Lebanese and Syrians, both have strong internal social networks relying on family ties and friends. However, between the two populations social relationships are weak due to a numerous of reasons: prejudices, discrimination and perceived threats. This indicates an absence of bridging. Without bridging it is difficult to realize integration because cohesion cannot be reached.

6.1.1 What does this mean for social distance?

The findings regarding perceptions and the interviews reveal that there are strong prejudices in Lebanon regarding the Syrian refugees. Additionally, must the history between the two countries be taken in to account. As affective social distance is linked to the amount of sympathy and closeness it can be concluded that there is large affective social distance between Syrians and Lebanese. The current education policies
are not tackling discrimination and stereotypes in schools and is therefore not helping to reduce this distance. There is as well large normative and interactive distance between Syrian and Lebanese. Because of the second shift and the high dropout rate a high level of exclusion towards the Syrian refugees, this is also caused by the negative social attitudes towards them. The feeling of us versus them is very high among Lebanese for different reasons, for Lebanese with a poor social-economic background it is caused by the competition over resources and opportunities while for Lebanese with from a ‘richer’ environment it is due to a sense of superiority. Due to the little frequency and low intensity of the interactions between Syrian and Lebanese students it can be concluded that the interactive social distance is high in the education sector. Hence, it can be concluded that Rummel’s class, power and status distance is substantial and that the groups oppose each other. Looking closer to power distance, it can be concluded that power plays a big role in the perceptions, expectations and behavior of people, both for the Lebanese and the Syrians. As the Syrians feel undervalued, discriminated and powerless versus the Lebanese who expect from their government that Syrians are segregated in society which is strongly showed in the approach of the government in the education system. This is understandable when one considers the history and the context of Lebanon as a tiny overwhelmed country. When these conclusions are viewed through the Jenson’s framework there is a low level of participation, belonging, inclusion and participation in the Lebanese society between Syrian and Lebanese youth; creating a large social distance between the two populations.

6.1.2 Integration struggle in Lebanon

After reviewing Jenson’s framework regarding social cohesion, it is stated that there is large social distance within society. It is safe to state that the acculturation strategy in Lebanon is separation and integration. In the public lives of Syrian refugees, especially when the focus is on education, refugees seem to adapt to the dominant culture in order to get access to services. This is especially the case in education when children have to adjust to a curriculum that is different than the one they had in Syria. However, privately it is seen that Syrians maintain and preserve their culture of origin, which points out a strategy of separation. It is arguable that there is limited choice for Syrian refugees regarding housing, labor and education; therefore, the strategy of integration and assimilation are difficult to adapt. Concerning the acculturation strategy of Lebanon, it is clear that this country adopts a segregation or
even exclusion strategy. For example, opening second shifts stimulated a segregationist society. Within this form of society, it is easy for communities to promote cultural exclusion, Lebanese can adopt marginalizing strategies of acculturation. Research findings showed cases of bullying and high drop-out rates, these events stimulate segregation and exclusion. Reviewing Berry’s fourfold model reveals the need for social cohesion and decreasing the social distance in Lebanon. Especially when one want to build a harmonious future, it is significant to focus on education, work with the Lebanese and Syrian youth in order to shrink this social distance.

Coming back to the research question: “How do global education policies, national education policies, and local schooling practices intersect to shape refugees’ social integration in Lebanon?”. It can be concluded that when discussed whether and how integration is happening in Lebanon, it is best to talk about de facto integration. As discoursed in the theoretical framework; de facto is integration as an informal process at the local level. De facto integration is more suitable as de jure integration primarily is about national belonging, representing the formal process of obtaining new citizenship. This process is not possible in Lebanon due to the political environment and as on a national level many citizens feel Lebanon is overwhelmed and that the public services cannot include 2 extra millions of citizens. There is lack of political will to offer citizenship to the Syrians to end their exile. Local integration as a durable solution remains deeply unpopular due to historical reasons and the daily struggles of the Lebanese themselves. Final, the legal status of Syrians in Lebanese that lies between displaced and de facto refugee is making the process of integration and the development of social cohesion extremely difficult. The biggest constraint to de facto integration is limited freedom of choice, scarce resources, prejudices and discrimination. The joint Syrian-Lebanese educational system and the existing nonformal education has limited impact on the integration of Syrians in Lebanese society. Therefore, the stance that current education policies, global and national, in addition to local practices do not have the capability (and lack of will) to shape an environment in which social integration is possible.
6.2 Reflection on Research

By using the concept of social cohesion to research the possibility for integration in Lebanon, enabled me to understand several dynamics. Most importantly it gave me insights in the humanitarian field, how it works, how it develops and the challenges the workers are facing. Using the concept of social gave me insights in the development of social tension and attitudes, this helped me to understand the context of Lebanon. But also to have a small peek into the world of a refugee in Lebanon. This way of thinking supported me to understand the dynamics in classrooms, allowing me to identify certain difficulties that occur. I like to think this is rather a spatial thinking approach than a time centered approach that mainly focus upon transition. Thinking in a spatial manner allowed me to comprehend different situations and places that happen simultaneously. This understanding makes me aware of the different development trajectories and how all the humanitarian sectors are connected. Time analysis is indispensable when the integration process of refugees is examined however at this moment many actors are postponing this problem to the future instead of dealing with it in the present. Tensions between humanitarian agencies, refugees and host communities rise over time which is triggering the need for social cohesion. However, to grasp why and how this evolves it is crucial to think in the ‘now’ and use spatial thinking.

This research contributes to the literature that is written about refugee integration linked to education. As the current literature is limited regarding this issue, one of the reasons as discussed is that this option is often dismissed as a durable solution. During this research it was difficult to discuss my topic with Lebanese because of the unpopularity of the topic integration. This made it problematic to collect data and to gather respondents for my interviews. I noticed it was better to speak about social cohesion rather than integration to help participants open up. In addition, the time schedule of my research was problematic in finding respondents, as schools were closed and many workers on holiday. Because it was the start of the new schoolyear many NGO’s were too busy to schedule appointments with. By being flexible and using Skype it was possible to increase the number of participants after my return to the Netherlands.
6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS ON POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Humanitarian organizations who are operating in Lebanon need to engage in social cohesion to remain relevant. Social cohesion is important to create stability and has been pointed out to be a strategic priority in national and regional response plans. Social cohesion is either a goal to gain national stability or it is a mean to reach better integration after the stance that the current educational environment is not suitable for the process of integration. It is significant to look at existing opportunities, “refugee economies” can contribute positively to Lebanon. Generating vibrant, thriving systems considering that the Lebanese economy is mostly based on services. Humanitarian actors need to design (education) programs that empower manners that will channel those economic opportunities for the benefit of refugees, Lebanon as host state and as well for the donors.

Education offers a big opportunity to enhance stability in Lebanon. The influx of Syrian refugees disrupted the Lebanese (especially public) schooling, physical infrastructures and fuels a culture full of tensions within classrooms and/or schools. This all contributes to poor quality of teaching and declined learning. However, education can influence governance positively and enable a higher involvement in citizenry, increase sense of inclusiveness and economic opportunities. Political instability will decline, as well as the cyclic of violence.

Interventions in the educational sector are a form of “upstream” thinking. Influencing on a lower level that will influence higher policy levels which impact the region on a larger scale. This way of thinking can stimulate evidence-based design in programming, especially in Lebanese areas where there is a fragile host community, in order to address social tensions. Corporating a social cohesion approach to humanitarian action in Lebanon offers to revise existing formal and informal educational frameworks. This approach incorporates in the education field but as well disciplines such as peace-building and development. Secondary violence and discrimination will be alleviated, scaling down negative externalities of the refugee crisis in Lebanon. Making humanitarian organizations more effective, in addition to empowering local communities by capacity building, resilience and local partnerships.

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6.3.1 Recommendations for MEHE

Education offers a key opportunity to engage community members positively and breaks ground to ease social tension and enhancing conflict sensitivity between Syrian refugees and the host communities. Education is a *bridging* component between children and parents from different groups and has a strong mitigating impact on possible conflicts in communities.

I. **The improvement of quality of educational standards should be a priority for MEHE, international donors and partners.**

   With a focus on the recruitment and training of teachers the quality can be increased substantially. Dialogue between CERD and DOG is crucial to increase the capacity and skills of teachers. Therefore a focus is needed on monitoring and training of current and new teachers with an inclusive approach and attention to building psychosocial support system. The positive impact of first shifts with mixed classes needs to be acknowledged and schools who are willing to accept additional Syrian students should be encouraged. Outreach activities in the host-communities and refugee settlements can help to make sure that these first shifts are supported by both Lebanese and Syrian parents.

II. **Second shift teachers need more support to create a better educational process and results, by close monitoring and evaluation.**

   Better outcomes will increase the overall quality of the public system and help Syrian refugee students to have more opportunities for higher education. Needs and issues for public schools need to be addressed quicker by the ministry, therefore responsiveness needs to improve. This improvement will reduce the stress for administrative staff and the teachers, especially when new teachers are hired this is currently a long process.

III. **Peace education initiatives need to play a stronger role in the education sector in the coming years.**

   In order to cope with conflicts and tensions in the classroom, teachers and school staff need more skills and training. In particular to build capacity that deals with differences and/or tensions between children from different backgrounds in the classroom. Conflict management training is a much needed training for teachers and this would reduce behavior that drives prejudices and stereotyping. These trainings are needed to create better cohesion and will help the integration of Syrian children in public schooling.
IV. **Investing in higher education opportunities**

In order to increase the number of well-educated refugees MEHE should have more focus on creating opportunities for Syrians and vulnerable Lebanese to enroll at universities. Capital investment in this field will give economic returns for the future and decrease eventually the unemployment rate.

6.3.1.1 **Need for Non-Formal Education**

I. The Lebanese government should form a comprehensible policy framework and system for standardizing and certifying non-formal education programs with involvement of their partners.

In addition GoL should acknowledge and validate skills, knowledge and competencies of individuals with a focus on youth. Prior education, certificates and degrees should be visible through proper documentation. Guidance and counselling to bridge between past and new education is needed to compensate gaps. When past-experiences of refugee youth is re-evaluated this has a healing purpose when one has been through traumatic events.

II. **There needs to be more synergy between formal and non-formal education. For example through assessing individual competencies of refugees for both systems of education.**

At this moment the curriculum is very strict, it would be recommended that MEHE recognized all learning outcomes of refugees. This can be done by making the standards in a national qualifications framework outcomes-based this will make the curriculum more flexible and linked to the learning needs of refugees.

III. **Structure non-formal courses that are work-related, or pathway programmes to employment.**

For the growing bulge of youth without education it is significant to encourage the participation and increase the feeling of belonging, in addition to bridging between Syrians and Lebanese.

6.3.2 **Recommendations for international and local non-governmental organisations**

I. **Construct a recreational channel for youth and let them connect with other people from their villages or school and build social relationships.**

Humanitarian organizations need to bring together Syrian and Lebanese youth, especially the ones that have no contact with each other. One way to do is to support and organize more extracurricular activities. These activities can take
place at the schools, however due to the regulation of MEHE it might be difficult to organize such activities when there is no support from the ministry. Hence, organizations can organize such activities during the weekends or outside schools within the communities. These initiatives can be tailored for certain age groups, as many programs focus on youth till the age of 14. It would be good to as well incorporate teenagers and young adults.

II. **Need for extracurricular educational programs designed for girls.**

Girls have less opportunities then boys to build relationships outside the school environment due to their responsibilities in the house or to informal labor. These programs need to be cultural appropriate and within the school grounds as this might be more acceptable to their parents.
7. Bibliography


Integration through education programs in Lebanon for Syrian youth refugees


