

The Legal and Socio-Economic Situation of the Non-Identified Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon



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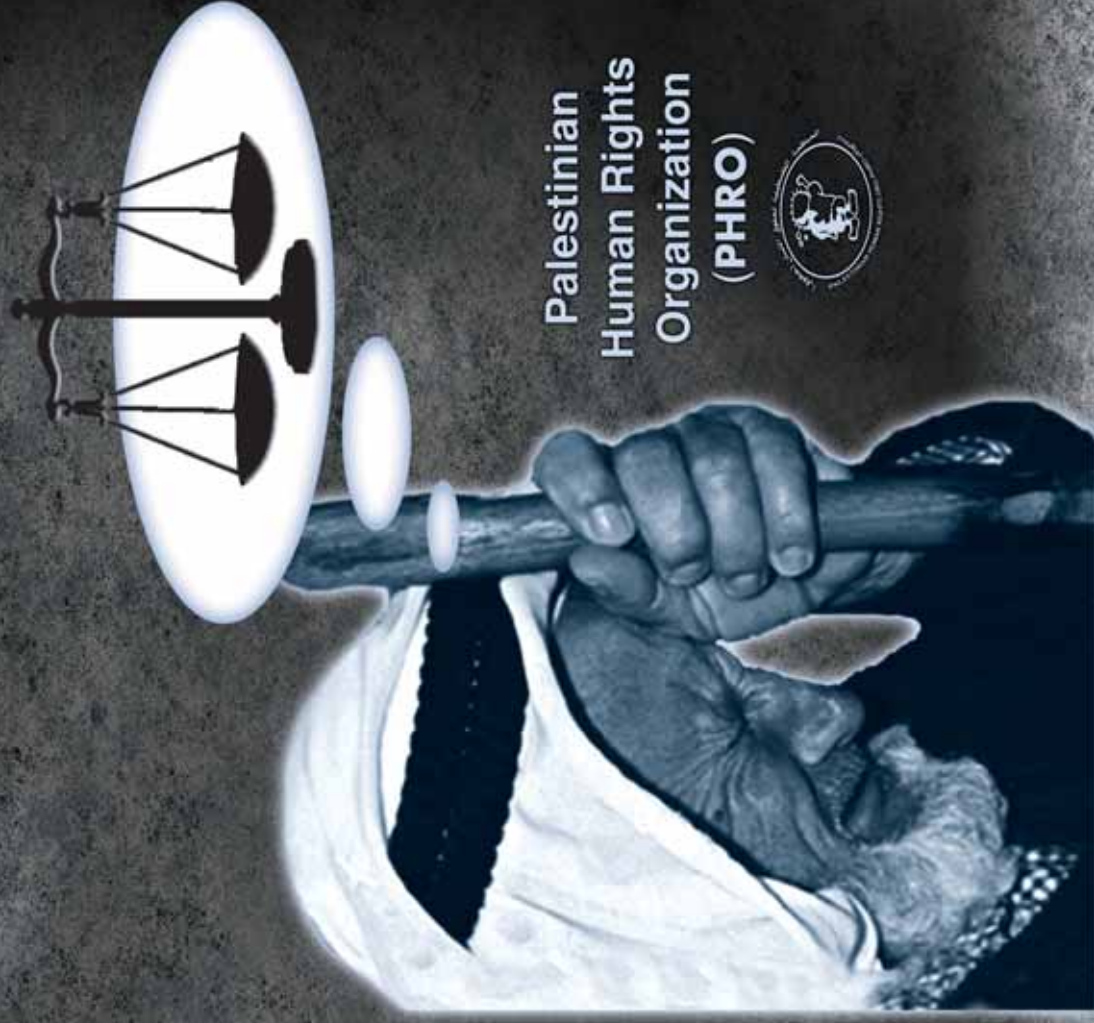
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Preface

This report was originally prepared for publication in February 2005 as one of three components in the Advocacy and Humanitarian Assistance to Non-ID Refugees in Lebanon project initiated by the Palestinian Human Rights Organization (PHRO) in June 2004. The PHRO partnered with the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) for general coordination of the research, which was funded by the European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO). The PHRO eventually financed from its own membership fund the completion and publication of this report, which was a challenge in light of the legal and collaborative issues that arose between partners during the project (see Appendix 3).

As a pre-cursor to the PHRO/DRC project, the PHRO conducted a pilot study in 2002, funded by the Ford Foundation/Euro Med Human Rights Network (EMHRN), and published a report of its findings entitled *An Emerging Society: Non-Identified Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon*. The aim of the PHRO/DRC project was to further on from the original pilot study and conduct a survey to gather data that would give a more comprehensive picture of the legal and socio-economic state of this group of refugees. The data would then be used to identify the needs and gaps in services, and formulate assistance programs. In addition, advocacy efforts on a local, national and international level would be conducted in the hopes of finding a just and feasible solution to their legal situation.

The PHRO would like to thank those who contributed towards the successful completion of the study. We would particularly like to extend our gratitude to the Palestinian community and all the families that received us in their homes and took the time to complete the questionnaires. Special mention is to be given to Mr. Ahmad Abdallah, the database and data analysis consultant on the project, whose tireless dedication to the work was indispensable for the production of accurate results. Thank you to the field workers, supervisors and data entry staff for their efforts and support. We would also like to extend our thanks to DRC and ECHO for their financial contribution.

We hope this report will prove to contribute to the overall awareness of the situation of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, and the particularly dire conditions of the non-ID Palestinian refugees that result from their legal status.



Turning Point

In September 2001, young Hosni Ghazal was a passenger in a car that was stopped for a routine control inspection at the Lebanese army checkpoint at the entry of Ain el Hilweh refugee camp. Hosni was told to step out of the car. He panicked, and ran from the checkpoint towards the camp. Soldiers shot him dead. Hosni, a non-ID Palestinian refugee, was carrying fake identification. He ran, frightened that he would be discovered and imprisoned. That day, the situation of "Non-ID" Palestinian refugees in Lebanon was brought to light.¹

I. Introduction

The daily struggle to find work, go to school, care for family; these are struggles of all Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. For the Non-ID Palestinian refugees, however, is the daily unknown. Up to three generations of 'faceless' Palestinian refugees live each day with anxiety and fear that they will not be able to hold on to the little they have, and will never have the means to cope with the daily challenges they encounter in their life without identification. The story of Hosni is just one sad ending to a story common to thousands of non-ID refugees in Lebanon.

For the PHRO, the tragedy above galvanised its objective to develop an understanding of the non-ID refugee situation in Lebanon, and try to aid their situation through its human rights mechanisms. Following Hosni's death, the PHRO conducted the first pilot study on the situation of non-ID Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and published a report in December 2002.² The study showed overwhelmingly that though Palestinian refugees have been living in Lebanon for over 54 years, struggling with everyday life with most dependent on humanitarian assistance, there are also Palestinian refugees who have fallen through the cracks and consequently face further legal and socio-economic challenges due to their lack of legal status in Lebanon.

In order to acquire broader knowledge of the added challenges confronting non-ID Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, the PHRO set out to survey in greater detail non-ID refugee households, provide some of the families legal aid, and disseminate the results to stakeholders capable of influencing change in their legal status and thus living situation.

From August to November 2004, the PHRO surveyed a cross-section of 1,800 refugee households from the 12 official camps and 27 unregistered gatherings in Lebanon. Data was collected through the use of questionnaires and interviews prepared by the PHRO in coordination with the DRC. Data analysis clearly revealed the many factors that influence the conditions of the non-ID refugees.

This report contains the key results of the survey and provides a comprehensive analysis of the main elements and effects of the legal situation of non-ID Palestinian refugees. This includes details about their arrival in Lebanon, if they have registration elsewhere, and the exact nature of the difficulties they face. While this study was conducted with a focus on non-ID refugees, Registered and non-Registered (non-R) refugees were also interviewed for comparison and, where relevant, the differences in the status and living conditions between the three groups are highlighted. The study also contains an overview of the refugee's self-perception, how they see their situation, their understanding of their legal situation, and how they perceive a solution.

1. Story originally documented and published in the Arabic version of 'Houkouk' (Rights) newsletter, PHRO, May 2002.
 2. See *An Emerging Society: Non-Identified Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon*, PHRO, 2002.



II. Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon

Palestinian refugees who reside in Lebanon are part of the 700,000+ indigenous inhabitants of historic mandate Palestine³ who fled or were expelled prior to, during, and after the 1948 Arab-Israeli War.⁴ UNRWA documented their number in 1950 as 127,600, and with subsequent events in the region and an absence of a solution to the conflict, today's population of Palestinian refugees in the country has grown to almost 441,000 and has diversified in its composition, as shown later in this section. (see Figure 2.1)

According to UNRWA, the number of registered Palestinian refugees is 400,582.⁵ As ESCWA figures⁶ estimate the Lebanese population at just over 3.7 million, Palestinian refugees in the country are equal to around 10% of the population of the country. However, this statistic is a drastic over-estimation when trying to determine the actual number of Palestinian refugees who reside in Lebanon. The US Committee for Refugees (USCR) estimates this number at 250,000.⁷ This difference is primarily the result of discriminatory laws targeted at Palestinian refugees, and the persistent events of the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990), especially the 1982 Israeli invasion and the 1985-7 War on Camps, which brought about massive migrations of Palestinian refugees particularly to Western European and Scandinavian countries. Though many emigrants to Europe settled

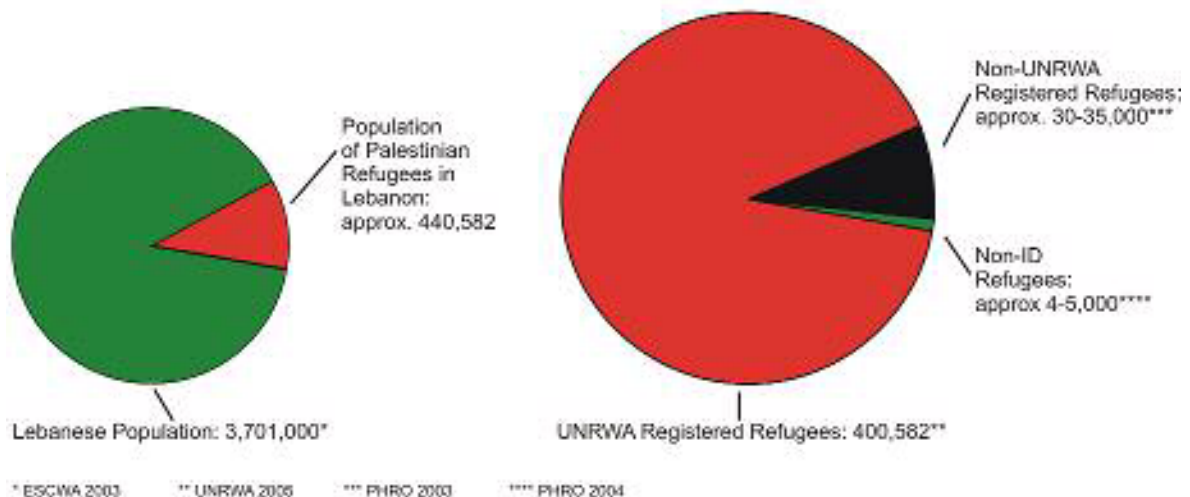


Figure 2.1: Palestinian refugees in Lebanon: Population Breakdown

3. Today historic mandate Palestine is divided into Israel (1948) and the West Bank (including east Jerusalem) and the Gaza Strip, which Israel occupied in 1967. The West Bank and Gaza Strip remain under Israeli occupation, with the bulk of the land area under full Israeli military control.
4. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1948_Arab-Israeli_War#Background
5. UNRWA statistics 31.03.2005.
6. ESCWA statistics 2003.
7. USCR 2004 country report on Lebanon. www.refugees.org/countryreports.aspx?

History and Definition of Camps and Gatherings

UNRWA defines a camp as an area of land made available by the host government in order for it to accommodate Palestinian refugees and set up facilities to provide for their needs. The plots are either state land or, in most cases, leased by the host government from local landowners. Areas that UNRWA does not designate as camps are not 'official' camps. At present there are 12 official UNRWA camps in Lebanon.

Between 1948-1955 UNRWA set up 16 camps in Lebanon, with Dbayeh being the most recently established camp (1955). Of the four 'lost' camps, Nabatiyeh camp was destroyed in 1974 by an Israeli raid, at the beginning of the Lebanese civil war (1975-1990), and the Joroud camp inhabitants, set up in the Beqaa, abandoned it shortly after its establishment in 1948 due to its remote location and lack of services within close proximity.

Gatherings are more difficult to define. Initially, some gatherings were set up as 'temporary' living areas as the camps grew too crowded to host the growing number of refugees. The aim was to eventually relocate them into the camps, however in many cases this never happened.

Other gatherings were formed as a result of the destruction of the Nabatiyeh, Dikwaneh and Jisr el Bahsha camps described above, while others developed through the spillover of refugees due to natural population growth over 57 years, restrictions on camp expansion, and lack of provision of additional living facilities to accommodate the refugees within the camps themselves.

permanently, and those living in Arab Gulf states have legal work permits, many still retain their registered status as Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.

Human rights and civil rights

Palestinian refugees are restricted from their full entitlement to basic human rights as guaranteed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Though Lebanon participated in drafting the UDHR and is a signatory to many other international conventions, it has violated treaties, declarations and conventions explicitly and implicitly through its discrimination towards Palestinians.⁸ Also, as with all neighbours of Palestine, Lebanon has not signed the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the status of refugees, and thus considers them aliens.

Under the pretence of the right of return and fear of naturalization (tawtin) for political, confessional, and demographic (sectarian imbalance) reasons, Lebanese legislation and practice also deny Palestinian refugees any civil rights. Of all regional countries, Palestinian refugees in Lebanon are the least integrated or accepted in society, and are refused the full right to work, education, housing and property ownership, freedom of movement, health, fair trial, restriction freedom of association, absence of social security and the right to nationality.⁹

Lebanese Reciprocity Clause

The Reciprocity Clause allows members of a recognised state who are on Lebanese territory to be treated in the same manner in which Lebanese citizens would be treated while in the recognised state, thus employing 'reciprocal' treatment for the citizens of each state. Even though Lebanon, as a member of the Arab League, regards the Palestinian

Authority as the representative of an Arab state, the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon are not considered to be foreign nationals of a state bound to Lebanon by reciprocity. By enforcing the Reciprocity Clause, the Lebanese Government has specifically targeted and discriminated against Palestinians.

UNRWA

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) is a UN agency specifically mandated to assist Palestinian refugees. It was set up in 1949 as a temporary agency to provide basic humanitarian relief aid to Palestinian refugees who fled their country as a result of the Arab-Israeli conflict in 1948. Those who fit UNRWA's definition of a Palestinian refugee were registered with the Agency and became eligible for humanitarian assistance. For over 56 years UNRWA has provided these refugees with health care, education, and social services. In light of its status as a temporary agency, and in the absence of a solution to the Palestinian refugee problem, the UN General Assembly continues to renew UNRWA's mandate every three years, most recently extending it until 30 June 2008.

8. See *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), Shadow Report of the Fourteenth, Fifteenth and Sixteenth Periodic Report of State Parties due in 2002: Lebanon, PHRO, 2004.*

9. See *Legal Situation of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon, PHRO, 2004.*

To this day, UNRWA defines Palestinian refugees as:

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

UNRWA's mandate does not cover refugees who left Palestine after 1950, and only offers humanitarian assistance as well as some camp infrastructure projects. Importantly, UNRWA does not offer protection for Palestinian refugees. As Article 1 D of the 1951 Refugee Convention, written after the creation of UNRWA and its mandate, states that it should not apply to persons "at present receiving from organs or agencies of the United Nations other than the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees protection or assistance", Palestinian refugees were excluded from the protection of the Refugee Convention and the UNHCR, and left to rely solely on UNRWA.

Palestinian refugee categories

As shown in Table 2.1 below, the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon can be categorized into three groups:

	Population	Registered By	Receive Assistance From	Points
Registered Refugees	400,582	UNRWA Lebanese Authorities	UNRWA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprise approximately 10% of the population of Lebanon. According to UNRWA, approximately 210,952 reside¹⁰ within the 12 registered refugee camps, which is 53% of registered refugees. The remaining live in unregistered gatherings and Palestinian communities.
Non-Registered Refugees	30-35,000	Lebanese Government	UNRWA (unofficially) ¹¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not fit UNRWA's definition of Palestinian refugees and cannot officially receive UNRWA aid. Are registered only with the Lebanese government under orders from former Interior Ministers (between 1969-1978).
Non-ID Refugees	4-5,000 ¹²	-	UNRWA (unofficially, on an ad hoc basis)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are not registered with any agency in Lebanon or international body. Do not possess valid documents acknowledging their legal existence. Cannot officially receive UNRWA aid. Do not receive assistance from the Lebanese government.

Table 2.1: Three categories of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon

10. UNRWA 31 March 2005. This figure does not take into account the number of those who, though still registered with UNRWA in Lebanon, do not reside in the country.

11. UNRWA has recently started offering limited services to non-R refugees as they have registration with some authority, and as they are Palestinian refugees who also fled their homeland and do not receive assistance from the Lebanese government.

12. PHRO 2004.

Non-ID Palestinian refugees

In general, the non-ID Palestinian refugees in Lebanon today sees its roots in the population of Palestinian men who entered Lebanon in the 1970s, and which over the past three decades has expanded to include their spouses, descendants and other immediate family. Some of the men came to fight alongside their people, and when they first arrived they were given support from political parties, chiefly the PLO, which at that time was the dominant organization in Lebanon. Other non-ID refugees are those who were in Lebanon for other reasons (work, education, family, etc.) and became trapped in Lebanon and were refused re-entry to their country of residence, primarily due to their association and/or participation with the "Black September" events in Jordan¹³ (for example, if a family member was part of the PLO).

After being forced to leave Jordan, the PLO established a base in Lebanon and quickly gained a substantial presence in the country. Many loyal PLO members, mostly from neighbouring countries, came to Lebanon, and were issued with PLO IDs, which were considered legitimate by the Lebanese at the time. Many did not seek additional registration with Lebanese authorities. However, after the expulsion of the PLO from Lebanon in 1982, the PLO's presence in Lebanon became illegitimate and no longer had the capacity to issue or renew existing IDs, rendering them invalid in Lebanon. To this day Lebanon has refused to recognise and provide proper registration to those who remained in the country, nor their families.

Today, a new undocumented generation is growing. Descendants of the original non-ID population are facing a host of problems such as graduating from school, the lack of opportunity to work, marriage registration, access to health services, and participation in other social, economic, and legal aspects of even basic refugee life in the country.

Their lack of legal status results in particularly difficult socio-economic conditions when compared to the general Palestinian refugee population in the country. They are restricted in gaining a stable form of income due to their ineligibility to work, and have no access to health care, educational facilities, and other forms of humanitarian assistance, such as aid in home rehabilitation. Local organizations, such as the Palestinian Red Crescent Society, provide health facilities that a non-ID refugee can use, however in most cases they are required to pay for these services. Technically, non-ID refugees cannot travel outside of their camps since their presence in Lebanon is deemed illegal as they have no legal documentation. As their movement is restricted, non-ID refugee children cannot obtain a higher education. In fact, many do not even continue past primary education as there are no secondary schools and universities in the camps and gatherings.

13. In September 1970 Hashemite King Hussein of Jordan instigated an armed conflict against Palestinian organizations that attempted to topple his monarchy. The clash lasted until July 1971. for further information http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_September_in_Jordan.



III. Survey Methodology

The study was composed of three parts: household questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and focus groups. All three tools were developed by the PHRO and DRC specifically for this survey.

Questionnaire

The household questionnaire was designed to obtain data to improve the level of knowledge on the legal and humanitarian situation of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon in general and the non-ID refugees in particular. The questionnaire was divided up into six parts:

1. household characteristics
2. legal situation
3. education
4. socio-economic conditions
5. housing and environment
6. health

After removing invalid questionnaires¹⁴, the final sample included 1,765 questionnaires covering 39 camps and gatherings in four regions. Camps targeted were those listed and administered by UNRWA, and gatherings targeted were those with a population of over 250 Palestinian refugees who live in camp-like conditions.

The sample was divided among the four regions in Lebanon as follows:

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

Camps

1. Ain El Hilweh
2. Beddawi
3. Burj Al Barajneh
4. Burj Al Shamali
5. Buss
6. Mar Elias
7. Mieh Mieh
8. Nahr El Bared
9. Rashidieh
10. Shatila
11. Wavel
12. Dbayeh¹⁵

Gatherings

1. Ber Elias
2. Barish
3. Bourghoulieh
4. Daouk
5. Doures
6. Fakhani
7. Fakiha
8. Gaza Gathering
9. Hamshari
10. Itanieh
11. Jal el Baher
12. Jaloul
13. Kfar Bada
14. Kfar Zabad
15. Maachouk
16. Majdel Anjar
17. Mina
18. Old City Gathering
19. Qassemieh
20. Riyak
21. Saadnayel
22. Shabriha
23. Simaia
24. Sirob
25. Taalbaya
26. Wadi el Zeini
27. Wasta

¹⁴Invalid questionnaires were from those who took part in the survey and, upon cross-referencing their situation with the criteria of the project, were deemed inapplicable.

¹⁵Questionnaires filled out in this camp unfortunately were eventually excluded from the overall sample due to unsubstantiated data.



Figure 3.1: Camp and gathering distribution in the four regions of Lebanon

The registered Palestinian refugees were selected randomly, but the non-R and the non-ID were sought as their numbers are few and they are more difficult to locate (see the Demographic section on Page 17 for the breakdown of interviewed Palestinian refugees by category). As non-ID refugees have no legal status and are therefore not registered anywhere, network sampling¹⁶ was utilized. They were identified through knowledge gained while preparing the PHRO pilot study on non-ID refugees¹⁷ and through district coordinators and volunteers chosen from the camps and gatherings who could identify such families.

Semi-Structured Interviews

The semi-structured interviews aimed to define specific socio-economic features characterizing the non-ID refugee target group, and were organized along four entry points:

1. Seasonal Income/Expenditure Pattern.
2. Coping with Crisis.
3. Income Generation Opportunities.
4. Organization and Backing Support.

16. The World Health Organisation's definition of "network sampling" is when intermediaries introduce the field team to respondents in communities whose members may be vulnerable or highly stigmatized and could not be easily approached by the team, and/or are unwilling to be interviewed.

17. See *An Emerging Society: Non-Identified Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon*, PHRO 2002.

Preliminary results showed that approximately 75% of non-ID refugees surveyed reside in the South region (Tyre and Saida), followed by Beqaa. Of the total 193 families who were randomly selected, interviewed were conducted as follows: 50 in Tyre (across 20 gatherings, 15 in Rashidieh camp and 15 in Burj Al Shamali camp), 50 in Saida (Ain el Hilweh camp), 48 in Beqaa, 30 in the North, and 15 in Beirut.

Focus groups

The focus groups were prepared as a tool to obtain multiple perspectives and insights into everyday life and people's shared perceptions of their environment and people living around them. The purpose was to gain an understanding of their general living conditions (demography, health, education, etc.) and difficulties, and their level of integration in the community.

Ten focus groups were conducted in the different regions. A set of questions was predesigned for the groups and the sessions were regulated by a moderator. Each focus group was comprised of between three to eight persons who, based on their work in the area, have knowledge on the education, health and socio-economic living conditions of their community or location where the interviews were conducted.

Data compilation and verification

Data collected through questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and focus group interviews was combined and cross-checked for a more detailed and accurate report. A randomly selected of households originally surveyed were re-surveyed to confirm accuracy of answers. Data was also cross-checked with recognized sources of information, mainly from UNRWA, other related NGO and governmental publications as well as individual publications listed in the bibliography.

Staff recruitment and training

The recruitment of 18 volunteers was based on their previous experience with field survey questionnaire methods. In addition, five supervisors, one for each region, were recruited to follow up on the questionnaires completed in their respective regions. Volunteers were trained, outlining the project objectives and aims, to ensure that they had a full understanding of the questionnaire.

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

Field work difficulties

To make up of the shortage, the number of questionnaires in other districts was increased, mainly in the Beqaa and Saida, where they were completed by non-IDs present in those two regions. Also, some non-IDs were reluctant to fill out a questionnaire, especially those in Beirut and some of the Islamists in the Saida region, due to their sensitive legal situation.

Some of the common problems encountered and reported by the field workers were:

- Lack of information given by non-ID interviewees due to their legal status.
- A question accounting for the financial support received from relatives abroad should have been included.
- The field work timeline was too short.
- The questions on health were not in-depth enough to give a comprehensive picture on the health situation of families, especially for the non-ID refugees.
- Lack of trust and welcome from some of the households because of the many researches made on them without any tangible results to their situation.
- Some of the factions were prohibiting the filling out of the questionnaire.
- Fear and reservation from some people, especially the targeted group.

On the other hand, field staff were also enthusiastic about the questionnaire and the study. Many non-ID refugees also welcomed the survey and saw the initiative as being a positive effort to help their plight.

Software and analysis

The Census and Survey Processing System (CSPro) program was used for this project, which is a software package for entering, editing, tabulating, and disseminating census and survey data. CSPro combines the features of the Integrated Microcomputer Processing System (IMPS) and the Integrated System for Survey Analysis (ISSA). CSPro uses data dictionaries to provide a common description of each data file used. Data generated and/or manipulated by CSPro may be imported into a database system. Once data entry was concluded, the information was exported to SPSS, a statistical software package designed to perform quantitative research, for analysis.

Analysis of the data was conducted and data percentages indicated in this document vary. To simplify, percentages are based solely on actual number of responses: for some questions, responses were given by the entire sample; for other questions, responses were given depending on the category of the respondent (such as head of household, non-ID refugee, etc.) and percentages are taken from the responses in each category. While the questionnaire was addressed to heads of households, some questions are related to all household members and the answers account for all the individuals in the family.

Housing and environment responses were not divided into categories as all interviewees as they live in the same camps and gatherings and the conditions are generally not category-specific.



IV. Survey Findings

This survey results noted in this section highlight the significant findings related to the non-ID refugees in Lebanon, and provides comparisons to Registered and non-R refugees where it helps in contextualising the situation of the non-ID refugees. All percentages are rounded to the nearest 0.5.

Significant overlying results are the complexities that affect the livelihood and living conditions of non-ID Palestinian refugees due to their lack of legal status, which is seen through their restriction to many services and opportunities including education, health services, and employment. The findings also show that as this has been an issue that has extend over 30 years, many non-ID refugees have used other unofficial means to try to 'legitimize' themselves in order to survive and take care of their families.

Demographic

The survey was conducted in 39 camps and gatherings in the four regions, interviewing a total of 9,582 Palestinian refugees: 6,217 Registered, 1,620 non-R, and 1,745 non-ID refugees. Questionnaire statistics yielded that all families have an average of 5.5 members, which is in accord with the Focus Groups, which estimated that families have around five to six members. It is common to find extended family living in the same households. All refugees, regardless of legal status, live together in the camps and gatherings. There are no problems faced by the non-ID refugees in terms of demographics as indicated by to all Focus Groups.

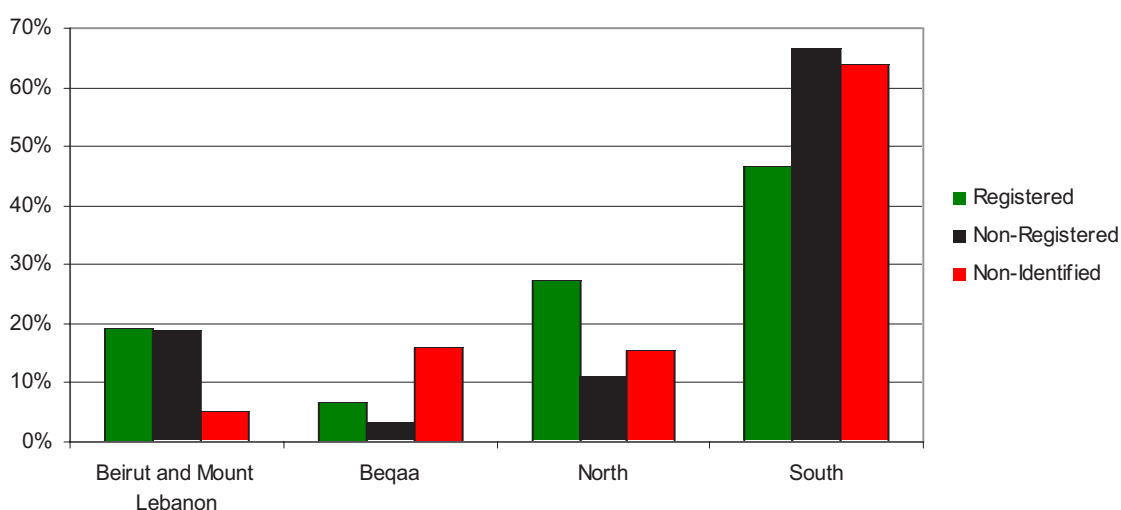


Figure 4.1: Overall Palestinian refugee distribution by region

Figure 4.1 shows that the majority of refugees surveyed (53%) live in the southern region of Lebanon. From our interviewed sample of households, 64% of non-ID refugees live in the South, while the second-most populous region of non-ID refugees is the Beqaa.

18. Extended family may include the brother/sister/mother/father/niece/nephew/etc. of either spouse.

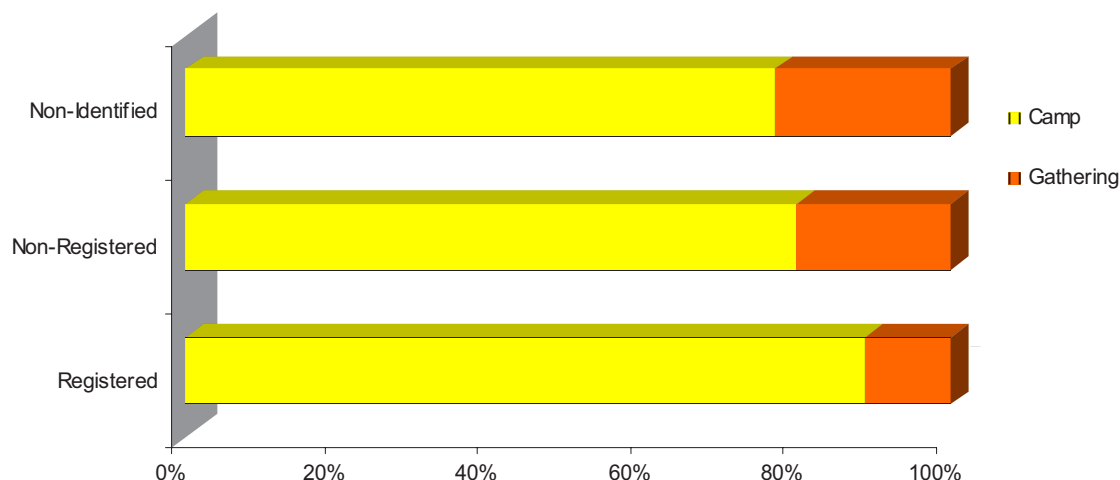


Figure 4.2: Palestinian refugee category distribution in camps and gatherings

Figure 4.2 shows the distribution of the total surveyed Palestinian refugees in camps and gatherings. Though most non-ID refugees live in camps, the 23% of those who live in gatherings are more vulnerable to harassment by the Lebanese authorities making their existence more challenging.

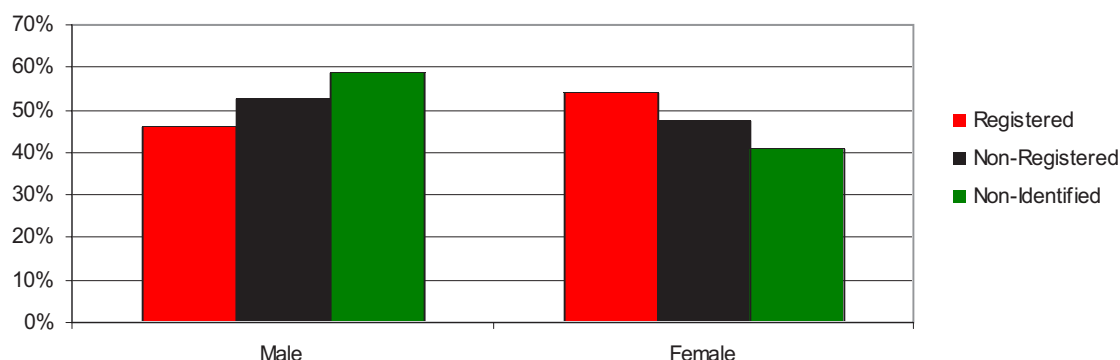


Figure 4.3: Palestinian refugee distribution by gender in camps and gatherings

Figure 4.3 shows that the non-ID sample population ratio is 59% male to 41% female, while the overall percentage of refugee women to men is 50.5% to 49.5%. The non-ID refugee ratio difference can be explained in two ways: men were more likely to have joined the Palestinian revolution¹⁹ and most women adopt the identity of men. If a non-ID woman marries a registered refugee, she and her children also become registered.

Figure 4.4 below shows that most Palestinian refugees are single. Out of the interviewed sample, the single status breakdown is 73.5% of non-ID refugees, 66.5% of non-R refugees and 61% of Registered refugees. While 22.5% of non-ID refugees are married, 28% of non-R refugees and 30.5% of the Registered refugees are married. The remaining percentages are divided up between engaged, separated, divorced or widowed.

The high percentage of single non-IDs and low percentage of married non-ID refugees is striking and can be accredited to their legal status and the fact that they cannot legally marry²⁰, and that the costs of marriage for some may be too expensive.

19. The Palestinian Revolution refers to the Palestinian armed struggle against Israeli occupation of Palestine.

The revolution started after the 1948 Arab Israeli war in which Palestinians fled or were forced from their land and have since struggled to gain it back. For more information see: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1948_Arab-Israeli_War.

20. Non-ID refugees marry religiously; however, the marriage is not officially registered by Lebanese authorities. Religious marriages are considered legitimate in the eyes of the society but unless registered with the proper authorities, they are not legal by law.

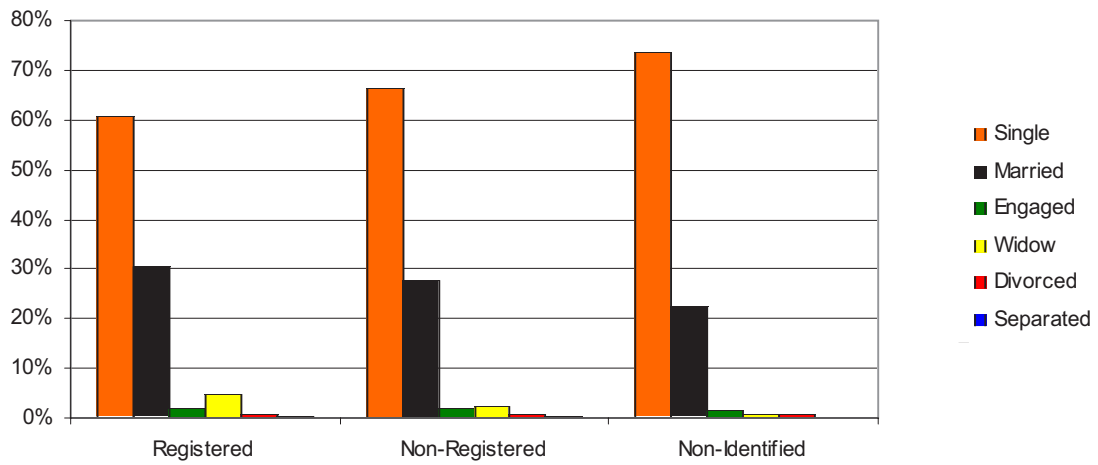


Figure 4.4: Marital status according to Palestinian refugee classification

The large youth population is an important factor contributing to the high "single" status of the non-ID refugees. Figure 4.5 below shows that non-ID children up to age nine comprise 19.5% of the non-ID population, and children ages 10-17 form 28.5%. Collectively at 48%, they make up almost half of the population that is below marital age. The working and "adult" population of non-IDs, ages 18-65, make up 51.5% of the population, with an average age of 33. Only 1% of non-ID refugees are over the age of 65.

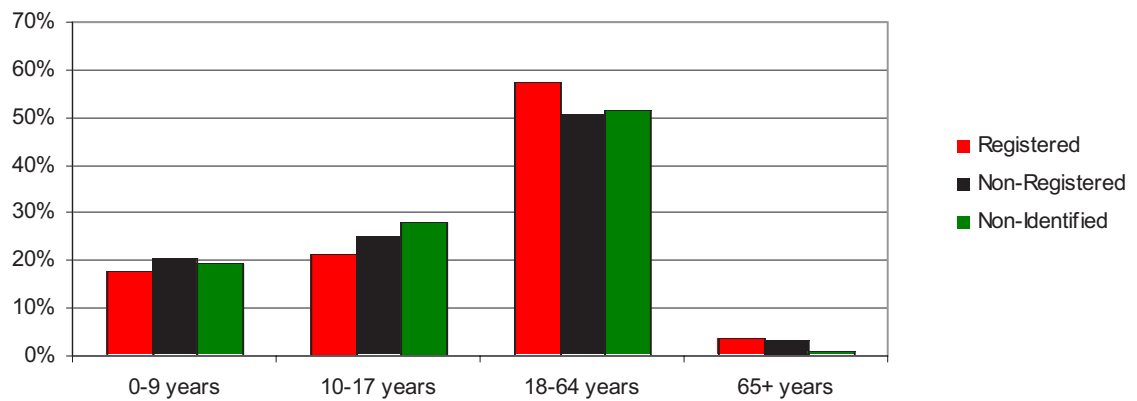




Figure 4.5: Age distribution by classification



Legal Status Explained



In Lebanon, nationality and legal status are passed from males: if a non-ID female refugee marries a man with a legal status (Registered, non-R, Lebanese citizen) she will gain his status, as will their children.

However, if a non-ID male refugee marries a female with a legal status he will not benefit from her status, and nor will their children. The husband will remain non-ID, and any children will be non-ID. However the wife will keep her legal status (as registered, non-R, or Lebanese citizen). This survey revealed many cases of families where the married female had a recognised legal status though her children did not, facing all the difficulties encountered by non-ID refugees.

Legal status

Documentation

While some Registered (4.5%) and non-Registered (2%) refugees living in camps and gatherings hold Lebanese citizenship, none of the non-ID refugees surveyed were found to hold Lebanese citizenship. Some, however, do have other forms of registration documents. When asked about the documents they possess and the issuing authority, non-ID refugees mentioned possessing registration documents from countries including Jordan, Syria, Egypt and Iraq. (also see Figure 4.8). While some were born and registered in other countries, all interviewees were of Palestinian origin.

Palestinian refugees have accumulated a number of legal documents showing proof of identification²¹ throughout their family history. As shown below in

Figure 4.6, when asked about how many legal documents were in their possession, without assessing their current validity in Lebanon, 93.5% of Registered refugees said that they hold two or more documents, the majority of non-Registered refugees hold one legal document (75.5%), while non-ID refugees holding a legal document is 64.5%. This relatively high figure of non-ID refugees with at least one form of documentation in their possession leads us to two conclusions:

1. the Palestinian identity of the majority of this group can be easily demonstrated.
2. for this majority, it will be possible to track their file and request the collaboration of an authority to liberate them from their non-ID status and that of their descendants.

However, 13.5% of non-ID refugees have no legal documents. Some are descendants of non-ID refugees described above, and were not registered upon their birth. Some do hold birth certificates or identification from the mayoral office in their district, but these documents are not considered legal in order to receive services, such as healthcare and education, nor do they serve as proof of residence in Lebanon.

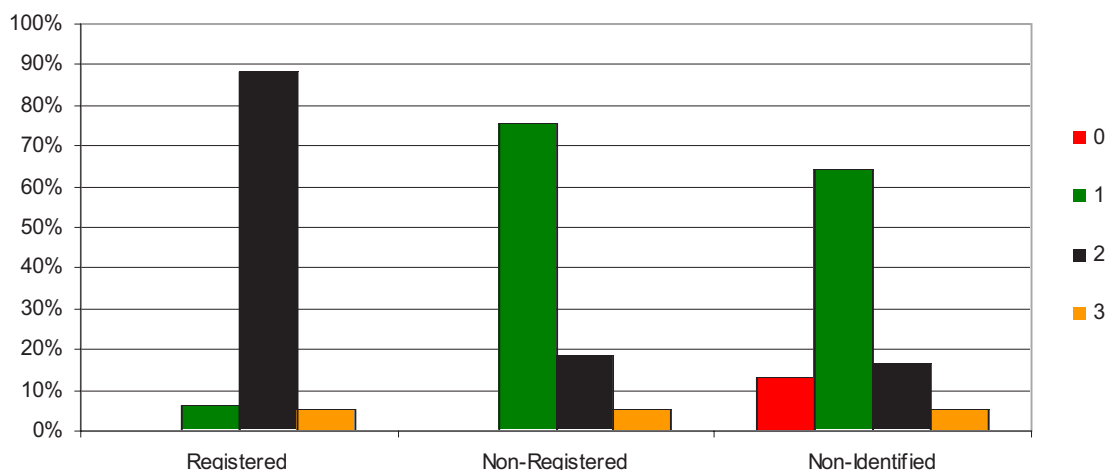


Figure 4.6: Number of legal documents possessed

²¹Legal proof of identification constitutes any document, valid or expired, that was issued by a recognized legal authority, i.e. expired passport, identification, etc.

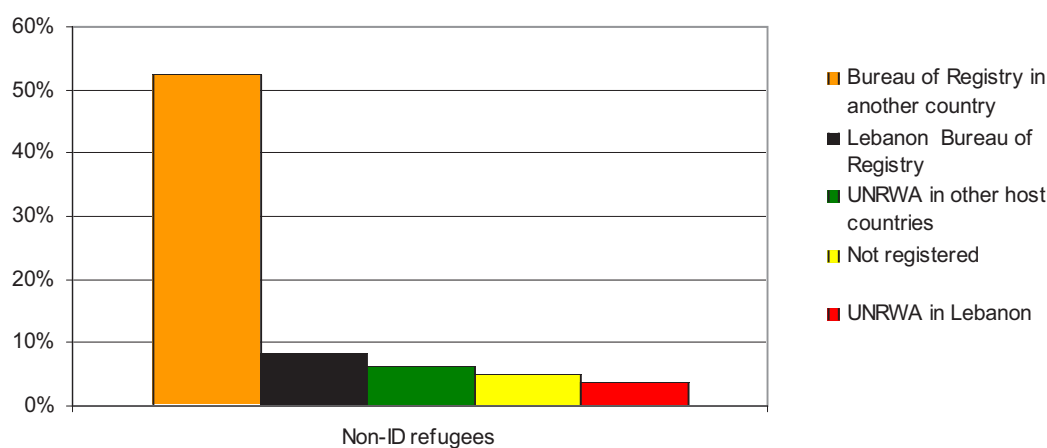


Figure 4.7: Document issuing entities

Figure 4.7 above shows that with non-ID refugee heads of households:

- 52.5% are registered by the authority of another country.
- 8% registered with the Lebanon Bureau of Registry.
- 6.5% are registered with UNRWA in another country.

The remaining non-ID refugees mentioned a variety of other issuing providers such as the PLO, legal midwives/hospitals, UNHCR (in countries outside UNRWA mandate), etc.

Mohammed's Story

Mohammed was born in Haifa (Jaffa) in 1938. During the Arab-Israeli war in 1948 he and his family fled to Iraq. While they lived in Iraq they studied until the 1980s when life became difficult under Saddam Hussein's rule. Their situation was very desperate; in search of a better life Mohammed left Iraq 1982 and legally came to Lebanon with an Iraqi Palestinian document, leaving his family behind. During the Lebanese Civil War in 1982 Mohammed lost his document. He went to internal security and the Iraqi embassy to report his passport missing, but so far is still without identification. He has tried several times to follow up on the situation with the embassy, but he was told that he has to check with the external ministry in Iraq, which in his present situation and the situation in Iraq, is not possible. He still has a copy of his Iraqi passport and ID.



Mohammed married a Lebanese Palestinian in 1967 and has four children that only have birth certificates. The eldest is 17. He is physically handicapped and can't work. He underwent four operations on his back, three operations on his knee and an ulcer operation. His family lives a very difficult life. As no other family member can work, they depend on charity and money received from good-doers abroad. Whenever he goes to local organizations for help, they request identification. His children cannot leave the camp like other refugee children as they do not have official identification.

"I live in a prison and I can't leave the camp to go and work. Even if I get an opportunity to work as a building attendant I can't because they need to see ID and I don't have any".

"I ask people with a merciful heart and any person who has a conscience to help me solve my problem because my situation is extremely dire."



In order to complete the questionnaire this man gathered all of his family documents and registrations, which date back to the British mandate on Palestine.

Of note, only 5% of the non-ID refugees said they have never been registered. However, though it cannot be represented here, some non-ID refugees have obtained legal documents from a recognised authority in Lebanon under a false identity.

Figure 4.8 shows the percentages of Palestinian refugees by category who passed through another host country before their arrival in Lebanon. Most non-ID refugees (84%) passed through another host country, though this is the case of only 11% of Registered refugees and 35% of non-Registered refugees. Of non-ID refugees, 77% who passed through another host country before coming to Lebanon arrived in 1970 or after. The remaining 23% is partially comprised of heads of households who were born in Lebanon.

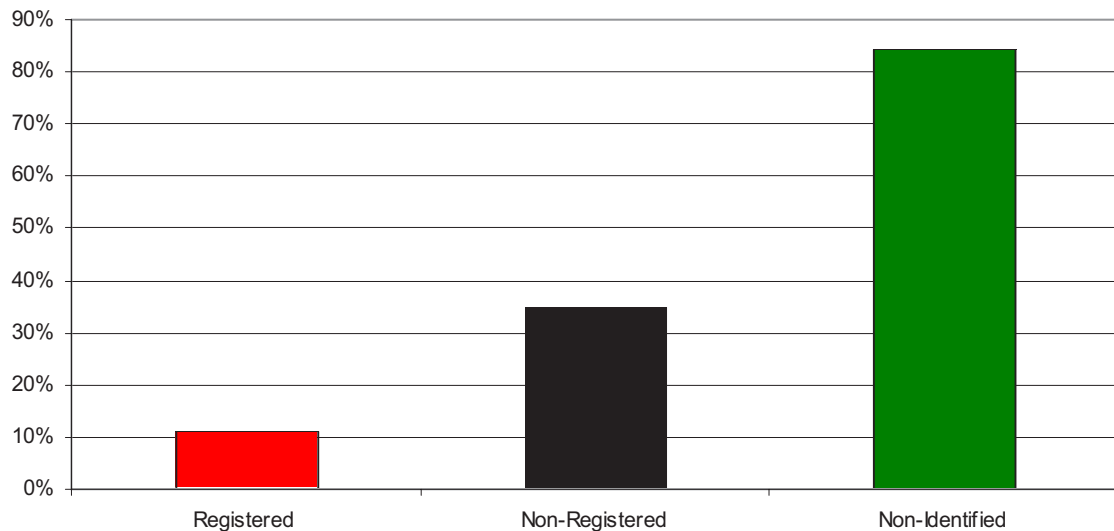


Figure 4.8: Refugees who lived in another country prior to arrival in Lebanon

The survey also identified the countries in which the 84% of non-ID refugees lived prior to their arrival in Lebanon: 64.5% lived in Jordan, 55.5% in Syria, 20.5% in Egypt and 12% in Iraq.²³ One main reason for the high percentage that passed through Jordan is linked to the Black September²⁴ event in Jordan in 1970. Many Palestinians left Jordan after the events; others were even deported from Jordan to Syria.

Restrictions on movement

It is well known that non-ID refugees are limited in their movements outside the camps and gatherings, and risk being arrested if they are stopped by Lebanese authorities without valid proof of identification. Around 94.5% of non-ID refugees said that they have faced restrictions moving out of camps, as well as moving around in the country (95%). In addition, 88% said that their willingness to move around is affected. Most prefer to remain in the camp in which they live as Lebanese authorities do not enter.

Movement is an even greater risk for non-ID refugees residing in gatherings. Restrictions in movement outside gatherings are faced by 97% of non-ID refugees and 97% face restrictions in moving around the country. Due to this ever-present threat, almost all non-ID refugees (96%) said it affects their willingness to move around.

23. The total is greater than 100% as some travelled through more than one country.

24. See Footnote 12.

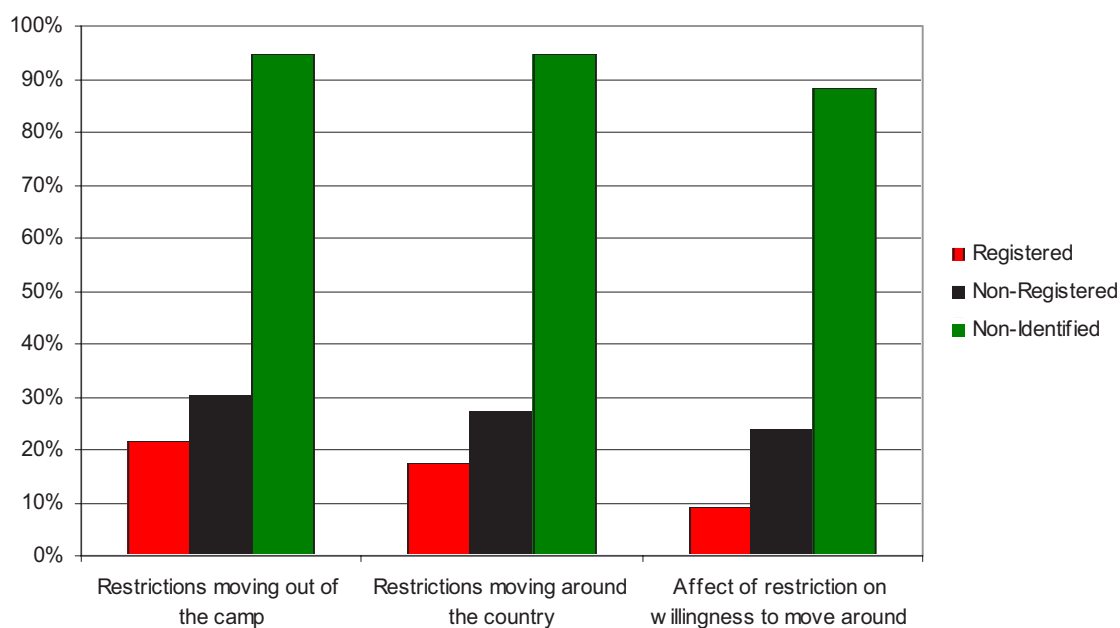


Figure 4.9: Restriction on movement

Figure 4.9 gives a clear image of the situation in which both non-ID refugees and also their children are confined. Non-ID refugees face over three times the level of restrictions when compared to those faced by registered refugees and non-R refugees. As a result of this restriction, their access to the labour market, institutions and services located outside camps is limited, compounding their everyday difficulties.

Access to services

One of the striking points raised by the interviewees is access to services. Non-ID refugees face an unparalleled disadvantage when compared with Palestinian refugees of other categories.

The first and most important is their ineligibility for UNRWA services, a critical problem as UNRWA administers two important services in the camps: education and health. It should be noted that while a small number of non-ID refugees do access UNRWA services, it is very limited, especially in the type of services they receive, whether educational or health related. It depends on availability, and priority is given to registered refugees.

While 77.5% of Registered refugees and 23.5% of non-Registered refugees report using UNRWA services, only 6% of non-ID refugees are using UNRWA services. This 6% is comprised mostly of non-ID refugee children who, in practice, attend schools as 'listeners' and not as active participants, which means that they will not be granted an official diploma. As a result, when non-ID refugee children reach the fourth intermediate level²⁵ where government official exams are required, they have no choice but to drop out as they lack official documentation to prove their identity. (see also the section on Education on Page 33.)

While UNRWA clinics are not accessible to non-ID refugees, some attempt to access services through fraudulent methods, such as through the use of a forged ID or by using the ID of another refugee. Though the circumstances in which they live have resulted in the use of these coping tactics, this is far from standard nor an acceptable solution to access the mentioned services.

²⁵Fourth intermediate level government exams must be passed by all students before they can go on to high school, at about the age of 14. It follows the old French system of schooling applied during French mandate.

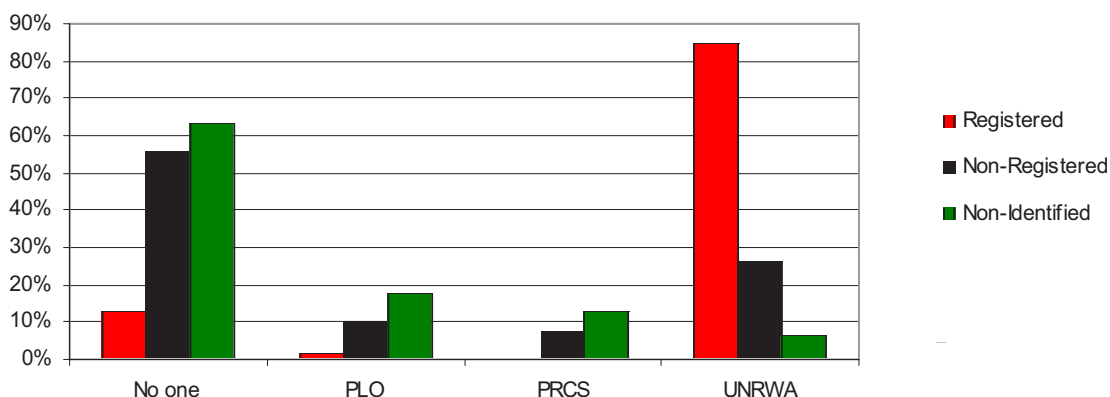


Figure 4.10: Breakdown of main service providers for Palestinian refugees

Figure 4.10 shows that non-ID refugees primarily compensate for the lack of access to UNRWA services by using other service providers more than other refugees: 12% use services from the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) in comparison to the minority of Registered and non-Registered, while 17% use PLO services. Significantly, 60% of non-ID refugees claim to not use free or subsidised services of any organisation.²⁶

Another unexpected finding is that although UNRWA declared that it has provided non-R refugees with broader access to its services since the beginning of 2004, only a small number of non-R refugees seem to be aware of this. To address this issue, we interviewed UNRWA²⁷, which confirmed that non-R refugees do have access to services, and can also be included in its "hardship cases" list. However, access to these services was not publicly announced and UNRWA relies mainly on word of mouth. UNRWA's decision to not make an official public statement about its new decision can at least partially explain why non-R refugees seem unaware of this possible extension of services towards them.

Refugee perception

This section addresses the difficulties that non-ID refugees and non-R refugees face as a direct consequence of their legal status, and their perception of some elements of their situation.

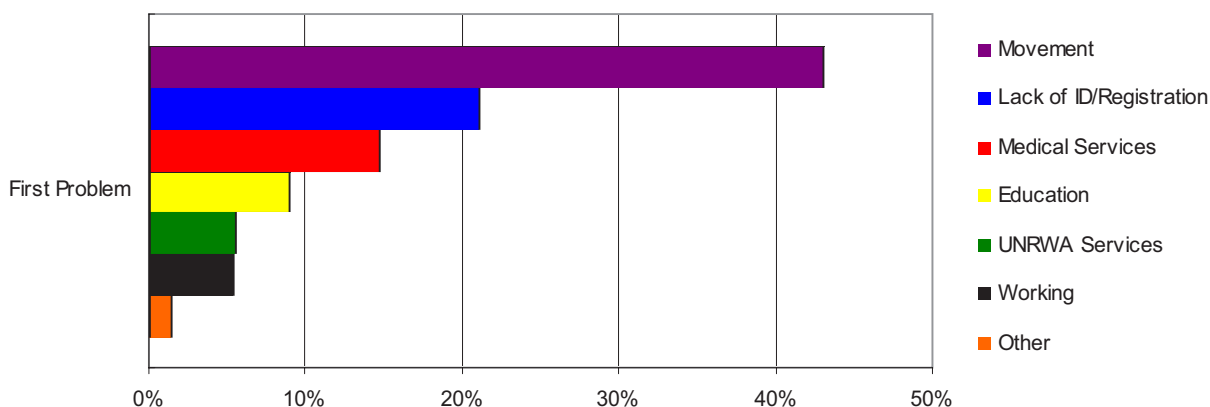


Figure 4.11: First priority problem faced by non-ID refugees

When asked in an open question to identify and rank by importance the main problems that result from their legal status, the top three answers recognised as the first priority problem were restrictions in movement (43%), registration/lack of ID (21%) and access to medical services (15%) as displayed above in Figure 4.11.

²⁶ The presumption of refugees who answered this question was that 'services' was defined as those that were both free and fee-based.

²⁷ Interview with Sven Berthelsen, Deputy Director of UNRWA (Beirut), 7 December 2004.

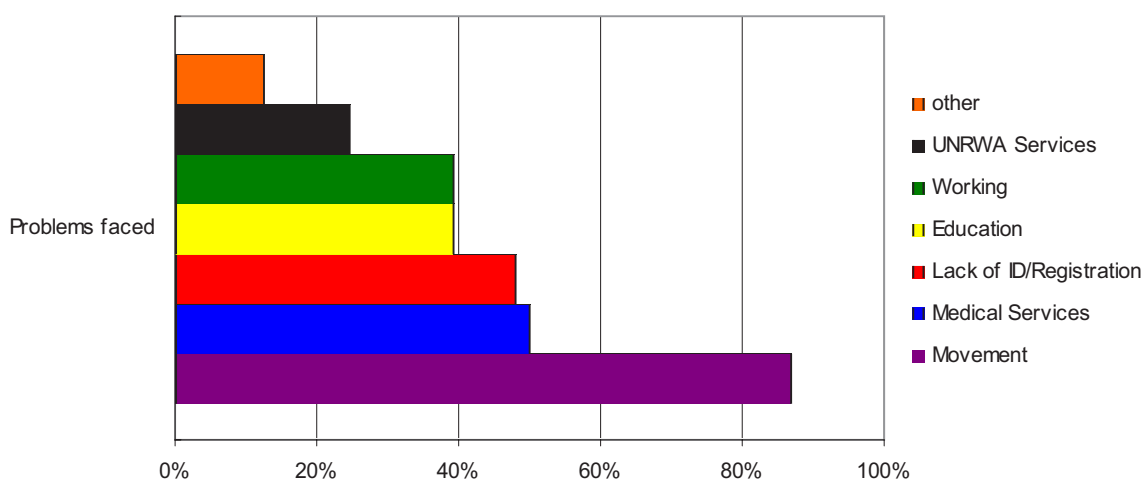


Figure 4.12: Problems faced by non-ID refugees

If we take a look at the most popular top three priority problems (see Figure 4.12) identified by non-ID refugees, there is a slight change in the order of this list. While restrictions in movement remains the number one problem (87%), the second-most prevalent issue concerns medical care (50%), followed by lack of ID/lack of registration (48%). Lack of access to education (39%) and the labour market (39%), as well as general access to UNRWA services (10%) were also identified.

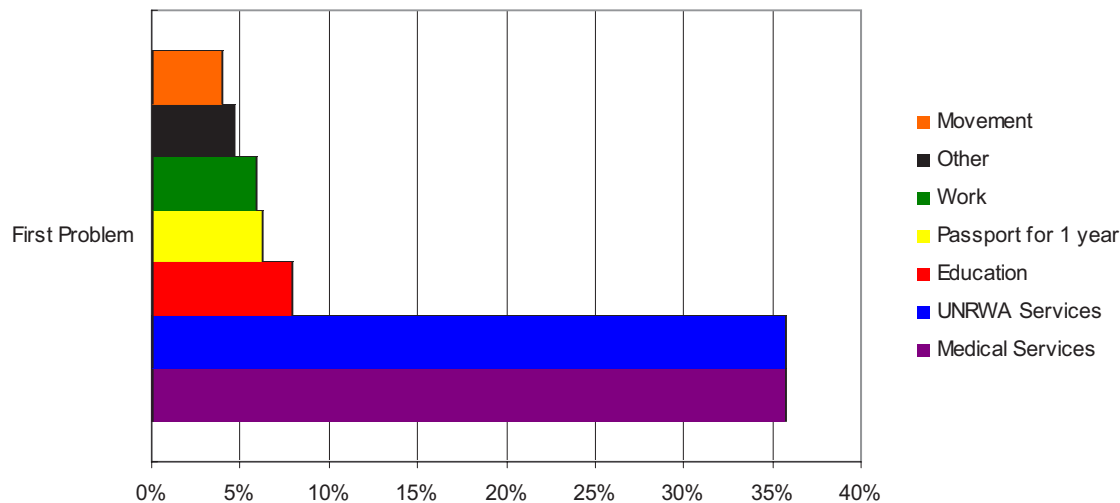


Figure 4.13: First priority problem identified by non-R refugees

In comparison, Figure 4.13 shows that non-R refugees said their priority problems are the difficulties in accessing extended medical services (35.5%), UNRWA services (35.5%) in general, and education (8%). While most Palestinian refugees face difficult living conditions, non-R refugees have an ambiguous awareness of the possibilities for them to access UNRWA services, and non-ID refugees experience the most difficult of circumstances due to their legal status.

Right of Return

The Right of Return is an overwhelming part of the Palestinian identity and cause. UN Resolution 194 passed on 11 December 1948 gave Palestinian refugees that were forced from their homes to the right to return "at the earliest practicable date".²⁸ For those who choose not to return, compensation should be paid for loss or damage of property. The resolution to date has not been enforced.

It has been almost 57 years since Resolution 194 was passed and the question of the right of return is still a highly emotive issue. For Palestinian refugees it raises a range of perceptions about what the 'right of return' implies: for some it means returning to their homes in the towns or cities from where they originate, while for others it means a less utopic, more realistic solution to their problem. In some cases refugees felt that posing such a question meant that they were being asked to consider a compromise or an alternative to the right of return, and felt offended and responded defensively. Regardless of the range of interpretations, most Palestinians remain committed to the right to return to their homes, and time nor hardship does not lessen this right.

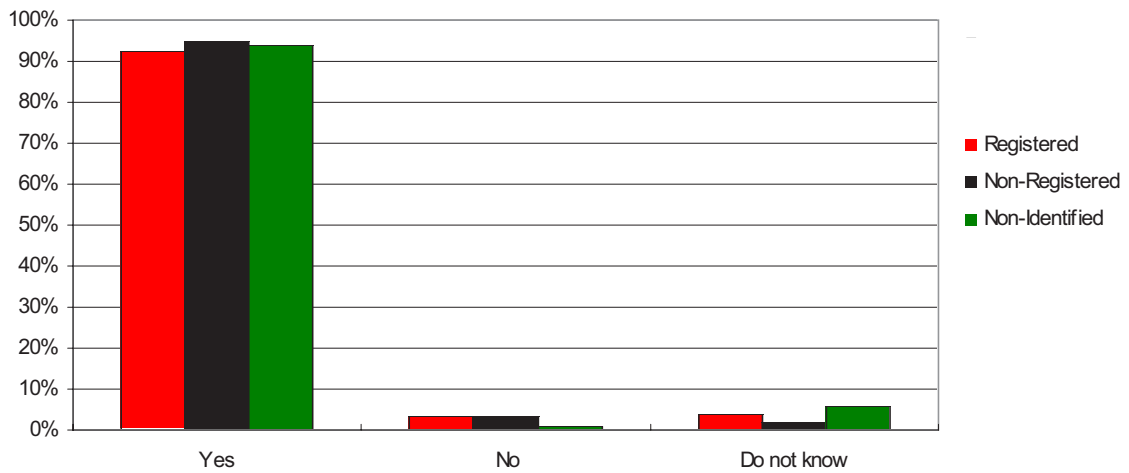


Figure 4.14: Right of Return to Palestine

Figure 4.14 shows that when asked about the Right of Return, 93.5% of non-ID refugees, 94.5% of non-R refugees and 92.5% of registered said they want to return to Palestine. Just 3.5% of registered refugees, 3.5% of non-R refugees and less than 1% of non-ID refugees said they do not want to return. However, 5.5% of non-ID refugees said they didn't know, compared with 4% of registered refugees and 2% of non-R refugees.

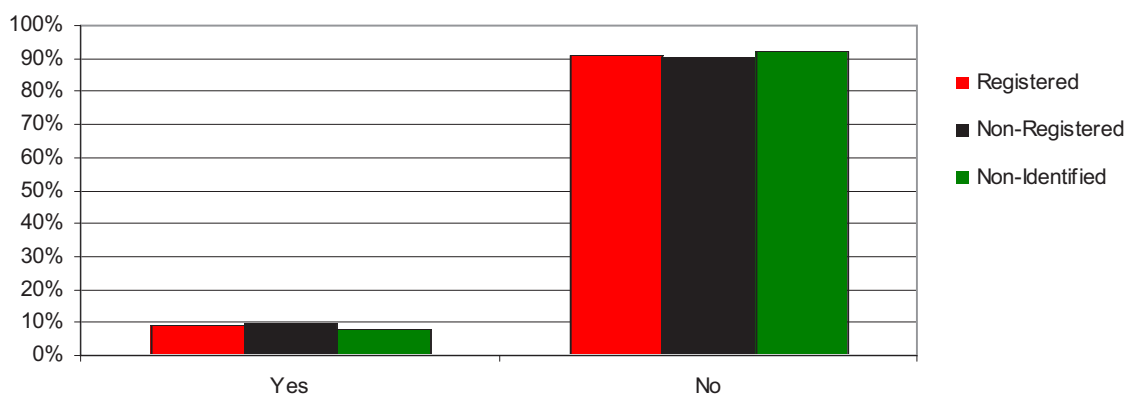


Figure 4.15: Compensation as an alternative to the Right of Return

28. Article 11 of UN Resolution 194: "Resolves that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible;"

Health

The living conditions in refugee camps and gatherings have contributed to the overall poor health of refugees. Registered refugees rely mostly on UNRWA's free and subsidised services while non-R refugees and non-ID refugees depend primarily on the PRCS' fee-based medical services. This is mainly due to accessibility and affordability. However both provide only basic healthcare, which does not contribute to the improvement of the general health of refugees.

There has also been an increase in physical health deficiencies as well as psychological disorders among all refugee categories. Though UNRWA provides basic medical care to registered refugees and it has recently extended limited services to non-R refugees²⁹, services have not been extended to non-ID refugees. Without an official legal status, non-ID refugees are the only category of Palestinian refugees who are not eligible for free UNRWA services, and must rely on other services or medical care paid for at their own expense.

Layla's Story

Layla, a registered refugee, is married to Mustafa, a non-ID refugee from the West Bank. They have a 22 year old son who was born mentally and physically handicapped and is completely paralyzed. He doesn't receive medical attention at all as Layla cannot afford to pay for his medical care alone, and does not receive funds from other sources to assist in paying for ongoing treatment. Her husband is currently serving a sentence in a Lebanese prison for attempting to forge identification.

"He was trying to issue an ID under someone else's name so that he could move around and find job, but he got caught and put in jail...he has been there for over 5 years now..."

Layla has nine children: seven boys and two girls. To support her family she works as a housecleaner, making L.L. 100-200,000 (US\$65-\$130) a month which barely enough to provide basic needs. The family lives together in a one room house that belongs to her mother because she cannot afford anything else.

Her children have birth certificates from the mayor's office, though they do not serve as valid ID. Her eldest son Mahmoud, 25, occasionally works when he can find menial jobs but barely makes enough for pocket money. Because he lacks ID, he is restricted from moving around freely for fear of being stopped and detained.



UNRWA offers services in the area of maternity, childcare, family planning, and the prevention and control of infectious and non-infectious diseases. Principal factors that limit healthcare access are the refugee population increases, the rising costs of medical care and the budgetary restrictions and fluctuations that are imposed on UNRWA. In 1993 UNRWA introduced restrictive criteria which are still being enforced, which has led to reduced funding for emergency treatments, medical staff recruitment and a reduction in medical equipment and clinic maintenance levels.

Access to public sector health care services in the Lebanese community is limited as the infrastructure is lacking and highly underdeveloped. Public hospitals are hardly sufficient for Lebanon's population, so most people are essentially forced to use private hospitals if they want decent care. In the case of Palestinian refugees, access to the Lebanese public health care is denied completely as Palestinian refugees are not distinguished by category and are viewed as one 'group' of people in Lebanon and are thus seen to be under the mandate and responsibility of UNRWA for health care provision. If registered or non-R refugees seek treatment at public or private hospitals they are required to pay regular medical fees. As non-ID refugees cannot officially receive UNRWA's health care services, they have no choice but to pay for any medical care they require.

29. An important note is that though services are extended to non-R refugees, priority is always given to registered refugees.

The Focus Group in Burj Al Barajneh camp unanimously agreed that poor health is directly attributed to the social, economic, and political stress of the refugee environment. This can be said especially for the psychological problems and cancers that are increasing in numbers amongst the refugees. While all refugees are subject to the same health risks, not all have the privilege of medical care.

Overall, clinical visits are common within the Palestinian refugee population. Survey results show that in the last three months, 68.5% of non-ID refugees visited a clinic, with an average of 5.7 visits per household. While 15% of non-ID refugees visited a clinic within the past three to 12 months, 16.5% did not visit a clinic within the last year. The Registered and non-R refugees, 85.5% and 82.5% respectively, have visited a clinic in the past three months an average of 6.7 visits for Registered refugee households and six visits for non-R refugee households. This greater number of visits among the registered and non-R refugees can be attributed to their less limited access to medical care.

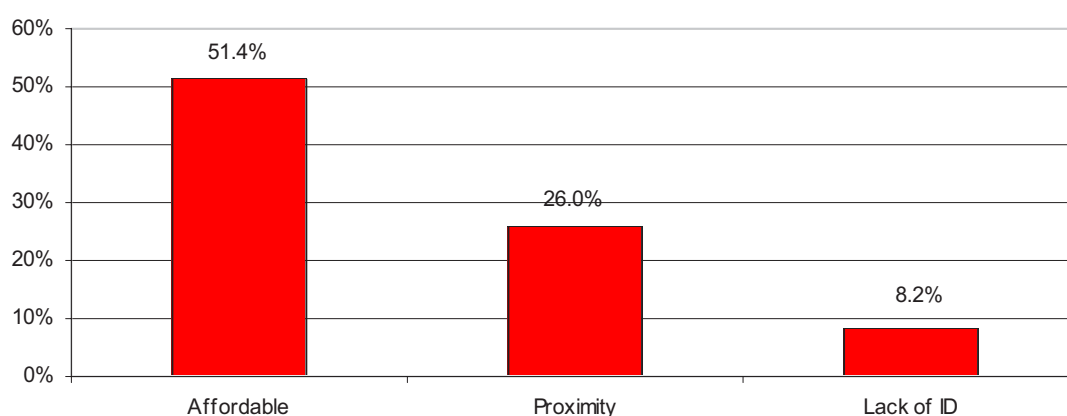


Figure 4.16: Reasons non-ID refugees chose a specified clinic

Figure 4.16 shows that most refugees (51.5%) chose clinics based on their affordability, followed by proximity (26%), and lastly, their lack of ID (8%). While affordability was the main reason for all Palestinian groups (62.5% for Registered and 57% for non-R refugees), only 12% of Registered and 19% of Non-R refugees said the clinic's proximity, while neither group expressed problems with ID.

Most non-ID refugees (62.5%) visit PRCS clinics regularly, 27.5% visit private clinics or hospitals, while only 17.5% visit UNRWA clinics. Just 13.5% of non-ID refugees said that they visit NGO or CBO clinics. Non-ID refugees are given limited access to UNRWA clinics, namely for basic treatment, but are not referred to hospitals. The high turnout of visits to PRCS clinics is because lack of identification is not a restriction to services, and most who visit are treated.

There are only five PRCS hospitals, one in every region, and nine clinics throughout the country. However, not all hospitals are located inside the camp, making access difficult. The Hamshari Hospital, for example, is located outside the Ain El Hilweh camp. Furthermore, non-ID refugees face added problems if surgery or hospitalisation is required as many procedures are not performed in nearby locations. The camps are equipped with clinics, but if serious attention and/or hospitalization is needed, he/she must go to a hospital outside the camp perimeters.

Remarkably, 52% of non-ID refugees had a family member hospitalised in the past year. Around 46% of non-ID refugees received financial support from various sources including family members, charities, individual philanthropists, etc., to help pay for hospitalisation, as compared with 62% of Registered refugees, though only 40% of the non-R refugees received assistance. The main source of financial support for non-ID refugees comes from the PLO.³⁰

³⁰. See Footnote 12.

Most Palestinian refugees (72.5%) stated that it is difficult to access medical aid in general. For 60.5% of non-ID refugees, financial burden was the most common reason for not having access, followed by lack of ID (18%) and inadequate UNRWA³¹ medical service (12%). Around 71% of non-ID refugees pay for medical services. This is because they lack official access to UNRWA's free medical services or those of other health providers. Even the PRCS charges a symbolic fee, which creates a further financial burden for non-ID refugees.

The reasons for difficulty in accessing medical care are similar when comparing the Registered and non-R refugees, with the exception of the lack of ID where neither Registered nor non-R reported having a problem, and where Registered refugees (24.5%) reported inadequate medical services in general. If a patient requires medication or a specific treatment, UNRWA sponsors a small portion of the lump sum, but often the needed prescription is not in stock or the treatments are still too expensive for refugees despite being subsidised.

Moreover, Focus Groups claimed that UNRWA doctors were overwhelmed with patients and thus could not spend extended time with any one person. Focus Groups also revealed that UNRWA turns a blind eye toward potential illness follow-up. If a person has a condition that is not deemed as "urgent," they are set aside as a "cold operation" for a few months later. However, there are cases of problems and complications that have arisen due to postponement. In its defence, UNRWA health centres have heavy workloads, with doctors seeing an average of 89 patients per day. This is one explanation behind the claims of lack of attention and rapid diagnoses, and is one reason why services have not been officially extended to the non-ID refugee population.

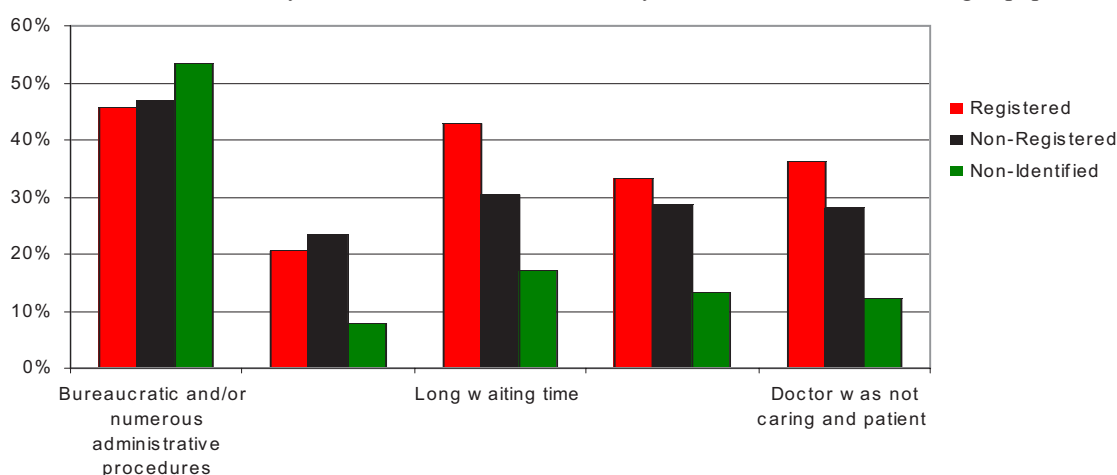


Figure 4.17: Problems faced when accessing medical care

Overall, 48% of refugees had difficulty with bureaucratic or administrative procedures regarding health matters in general, 35% criticised the long waiting hours, and 30% said doctors were not patient and attentive. Figure 4.17 shows that the main problem faced by all refugees when accessing medical care are bureaucratic and administrative procedures. While the highest percentage of this problem was given by non-ID refugees (53%), Registered and non-R refugees listed all problems almost equally when it came to the problems faced.

Most refugees are not satisfied with the level of medical care to which they have access. Of the non-ID refugees 69.5% were unsatisfied, 22% were somewhat satisfied, while only 3.5% found medical services to be adequate. The remaining 5% did not know. The level of dissatisfaction was also quite high among the Registered and the Non-R (69% and 68% respectively).

Although the majority of Palestinian refugees complained of the health care system available to them, it seems that for the non-ID refugees, the lack of ID further limits them in the availability of medical services provided and puts additional pressure on their limited budget, making them even more vulnerable to medical difficulties than the rest of the Palestinian refugee population in Lebanon.

31. Non-ID refugees may use UNRWA clinics, but they are not given referrals to hospitalization, and medication is given only if available. In any case, priority is always given to Registered refugees.

32. UNRWA Annual Health Report 2003.

Socio-economic

Palestinian refugees in Lebanon live in the worst socio-economic conditions in all UNRWA-operated regions. Lebanese laws prohibit Palestinian refugees from working in over than 70 professions, which is one of the many restrictions imposed that seriously affect the overall livelihood of Palestinian refugees.

According to survey results, 66% of Palestinian refugees interviewed are unemployed. The Focus Groups also said that unemployment is very high among the refugee population, averaging 65%. The level of unemployment among non-ID refugees is 58%. The unemployment rate among non-ID refugees is slightly lower than the general unemployment rate because 31% of non-ID refugees are employed by the PLO in the camps and receive meagre wages, while only 2% of Registered refugees and 5% of non-R refugees reported being employed by the PLO.

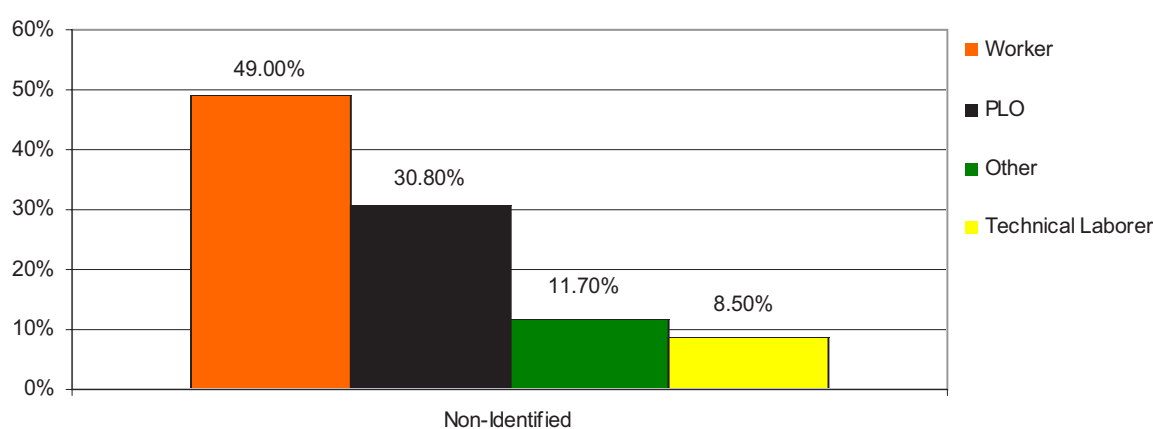


Figure 4.18: Types of jobs held by non-ID refugees

Most non-ID refugees (72.5%) are self-employed, while 27% work for an international NGO, 27% work for a national NGO and 18.5% for a private company.³³ Figure 4.18 above shows that the most common sectors of employment of non-ID refugees included general labour (49%), the PLO (31%), technical (8.5%), and the remaining 11.5% work in various jobs.

Most refugees engage in simple trades, as a worker or a driver. Most of those who live in the southern camps and gatherings commonly work - sometimes on a seasonal basis - in agriculture. Many of those who have worked in construction have been unemployed since the Lebanese construction³⁴ field was retrograded, and due to competition from other foreign workers. With the inability to work safely outside the camps thus restricting their access to employment, many have continued to align themselves with political parties, such as the PLO.

Of all refugee categories, 86.5% are in full-time employment, 27% work part-time, and 41% work seasonal/temporary. The average work day is nine hours, with an average salary of US\$8.70/day (13,000 L.L.)³⁵ or around US\$225.00/month (L.L. 338,000). Between all camps and gatherings, the average monthly wage is around 250,000 LL, as stated by Focus Groups. There was difficulty determining consensus on the exact definition of 'poverty line' as it was felt that consideration should be given to members of household, their place of residence, and also whether they receive a regular salary. It was, however, agreed that the majority of refugees live below the poverty line.³⁶ It is an economic hardship for families to run heaters in their houses during winter, for example, and families survive with small incomes, few jobs, and bare essentials.

33. Percentages overlap because some refugees work more than one job.

34. As of November 2004 Lebanese authorities again permitted the entry of building (construction) materials into the camp, which for 11 years had been a restriction.

35. Working days are from Monday to Saturday.

36. According to a paper prepared by Antoine Haddad in 1995 entitled "The Poor in Lebanon", the extreme poverty line was defined as the income level at which a family of five can meet only its food requirements, and was estimated at US\$306 per month.

Non-ID refugees are further limited because they cannot work outside the camp. Figure 4.19 reveals that 68% of employed non-ID refugees work inside the camp, compared with 62% of Registered refugees and 60.5% of non-R who work outside camp perimeters.

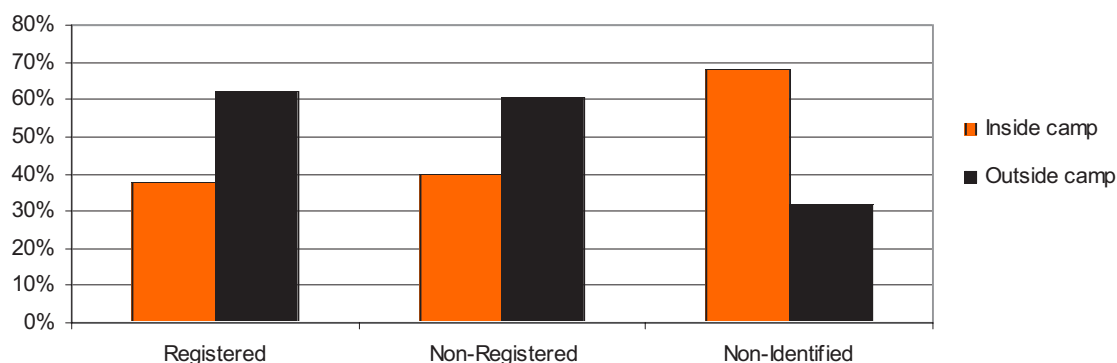


Figure 4.19: Location of work

Non-R refugees and Registered refugees can leave camps for work, but are limited in the type of work they can obtain, and can face daily obstacles at checkpoints. Checkpoints are notorious for traffic build-up, and frequent questioning of their whereabouts by Lebanese Authorities. Palestinian refugees also face competition from Syrians and other foreigners seeking jobs. One Focus Group participant pointed out that even if Palestinian refugees are able to work, it does not mean that they are paid on time or even in full.

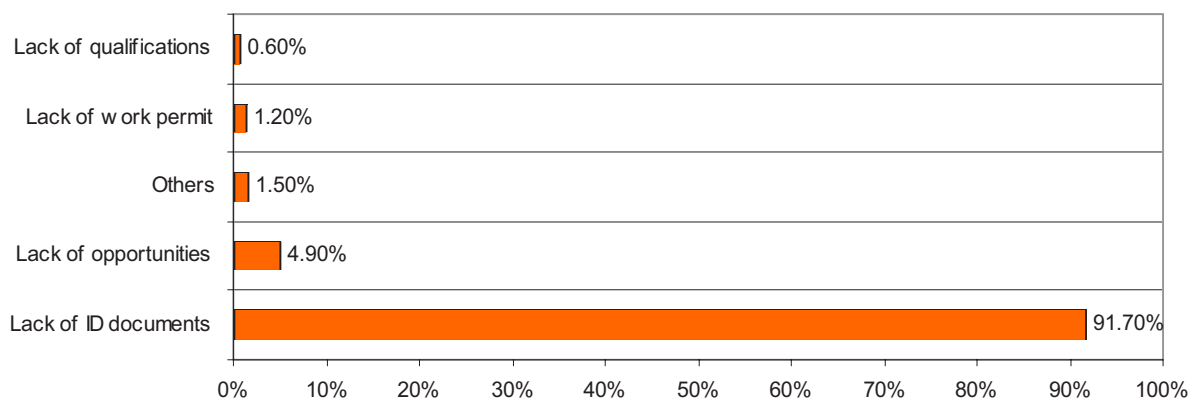


Figure 4.20: Difficulties faced by non-ID refugees seeking employment

As represented in Figure 4.20, when asked about the difficulties in finding a job, an overwhelming 91.5% of interviewed non-ID refugees said that the absence of ID documents was the main difficulty, where Registered and non-R refugees stated that lack of opportunities (53% and 48%) and lack of qualifications (12% and 12%) were the two main difficulties in finding a job.

Labour law restrictions imposed by the Lebanese government affect all Palestinians refugees in Lebanon. However, when it comes to non-ID refugees, lack of identification is an added hindrance to their mobility, and it is highly risky for them to move around to find a better job, thus they must accept whatever jobs they can find in their area of residence under the conditions and payment terms offered, further agitating their situation, physically and psychologically.

Semi-Structured Interviews

Findings and comments from the Focus groups have been integrated into our analysis, together with the questionnaire interviews. For this socio-economic section we have also added a summary of the semi-structured interviews that focus on these questions. The 193 interviews were conducted only with non-ID households.

A sample of non-ID refugees were interviewed with a separate qualitative questionnaire to assess their livelihood and survival mechanisms in times of need. The semi-structured questionnaire was organized by:

1. Seasonal income/Expenditure pattern.
2. Coping with unexpected events.
3. Income generation opportunities.
4. Community involvement.

Seasonal income/Expenditure pattern

Every region's households have different seasonal expenditure patterns, however common to all regions were the typical expenditures on food, rent, and education. Other expenditures are more region-specific.

For example, electricity and water constitute main expenses in Saida³⁷ and Beqaa compared to other regions. Water tanks are made available to the refugees in these regions at a cost. Fuel is an expense that was only mentioned by the households in the Beqaa region. Similarly, in the North and Beqaa regions, households tend to spend more on clothing than the other regions. This is due to cooler weather in these regions. Cost of medication was a major expense in Tyre, North and Beqaa, compared with Saida and Beirut, where it was not considered a typical expenditure.

In terms of unexpected costs, medication was common across all regions. House reparation was particular to the Tyre region. This is due to its proximity to the sea, where the houses are more likely to be affected by bad winter weather. Cost of imprisonment and detention was another unexpected cost that was mentioned by households in Tyre, and this can be attributed to the nature of the region's dominating political atmosphere, and closeness to the border with the Occupied Territories.

Income from labour work and the PLO were common across regions. However, the main income source in Saida and Tyre was from the PLO, while the main income sources in other regions was through labour work (butcher, painter, grocer, etc.). Sources of income from NGOs were mentioned in all regions except Beirut. Unexpected sources of income mentioned were from financial aid and donations during the month of Ramadan.

Coping with unexpected events

The main source of distress for the refugees across regions primarily relate to health care, such as the cost and availability of medications or the need for an operation or hospitalization. Such services are not accessible to non-ID refugees who must pay sums that exceed their budget. Other main sources of strain concerns housing issues: damage and deterioration, floods and forced eviction. Without a doubt, the status of their homes directly affects their living conditions and their health.

A delay in receiving monthly income, or losing a job, which often causes an economic imbalance also adds pressure on the financial and psychological well being of the family. Other unexpected events that refugees mentioned they had to cope with included detention and imprisonment.

Periods of economic imbalance and adversity result in dissimilar reactions by both the men and women in each household, and both are affected negatively. Environments in households become tense. Family members argue, admitting that discussions lead to more tension and problems. Coping mechanisms of the men and women usually differ. In general, both become antisocial³⁸, easily agitated, and argue more frequently. Men usually smoke more, take on other jobs and/or borrow money. Women tend to cope alone and suppress their anger and frustration within themselves, and/or ask their parents for support.

The psychological distress and anxiety due to the unpredictable way of life in the camps often leads to an antisocial behaviour that ranges from verbal abuse to rare cases of domestic abuse. There was a consensus that financial aid could minimize household tension as refugees generally lack funds to sustain them. While financial aid is vital, the granting of IDs would also alleviate much of the prevailing bad tensions.

37. The south region was divided up into Saida and Tyre for the semi-structured interviews as survey results show that the majority of non-ID refugees live in those two areas mainly due to the nature of the security surrounding the camps in those areas.

38. <http://www.accg.net/antisocial.htm>

Income-Generating Opportunities

When asked about the kinds of skills that could help refugees gain better income-generating opportunities, the majority across all regions stated more access to vocational training. In the North, Tyre and in the Beqaa, refugees said the availability of work prospects would help as well as having legal identification, as they have skills but do not have valid proof of identification to have a job.

Although interviews revealed that the majority of non-ID refugees agree that more work opportunities would improve their household economy, both men and women feel that not having proper identification further limits their access to opportunities. Most perceive that there are opportunities available to others which are not available to them. This is mostly as a result of lacking identification, however in the Beirut region households stated that their lack of skills also plays a role in not having access to those opportunities. To increase their economic wellbeing status, non-ID refugees mostly rely on extra incomes or financial assistance from the PLO, NGOs and charity organizations.

Community involvement

The refugees expressed in majority that they share occasions with one another on a regular basis. Within a neighbourhood and community, people have close relations and take part in one another's events, such as marriages, births, and deaths. The interviewees all stated that mutual activities and closer relations could only benefit them. Networking within their society gives them the chance to find common ground and share experiences.

The majority said that community work and decision making are organized through the political parties and popular committees. All refugees claimed that they are acknowledged 100% by their community leadership. However, the majority of the non-IDs do not partake in community-based decision making. All refugees in Beirut, the North, and in the Beqaa interviewed said that they are not active in community-based decision-making, a very small percentage of those in Tyre and Saida participated, while some refused to answer. Those who chose not to participate in community-based decision-making claimed that it "is not any of their business."

Education

As mentioned in the introduction, one of the main services provided by UNRWA is free basic education. In Lebanon, UNRWA runs 79 pre-secondary, five secondary, and one vocational training centre. Due to the large number of pupils, schools operate with double-shifts (morning and afternoon schedules). Refugees with the means can also access private schools. Statistics gathered through the survey show that the level of education does not differ considerably between the legal categories, however most non-ID children attend schools as 'listeners' and are not active participants. This causes difficulty for non-ID refugees if they wish to pursue higher education as they are not granted an official diploma.

If Palestinian refugees want to pursue higher education, they must seek financing their own financing. As Palestinian refugees are treated as foreigners in Lebanon, despite their refugee status, they must compete with all foreigners, a group quota for which there is an upper ceiling but not a lower one, meaning that Lebanese students can be given the seat of a foreigner if needed.

Differences can also be found in relation to geography or settlement type. According to the Focus Groups, for example, in the Beqaa region, which was less affected by the civil war, the overall literacy rate is higher than average. Non-ID refugees living in gatherings will find it more difficult to attend school in the camps because of their fear of being controlled and arrested.

In addition, parents of non-ID refugee children report that children are often sent home due to lack of proper documents, and that they must often intervene to have the child reintegrated in school. As shown in Figure 4.21 below, a significant proportion (42.5%) of refugees interviewed have a child who dropped out school.

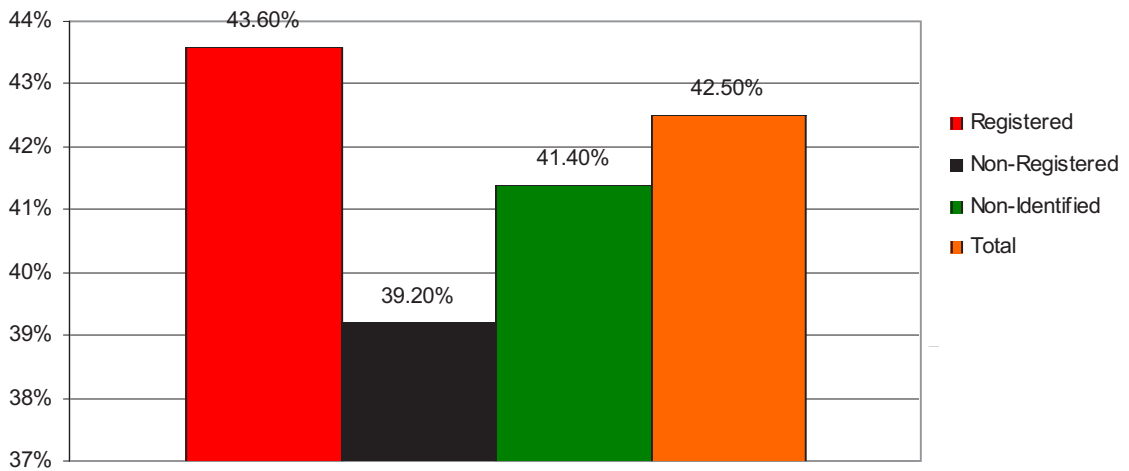


Figure 4.21: School dropout rate among refugee children

Although the dropout rate does not differ much between the three categories, the reasons do. Figure 4.22 shows that for non-ID refugees, the main reason was due to lack of ID (42%), followed by financial burden (29%), and child disinterest (7.5%). Registered and non-R refugees stated financial burden as the main reason (42% and 43% respectively) followed by child disinterest (21% and 16.5%), and child failure (13% and 7.5%). Ironically, only 4% of non-ID refugees stated that child failure was the reason for dropping out.

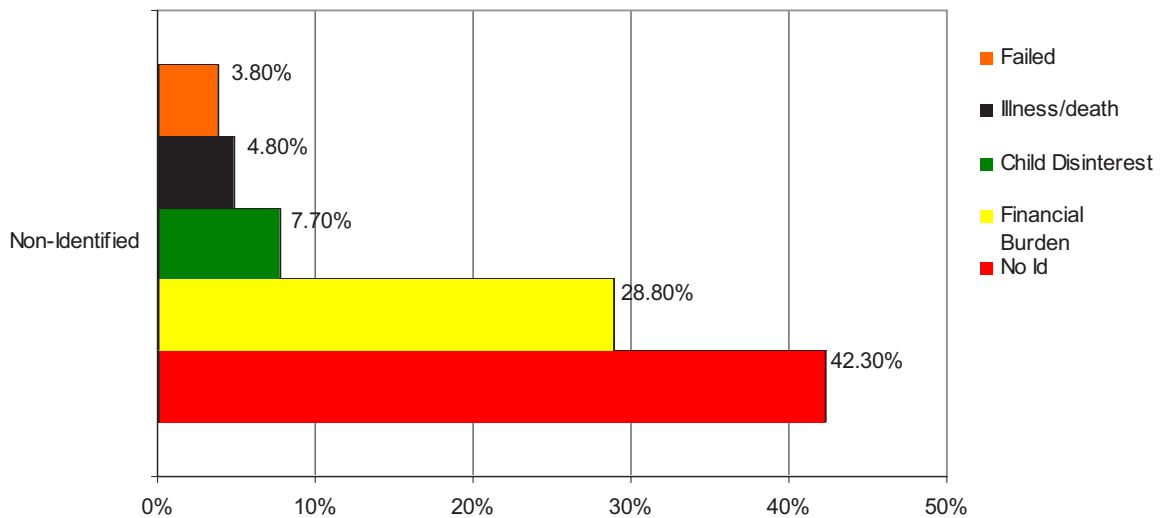


Figure 4.22: Dropout reasons among non-ID refugees

In all categories, financial difficulties play a lead role when continuing education is considered. Of Palestinian refugees interviewed, 89.5% said that the economic factor is a main reason. Focus groups made a point that refugees with less opportunity to access the job market have a higher tendency to quit school.

Non-ID refugee children face restrictions in accessing schools and thus are at a higher risk of dropping out. Even when they attempt to finish their education, they have difficulty in obtaining degrees. Only 16.5% of non-ID refugees report to have a valid diploma, of any level. Though not quantifiable, some of those interviewed said that they or their children received a diploma under a false identity, or the identity of a friend or family member.

“They dream of carrying the blue ID.”

Noor is married to Khaled, a non-ID refugee who came to Lebanon in 1971 from Jordan as part of the Palestinian revolution. He has an expired Jordanian passport. Together they have six children; the eldest is 23 and the youngest is two years old. All have birth certificates from the midwife, and all except the youngest have IDs from the PLO which must be renewed annually.

The eldest child, Dina, has a baccalaureate degree. She forged an ID in order to be able to take the government exams as her PLO ID is not officially recognized by the government. As she does not have legal papers she cannot attend university, nor can her family afford the expense. She is also having difficulty finding work.



Noor's son Bilal also has a baccalaureate degree and her daughter Rayan has a high school degree. Another son, Tarek, finished Brevet* but was refused admission to Sibline** as he lacks official papers. As he cannot leave the camp to find a job or continue his education, he joined the PLO.

Jaber goes to an UNRWA school, and suffers from being different than others. "They differentiate between kids in school, especially when the teacher asks those children who don't have IDs to stand up in class, and the children feel humiliated in front of their classmates. He dreams of carrying the blue ID."

As for Yasmin, the youngest, she only has a birth certificate from the midwife. She cannot receive the PLO ID as she they are offered on an as-needed basis, for example when they are needed for school.

Both Noor's husband and son Tarek receive around 250,000L/month (US\$165) each from the PLO. "We don't receive any services from organizations or associations. We have a relative in Denmark that sends us some financial assistance every once in a while".

Noor's family faces many problems as a result of not having official identification. Her children can't go outside the camp to look for work without facing problems at the checkpoints. Two of her underage sons have been arrested and detained by the Lebanese army several times when they tried to leave the camp, but after talking to people with 'connections' they were eventually released.

"All of our problems are because we don't have identification. The only solution is to have legal papers. All we want is to be equal to other Palestinians in Lebanon, and go back to our country Palestine."

* Brevet is the fourth intermediate level at which government exams are required by all students before they can proceed on to high school. It follows the old French system of schooling applied during French mandate

** Sibline is the only UNRWA vocational training school for Palestinian refugees that provides degrees in technical training i.e. mechanics, carpentry, accounting, etc.

Housing and environment

The refugee camps were originally founded on temporary basis in 1948 and the infrastructure was built accordingly. Since then they have not been developed properly to accommodate the increases in refugee population and the only efforts made were makeshift, not real development.

There is no difference in the housing and environmental infrastructure for non-ID refugees and that of other refugees. The only differentiating factor is the ability of Registered and non-R refugees to live outside camps and gatherings.

According to Focus Groups, few refugees living in gatherings use the Lebanese infrastructure. As they are per chance situated in a Lebanese region - thus may have access to electricity, water and sewage systems - they have to pay fees in line with Lebanese society, unlike those in camps. In addition, most gatherings lack elements of infrastructure; they may have electricity but may not have access to sewage facilities.

The physical aspects of the housing conditions and environment are an important way of determining the comfort and space available to the people. According to all Focus Groups, non-ID refugees do not face any unique problems in their living environment that are not faced by other refugee categories. This is in part because refugees as a collective tend to perceive that they are all in the same situation and do not differentiate amongst themselves.

The dense living conditions in refugee camp and gathering households reveals that for an average refugee family of five to seven members, only two sleeping rooms per household exist. About 17% of refugees interviewed live in one room homes, 46.5% live in two-room homes, while about 27% live in three room homes. Given the average family size in a household, Figure 4.23 shows that around 69.5% of the sample population has less than half of a room allotted to each person. Non-ID refugees are not set apart from these figures.

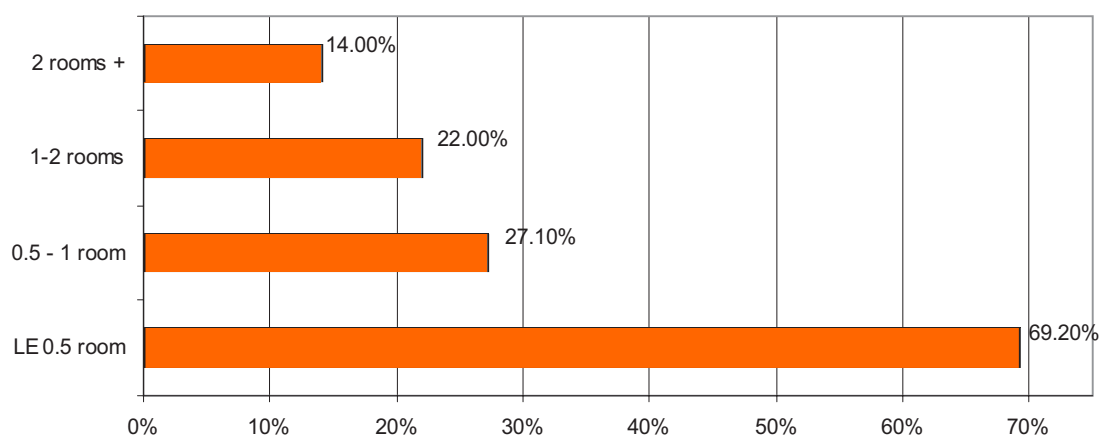


Figure 4.23: Number of rooms per person

Refugee homes are also in desperate need of rehabilitation. Focus Groups stated that as the Palestinians first considered that their stay in Lebanon would be temporary, only interim structures were built. Over time, and as Lebanese authorities prohibit construction, improvements, or basic repairs on refugee houses, the existing housing infrastructure has posed a number of dangers, among them health risks, according to Focus Groups.

Notwithstanding the previous destruction of homes in recent history, families continue to construct home additions surreptitiously, above existing dwellings, in order to accommodate their growing families. This makeshift housing environment has made it hard for sewage, electricity, and water facilities to function properly. Improvised infrastructure and construction is more common in the South as the Lebanese authorities more strictly enforce the maintenance and development ban.

Among all refugees interviewed, 72% claim that their homes need rehabilitation, and have not been able to do so in the past year. While all refugees live in similar conditions, it is surprisingly the homes of Registered refugees that need rehabilitation the most (74%), while only 65.5% of non-ID refugees made the same claim. Non-ID refugee households in the South are most in need as this area holds the highest concentration of non-ID refugees and the ban on reconstruction is harshly enforced.

Refugees who have managed to build and maintain their homes have primarily done so with personal funds and resources. The European Union is the one outside body that has provided funding, but only in critical home rehabilitation cases. The non-R refugee population has had a higher rate of having homes rehabilitated in the

past year. As refugees generate meagre amounts of income, it is channelled according to priorities, which are mostly essentials such as food, electricity, and water. Refugees adapt to their changing housing conditions and accept them until they become unbearable. Focus Groups explained that refugees often find roundabout ways of getting the most essential renovations done.

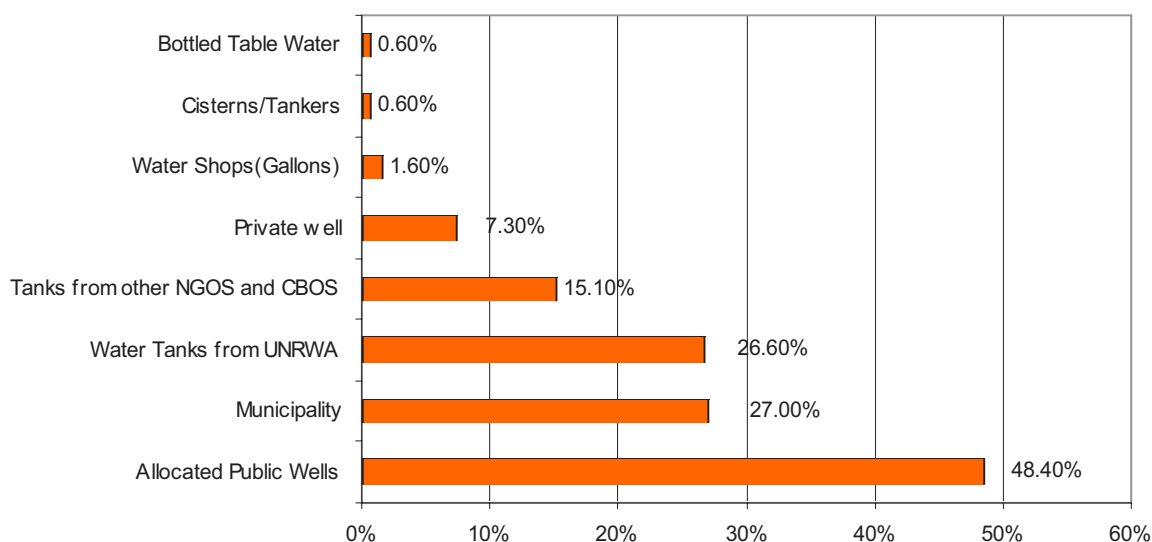


Figure 4.24: Domestic water sources

According to the questionnaire and Focus Groups, water is accessible in all the camps. During the summer, water shortages occur due to increased use. Figure 4.24 shows that the majority of refugees (48.5%) obtain domestic water from allocated public wells. About 27% are provided with water from the municipal government and 26.5% obtain water tanks from UNRWA.

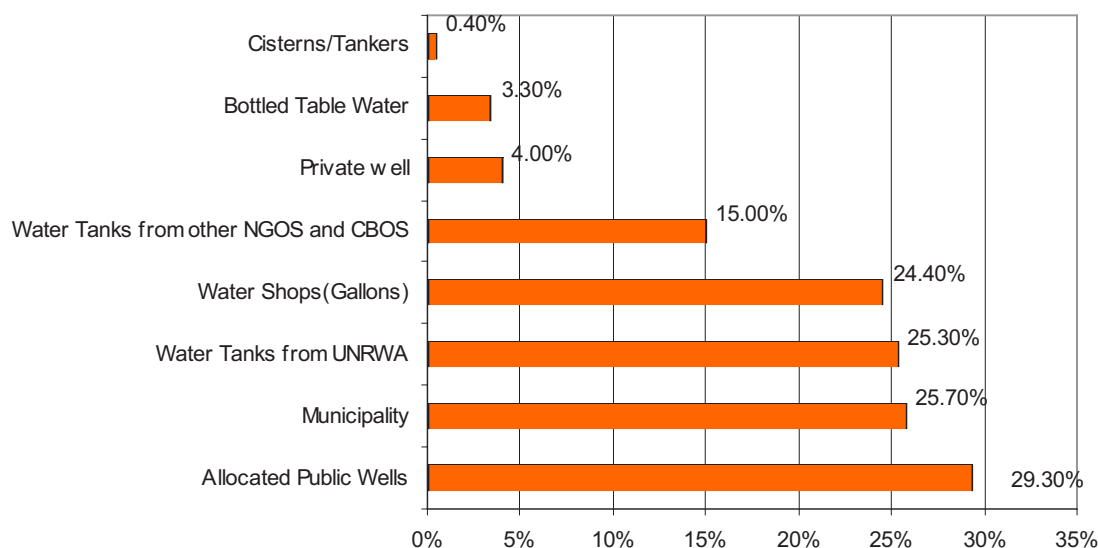


Figure 4.25: Drinking water sources

Figure 4.25 indicates that drinking water is received from allocated public wells (29.5%), municipal sources (25.5%), water tanks from UNRWA (25.5%), and water shops or gallons (24.5%). Water is often provided to refugees as water piping infrastructure is weak. All refugees, including non-ID refugees, receive the same water as other refugees. As mentioned earlier, refugees in gatherings often rely on water supplied by the Lebanese infrastructure.

According to Focus Groups, inadequate sewage infrastructure is one of the main housing environment problems, and without a reliable system the water quality is affected, refugees are more susceptible to diseases and pollution. Despite a poor common sewage system, 77% of refugees state that they have sewage services to dispose of their wastewater. A problem is that the services do not meet the capacity of the camps. The pipes have not been maintained since they were originally put in place, becoming corroded. Furthermore, sewage and water pipes were improperly and closely installed underground causing overflow and contamination of the fresh water connected to the houses in the camps, leading to a hazardous environment. In general, it appears that polluted water is the main reason why refugees do not use the municipality's drinking water. In addition water tends to have high concentration of salt, calcium, and even chlorine.

Two camps in the South, Burj Al Shamali and Rashidieh, and some nearby gatherings house approximately 16% of the overall refugee population. They do not have sewage systems and dispose of waste by on site sewage not adequately built or maintained, which result in contaminating the ground water and effecting the environment. Furthermore, in Burj Al Shamali, a camp located on the sea coast, their sewage is polluting the sea, which is their main source for non-drinking water.

Electricité du Liban (EDL), Lebanon's industrial and commercial provider, supplies electricity to the majority (98%) of refugees in the camps and gatherings. The electricity infrastructure however is still under-developed compared to the rest of Lebanon. Cables are hazarously connected and exposed through the camps. Also, the camps experience frequent electricity shortages, and generators are often too expensive for refugees to purchase.

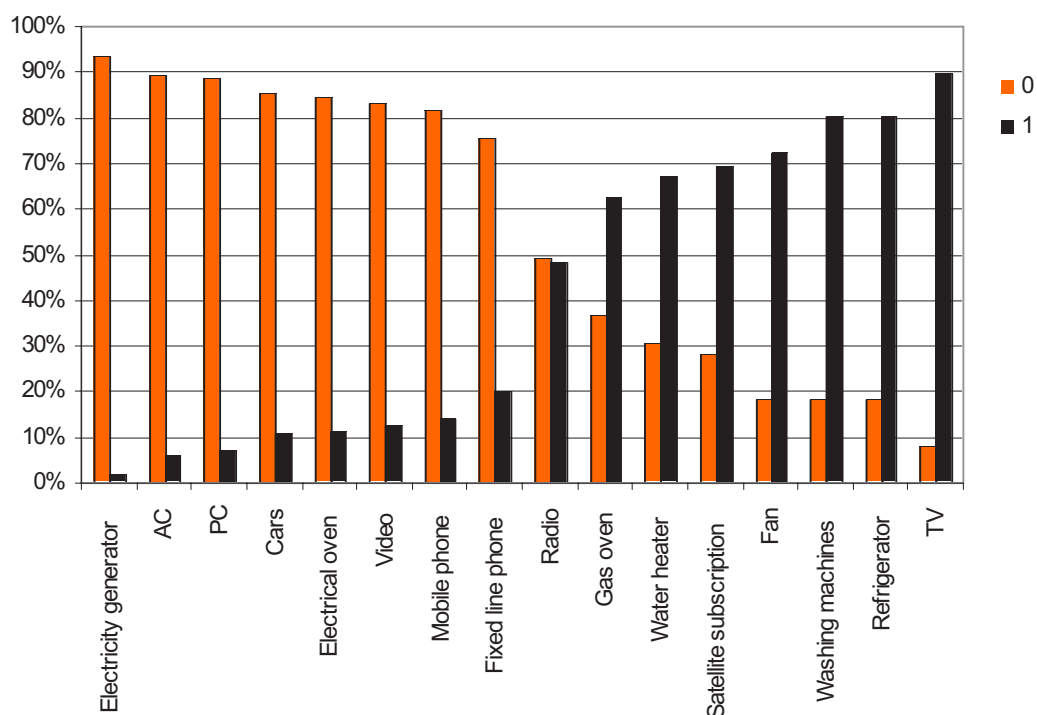


Figure 4.26: Household items owned

Figure 4.26 shows the percentage of the types of items are owned by Palestinian refugee households. Equipment ownership varies between the refugee categories. With the limited income that refugees have, basic household items are not always found in their homes. Although the majority, 90%, said they own a television, and 80.5% own a refrigerator, there are 36.5% of the interviewed sample that do not own a gas oven and 30.5% do not own a water heater, items that are considered essential in households.



V. Conclusions

The findings in this study have shown the extent to which non-ID refugees in Lebanon, and Palestinian refugees in general, face difficult socio-economic situations. Restrictions in Lebanese employment and ownership laws in particular, not to mention the deprivation of basic human rights, fundamentally shape the economic and social stability of the community. Appalling environmental conditions and contaminated living environments due to over-crowdedness and infrastructure issues are increasing the health vulnerability of refugees, which is an added burden to their daily misery.

Due to their lack of legal status, the suffering of the estimated 4-5,000 non-ID refugees extends into daily fear of being approached and detained by Lebanese authorities, as they do not have the ability to move freely outside camps and gatherings. For the majority, they are denied the basic human right of a legal existence, whether by specific countries refusing to renew their papers or the Lebanese refusal to acknowledge their presence.

The added dilemma for non-ID refugees relates to the consequences that affect their descendants, where children born to a non-ID refugee are also denied legal registration. This element is a punishment inflicted on children for simply being born to a non-ID refugee. The various governments denying a person to legally prove their existence are exercising collective punishment on innocent people simply because they render, in general, their fathers as being politically affiliated.

When non-ID refugees were asked about their perceived solution, unanimous consensus was that the only solution would be to have legal papers, allowing them to move freely, seek employment, pursue an education and have access to adequate health services, which are difficult to access. In the meantime, while some look for "other" means to survive, others simply accept their fate hoping that one day a solution can soon be found.



VI. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, which garnered in-depth knowledge on the living conditions of non-ID refugees in comparison with Registered and non-R refugees, the PHRO recommends the following:

Local

1. Non-ID refugees who are registered with UNRWA in another host country should have their files transferred to Lebanon so they can officially benefit from UNRWA services.
2. Countries from which refugees hold documents (i.e. Jordan) should be obliged to renew their expired papers and register their descendents.
3. Refugees who volunteer to return to the country that originally issued their documents should be authorised to do so by the related governments, and should be protected from any persecution that they might face.
4. The Palestinian Authority should offer identification to non-ID refugees who are PLO members and an active solution should be sought to allow them to voluntarily return to their homes and families in Palestine.
5. The Lebanese government should acknowledge their existence and legitimize their presence.
6. Children without identification should take the status of their mother and benefit from the services provided to her.
7. UNHCR should recognize and register those Palestinian refugees who carry documents from countries not covered by the UNRWA mandate.
8. A legal aid program should be set up to help non-ID refugees on a case-by-case basis in order to assess their legal situation and present possible legal actions that could be pursued to resolve their situation.
9. Assistance should be provided to families who live in grave conditions and are in need of immediate relief.
10. Income-generating opportunities should be made available to non-ID refugees in their community to avoid the risk of movement outside the camps and allow them to provide for their families.
11. The Lebanese government should enforce the law which states that any child born in Lebanon to a stateless mother and father receives the Lebanese nationality.

International

1. Awareness of this particular group should be raised to the international community in order to form a lobby and advocate for the hosting countries to register them.
2. International assistance should be sought, in cooperation with the local NGO's working with the Palestinian refugees, in order to make up for the lack of assistance received by this particular group until a just solution is found to their pressing problem. Assistance should be in the form of awareness raising for non-id refugees about their rights and human development projects aimed at alleviating their economic situation.

Appendix 1: Bibliography and acronym/abbreviation list

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12. Palestinian Human Rights Organisation, *Legal Situation of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon*, 2004.

Acronym/abbreviation list

ESCWA - United Nations Economic and Social Council for Western Asia
PLO - Palestinian Liberation Organization
PC - Popular Committee
PRCS - Palestinian Red Crescent Society
PHRO - Palestinian Human Rights Organization
DRC - Danish Refugee Council
Non-R - Non-Registered refugees
Non-ID - Non-Identified refugees
UNRWA - United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees
FAFO - Institute for Applied International Studies - Norway
NGO - Non-Governmental Organization
CBO - Community-Based Organisation

Appendix 2: The PHRO and further acknowledgments

The PHRO is a volunteer-based NGO operating in Lebanon. Established in 1997, the PHRO offers temporary and permanent programs to improve the lives of Palestinian refugees residing in Lebanon. As a non-partisan institute, the PHRO's initiatives are conducted on local, national, regional, and international levels and focus on five key areas: monitoring, training, research, advocacy, and legal aid.

On a local level, the PHRO works to improve rights awareness in the refugee community and strengthen its indigenous civil society. National efforts are made to educate all levels of Lebanese society on the situation of Palestinian refugees in the country, promote constructive dialogue and interaction, and initiate lobbying activities for change in Lebanese policy. The PHRO participates in several networks that, on a regional level, support the creation of durable solutions for the Palestinian refugee situation as a whole. PHRO international efforts aim to bring the ill treatment of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon to the global stage in order to initiate international pressure on Lebanon to change unjust policies.

Ultimately, the PHRO aims to work for change in Lebanese policies which negatively affect Palestinian refugees, and advocates to have Palestinian refugees granted civil rights in Lebanon. It is also a staunch supporter of UN Resolution 194, which calls for the Palestinian 'right of return'.

Further acknowledgments

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Appendix 3: The PHRO and DRC partnership

Due to unfortunate disagreements that arose between the DRC and the PHRO during the course of the project, the partnership was unofficially terminated before its completion. As a result of the nature of the events, the PHRO is pursuing legal action against the DRC, and a case is pending.

As stated in the last revision of the partnership contract between the DRC and the PHRO, the PHRO has exclusive copyright of the data that was collected, the analysis and results of which are contained in this report. The DRC published its own report on non-ID refugees in early 2005, based on an earlier rough draft of this report that the PHRO shared with the DRC, and its unverified findings were published as final results without consultation by, or notification given to, the PHRO. The PHRO verified and changed many of the findings through its subsequent technical editing process. As the DRC wrongly claimed in its report that it was published in cooperation with the PHRO, the PHRO felt it was necessary to issue a letter denouncing its involvement or association with the DRC's report and dissociate itself with any claims made therein. The letter on Page 48 was sent to all relevant project participants and PHRO-related affiliates which expressed concern over the PHRO's alleged involvement in the DRC publication.



Dear Colleagues and Friends

In regards to the recently published report by Danish Refugee Council (DRC) (and claimed jointly with the PHRO) entitled 'Non-Id Palestinian Refugees - Lebanon', the PHRO would like to make a few clarifications.

1. Since January the PHRO has had unresolved legal issues with the DRC, which to date have not been resolved. Thus, The PHRO did not participate in the assembly of this report, neither was it consulted nor informed of its publication. **The PHRO wishes to detach itself entirely from claims made in this report, and apologizes to all who have so far contacted the PHRO with criticism of the claims made in this report. The PHRO was not consulted by DRC for permission to use its data, name and logo on the report.**
2. After a series of correspondence and meetings with the DRC, we failed to reach an agreement on matters. In our last meeting that was held March 1, 2005 and which resulted in an informal termination of the agreement, and the DRC's refusal to pursue arbitration as stated in the contract, we have not heard from them anything in regards to the project. In previous correspondence we have warned the DRC from continuing with the activities of the project without resolving the serious allegations ongoing between the partners. We suggested several solutions to resolve the dispute and none were considered or responded to by the DRC.
3. The DRC prepared this report on its own using data from an initial undeveloped draft jointly prepared by the DRC and PHRO. The data used in the first draft, which was collected and for which the PHRO holds copyright, was unverified at that stage, and is thus inaccurate and misleading in many cases. The PHRO has since verified and re-analysed the data in subsequent drafts it has prepared, and it differs greatly from claims made in the DRC report. The PHRO survey was conducted and analyzed in a scientific manner, contrast to what was implied in the DRC's report. This was an aim of the survey. The PHRO has retained all questionnaires and data, and the methodology and analysis of results have been detailed in the final report prepared by the PHRO.
4. As stated in the last version of the contract between the PHRO and DRC, the PHRO is the sole owner of the survey questionnaire, research and data collected. The DRC was not given copies or unrestricted or unsupervised access to the data, nor were they granted permission to publish the PHRO's data. This constitutes a serious infringement of copyright law as stated in our contract paragraph 6.02 "ownership, title, and intellectual property rights in the results of the Operation and the reports and other documents relating to it shall be vested in PHRO."

The PHRO finds the haphazard and unprofessional way of writing and publishing a report, and the misinterpretation of some of the results and making unfounded generalizations in a way to harm the beneficiaries just to meet the donors deadline, is unacceptable and unethical, not to mention illegal. The unauthorised use of the PHRO name and data in their report are yet further infringements of the contract not yet officially terminated.

The PHRO will publish its own report in line with the terms of resolution of the legal matters with the DRC. We would have liked the same courtesy extended to us, however, the DRC neither responded to allegations we made about their breach of contract during the active time of our partnership nor continued to keep us informed about their activities regarding the project for which we signed a partnership contract.

The PHRO will pursue a legal case to settle this matter. We wish that the PHRO neither be quoted nor documented as a source of this report published by the DRC.

Kind Regards,

Ghassan Abdallah
General Director

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