
United Cities and Local Governments

Middle East and West Asia

(UCLG-MEWA)

Middle Eastern Urban Forced Migrants' Social Inclusion
Policies Turkey and Lebanon

The Role of Municipalities of Turkey and Lebanon in the Syrian Migratory Influx Management

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January 2016

Supported by the



European
Commission

¹ Field research for this report benefited from the support of Khaldoun Abu Tay & Thamer Abou Manssour.



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1. Introduction

United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) is a world organization dedicated to promoting the values, objectives and interests of local and regional governments across the globe. It is the largest local government organization in the world, with a diverse membership that includes both individual cities and national associations of local governments.

As one of the eight sections of UCLG World Organization, United Cities and Local Governments, Middle East and West Asia Section (UCLG-MEWA) continues to serve to the main principles of democracy, human rights, international solidarity, local governance and sustainable development from its headquarters in Istanbul, Turkey. The geographical region of UCLG-MEWA covers the following 15 countries: Afghanistan, Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Yemen; as well as Azerbaijan, Egypt, Libya, Pakistan, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Turkmenistan and Cameroon. (More detailed information at www.uclg-mewa.org).

Following the call of UCLG President in 2012 for international community solidarity's towards local governments dealing with Syrian refugees, UCLG Middle East Working Group along with an international delegation of elected officials, members and experts from the national associations of local governments from France, Turkey, the Netherlands and Canada, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality and UCLG-MEWA reported about municipalities coping with the influx of Syrian refugees in Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon. At the time of the report, Turkish municipalities were beginning to feel the strain, particularly along the border areas where refugees have selected to stay independently and in communities adjacent to refugee camps. Municipalities were setting up resource centers to register refugees who have chosen not to go to the camps and directed them to services such as shelter, food and clothing, medical care, education and other services.

Following this mission, UCLG-MEWA Committee on Social Inclusion developed with its city-members several projects in line with social inclusion needs of Syrians who were forced to leave their country to settle in one of Syria's neighboring countries. In line with those activities and previous reporting mission, the report *"Middle Eastern Forced Urban Migrants' Social Inclusion Policies"* explores the role of municipalities of Turkey in the management of the Syrian migratory influx and their role as humanitarian and migration management actors. The study also highlights some best practices developed by its city members. Throughout this report, UCLG-MEWA provides keys of understanding for the international community to dedicate an enhanced consideration to municipalities as migration management actors and their integration in the humanitarian governance scheme.

2. Executive Summary

This research was undertaken from December 2015 to January 2016 through field researches, interviews with key actors (government bodies, municipalities, UN agencies headquarters/field offices, international and local NGOs) and literature review and desk-research. The findings are not exhaustive, however they draw important points regarding the decisive role municipalities have in the local management of a mass displaced population and the fostering of social inclusion on the middle term.

In this context of on-going migratory policy-making and evolving migratory flux to Turkey, this report sheds a light on the action of municipalities in the Syrian migratory influx management. It appears that several municipalities have been proactively developing projects and actions in favour of Syrian population although the national legal framework and financial support both from national and international actors remain marginal. This report sheds a light on the need to better acknowledge municipalities as actors of migration-management and social inclusion, notably through service delivery and social cohesion activities.

3. Turkey, Syrian Crisis and Migratory Public-Policy Making

The five years of the Syrian conflict triggered the biggest humanitarian crisis since the World War II with an estimated total of 9 million displaced individuals. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), over 3 million of Syrians have fled to Syria's immediate neighbours (Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq). 6.5 million are internally displaced within Syria.

In reaction to the protracted nature of the Syrian crisis which lead to expect for lengthy duration of the Syrians' stay in neighboring countries, international actors active in the support to displaced and conflict affected Syrians currently orient their action towards a development and resilience-based approach including a response to Syrians' needs but also to support communities hosting refugees.

UNDP Head, Helen Clark pushed for an urgent implementation of the resilience approach in development actors' programs : *"The Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) and the Syria Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) outline how partners can help. These are not business-as-usual plans. Conventional approaches of "relief now, development later" do not work in response to the Syria crisis or other similar protracted crises. Refugees, host communities and internally displaced people in Syria need livelihoods. They need basic services, like health, education, water, sanitation, electricity, and garbage removal. And they need hope for a better future."*²

The shift from sole humanitarian approach to resilience (ie. capacity of a community to recover after a shock/a disaster) took place in the UN response in 2014. From a Syria Regional Response, the coordinated plan changed its name for the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP). Resilience is shaped around a better connection of humanitarian aid and development along with support to host communities and a specific focus on livelihoods, job creation initiatives and multi-actor partnerships.

3.1. The Syrian Crisis in Turkey and its Actors

Since the conflict broke out in Syria in March 2011, Turkey opened its border to Syrian citizens forced to leave the country. Along the five last years, their number has exponentially grown to reach as of 11th of January 2015, 2,503,549 Syrians registered by the Government of Turkey and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) ³ out of a total population of 78 millions⁴. In 2015, Turkey was ranked as the country welcoming the highest number of refugees in the world and is Syria's

² UNDP, 2016

³ Syria Regional Refugee Response

⁴ "The Results of Address Based Population Registration System, 2014". Turkish Statistical Institute. Retrieved 17 January 2016.



neighboring country hosting the highest number of Syrians. 2.75 million of Syrians are expected to be registered by the end of 2016⁵.

Since 2011, the Government of Turkey dealt in a simultaneous fashion with the development of its national migratory system and with the management of the Syrian migratory influx and its humanitarian response.

The Government of Turkey and public central institutions are particularly involved in the Syrian migratory influx management to Turkey. Institutions directly responsible for the Syrian crisis management are the Prime Ministry Presidency for Emergency and Disaster Management (AFAD) and the newly operational Directorate General for Migration Management (responsible for temporary protection, international protection and all migration-related matters). Since the beginning of the migratory influx, AFAD was the dedicated agency to develop humanitarian response and responsible for camp management.

Prior to 2013, migratory affairs of Turkey were under the responsibility of the Ministry of Interior and dealt through police forces. The New Law on Foreigners and International Protection was enacted in 2013 and entered into force in 2014. It is Turkey's first law providing a holistic migratory legal framework and provided for the establishment, under the Ministry of Interior, of a specialized civilian institution, the General Directorate for Migration Management (DGMM), to manage international protection, temporary protection and all migration-related matters. The DGMM and its provincial branches became fully operational in 2015.

In coordination with the Government of Turkey's action, UN agencies were important actors of the response. UNDP (United Nations Development Programs) and UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) are leading agencies and coordinate the action of the 10 UN agencies active in Turkey (FAO, ILO IOM, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, WFP and WHO).

International and local NGOs, foundations and private sector actors are also active in the Syrian migratory management in Turkey.

3.2. Turkey in the context of a Complex Regional Migratory System and National Migratory Policy System Building

The Syrian migratory influx in Turkey took place in the midst of a national migratory policy-making process. The New Law on Foreigners and International Protection which was under preparation for several years, was released in 2013. It is Turkey's first asylum law and first temporary protection law, introducing a rights-based approach to Turkey's migratory public policy system. The Law also provided for the establishment, under the Ministry of Interior (MoI), of a specialized civilian institution, the General Directorate for Migration Management (DGMM), to manage international protection and migration-related matters. This new migratory policy framework was both influenced by the Syrian migratory influx to Turkey, and the reflect of Turkey's evolving migratory identity for the fifteen last years.

While from the 1960's until recently, Turkey was a recognized emigration country to Western Europe, it became in 2015, due to the Syrian migratory influx, the first-ranked country in the world to

⁵ 3RP, Turkey, 2016-2017

host refugees. Since the last two decades, Turkey is also a country of transit for irregular migrants to the European Union. While this situation was intensified throughout the Syrian crisis, it was already a channel frequented by Afghans, Bangladeshis, Iraqis, Iranians, Pakistanis, various nationalities from West Africa and former Soviet Bloc countries. Along the time, from rather a simple transit destination, Turkey also became a destination country in which some migrants from above mentioned origins but also from Arab countries and Western Europe, chose to settle.

The Syrian migratory influx to Turkey is by far the most important in Turkey's History, however not the sole neither the first one. Following the spill-over of the Syrian crisis to Iraq, Turkey is also hosting Iraqi citizens. Unofficial estimates consider that 120,000 Iraqis were in Turkey as of December 2015. Iraqi citizens who arrived after May 2014 to Turkey can apply to humanitarian visa or international protection meaning that they remain in Turkey as asylum-seekers until they are accepted as refugee by a third country. Also, fleeing the war that took place in Afghanistan until 2014, Afghans are considered to be the third nationality of asylum-seekers with 42,330 of them registered by the UNHCR in Turkey as of December 2015⁶. The process of asylum-seeking being recognized as long and complex to manage, it is not rare that Iraqis and Afghans pass through different legal status during their stay in Turkey.

The Republic of Turkey is signatory of the 1951 Geneva Convention but did not ratify the 1967 Protocol on the Legal Status of Refugees lifting geographical limitation, hence only people fleeing violence or prosecutions taking place in Europe can apply for the legal status of refugees in Turkey. Iraqis, Afghans and Syrians are *de facto* excluded from this possibility.

In the same line, Syrian nationals although they are granted with temporary protection, can also access other legal status (residency permit, student visa etc.) and migratory legislation has evolved at a particularly fast pace along the past years. The temporary status of Syrian nationals in Turkey is reflected in the difficulty for citizens of Turkey to name Syrians whether "guests", "refugees" or "migrants". The vocabulary is also varying according to the actors and no term was yet coined in order to precisely describe the temporary protection status.

At the regional level, similar complexities exist regarding migrations and in naming displaced Syrians in neighboring countries. There is no consensus among host society's actors, international actors, governments, NGOs and municipalities.

Reflecting on those different elements, this report decided to use the emerging term among international actors of "forced migrant" which describes in an indiscriminate fashion population forced to migrate. This report aiming at raising awareness on municipalities' action towards forced migrants settled in urban areas to coin the term of "urban forced migrants".

4. Social Inclusion

While the Syrian crisis is about to reach its 5th year, the question of the duration of the stay of Syrians in Turkey appeared along the years to be a constantly evolving question mark, which led to enhanced challenges in developing adapted policies. Gradually, the different involved actors in the Syrian

⁶ UNHCR, 2015

migratory influx to Turkey gradually acknowledged the need to foster social inclusion of Syrians settled in Turkey, notably those in the fields of access to employment, education and health.

4.1. Social Needs of Syrians in Turkey

Before 2014, the Government of Turkey's responded to the Syrian migratory influx by high standard humanitarian response (through the development of refugees' camps), the figures of Syrians in Turkey settled in urban areas has now largely overcome the population in camps. Only an approximate 20% of the Syrian population is currently living in camps (268,843 in camps out of 2,503,549 registered Syrians in Turkey as of 11th of January 2016)⁷ in the 25 camps located in the Southeast Anatolia Region.

TABLE 1: DISTRIBUTION OF RESIDENTS IN 25 CAMPS IN 10 PROVINCES OF TURKEY (BY CAMP-PROVINCE)

Source : AFAD, <https://www.afad.gov.tr/EN/IcerikDetay1.aspx?ID=16&IcerikID=848>, accessed on 11th of January 2016

Current Status in AFAD Temporary Protection Centres				
PROVINCE	TEMPORARY PROTECTION CENTER	SHELTERING TYPE	TPC POPULATION	TOTAL POPULATION
HATAY	Altınöz 1	263 Units	1.331 Syrian	15.473
	Altınöz 2	622 Tents	2.935 Syrian	
	Yayladağı 1	236 Tents	2.730 Syrian	
	Yayladağı 2	310 Units	3.167 Syrian	
	Apaydın	510 Tents	5.310 Syrian	
GAZİANTEP	İslahiye 1	1.181 Containers	8.420 Syrian	51.148
	İslahiye 2	1.898 Tents	10.512 Syrian	
	Karkamış	2.364 Units	9.548 Iraqi	
	Nizip 1	1.686 Tents	7.229 Syrian	
	Nizip 2	1.858 Tents	10.554 Syrian	
ŞANLIURFA	Ceylanpınar	938 Containers	4.885 Syrian	109.673
	Akçakale	4.771 Tents	22.079 Syrian	
	Harran	5.000 Tents	29.418 Syrian	
	Viranşehir	2.000 Containers	14.033 Syrian	
	Suruç	4.100 Tents	18.195 Syrian	
KİLİS	Öncüpınar	7.000 Tents	25.948 Syrian	33.783
	Elbeyli Beşiriyiye	2.063 Containers	10.402 Syrian	
MARDİN	Midyat	3.592 Containers	23.381 Syrian	13.856
	Nusaybin	1.300 Tents	3.135 Syrian	
	Derik	3.270 Units	1.734 Iraqi	
KAHRAMANMARAŞ	Merkez	2.100 Units	8.987 Syrian	18.176
OSMANİYE	Cevdetiye	3.684 Tents	18.176 Syrian	9.367
ADİYAMAN	Merkez	2.012 Tents	9.367 Syrian	9.997
ADANA	Sançam	2.260 Tents	9.997 Syrian	10.787
MALATYA	Beydağı	2.162 Tents	10.787 Syrian	7.865
		2.083 Containers	7.865 Syrian	

While the camps provide high standards of services (sheltering, health, education, nutrition etc.) : the high number of refugees settled in urban areas lead to enhanced challenges, notably in reaching out to population and vulnerable cases and in facilitating the access to services.

⁷ <https://www.afad.gov.tr/EN/IcerikDetay1.aspx?ID=16&IcerikID=848>

In term of social needs of Syrians in Turkey, priorities are unanimously acknowledged to be an enhanced access to social services, means to sustain self-sufficient living along with support to Turkey's and its citizens in coping with the economic and social strain of hosting Syrian population.

Although free of charge access to social services and working permit are granted through national legislation, a major stake remain in the practical implementation of such measures. The Ministry of National Education considers that out of the 589,500 school-age Syrian children in Turkey, up to 250,000 would be currently enrolled in schools with an approximate additional 137,650 plan to be enrolled by mid-2016⁸. In 2013, a national need-assessment highlighted that only 60% of the out of camps Syrian population was accessing Turkish health services and that 54 percent had difficulties accessing medication. This situation is mainly due to lack of information, inability of communicating in Turkish⁹. In both education and health sectors, Turkish citizens have reported suffering from strained social services, in a greater extent in the Southeastern region of Turkey.

The employment and access to livelihood means remained a major issue as in the Southeast Anatolia region, the major source of households' income was reported to be savings, selling assets and remittances. Those means of living after several years of stay in Turkey are reaching to an end. In addition informal work and situations of exploitation were reported which was also of concern for some Turkish citizens due to the potential competition in the labour market¹⁰.

4.2. From Humanitarian Approach to Employment Regulation and Support to Turkish Host Communities

While the different actors involved (Government of Turkey, UN agencies, international and local NGOs, municipalities) first adopted a humanitarian approach to answer the needs of Syrians, the different actors' approach has now evolved acknowledging that the stay of Syrians in Turkey needs to be planned on a longer run.

Throughout this crisis, the Government of Turkey provided high-level standard emergency response (notably in camps' settings). Along the run of the migratory influx, the Government's policies has adapted to the needs' changes of Syrian population and has gradually set up necessary legal framework and developed a system of institutions, coordination mechanisms and legal tools. The Government's approach to consider Syrian population as protected "guests" settled in the middle-term on its territory that shall be prepared to return home once the conflict ends¹¹.

In this line, Syrians in Turkey are under Temporary Protection, a legal status ensuring them *non-refoulement* principle, legal stay in Turkey for a temporary duration¹² and granting free of charge access to health and education public institutions. To this set of rights and duties were recently added the approval by Council of Ministers and enactment of Temporary Protection's secondary regulation allowing Syrians to apply for working permits in Turkey with specific regulations according

⁸ World Bank, 2015

⁹ AFAD, 2013

¹⁰ World Bank, 2015

¹¹ World Bank, 2015

¹² This duration is not defined in the law and will be terminated when decided by the Government of Turkey.

to labour sectors¹³. This measure should allow the Syrian population to increase its ability to be self-sufficient.

The access to employment is also understood as a way to turn the presence of Syrian refugees into opportunity for Turkey, as they will contribute to the economic growth by working. In complementarity to this new employment regulation, international actors' actions are converging into increasing the social inclusion needs of Syrians through programs oriented towards development and support to Turkish host communities. One of the major step in this approach was the EU-Turkey Summit that took place in November 2015 and which decided on an Agreement¹⁴ involving new funds dedicated to development in neighboring countries with a specific focus on education, local development and resilience programs in Turkey.

5. Municipalities and Syrian migratory influx to Turkey

Field research and interviews show that municipalities are at the same time directly affected by the crisis and have been active in providing services but remain under acknowledged in the humanitarian and development aid system.

5.1. Typology of municipalities and local governments in Turkey

Municipalities of Turkey have jurisdiction power over urban areas populated of 5,000 inhabitants and more. There are 1,395 municipalities in Turkey and they are recognized through their legal status and duties as the main actor of the local governance.

Two other size-related lower and upper levels of the local governance exist in Turkey : villages and metropolitan municipalities.

Less than 5,000 inhabitants are legally entitled as villages, they are governed by an elected representative named *muhtar* with executive powers on service-delivery over the area and central government representatives for the locality.

The Metropolitan Municipality is an umbrella structure overseeing district municipalities (at least 3 per metropolitan municipality). It plans the overall coordination and planning of the urban area and undertakes major and cross-cutting urban services. Since the Metropolitan Law's amendment of 2012, the total number of Metropolitan Municipalities in Turkey is 30.

Municipalities and local authorities are entitled to establish union of local authorities to undertake common services and to encourage cooperative activities amongst them. The unions enjoy the authority, powers and rights of municipalities and other local authorities. Such unions may focus on a specific joint service (such as the operation of a sanitary landfills, waste-management etc.), seek to establish a country-wide network on a specific topic or operate on the basis of a specific province or a geographical regional for advocacy or similar purposes. The country-wide network of

¹³ The regulation was released in the Official Gazette on 15 January 2015 (Muhasebe, 2016). The release of this legislation was awaiting for several months due to on-going discussions regarding the challenge of setting-up an employment policy beneficial for Turkey's labour market (World Bank, 2015). The amount of foreigners under temporary protection cannot exceed 10%. Seasonal working refugees in the stockbreeding field and agriculture will be exempt of working permit.

¹⁴ Council of the European Union, November 29 2015

municipalities, established in mid-1940s with the status of an NGO (“Association”), was converted in 2002 into the Union of Municipalities of Turkey and was established as a public body which represents all municipalities (on the basis of “compulsory” membership) in the country¹⁵.

Special Provincial Administrations are the provincial administrative divisions of the central government. There is one Special Provincial Administration per province and they are composed of three organs: a provincial general council (elected organ), executive committee and governor. Within executive committees, directorates representing ministries implement the decisions taken at the national level.

5.2. Financial Autonomy and Resources of Municipalities

Revenues of municipalities of Turkey are generated through two sources : (1) allocation by central government, including the shares from national taxes revenues, financial assistance by central government, loans and grants ; (2) locally-generated revenues, including taxes, fees and user charges, contribution to infrastructural investments, income from municipal assets, revenues from entrepreneurial activities, and other income¹⁶. Local taxes remain a way lower share of municipal budgets which mainly rely on national transfers.

The transfer and allocation system from national governments to municipalities in Turkey is based on grants and shared revenues (specific percentages from the general budget tax revenues such as income and consumption taxes) that are set by the central government. Certain criteria such as population, acreage number of villages in the city, rural population and city development index are used for distribution of transfers among local governments. Municipalities can engage in domestic and foreign borrowing. Municipal borrowing is, in principle capped in proportion to annual revenues. Foreign borrowing is subject to approval by the Treasury and it is heavily concentrated on metropolitan municipalities. Municipalities have high rates of indebtedment notably to meet their new infrastructural needs¹⁷.

In line with the pre-accession status of Turkey, many municipalities set up European Union and International Relations Directorates. A part of the work of those departments is to seek international and European Union project funds.

In practice, financial, service-delivery and development-project capacities of municipalities vary widely from a municipality to another. Geographically, this differentiation is also related to the different levels of development existing between the different regions of Turkey.

The main difficulty of municipalities of Turkey is the access to funds and the lack of qualified staff and expertise in project development.

5.3. Typology of Syrian Settlement in Municipalities of Turkey

Last released official figures of Syrians by cities based on official registration figures date back to February 2015¹⁸ at a time when the total number of Syrian population in Turkey was 1,650,000. Local authorities usually through their own communication channels and assessment are able to provide

¹⁵ UCLG-MEWA, 2013

¹⁶ ibd.

¹⁷ GOLD II, 2010

¹⁸ Figures published in M. Erdoğan, 2015

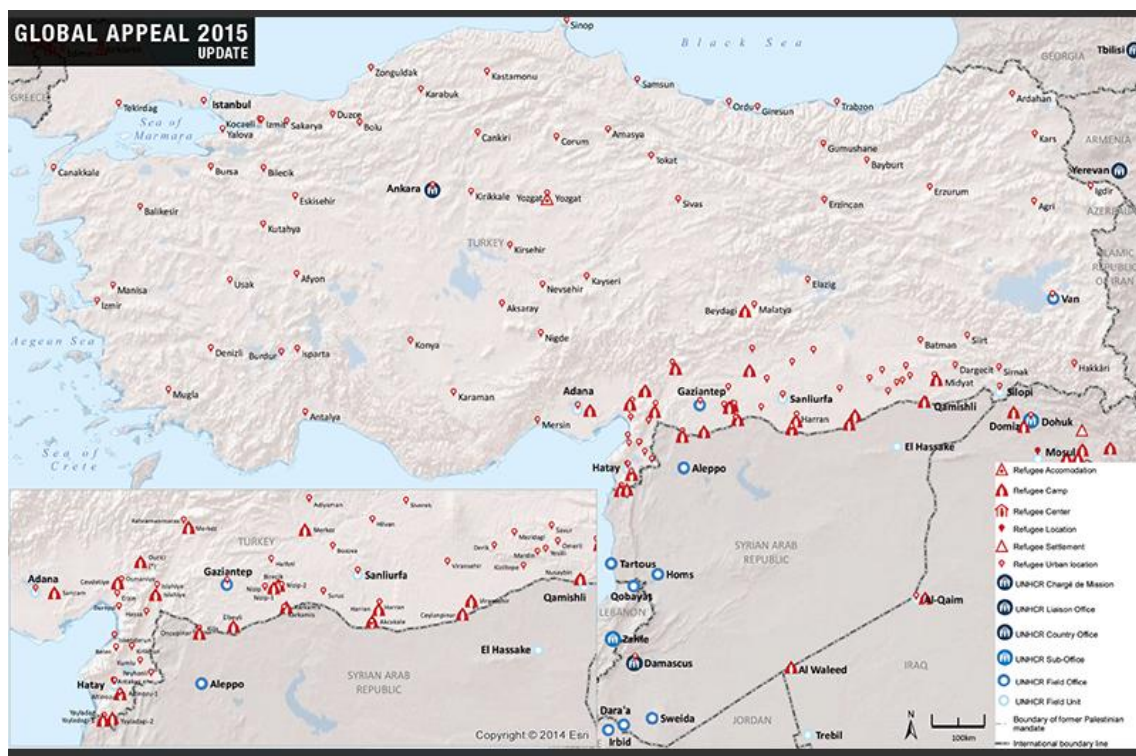
estimate numbers and NGOs mention a necessity to upgrade official numbers from 15 to 25% in order to get figures including the Syrians not registered under temporary protection (whether they are holding residency permit, working permit or no documentation from the Turkish state). Hence, the figures of refugees per city in this report, are provided as range estimates (example: 300,000-350,000 - the lower number is the last official release of 2015 and the highest one is the higher estimate encountered throughout interviews of local officials and NGOs; when only one number is displayed, this is the sole 2015 official release as no other estimate was collected through interviews) encompassing the different sources and interviews used for this study.

The cities of Turkey hosting the highest numbers of out of camps Syrians (by top-down ranking) are: Istanbul (305,000-400,000), Gaziantep (238,000-350,000), Şanlıurfa (250,000-400,000), Hatay (330,000), Adana (111,000), Kilis (90,000-120,000), Mersin (114,000), Mardin (78,000), Izmir (73,000-100,000), Kahramanmaraş (52,000).

Although those cities host the highest number of Syrian citizens, many smaller municipalities also received an important share of migratory influx proportionally to their size.

TABLE 2: MAPPING OF SYRIAN SETTLEMENTS IN TURKEY

Source: UNHCR Country Operation Profile, <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e48e0fa7f.html>



5.3.1 Anatolia Southeastern Region of Turkey

Since 2011 up to now, the Anatolia Southeastern Region of Turkey remains the primary area hosting Syrians. About 1.25 million of Syrian (half of the total population of Syrian in Turkey) would be settled in the area.

Some major cities of the region such as Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa and Hatay attract Syrians due to their economic opportunities, geographical and cultural proximity and existing social networks.

Municipal officials reported about a particularity of the region: smaller cities host a higher proportional number of Syrians, it is the case for Kilis which hosts more Syrians than Turkish inhabitants (approximate of 120,000 Syrians for 90,000 Turkish citizens). Social issues and social tensions are proportionally higher in this region. The ratio of Syrian for Turkish population is 0.95 in Kilis ; in Urfa it is 0.20 while in Mardin and Gaziantep it is 0.12.

While municipalities of Anatolia Southeastern Region of Turkey were the first to receive a population with humanitarian needs, they are now directly facing the issues related to longer-term settlements (strain on municipal services, need to develop social cohesion programs etc.) . In Gaziantep, the Syrian population has led the total city's population to be already higher than the population figures planned in the Metropolitan Municipality 2036 strategic plan.

5.3.2 Coastal Cities

Cities along the coast, Mersin, Mardin and Izmir also welcome high population of Syrian nationals, due to their geographic position and possibility to transit to Europe through the sea. Those municipalities welcome a population of migrants “on the move” with specific features in their settlement in the city, as many of them are only transiting by the city for a time often uncertain.

5.3.3 Istanbul and Marmara Region

Due to its concentration of economic opportunities and migration established social networks, Istanbul attracted a high number of Syrians. The municipalities of the Marmara region, also reported welcoming a high number of Syrians proportionally to their size.

5.3.4 Other Regions of Turkey

In 2014, official released numbers were highlighting that only 9 provinces of Turkey out of the total 81, namely Tunceli, Bayburt, Ardahan, Iğdır, Sinop, Kastamonu, Erzincan, Giresun, Gümüşhane, were not hosting Syrian population¹⁹. In 2016, it can be easily estimated, due to the exponential rise of Syrian population's number in Turkey, that Syrian population is present in each province of Turkey. Also, although other provinces welcome lower number of Syrians, municipalities of every province of Turkey proportionally to their size and capacities had to deal with the settlement of Syrian population within their jurisdiction.

5.4. Impact on Cities and Action of Municipalities of Turkey

In 2013 throughout the reporting mission of UCLG-MEWA²⁰, it was noticed that municipalities of South East Antolia Region in Turkey were only beginning to feel the strain of Syrian population thanks to national government's support. However at the time of this report, national government support was punctual and not yet framed into a national coordination process. Some municipalities developed in an *ad hoc* fashion their own social infrastructures. It is the case of the Metropolitan Municipality of Gaziantep, among the first municipalities to foster the setup of a Syrian school within

¹⁹ Erdoğan, 2014

²⁰ UCLG-MEWA, 2013.

its city. The Union of Municipalities of Turkey was also active in providing material support such as food, aid in kind, garbage trucks and ambulances.

Considering that the Syrian population settled within the municipalities' territory was falling under their legal responsibility, some municipalities along the years developed infrastructures and social services for Syrian population. Mayor and political will are identified as important factor in fostering the development of such services.

Municipalities which developed social services towards the Syrian population had to face the challenge of developing *ad hoc* solutions, with restrained support from humanitarian actors and to cope with the related difficulties linked to a rapid increase of service-delivery.

"We are managing two States" said smiling the head of Social Services Department of Gaziantep Municipality, after detailing their current services for Syrian population and while answering the mobile phone through which a voice announced him that the representative of a Turkish association was waiting to be received.

Some municipalities have reported facing the difficulties listed below due to the migratory influx of Syrian refugees to Turkey. Those challenges appeared to be widely differing from a municipality to another, depending on the share of Syrians settled, their project development capacity and funding. As city-managers, municipalities did not deal solely with the direct needs of Syrian population but also with some interrelated issues of the urban life and coexistence with citizens of Turkey.

Difficulties reported by municipalities:

- Strain on infrastructures (water, electricity, waste management)
- Strain on pre-existing social services infrastructures
- Raise in housing markets' prices
- Helplessness in answering other social needs of Syrians
- Social tensions with the city-dwellers of Turkey, discontent due to the feeling of unfair direction of social services to the sole Syrian population and competition on labour market
- Language barriers stopping them to provide support to Syrians
- Difficulties in developing adapted psycho-social services

The following social activities and solutions were developed by municipalities as a response to the settlement of Syrians in their city:

- Aid-in kind: several municipalities have reported distributing food baskets, blankets, clothing and related goods to the most disadvantaged families.
- Access to information and social services: several municipalities have a role of facilitator for Syrians to access public institutions' in their city, notably for health and education. Municipalities reported having been reached by Syrians requesting information on how to get cured for example. The multiplication of those requests along the time led to the creation of informal referral system to hospitals, schools and other public institutions. The municipality establishes contact with hospitals, schools and related provincial directorates first on an *ad hoc* basis and it then becomes a regular practice leading sometimes to institutionalization of social services. A few municipalities developed their own social

services' infrastructures or established necessary collaboration to do so (establishing a municipal NGO or working with NGOs). Municipalities also reported providing information about a wide-range of legal processes (whether access to documentation in Turkey or process related to the life in the city).

- Dealing with social tensions: some municipalities reported their needs to deliver aid at night, in order to avoid to raise tensions among its citizens. Some municipalities decided to open social services' infrastructures both benefiting the Syrian population and Turkish population of the city.

Throughout those actions, it can be noticed that municipalities both play a role of actor of the humanitarian governance (by distributing first necessary goods) and social inclusion fostering actor, by easing the access to social services, to city's life information and by dealing with on-going social tensions. While some municipalities simply undertook punctual actions with limited scope, some others decided to develop infrastructures of social services for Syrian citizens.

5.5. Best Practice: a Municipality which Developed Social Services Infrastructures for Syrians - Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality

The Metropolitan Municipality of Gaziantep developed the following social services for the Syrian population settled in the city:

Within the Health and Social Services Directorate of Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality:

Social Services Sub-Directorate

In Perlikaya, Bekirbey and Hacıbaba neighborhoods, there are 3 public soup kitchens (active on Monday, Wednesday and Friday), it provides 69,000 portions of food. Syrians and citizens of Turkey are both beneficiaries of the service.

In addition, several social services from the Metropolitan Municipality of Gaziantep access is open to Syrian nationals:

- Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality Women's Shelter welcomes women victim of violence in need of support including Syrian nationals.
- Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality Art and Vocational Courses Centers (Gazmek) is currently expanding its services to Syrian nationals.
- Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipal Hospital and the medical centers provided health care to about 30.000 Syrians free of charge and a psycho-social therapy is planned to be established.
- Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality also set up the Social Research Center (SARMER) developing status and needs analysis and analyze implemented social services policy and adapt them according to needs and emergency situations interventions.

Migration Affairs Sub-Directorate - *The Migration Affairs Sub-Directorate of the Metropolitan Municipality of Gaziantep is a municipal innovation which allows to a reinforced city-scale migration-related activities management and vision.*



Within the Metropolitan Municipality of Gaziantep, there are two “Information and Education Centers for Syrian Guests”. In those centers, Turkish language education is provided to about 1,400 Syrian children including Turkish language education and education based on Syrian Interim Government syllabus. Up to now 2.990 students accessed education.

In 2015, Ensar Community Center provided social, health, psychological, legal, education, advising and coordination services to 1,016 Syrian guests.

The Metropolitan Municipality of Gaziantep is among the very active municipalities in Turkey in developing social services infrastructures for the Syrian population settled in the city. In its 2016 provisional budget, the Metropolitan Municipality of Gaziantep foresees an estimate spending of 1.850.000 Turkish Liras (USD 609.786) to activities dedicated or including Syrian nationals.

Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality considers that although it developed its own social infrastructures for the Syrian population, the strain is too important and there is a need for additional funding. The municipality addressed its priorities as follow:

1- Housing

A large housing project is currently being developed in Gaziantep (to host 50.000 people) but due to legal constraints, Syrians are not among the beneficiaries.

2- Education

Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality considers that out of 92.000 Syrian children settled in Gaziantep only 55.000 would currently access education. Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality is able to provide qualified educational staff from the municipality and material, but new centers for education are necessary.

3- Community Centers

Ensar Community Center was developed by Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality, although it serves an approximate 1,000 Syrian guests, is not sufficient anymore. It is due to its location out of highly populated Syrian areas hardly accessible from some other neighborhoods and its services are limited to advising. There is a need for new community centers providing sport, cultural, educational and social activities along with basic services and advising services.

4- Transportation

Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality is providing transportation to 1,300 Syrian children going to 2 different schools. However, municipalities’ transportation are currently strained as they are undertaking 4 services per day.

5.6. Challenges Faced by Municipalities in Developing Social Services for Syrians

Municipalities developing social services for Syrians reported facing the following issues:

- Developing social services for Syrians settled in their city creates a strain on municipalities' budget
- Municipalities remain uncertain whether delivering social aid for Syrians fall within their legal scope of work. Some of them refer to an article of the municipal law which indicates that every person living on the city's territory falls within the scope of the municipality's responsibility to deliver social services. Hence, Syrian population settled within their territory can receive municipal aid.
- Lack of knowledge regarding Syrian population settled in municipalities' territory
- Difficulties to establish coordination with other municipalities and other actors, to share data to establish common standards. On this topic, the necessity to establish a common database was repeatedly pointed out.

Legal Framework for Developing Services for Syrian Population

5393 Municipal Law ²¹

Article 13-

Everyone is a townsman of the town in which he lives. Townsmen shall be entitled to take part in municipal decision making and services, receive information on municipal activities and benefit from the aids distributed by the municipal administration. Aids shall be provided in such a way as not to injure human dignity.

The municipality shall make necessary efforts to develop social and cultural relations among townsmen and preserve cultural values. It shall take steps to ensure that universities, public professional organizations, trade unions, civil society organizations and experts take part in such efforts.

Every individual residing or being present or having connections within the boundaries of a municipality shall comply with the municipality's lawful decisions, orders and announcements and pay municipal taxes, duties, charges, fees and contributions.

Article 38 –

The Mayor can set up a budget for social aid directed to the poor and indigents settled in its district.

In order to cope with this last point some actions of communication and information exchange are organized. It is the case of the Union of Municipalities of the Marmara Region which has organized in November 2015, a workshop with the UNHCR Istanbul gathering Istanbul Vice-Governor, Istanbul DGMM representative, 21 municipalities' officials, academicians and researchers in order to discuss and share issues faced by municipalities towards Syrian population in their territory.

²¹ Unofficial translation of the article 13 of the municipal law.

6. Actors of the Syrian Crisis and Coordination Process: Municipalities are Marginally Involved

6.1. Coordination Process

Contrary to Jordan and Lebanon, Turkey's response to the Syrian migratory influx management to its territory was a government-led process which led to the setting up of coordination mechanisms, however municipalities remain involved in a marginal fashion within those coordination mechanisms²².

6.1.1 Government of Turkey-led Coordination of Actors

From the governmental side, several public institutions handled policies' development and humanitarian aid related to the Syrian migratory influx. Since mid-2015, enhanced coordination mechanisms were set up providing new schemes for multi-actor coordination not only within the government but also involving UN agencies, non-governmental actors and local authorities.

Until 2015, a Coordinator Governor was based in Gaziantep (South-Eastern Turkey) and was coordinating the affairs related to Syrians. In July 2015, the Office for Migration Coordination of the Prime Ministry was set up and strengthened national coordination mechanisms. In October 2015, the Syrian Refugee's Commission was established by the Prime Ministry. It is divided in 6 working groups (education, health, economy-labor-development, human aid, religious services and religious education, and finally social support and integration). Each working group aims at coordinating the development of activities among ministries' (Ministries of Health, of Education, of Family and Social Policies, of Labor and of Social Security, Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of Development), public institutions, NGOs and UN agencies. The Union of Municipalities of Turkey is involved in this mechanism process, as the main representatives of municipalities.

Similar provincial-level coordination mechanisms are being held by Special Provincial Administration and AFAD. They are attended by provincial directorates, UN field agencies, NGOs and on a punctual basis municipalities active on the Syrian issue. It seems that municipalities' attendance is partly dependant on the relationships of municipalities with Special Provincial Administration and AFAD²³. In the cities of Şanlıurfa and Kilis, municipalities have claimed being particularly well involved in the AFAD-led coordination process.

Municipal officials from South East Anatolia Region were reported to regularly express the will to be active, notably on the topic of school transportation. However due to lack of means, it is most of the time not leading to concrete follow-ups.

The Directorate General on Migration Management (DGMM) is also gradually involving municipalities. As matter of example, the conference entitled "Irregular Migration in Turkey" which took place in 4-5 December 2015, had a panel dedicated to local authorities. Although, the topic was

²² World Bank, 2016

²³ Interview with UN official

irregular migration, a wide part of participants' discussions and presentations were centered around Syrian population in Turkey.

6.1.2. United Nations Coordination Process

UNDP (United Nations Development Programs) and UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) coordinates the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) which sets the objectives and priorities of the humanitarian and development activities in Turkey and address its funding requirements to international donors. In the 2016-2017, the 3RP coordinates the activities of United Nations Agencies (FAO, ILO IOM, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, WFP and WHO) and more than 200 partners (NGOs, foundations and private sector actors) under UNHCR and UNDP's coordination. When the plan was launched in 2012, 34 organizations were registered as partners of UN agencies.

The plan is divided into six sector working groups: Protection (UNHCR), Basic Needs and Essential Services (IOM, UNHCR), Education (UNICEF, UNHCR), Health (UNHCR, WHO), Food (WFP) and Livelihoods (UNDP, UNHCR). Responsibles for the UN response meet bi-weekly in Ankara and monthly in Gaziantep to share information and report on achievements towards the 3RP in Turkey²⁴.

In line with the strong ownership of the Turkish government over the Syrian crisis and the resilience-based approach, the 3RP and UN agencies emphasizes their support to the central government institutions, AFAD, DGMM, line ministries in development of Turkey's own national humanitarian and migratory system. The Directorate General on Migration Management (DGMM) gradually launched a registration database, GOC-NET, on 18 May 2015, a platform for streamlining all refugees and asylum-seekers into a national database system. This process used to be handled by the UNHCR which is now supporting the DGMM in this process. In a similar line, UNDP and UNHCR currently supports the Government of Turkey in developing a National Plan that will gather national institutions and NGOs in order to set up priorities and coordinated action.

6.2. Typology of Cooperation with Municipalities

Within those coordination process, some cooperation between government, United Nations agencies and NGOs could be identified. However, they remain marginal.

6.2.1. Government and Municipalities Cooperation

The Government of Turkey has provided punctual support to municipalities.

In the early years of the migratory influx to Turkey, AFAD had acknowledged municipalities of South East Anatolia as frontline actors by providing them extensive support (notably in term of transportation means, ambulance, fire truck etc.)²⁵.

It appears that although there is currently no legal framework for governmental support to municipalities, it appears that public bodies and municipalities developed on a punctual and *ad hoc* basis projects. The development of those projects is highly dependant on the willingness of the municipality to be active along with the relationship of the municipality with state bodies.

²⁴ UNDP, 3RP, 2016-2017

²⁵ UCLG, 2013



The Central government has provided funds through different channels to municipalities (AFAD, the Turkish Red Crescent, Ministry of Interior); however this support remains punctual.

As a matter of example, the Metropolitan Municipality of Gaziantep received a support of 20 million of Turkish Lira (6.83 million USD). This support comes from the special activity funds developed by AFAD which allows actors to inform about their planned activities for Syrian population and get additional budget. However in practice, actors often inform AFAD about its activities after they are undertaken.

6.2.2. Best Practice : “Healthy Mothers, Healthy Children” Project - Provincial Directorates and Municipalities Cooperating - Gaziantep and Sultanbeyli

Gaziantep

The Family and Social Policies Provincial Directorate, the Provincial National Education Directorate and the Metropolitan Municipality of Gaziantep signed a protocol to set-up the project “Healthy Mother, Healthy Children” providing Turkish classes to Syrian women, and training modules on “School and Families”, “Children and Adolescent Health” and “Pregnancy Health and Motherhood Health” along with classes on “City Orientation” and “Values”. In addition, activities are planned for 0-6 years old children.

Sultanbeyli

A special agreement signed in 2014 between Sultanbeyli Provincial Governorate and the Municipality Social Aid Department of Sultanbeyli Municipality, Sultanbeyli Provincial Mufti Office led to the distribution of 390 stoves and 1300 tons of coals to families. 4 Syrian translators and 7 Syrians shippers were employed for this distribution. In 2015, 1500 tons of coals and 700 stoves were delivered.

In addition, the Government of Turkey throughout the process of strategies’ definition and coordination with international actors, has oriented some funds of United Nations and international donors to support municipalities in managing the Syrian migratory influx.

6.2.3. United Nations Agencies, International Donors and Municipalities Cooperation

In their great majority, municipalities of Turkey were not involved in United Nations agencies funded programs which usually direct their funds towards international and local NGOs or through its own agencies as programs’ implementers. However since 2014, the presence of municipalities in international funded projects although remaining marginal, gradually increased.

While there was no mention of municipalities in the successive Syria Regional Responses for Turkey from 2012 to 2014, starting from the third Syria Regional Response of 2014 and in the following Refugee and Resilience Regional Plan of Turkey²⁶ (up to the last one of 2016-2017), municipalities are included as an actor to be supported for improving the livelihood and the basic service delivery of both Syrians and host communities.

²⁶ the last one being the 2016-2017

The Syria Regional Response Plan 5 (2013) mentions municipalities among its objectives “ The [upcoming] RRP6 objectives are designed to ensure meaningful participation of communities, promote community-based protection and provide support to vulnerable individuals, host communities and municipalities, complementing or supporting national government-led responses.”

This appearance of municipalities’ in the 3RP is linked to both an acknowledgement of the need to support municipalities by the Government of Turkey and UN agencies’. AFAD was among the first actor to mention them as relevant actors and requested UNDP to support municipalities through provision of fire-trucks²⁷. Along the time, UNDP programs were extended in order to support municipalities in a sustainable way in their service-delivery both to Syrian and Turkish nationals.

6.2.4. Best Practice: Supporting Municipalities in Service-Delivery - UNDP

Under the UNDP-UNHCR Agreement on “Mitigating the Impact of the Syrian Crisis on Host Communities in South East of Turkey”, UNDP developed a range of projects directly supporting several municipalities of the South East Anatolia Region in waste management and vocational training. The project involves several other local partners such as Chamber of Industry and Regional Development Agencies. Gaziantep and Şanlıurfa Metropolitan Municipalities along with Kilis Municipality are entitled as project beneficiaries.

This project is funded by European Union with a budget of USD 5,7 million. The project has started in July 2015 and planned to be completed in January 2017.

Aside from UNDP “Mitigating the Impact of Syrian Crisis on South East Anatolia Region” programs, two cooperations between United Nations agencies and municipalities developed in a bottom-up fashion could be identified. In the two cases, the municipalities were the primary actors in starting the social service infrastructures:

In Gaziantep, the temporary education school that was set up by the municipality received punctual support from UNICEF through furnitures, stationery kits, school bags, computer and photocopy machines. It was part of the provincial education plan and was not budgeted as an activity.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the municipality of Küçükçekmece jointly developed a computer-literacy class for Syrians. While the International Organization for Migration sought funds from the Netherlands government (which were used for the provision of electronic material and the salary of a translator), the municipality provided infrastructure and hired a teacher. The municipality was the one to reach out to IOM and provided information to undertake the necessary field assessments. The project had an approximate total of USD 22,000.

In addition, the UNHCR Istanbul regularly organizes visits and meetings with municipalities of the Marmara region.

Early 2016, a fund was issued by JICA (USD 400 millions) to answer infrastructural needs of municipalities of South East Anatolia Region impacted by the Syrian population. It was attributed to

²⁷ UNDP interview

Iller Bank²⁸ in order to issue low rate loans to municipalities. Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality, Şanlıurfa Metropolitan Municipality and Kilis Municipality are currently preparing projects' proposals.

6.2.5. NGOs and Municipalities Cooperation

Throughout the interviews, it could be noticed that cooperation between municipalities and NGOs is not a common practice. While the majority of interviewed NGOs acknowledged that they had barely contacts with municipalities, some of them said that they had tried to reach out to municipalities. However, the contact was difficult to establish. On the other side, some municipalities consider that a high number of NGOs are visiting their office but no concrete follow-ups take place. This is particularly striking in the case of Gaziantep. From the beginning of the conflict, the city quickly became a strategic settling base for NGOs and UN agencies cross-border operations inside Syria. Along the years, NGOs gradually started to develop their activities in order to reach out Syrian population settled in Gaziantep. There are currently approximately 50 to 57 NGOs settled in Gaziantep, however links and relations with municipalities remain punctual and did not lead to development of collaboration.

A blocking factor in cooperation that was identified by NGOs is political cleavages.

Throughout the study, only 5 cases of cooperation between municipalities and NGOs could be identified. A typology of the different forms of cooperation between NGOs and municipalities could be established (ranked from lower to upper degree of involvement) :

- **Information:** The lower level of municipalities' involvement is non-governmental organizations informing municipalities before setting up a project in their district and/or consulting municipalities in order to know where populations in need are settled.
- **Informal capacity building:** currently meetings between non governmental organizations and municipalities are increasing. Those meetings lead to informal capacity building activities: municipalities provide information and knowledge on the difficulties they meet and NGOs provide trainings on humanitarian principles and concepts used in their work (such as gender-based violence, human rights etc.).
- **Joint activities:** it happens that non governmental actors and municipalities hold common activities, and bring together components from their respective activities (such as participants or the municipality providing its infrastructure). This also results in informal capacity-building.

7. Fundings' screening: Municipalities' Under-Represented in Funds' Distribution

The government of Turkey has spent 8 billion of dollars²⁹ in humanitarian and development aid since the beginning of the crisis.

The European Commission is a major donor involved in Syria's neighboring countries in humanitarian aid delivery since the beginning of the conflict, through funding of humanitarian aid and support to

²⁸ The Bank of Municipalities and Local Governments in Turkey

²⁹ Estimation by the Government of Turkey. AFAD, 2016

the government of Turkey in refugees' management. Since 2014, EU support has been primarily focused on off-camp refugees. The European Union is the leading donor on the Syrian crisis with 325 millions of dollars (51 millions from European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO) ; 167 millions from EU Trust Fund (created in 2014), 6 millions from EIDHR (the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights) and 75 millions from the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA).

The total expenses from foreign donors is estimated to be \$455 million of USD³⁰. Out of this amount, 11,5 million of USD were spent for projects benefiting municipalities³¹. It represents only 2,5% of the total amount of expenses. The fund recently issued by JICA (USD 400 million, not yet allocated; not included in the above calculation) is the first wide-scale program aiming at supporting municipalities. It goes along with the current increased presence of municipalities in the Refugee and Resilience Regional Plan and in United Nations programs.

From the government side, initiatives supporting municipalities have been multiplied. However, this did not yet led to insitutionalization of the support and full acknowledgement of municipalities as a key actor of migration management and social inclusion which shall be better participating in the current common efforts of resilience and sustainable development directed at Syrian population and Turkish host communities.

In addition, announced funds from European Union-Turkey joint Action Plan (a total of 3 billions announced) aim at fostering local development and social inclusion of refugees. A total of €140 million will be dedicated to education programmes, €130 million to resilience and local development programmes, €55 million to health programmes³² in Turkey. Mentioned beneficiaries and fund receivers are NGOs, government and ministries, municipalities are not listed among beneficiaries.

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**Middle Eastern Urban Forced Migrants' Social Inclusion
Policies Lebanon**

**The Role of Municipalities of Lebanon in
the Syrian Migratory Influx Management**



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1. Introduction

United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) is a world organization dedicated to promoting the values, objectives and interests of local and regional governments across the globe. It is the largest local governments' organization in the world, with a diverse membership that includes both individual cities and national associations of local governments.

As one of the eight sections of UCLG World Organization, United Cities and Local Governments, Middle East and West Asia Section (UCLG-MEWA) continues to serve its main principles of democracy, human rights, international solidarity, local governance and sustainable development from its headquarters in Istanbul, Turkey. The geographical region of UCLG-MEWA covers the following 15 countries: Afghanistan, Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Yemen; as well as Azerbaijan, Egypt, Libya, Pakistan, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Turkmenistan and Cameroon. (More detailed information at www.uclg-mewa.org).

Following the call of UCLG President in 2012 for international community solidarity's towards local governments dealing with Syrian refugees, UCLG Middle East Working Group along with an international delegation of elected officials, members and experts from the national associations of local governments from France, Turkey, the Netherlands and Canada, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality and UCLG-MEWA reported about municipalities coping with the influx of Syrian refugees in Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon (see the report "[Municipalities on the Frontline](#)").

UCLG-MEWA Committee on Social Inclusion developed with its city-members several projects in line with social inclusion needs of Syrians who were forced to leave their country to settle in one of Syria's neighboring countries. Along those activities and previous reporting mission, this report explores the role of municipalities of Lebanon in the management of the Syrian migratory influx and their role as humanitarian and migration management actors. The study also highlights some best practices developed by its city members. Throughout this report, UCLG-MEWA provides keys of understanding for the international community to dedicate an enhanced consideration to municipalities as migration management actors and their integration in the humanitarian governance scheme.

2. Executive summary

This report provides a critical overview of the Lebanese response to the arrivals of Syrian refugees. As Lebanon did not officially establish camps (like in Jordan or Turkey) and did not enact a comprehensive national policy, it was left to the Municipalities to cope with the new challenges. In May 2013, UCLG-MEWA pointed at the threat on local governance and called humanitarian actors to consider Lebanese municipalities in their response. This report reviews the current situation in the lights of these recommendations. Through interviews with various actors (municipal staff – NGOs – donors – UN agencies) and the financial tracking of the funding of the response, this report looked at how the different stakeholders are responding to the current challenges. Two and half year later, the pressures on the host communities are still high: water network, electricity, garbage collection, job market, and housing. Most of the refugees are living in distress conditions. The ratio of refugees per inhabitants is the highest in the world. And the concern for social stability has emerged in the

localities where tensions between refugees and host communities appeared. This reports shows that the importance of local governance in the response to the crisis has been acknowledged by the major donors. Donors and UN agencies have gradually involved municipalities in their interventions, but these partnerships are often very fragile. Most municipalities remain institutions in need of support to strengthen their financial resources and technical capacities in order to become efficient humanitarian partners.

3. Another year into the crisis: Three key points to understand the situation in January 2016

3.1. The regional focus on “social cohesion” and its Lebanese translation

One in three people in Lebanon is a refugee. The majority of them live among the host communities.³³

No country in the world experiences a ratio of refugees like Lebanon. In 2011, the country kept its doors open to the persons fleeing Syria, like it did 60 years ago for the Palestinian refugees. Complex internal political cleavages and regional geopolitical issues led the Government of Lebanon not to set up comprehensive policies or camps for Syrian refugees. An important debate was the duration of the stay of Syrians and how to avoid their permanent settlement. Lebanon also currently hosts thousands of individuals fleeing violence and persecutions in Iraq, Ethiopia, Eritrea, or Soudan, but does not recognize them as refugees. As opposed to Jordan and Turkey, Lebanon has not signed the 1951 International Convention on Refugees and only acknowledges the presence of “displaced persons from Syria”. Since January 2015, the borders are closed between Lebanon and Syria and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is not allowed to register new refugees. International humanitarian actors first introduced the concern for social cohesion in the 2013 regional response framework³⁴. Consequently, a chapter on “social cohesion” appeared in the *Lebanon roadmap of priority interventions for stabilization from the Syrian conflict* (released in October 2013). However, it was quickly replaced by the more consensual need for “social stability”³⁵. In Lebanon, the programs and projects that fall under the tag “social stability” cover a wide range of activities: water pumps, solar cells, children playgrounds, and training for the local police.

3.2. The delivery of humanitarian aid widely ignored the state institutions

During the first years of the crisis, the Lebanese authorities were not seen as trustful and efficient partners by international aid providers. The resignation of the Lebanese government in March 2013,

³³ The official number of “displaced” individuals from Syria registered in Lebanon by the UNHCR reached 1,070,189 in December 2015 (UNHCR, online data portal <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=122>). However, it is estimated that 500,000 refugees from Syria live in the country without being registered. Lebanon also hosts 260,000 – 280,000 Palestinian refugees (UNWRA, “Unrwa in figures 2015” http://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/unrwa_in_figures_2015.pdf) and around 50,000 Iraqi and 800 Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers.

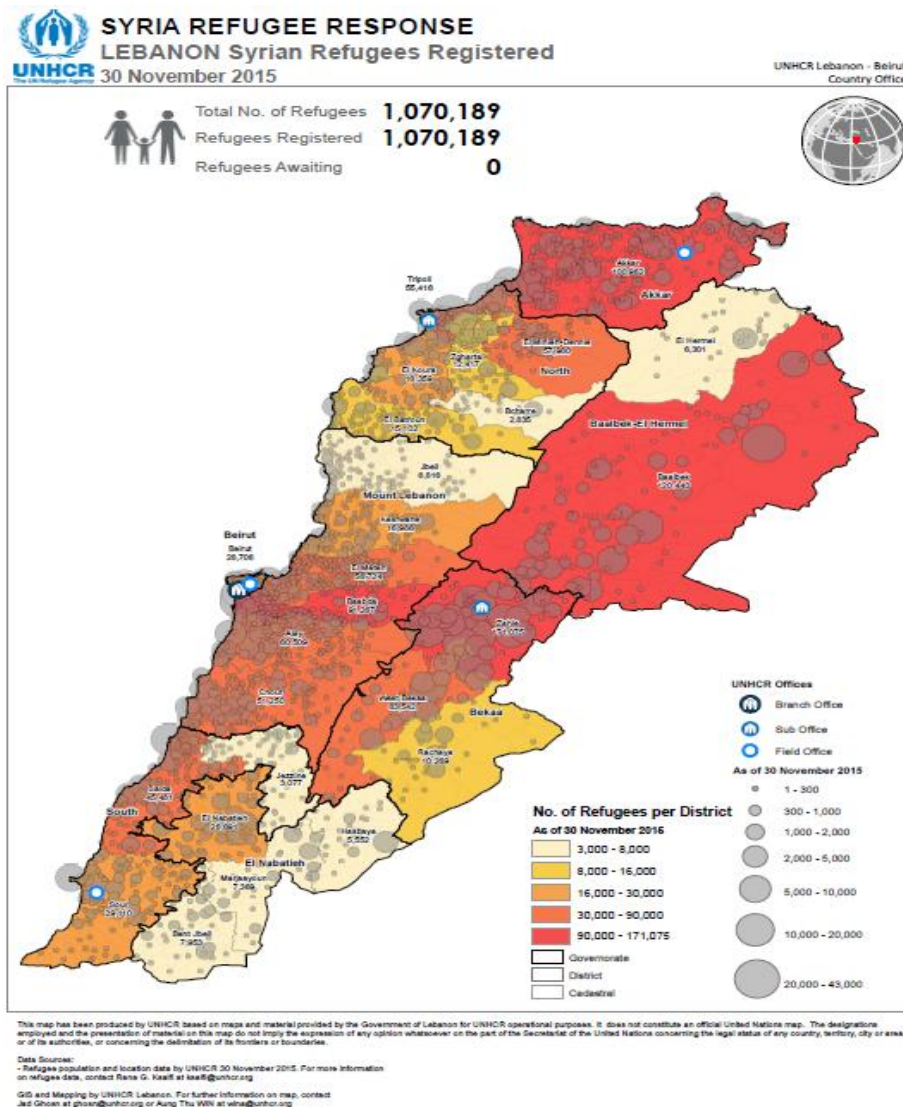
³⁴ It was first mentioned in the *Regional Response Plan 5* for the year 2013 (published in May 2013)

³⁵ Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) 2015-2016 and LCRP II 2016-2017.

the lack of elections since and cases of funds' mismanagement deterred the humanitarians to collaborate with the Lebanese institutions. The funding of the response, coming mainly from Western and Gulf states was almost entirely channeled to United Nations (UN) agencies and international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO).

Out of the \$ 3.33 billion that were allocated to Lebanon in the framework of the Regional Response Plan for the period 2012-2015 only 1.24% were transferred directly to the Lebanese authorities³⁶.

This approach should be understood in the context of the liberalization of the State since the 1990's. Since the end of the Lebanese Civil War, the State has largely privatized the provision of services. Today, the private actors and the local associations cater for most of the communities' needs: housing, schooling, access to basic services of water and electricity. There is no national mechanism of redistribution and significant territorial inequalities within the country. These inequalities were widened by the fact that the inflow of refugees did not reach equally all the regions and cities.



³⁶ Data retrieved from Financial Tracking Services UNOCHA
<https://fts.unocha.org/pageloader.aspx?page=special-syriancrisis>

In this context, the United Nations agencies and the International NGOs responded to the Syrian crisis without engaging with national institutions. They developed an independent system of aid distribution until very recently, when the Lebanese government decided to step in and take control over the humanitarian interventions³⁷.

3.3. Municipalities as the “new” relevant partners in the response to the Syrian crisis?

Municipalities in Lebanon have also been ignored by the international response plans for Lebanon. They are seen as weak and inefficient bodies facing many constraints: 57% of them do not have an administrative structure and 40% have only one employee who is sometimes not paid³⁸. They received almost no funding from foreign donors to deal with the new pressures brought by the refugees. However, during the year 2014, humanitarian actors operated a shift towards a development-oriented approach in which municipalities had a role to play. They started to include municipalities in their interventions.

“At the beginning the International NGOs were not working with us... but now they have to”

Vice mayor of municipality in the Beqaa Valley
(5,000 Lebanese residents, 20,000 Syrian refugees)

The shift can be first explained by the reactions of the municipal authorities, which began to prevent international actors to operate on within their jurisdiction without their consent. They called for more coordination and the transfers of resources. This shift also originated from the international donors and implementing partners. They are foreseeing a protracted crisis in Lebanon but also the reduction of the funding stream. Developing municipal capacities and local governance become a component of their exit strategy. Thus the UNHCR abandoned the “Quick Impact Projects” to launch together with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Lebanese Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA): the long-term “Lebanese Host Communities Support Projects”. The last Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan 2016-2017 (3RP) made the enhancement of local capacities its 2nd pillar, whereas it was barely mentioned the previous years.

4. Municipalities’ Response to the Syrian Migratory Influx

4.1. Extreme heterogeneity and variable resources to face the influx of refugees

Since 2011 municipalities have been on the frontline of the Syrian crisis, they had to cope with growing pressures on housing, waste collection, electricity grids, drinkable water resources, sewerage network, schooling and job provision. Municipalities focused their response mainly on:

- Garbage collection. Trash bags piling up in the streets appeared as the number one concern for mayors. They hired extra workers to collect solid waste. In the municipality of Marj, in the Beqaa Valley: “there were 15,000 Lebanese residents, now there are 20,000 Syrian, we are

³⁷ LCRP 2015-2016 and LCRP II 2016-2017.

³⁸ World Bank, *Systematic Country Diagnostic*, 2015.

almost twice more! We used to have one garbage truck, now we have three. We used to have 2 employees, now we have 6. And it is not enough!” (Vice Mayor of el Marj)

- And policing. Fears that refugees could be associated with armed groups inside Syria are well-spread among Lebanese residents³⁹. Refugees who could not renew their residency permit are especially targeted by the authorities. Following the repressive practices of the national Internal Security Forces (ISF), around 45 municipalities imposed temporary curfews on the Syrian⁴⁰. Yet, the majority of the municipalities approached the situation with pragmatic views. Most of the mayors increased the police force in their jurisdiction in order to prevent conflicts and ease the tensions but also to reassure their constituents. For instance, the municipality of Kabellias in the Beqaa doubled its staff in the police section. The municipality of Ghobeiry in the suburbs of Beirut increase the police force by 40%.

There are 1,114 municipalities in Lebanon, with great differences in size, economic situation and financial means. Specific political and sectarian affiliations and the presence prior to 2011 of Syrian seasonal workers also influenced how municipalities dealt with the newcomers. This very heterogeneous group of elected bodies (6-year mandate) can be broken down in three categories:

- The **capital city of Beirut**, which hosts officially 28,706 Syrian refugees⁴¹ for total population close to half a million⁴². The capital city benefits from a special administrative status. The municipal council is composed of 24 members (out of them only 16 members are elected) and is presided by the governor of Beirut, appointed by the Council of Ministers. Its yearly budget is around \$250 million⁴³. The majority of the 200,000 refugees who arrived in the metropolitan area of Beirut actually settled in the suburban towns where the cost of living is cheaper. Meaning that the municipalities at the periphery had to handle their settlement.
- The majority of Lebanese municipalities are **very-small municipalities** with less than 4,000 inhabitants and only 9 members forming the municipal board. They keep no track of their expenses. Nine out of ten Lebanese municipalities have less than 6 employees in charge of cleaning the streets, asphaltting the road, maintaining the public lighting⁴⁴. In some instance, even the mayors are illiterate. Their budget approximately ranges from \$10,000 to \$500,000. Since 2011, many of these municipalities have been deeply affected by the influx of refugees.

³⁹ International Rescue Committee & Norwegian Refugee Council, Legal Status of Refugees from Syria: Challenges and consequences of maintaining legal stay in Beirut and Mount Lebanon. June 2015, 30 pages.

⁴⁰ Human Rights Watch, 2014, “Local curfews imposed on Syrian refugees in Lebanon” (3rd of October) <https://www.hrw.org/news/2014/10/03/lebanon-least-45-local-curfews-imposed-syrian-refugees>

⁴¹ UNHCR, November 2015, *op. cit.* refugees registered within the administrative boundaries of the city (all the figures related to refugee populations mentioned in this report can be found on the online data portal).

⁴² NB: the last census that was conducted in Lebanon dates back to 1932. No official demographic figures have been published since. Lebanese nationals do not vote based on their place of residency but in the locality where their parents were registered. There are 453,951 Lebanese voters for the city of Beirut (source: Localiban, 2010).

⁴³ The researcher was not given access to the official budget of the capital city and this estimated figure based on previous publications as well as on the \$111 million transfers from the central government to Beirut in December 2015.

⁴⁴ Lebanese Center for Policy Studies (LCPS), *About Administrative Decentralization in Lebanon*, 2015, 32p.

- Between these two extremes, there are about **40 operating municipalities mostly in urban areas**. They employ around 50 workers. In addition to maintaining the roads and collecting waste, they deliver services in education, health and tourism. Yet, the municipal workers are not qualified. There is no trained staff with competencies in urban planning or architecture: “there is one general - the mayor - and many soldiers cleaning the streets, but no lieutenant, officers, colonels”. The budget of these municipalities is not public. It varies between \$1 million (Bent Jbeil, Nabatieh, Halba), \$3 million (Tyr, Baalbek, Zahle, Jdeideh, Burj-Hammoud, Jounieh), \$6 million (Saida) and \$14 million (Tripoli). These municipalities, close to the Syrian border and which can offer work opportunities faced the arrivals of tens of thousands of refugees within just a few years.

How these arrivals impact the municipal *spending*?

This report looks at the spending of the municipality of Baalbek in the Beqaa Valley, Saida and Tyr in the South, and Tripoli in the North of the country. The impact of the “Syrian crisis” on the expenditures was stronger in the municipalities that receive more refugees. For the period 2011-2013:

- increase in the spending in Tripoli (+9.7%) and in Baalbek (+21.3%). These two municipalities were hosting over 50,000 refugees (Tripoli) and 14,188 (Baalbek) in November 2013. The details of the expenditures show that the spending were concentrated in the wages and compensations for the workers (in Tripoli +6% and in Baalbek +47%) which was compensated by a decrease in the capital expenditures (-62% in Tripoli).

- slight decrease in the spending in Saida (-2.8%) and in Tyr (-2.2%). These municipalities are located in the South and received very little refugees at the beginning of the crisis.

Yet, these figures should be considered very carefully. Sometimes, the municipalities did not finance themselves the extension of the local services. In some instances, the wages of the new garbage collectors (approx. 600,000 LL monthly i.e. \$400) and the purchase of garbage trucks was paid by United Nations agencies or International NGOs. In such cases, the municipalities’ budgets do not reflect the intensification of the municipal work. The municipalities also contracted temporary security staff to strengthen municipal police, consequently their wages are not included in the line “wages and compensations”, but may fall in the “current expenditures” or in “Other”, or even may not appear at all. The increase in 2012 in the expenditures on wages and compensations can also be explained by the new salary grid and cost of living adjustment in the public sector.

Sidenote: There is no line for social inclusion programs in the municipalities’ budgets.

4.2. What are the challenges that municipalities face?

There is a gap between the services provided by the municipalities (maintenance of the road lighting, of the road paving, sometimes of the water network, or building of new retaining) and what falls

under their legal responsibility⁴⁵. According to the law (decree-law 118-1977, articles 49 to 52), the Lebanese municipality is “a local administration that enjoys within its geographical boundaries the power delegated to it by law”. Municipalities are in charge of the budget, they decide on their revenues and expenditures, they collect fees, they issue ToR for local works, they accept or refuse grants and donations. They are responsible for land-use, water delivery, and garbage collection. They plan the urban development of the territory (gardens, public parks, markets, hospitals, museums). These prerogatives seem to give to municipalities the necessary tools to respond to the arrivals of refugees. Yet, most of the mayors are not aware of this legal framework. Besides, municipalities lack the technical and financial capacities to plenty fulfill their tasks. There are three main challenges associated with local governance:

Lack of institutional autonomy

Around ¾ of the decision taken by the municipal boards needs to be validated by the ministries, by the concerned governmental agencies or by the deconcentrated state bodies – governorates and *qada*. The bureaucratic process for hiring a new employee or contracting a private company to renew the sewerage system can take years (terms of reference, approval by the concerned authorities, publication in the official gazette, etc.)

“Even if a project is coming from Ban Ki-Moon himself, I cannot do it if I don’t get the approval of the Ministry of Environment. Even if the project has all the requirements, everything...there needs to be studies about the environmental consequences of the project and I need approval from the Ministry of Water.”

(interview with the Mayor of 10,000 inhabitant municipality within the governorate of Akkar).

The constraints imposed by the central authorities make any local development initiative incredibly difficult. All the current development projects in Lebanon were first voted by the Council of Ministers and then carried out by the Council for Development and Reconstruction. Central agencies constantly bypass the municipalities, which threatens local governance.

Lack of financial autonomy

The budget of the municipalities is made out of three main sources: the taxes collected by them and the transfers from the national agencies and from the Lebanese state. Municipalities have very little control over their revenues. The moment and the amount of the transfers from the Ministry of Finance are unpredictable and the distribution between the different municipalities does not necessarily match the needs.

Revenues	Description	Challenges
Taxes directly collected by the municipalities	80% of the revenue collected stem from three taxes. 1) on the rental value of the built real estate . 2) on construction permits. 3) on sewerage and pavement	⌘ Municipalities often do not have the ability to collect the taxes (not enough employees). Estimation of the tax collection rate: 50%

⁴⁵ Harb, Mona & Atallah, Sami (2015), *Local governments and public goods: Assessing Decentralization in the Arab World*. 241p.

	maintenance. The rest stems from the renting of municipal buildings, advertisement and touristic sites.	✕ The rates and the margins of the taxes and fees are set by law. Municipalities cannot create new taxes.
Taxes collected by public agencies and transferred to the municipalities	The national agencies for electricity (Electricité du Liban), water, and telecommunications have to transfer 10% of the taxes they collect to the municipalities. The distribution is based on how much taxes the agencies collected in each locality.	✕ The municipalities have no control over the process. They do not know how much money was collected and how much money is due to them. They depend on the concerned Ministries, which have to approve the financial transfers to the municipalities.
Taxes collected by the state and transferred to the municipalities	The state collects 13 taxes on behalf of the municipalities and channel them to the Independent Municipal Fund, which then allocate them to municipalities. Municipalities are meant to use 30% of the amount transferred for their current expenditures and 70% on development projects. The distribution is based on the registered population and also on how much taxes the State collected in each jurisdiction.	✕ Not all the taxes collected on behalf of the municipalities are transferred to the municipalities. Part of the funds is allocated to the Civil Defense, to the Ministry of Interior and of the Municipalities, to the sub-regional <i>qada</i> for development projects in the rural areas, for public works or solid waste collection. ✕ The distribution criteria have been described as unfair. The registered population does not reflect the actual number of residents. The transfers do not match the needs. Sometimes it appeared that it was benefiting more the already rich municipalities in urban areas⁴⁶.

During the last decade, Lebanese municipalities' revenues were proven to be highly variable due to the irregularity of the state transfers and of the national agencies' transfers (taxes on the telecommunications and on electricity and water consumption).

From 1999 and 2009, the IMF collected \$2.7 billion on behalf the municipalities but only transferred \$1.9 billion to the municipalities⁴⁷. Also for many years the municipalities did not receive their due share from the telecom revenues. Some former Finance Ministers sometimes used the share of the municipalities to reduce the budget deficit or transferred it to the private company Sukleen⁴⁸. Interestingly, in September 2015, a delegation of mayors met the Minister of Finance Ali Hasan Khalil to request the transfers. The 3rd of December 2015, the official gazette published the decrees 2338 to 2341 announcing the transfers of funds corresponding to four years of VAT on cell phones, in addition to the transfers from the Independent Municipal Fund. Municipalities should receive about \$665 million.

⁴⁶ Ibid

⁴⁷ Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, ICMA, 2011 Municipal Finance Studies Program Final Strategic Framework

⁴⁸ Sukleen is the private company in charge of solid waste collection in Lebanon. The Daily Star, 2015, "Khalil vows to allocate funds to municipalities" <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/ArticlePrint.aspx?id=314472&>

	in Lebanese Lira (LL)	in USD
Allocations from the VAT on cellphone communication for the period January 1st 2010 to May 31st 2014	667,020,300,000	444,680,200
10% for the Unions of Municipalities	66,702,030,000	44,468,020
90% for the municipalities	600,318,270,000	400,212,180

Allocations from the VAT on cellphone communication for the period January 1st 2010 to May 31st 2014 to the villages without municipalities	600,000,000	400,000
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Allocations from the Independent Municipal Fund	527,000,000,000	351,333,333
12% to the Unions of Municipalities, of which:	63,240,000,000	42,160,000
60% is allocated on the basis of the number of inhabitants registered	37,944,000,000	25,296,000
40% is allocated on the basis of the number of municipalities in the Union and should be used for development projects and feasibility studies	25,296,000,000	16,864,000
88% "to the municipalities", of which:	463,760,000,000	309,173,333
5% is first re-channeled to the Independent Fund for Civil Defense	23,188,000,000	15,458,667
95% is actually transferred to the municipalities, of which:	440,572,000,000	293,714,667
90% is allocated on the basis of the number of inhabitants registered, of which:	396,514,800,000	264,343,200
78% is allocated on the basis of the number of people registered	309,281,544,000	206,187,696
22% is allocated on the basis of the taxes that were collected by the state within each jurisdiction	87,233,256,000	58,155,504
10% is allocated to the <i>qadas</i> to develop the municipalities that have less than 4,000 inhabitants	44,057,200,000	29,371,467

Total funds allocated to Unions of Municipalities	129,942,030,000	86,628,020
Total funds allocated to the Municipalities	996,833,070,000	664,555,380

This recent announcement of million-dollar transfer should not be understood as a state decision to equip the municipalities with sustainable resources. The institutional challenges associated to municipalities' revenues remain. And they make any urban or development planning on the long term impossible. Municipalities cope with the pressures brought by the refugees and don't develop comprehensive policies. Sample of testimonies from the municipalities:

"The money is so tight, for the last three months, the employees did not receive their salaries"
(municipality in the Beqaa valley)

"We voted the budget last September but with no indication. We did not know how much money we would receive from the state, or even if we would get anything. Our tax-collectors do not collect all the taxes, it is difficult. With the economic situation. The tax should account for 65% of our revenues. But actually it is only 25%" (large municipality in the suburbs of Beirut)

"We have around 6 employees for the garbage and 13 employees for the administration. We spend around \$10,000 per month for the employees in the administration. And also \$15,000 every month. We do not pay the salaries for the garbage collector. But we have to pay the rent for the dumping site \$40,000. So there is no money left for anything else" (municipality in the West-Beqaa).

"The money coming to the municipality is very little and enough only for expenses for little work" (large municipality in the governorate close to the Syrian border).

"The budget is around \$2.5 million. When we plan the budget for the next year, there are three main lines: the maintenance (which is garbage and road), the projects and the events. We also give some money to Red Cross, the schools, and for tourism. But actually we have to be very very flexible with these budget because we don't really know how much money we will have" (municipality in the Beqaa Valley)

Lack of transparency

In addition to the aforementioned difficulties, municipalities' budgets suffer from general lack of transparency. According to the law, any Lebanese citizen can access the budget of the municipality where he is registered as a resident. Yet, this disposition is widely ignored. In some cases, the priorities of the municipal council are not necessary in the residents' primary interests⁴⁹. This is reflected in the fact that the level of services provided by municipalities is not directly linked to their economic development⁵⁰.

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In order to overcome these challenges, municipalities have joined forces within **Unions of Municipalities (UoM)**. There are 53 UoMs in Lebanon which gather 700 municipalities. According to the law (article 126), there are given a wide range of prerogatives: construction of public projects (roads, sewerage, waste treatment, slaughterhouse, and firefighting) and land planning and expropriation. In reality more than 70% of their budget goes to the construction of public road and parking⁵¹, the rest goes to the maintenance of sewerage system and public lighting networks and the construction of playing fields. Many of the UoM's prerogatives overlap with the responsibilities of the municipalities. This occasionally creates institutional blockages, also reinforced by political and sectarian tensions. Unions of municipalities experience the same challenges as the municipalities in terms of funding and institutional autonomy. They lack qualified staff. Besides, most of the UoM gather municipalities that are not direct neighbors, as there is no territorial continuity between the members, it make the implementation of projects at the union-scale difficult.

4.3. Municipal authorities and the humanitarian actors: fragile relations

Civil society organizations play a major role in service delivery in Lebanon. Since the 1990's, the State has gradually withdrew from the agriculture, housing and industry sectors. With a few exceptions, the provision of services has been largely privatized and often delivered by local and international NGOs engaged in social development. They have increasingly catered for the communities' needs, especially in post-war contexts (in the 1990's and after the 2006 Lebanese Israeli war). When the first refugees arrived from Syria in 2011, the dynamic social fabric responded with large-scale assistance.

⁴⁹ Public sector magazine, 2015 April, Issue 153

⁵⁰ Harb (2015), *op. cit.*

⁵¹ Lebanese Center for Policies Studies (2015), *op. cit.*

However humanitarian actors, both international and local, largely by-passed the municipalities. The emergency required fast delivery of primary aid. The NGOs feared that bureaucratic municipal procedures would hinder their action. The law allows partnership between private sectors and municipalities for service delivery but only after long and complex process. The general lack of trust in the municipalities and the will not to deal with political parties (“one day we would have to stop this project because this or that party decides so”) also explain why local officials were neglected. As a result municipalities were rarely tapped. If sometimes the NGOs would meet the mayors prior to their intervention, the municipalities were very rarely associated in the implementation of the projects.

This is changing. Over the last year, local government has been slowly included in the response of the civil society organizations. It is partially due to the will of the humanitarian actors to shift towards a development-oriented approach that would empower municipalities as shown for instance by the Regional, Refugee and Resilience Plan 2016-2017 (see section 5 of this report: *The donors’ response*). It is also the results of a clear message sent by the municipalities: “Now, we will stop all the NGOs that come on the municipal territory but don’t work through us” (mayor of middle size town in Akkar, North Lebanon). Municipalities want to be acknowledged and to control the delivery of aid and the implementation of development projects.

The relationships between municipalities and civil society organizations take on different modalities, from strong collaboration to loose informal partnerships. In the majority of the cases, the international NGOs decide on which sector they will intervene (water and sanitation, housing, education, job market, etc.) and how (budget, length of the project, localization) prior to meeting the municipal officials. They base their interventions on their nation-wide mapping of the vulnerabilities. They inform the mayors that they will renovate the water or electricity network, equip the town with water pumps, donate new garbage trucks, build a playground for children, or set-up solar cells. Funding is never transferred directly to municipal budgets. In some instances, the NGOs will ask the municipalities to support the implementation of the project (with ad-hoc registration data, or with selecting local plumbers or technicians). Extracts from interviews:

- Mayor of a municipality in the Beqaa Valley – West district (12,000 Lebanese residents, 23,000 refugees registered with UNHCR in addition to 20,000 Syrian refugees not registered)
“We have very good relationships. We are the number one for the collaboration with the NGOs. We care about the projects not the money. From the beginning we worked a lot with the EU, USAID, the UNDP and the UNHCR. We did common project with the neighboring municipalities: a new recycling program. The project is financed by international donors. The NGOs come to us with list of projects and we accept or not”.
- Director of local NGO operating in North Lebanon, providing shelter and protection to Syrian women and children.
“I always ask the staff working in the NGO to go talk to the municipality and to explain to the mayors what we are doing. Then the municipality can give us some information for instance: “Syrian refugees have settled in this or that area”. The police officer tells us: “they are there, the refugees live there”. Only this.”
- Vice Mayor of small municipality in the Beqaa Valley (4,000 Lebanese Residents, 11,000 registered Syrian refugees in addition to 8,000 refugees not registered with UNHCR)



“For example, one NGO come with 100,000\$ to spend in the area. So we give them a project so that this money will be spent. We had projects with the Danish refugee council, the French Development Agency, the UNHCR. It depends... Sometimes they are coming for a project to bring tents for the “displaced”. So we give them the numbers of “displaced” and we take them to the camps. If they have money left, they ask us about our needs and what the “displaced” need, and where they can make projects that will benefit both Lebanese and Syrians.

Increasingly, civil society organizations see an interest in collaborating with municipalities. Yet, in many instance, the municipal officials blame their lack of consideration and short term vision.

- Mayor of a major city in the Beqaa valley (48,000 Lebanese residents and 25,000 Syrian refugees)

“I tell the NGOs that we don’t want the money, we just want to be involved in the project and control what they are doing. But sometimes, the NGOs come and take the approval from us and then we don’t hear from them.”

- Vice Mayor of suburban city, southern suburbs of Beirut

“Since 2006, a lot of NGOs and International NGOs have been active in the area. We received millions of dollars from foreign countries. But... for instance, this [European NGO] came last year and distributed food rations. And the municipality is totally absent from the process. Even though we are the closest to the people! The International NGO work a lot with the General Security but not with the municipalities. We, as municipal council, we want a more direct line between the NGOs and us”.

The relationships between the municipal boards and the NGOs also depend on the ability of the mayor to “attract the donors” and market his municipality. The mayor’s personality, his own communication skills, his networks, his mastering of the international humanitarian jargon can impact the strategies of the NGOs.

What are the benefits of the collaboration between municipalities and International NGOs?

- Legal grounds & long term development

Field interventions conducted in partnership with municipalities are more likely to succeed. As opposed to the NGOs, municipalities are accountable to their constituents via the elections. The municipalities engage their credibility in the projects and they have strong interests in achieving successful results.

- A better understanding of the community needs

The municipalities have comprehensive understanding of the local communities’ needs: refugees and Lebanese residents. They can provide the newcomers with crucial information that ministries in Beirut don’t know about. There were sometimes striking mismatches between the projects as conceived by the International NGOs and the actual demands of the local community.

Mayor, city in North Lebanon, close to the Syrian borders (5,000 Lebanese residents, 15,000

Syrian refugees):

“One of the biggest issue is that the NGOs don’t know about the area. We were very surprised because the Lebanese National Water Agency gave a report on North Lebanon to the international associations... with many wrong elements. They told the international associations that we had functioning water network in the villages here. But the water network dates back to 1964 and it doesn’t cover more than 10% of the territory of the villages as they exist today! So we were asking the associations to solve the problems of the drinkable water in the area. And we asked for a water tower. And they said no because they thought that we already had a functioning network”

To extend their impact to a broader territory, some international NGOs chose to intervene through **the unions of municipalities**. The results are contrasted as the resources of the UoM and the support they can provide is very unequal. Some UoM were successful in attracting NGOs and improved the provision of services in the area. For instance, in the South, the UoM of Tyr Qada is currently coordinating the implementation of projects in waste treatment, potable water network, sewage, road maintenance, which total amount is \$291,000⁵².

5. National Lebanese Government’s Response to the Syrian Migratory Influx

The national authorities did not take substantial measures nor set up coherent plans to respond to influx of refugees from Syria. The authorities feared that refugees would settle permanently in Lebanon and they dealt with the situation without long-term vision. In October 2014, the government announced its attention to reduce the number of Syrians present in Lebanon⁵³. The confusing and contradictory statements by the ministers as regards the settlements of the refugees or their legal status was part of a “no-policy” response⁵⁴. The Lebanese authorities only focused on securing the international funding flowing to Lebanon and did not provide the local authorities with financial resource or logistic guidance. This section unfolds this “no-policy” response by looking at:

- the spending of the central authorities (included the deconcentrated bodies: 8 governorates and 26 sub-regional *qada*)
- the delegation of power to the municipalities
- the fuzziness in defining legal status for the refugees coming from Syria

5.1. Spending of the national government

Since early 2011, and as the number of refugees was increasing in the country, the Lebanese government has refused to launch a state-led response to the crisis. The national budgets for the years 2011 to 2014 account for this no-policy⁵⁵.

⁵² See details of the projects in section 5

⁵³ Minutes of the Council of Ministers as reported by Daily Star, 2014, October 23rd, Lebanon cabinet votes to stop accepting Syrian refugees <www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2014/Oct-23/275075-refugee-crisis-tops-lebanon-cabinetagenda.ashx>

⁵⁴ Dr. Karim El Mufti, "Official response to the Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon, the disastrous policy of no-policy", Civil Society Knowledge Center, Lebanon Support, January, 2014.

The overall raise in the state expenditures since 2010 should not be understood as the results of national policies to cater for the refugees' needs. Between 2010 and 2014, the 23% increase in the total expenditures (**almost \$14 billion in 2014**) was mainly the result of the raise of the wages and of the end-of-service indemnities in the public sector⁵⁶ as well of higher interest payments on national debt, and of the raise in the price of fuel and gas oil⁵⁷.

- In 2012, the financial transfers from central authorities to the municipalities increased by 231% (from \$77 million in 2011 to \$254 million in 2012), yet the Ministry of Finance stated that “it was mainly because of payment timing issues”⁵⁸ and not to strengthen local capacities in the context of crisis. On average, the transfers to the municipalities account for 1.42% of the total state expenditures.
- From 2012 to 2014, the \$264 million transferred to the Higher Council of Relief (also called the High Relief Committee) only reached Lebanese nationals. The funds were allocated to the payment of indemnity for destroyed properties during the 2006 war, for the victims of the battles in Tripoli in October 2014 and for the victims of the blasts in Dahr el Baydar and Chiyah.

The concern for “social cohesion” as expressed by international donors did not translate into budget lines dedicated to social policies benefiting forced migrants.

Yet, in 2012, the former Lebanese Prime Minister, Najib Miqati, declared that the concerned ministries had spent over \$179 million⁵⁹ for Syrian refugees. This figure was not broken down by the Prime Minister. And as direct spending to services for refugees “remained highly regulated”⁶⁰, this figure very likely accounts for **the increase in spending for waste management and for security concerns**. Between 2011 and 2014, payments for solid waste management increased by 38% (from \$161 million to \$223 million). At the same time, the army intensified its raids in the informal settlements of refugees and increased its contingent. The expenditures for the wages and salaries for army personnel climbed up by 11% (from \$1.62 billion to \$1.80 billion). These two budget lines account for the very limited response of the state in the period 2011-2014.

Sidenote: The raise of the state revenues between 2010 and 2014 by almost 30% can be linked to the arrivals of refugees in the country. For instance, the taxes collected on built properties increased by 50% from 2010 and 2014 possibly due to the rise in the number of rental contracts and rental values caused by the arrivals of refugees from Syria.

5.2. Decentralization in the context of the Syrian crisis: old fears & new incentives

The arrival of refugees from Syria also undermined the implementation of administrative decentralization. Since the end of the Civil War, the fragile unity of the country has relied on a

⁵⁶ In February 2012 the cost of living adjustment became effective and led to the increase of the state employees' salaries. A few months later, following the strike of the civil servants and teachers, the Council of Minister adopted a new salary scale.

⁵⁷ In 2012, the financial transfers to Electricité du Liban for payment of petroleum, fuel and gas oil consumption raised by 30%. Yet this did not reflect a raise in the overall consumption but rather was due to a price effect and the replacement of natural gas consumption.

⁵⁸ Public Finance Annual Review for the year 2012

⁵⁹ See: <http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/63145>

⁶⁰ Public Finance Annual Review for the year 2014

complex sectarian balance - the Lebanese constitution recognizes 18 sects and attributes to each one of them a given number of seats in the Parliament and the various institutions. The rapid increase in population (more 20% over four years) in Lebanon challenged this subtle balance and increased the fears of implosion. This context has hindered decentralization measures, which would endow local governments with responsibilities and financial resources and strengthen regional leaders. Despite a sophisticated legal framework in favor of local governance, policies in Lebanon are designed and implemented by the central government. At the country level, only 6% of the overall state budget is spent by local governments and 94% by centralized state bodies⁶¹.

Decentralization in a time conflicts – *historical elements*

The history of the municipalities in Lebanon starts in 1833⁶² when the Ottomans established the first Provincial Council of Beirut, in charge of sanitation and lighting. At the end of the 19th century, all the major cities had their own council, acting as the local administrative arms of the extended Ottoman Empire. During the mandate (1920 – 1946), the French ensured the control of the territory and its inhabitants through central institutions. In 1947, at the Independence, hundreds of municipal laws (over 600 laws were passed by the year 1969)⁶³ paved the way for decentralized governance... and in practice allowed the central government to extend its control on local affairs. In 1977, municipalities were legally granted the management of all local public works such as public libraries, schools and hospitals (Ministry of Interior and Municipalities - decree-law 118). The Civil War (1975 – 1989) put municipal governance on hold. Elections were suspended; municipal councils were dissolved or felt under the jurisdiction of the *qada*. In 1989, the Taef reconciliation agreement engraved the preeminence of the central state, but at the same time called for decentralization measures and local participation⁶⁴. The first municipal elections were organized in 1998.

Since then, on regular basis, governments discussed potential decentralization measures without reaching substantial agreement. The last attempt dates back to the initiative of former president Sleiman in 2014 to create elected councils in charge of planning at the sub-regional level with the ability to raise taxes and a police force⁶⁵. Yet, the release of the draft law did not lead to the vote of decentralization reform. At the Parliament, the long-lasting opposition between the “March 14 Coalition” (mostly Sunni and against the Assad regime), and the “March 8 Coalition” (mostly Shi’a and pro-Assad) is turning into political impasse. Lebanon has been left with no President since April 2014. The arrival of refugees, who hold political and sectarian affiliations, has been seen by both coalitions as an opportunity to increase their weight in the Lebanese fragile sectarian balance. The discussions on local governance are tainted by party politics. And the institutional deadlocks last.

⁶¹ Harb (2015), *op. cit.*

⁶² For comprehensive history of decentralization laws. Harb (2015), *op. cit.*

⁶³ Favier, A. 2001. *Municipalités et Pouvoirs Locaux au Liban*. Beyrouth: CERMOC.

⁶⁴ Taef National Pact, art.3.A states: “decentralization will be extended to small administrative units (districts and below) by means of the election of a council managed by the District Administrator of each district in order to ensure local participation”.

⁶⁵ Daily Star, 2014, April. “Sleiman launches long awaited bill to decentralize government”: <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2014/Apr-03/252126-sleiman-launches-long-awaited-bill-to-decentralize-government.ashx>

Re-drawing the administrative map to extend central control over peripheral regions and aid delivery

In May 2014, the governorate of North-Lebanon was split into two: the governorate of Tripoli and its five surrounding districts (T5) and the governorate of Akkar. Similarly, the governorate of the Bekaa Valley was split into two: the governorate of Baalbek/Hermel and the governorate of Bekaa. This redrawing of the administrative map allowed the central state to send two dynamic governors to administer the new jurisdictions. The state by doing so extended its control on the regions that welcomed the most of refugees since 2011. The new governor of Akkar quickly set up a Local Development Office that centralizes humanitarian aid and development projects. Thus, since 2014, the Lebanese state has gradually increased its control over the delivery of humanitarian aid. The concerned ministries are requesting the International NGOs and the UN agencies to operate with their consent and to channel their programs through the ministries. The mayor of one municipality in the new-governorate of Akkar blames the “competition” between these actors, which eventually does not necessarily improve service delivery:

There is a competition between the NGOs and the ministries. For instance, the National Water Agency is responsible for sanitation and drinkable water in the area. There is also the ministry of Energy and the Ministry of Environment. They all want to implement their project and then the NGOs come and they have to negotiate with them.

(Interview mayor of municipality in Akkar)

In August 2015, the council of Ministers announced a \$100 million grant to the new governorate of Akkar, to be spent on development projects⁶⁶. Yet, local mayors are skeptical as the similar \$300 million grant that was approved last year went to the construction of the city-hall of Halba (\$7 million)⁶⁷.

Over the summer 2015, the “garbage crisis” brought several thousand of protesters in the streets. Their demands included the transfers of financial and technical capacities to the municipalities currently enabled to cope with the garbage piling up. Once again, Lebanese politicians took interest in the question of decentralization. Paradoxically, the tensed political context could provide two incentives to decentralize. First, empowering local leaders and giving them access to resources would have “institutionalized” the political opposition and would paradoxically reinforce the control of the central states on its local opponents, through notably the local governors and *qada*. Second, at a time of humanitarian crisis, the state can have interest in following the donor’s recommendations in terms of “people participation” and local governance⁶⁸.

5.3. Erratic national legislation on forced migrants

The “no-policy” response of the Lebanese state also applies to defining a legal status for the refugees coming from Syria. Lebanon never signed the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees – nor its 1967 Protocol. The persons who fled from Syria from 2011 are not recognized as refugees under Lebanese law. Syrian authorities use the words “displaced persons from Syria”, “persons registered

⁶⁶ National News Agency, 2015, Aug. Chabtini from Serail: USD 100 million allocations to Akkar not related to trash dossier, <http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/48710/nna-leb.gov.lb/en>

⁶⁷ Alieh, Yasmine. 2015, Aug. 25 “Akkar receives grant of \$100 million” <http://www.businessnews.com.lb/cms/Story/StoryDetails.aspx?ItemID=5100>

⁶⁸ The ministry of Finance notably launched a « Citizen Budget » in 2011. See: Ministry of Finance, 2011 February 11, *Muwazena el-Muwatn* 2010. 8p.

with the UNHCR” and since October 2014, the ambiguous “*de-facto* refugees”. During the first years of the crisis, Syrians who entered Lebanon officially were automatically granted a 6-month residency coupon. They had to renew it and pay \$200 each year. However, conditions have toughened. In December 2014, for the first time in its history, Lebanon closed its borders to Syrian. The inflow of refugees was stopped. Syrians are now required to apply for visa and the UNHCR is no longer authorized to register new entries.

2015: the introduction of stricter conditions of entry and stay for Syrian

In order to enter Lebanon, Syrians now have to provide all the required documents prior to crossing. They have to apply to one of the seven types of visa, which authorize them to stay in Lebanon from two weeks to one month.

- Category 1: For purposes of “tourism, shopping, business” or for landlords, and tenants.
- Category 2: Studying
- Category 3: Transit visa to 3rd country
- Category 4: Displaced. Only for exceptional cases with precise criteria defined by the Ministry of Social Affairs (for the children alone and whose parents are already living in Lebanon or urgent medical needs with no treatment available in Syria).
- Category 5: Medical treatment
- Category 6: Embassy appointment
- Category 7: Stay guaranteed by a Lebanese sponsor.

Most of the Syrians actually do not fit into these strict categories.

For the Syrian already in the country, the process to renew their residency permit has changed. They are now required to provide dozens of official papers (certificate of residency, valid national ID, entry coupon). If they registered with the UNHCR they should provide the certificate of registration. If they are not registered, they should provide an official “pledge not to work” and be sponsored by a Lebanese national, who should also meet specific criteria.

The whole process that Syrian should complete in order to be legal in Lebanon is expensive: \$200 fee to renew the residency permit, in addition to all the necessary expenses (transportation, official documents signed at the offices of the public notary), which cost around \$75. In addition, the list of the required documents is constantly changing. The process is confusing and even Syrian who met the criteria have been denied their visa⁶⁹. **As a consequence, an increasing number of Syrian are illegal in Lebanon.** They are exposed to arrests, harassment, and detention and sometimes they are forced to leave the country⁷⁰.

The persons who fled the Syrian Civil War since 2011 also include Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS). They were taken care of by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). They join the 270,000 Palestinian refugees, whom parents and grandparents settled in Lebanon after 1948⁷¹.

⁶⁹ Amnesty International Pushed to the edge: Syrian refugees face increased restriction in Lebanon, Amnesty International Publication, London, 2015. 30p. June 2015

⁷⁰ International Rescue Committee & Norwegian Refugee Council, *op. cit.*

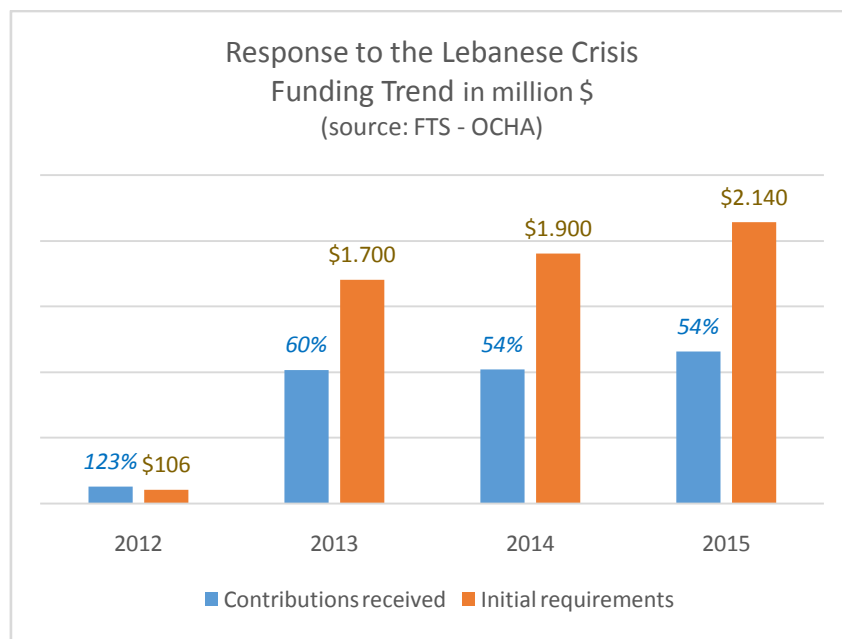
⁷¹ Chaaban, J., Ghattas, H., Habib, R.R., Hanafi, S., Sahyoun, N., Salti, N., Seyfert, K., Naamani, N. (2010), “Socio-Economic Survey of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon”, Report published by the American University of Beirut (AUB) and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

Palestinian in Lebanon enjoy very restricted legal status. They cannot work in many professions. They are confined to the city-camps guarded by the Lebanese army and suffer from restricted mobility. Sixty years after their arrival, the legal status of the Palestinian is the one of foreigners with very limited rights. Lebanon also hosts 50,000 Iraqi and 800 Sudanese nationals, asylum seekers who fled violence and persecutions, yet cannot apply for refugee status in Lebanon, which does not recognize it.

6. Main donors' Response to the Syrian Migratory Influx

6.1. The donors' fatigue and the distrust in state institutions

Over the period 2012 – 2014, the funding requirements of the humanitarian actors to respond to the refugee crisis in Lebanon have been increasingly unmet. Similarly, for the year 2015, despite the \$1.16 billion donations allocated to Lebanon, only half of the needs, as expressed by the UN agencies were funded. The international community's financial support to Lebanon is not sufficient to cover all the programs envisioned by the humanitarian actors. In December 2015, Lebanon and the UN agencies are pleading for \$2.48 billion to finance the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) 2016-2017, which is even 16% more than for the year before.

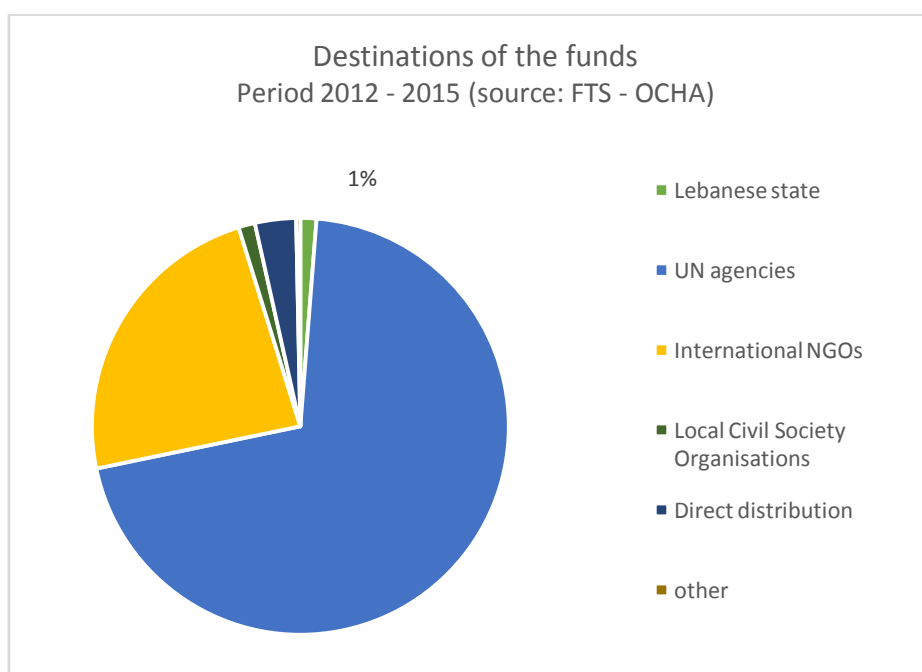


Where do the funding allocated to the response of the crisis in Lebanon go? Most of the donors were reluctant to transfer money to the Lebanese institutions, and preferred to intervene through

International NGOs or UN agencies. Thus, in order to improve transparency in the tracking of the funding⁷² and to reduce information gaps, a few platforms were created:

- The Humanitarian Pooled Fund for Lebanon administered by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).
- The Multi-donor Trust Fund administered by the World Bank⁷³
- the Lebanon Recovery Fund (LRF) administered by the UN

These platforms received the funds and re-channel them to the implementing organizations. Out of the \$3.33 billion donations allocated to Lebanon, 94% were sent to UN agencies and International NGO for the period 2012-2015. Almost no donations were sent directly to Lebanese municipalities and very little to the national authority (1.24%).



For instance the European Fund *Madad*, specifically set up by the European Union (EU) to respond to the Syrian Crisis, made it clear that it was reluctant to work with Lebanese institutions and send donations to the current not-functioning government⁷⁴.

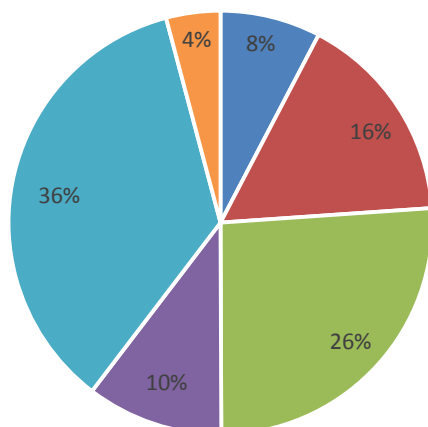
Who are the donors? The majority of the contributions came from national states. The donations of the European States (including the contribution of the European Union), North American states and Arab States all together account for 88% of the funding.

⁷² Most of the donations are reported on the global platform set up by OCHA. Yet, there is no specific tracking of the funding for the Lebanese interventions. The last LCRP for the year 2016-2017 mentions the need to develop such mechanism.

⁷³ World Bank Press Release, 2014, "World Bank-Run Trust Fund Targets Lebanese Municipalities to Offset Spillovers of the Syrian Crisis" < <http://www.albankaldawli.org/ar/news/press-release/2014/09/12/world-bank-run-trust-fund-targets-municipalities-to-offset-spillovers-of-syrian-crisis>>

⁷⁴ Daily Star, 2015, Oct. <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2015/Oct-23/319925-eu-official-no-financial-aid-before-functioning-government.ashx>

Main donors - period 2013 - 2015 (source: FTS - OCHA)



- United Nations (i.e. OCHA Emergency Response Fund; OCHA Central Emergency Response Fund; UNICEF National Committees; World Food Programme)
- European Union Budget (i.e. European Commission; European Commission EuropeAid Development and Cooperation; EC's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department)
- European states (Belgium, Germany, Estonia, Denmark, Netherlands, Sweden, Monaco, UK, France, Poland, Spain, Ireland, Norway, Italy, Switzerland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Finland, Greece, Iceland)
- Arab States (Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE)
- Other States (United States, Canada, Japan, Korea, Australia, New-Zealand)
- Private (individuals & organisations)

due to the development of the Syrian crisis in Europe – the new terrorist threat of the Islamic State (ISIS) and the growing number of refugees reaching the Greek shores and the Eastern European train stations – the EU agreed on a new European Agenda on Migration. In September 2015, the EU allocated additional funds for the management of the borders (by Frontex and Europol agencies, and by the member states): €7.67 billion for the period 2015-2020. They also commit to additional funding for Syria's neighbors (through the European Neighborhood Instrument and the *Madad Fund*)⁷⁵. The EU raised its contribution to the Lebanese response to \$182 million in 2015.

6.2. The shift to development approach is supported by the ministries

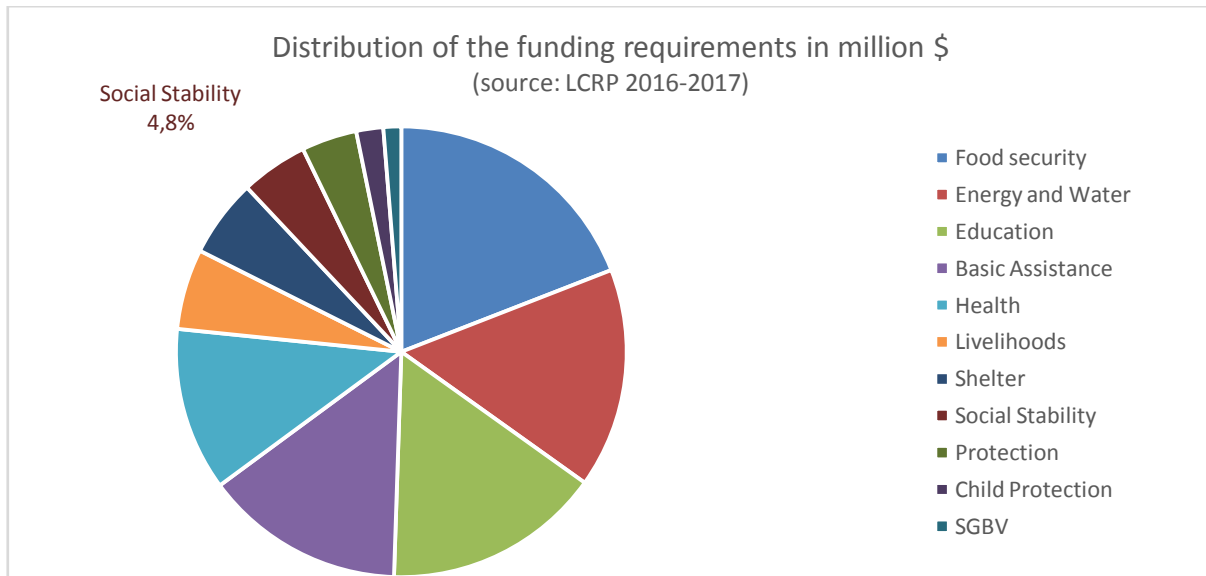
In the course of the year 2013, when it appeared to the international community that the Syrian conflict was turning into protracted crisis, the questions of “social cohesion” between the host communities and the refugees was introduced in the regional response (see Regional Response Plan 5). Donors and humanitarian actors acknowledged the need to develop sustainable programs targeting Syrian refugees and host-communities, rather than short impact aid delivery. In December 2014, the EU launched a new platform dedicated to the funding of development and resilience initiatives: “the EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis (also known as the *Madad fund*)⁷⁶. It was launched by the EU Commission with €20 million and has now reached €610 million (as December 2015). Approximately a fifth of this amount will go to programs to mitigate tensions between hosts and refugees (€130 million) in the region. The Fund has received 50 program proposals. Half of the grants will go to European NGOs, 20% to European development agencies and 30% to UN agencies.

At the country level, the same strategy guided the funding appeals for Lebanon in 2015 and 2016. Alongside the emergency humanitarian interventions such as the distribution of food rations or

⁷⁵ European Union, European Agenda on migration: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/press-material/docs/state_of_play_-_member_state_pledges_en.pdf

⁷⁶ European Union, Madad Fund, <http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/neighbourhood/pdf/key-documents/syria/20120212-signed-ca-eutf-syrian-crisis-and-annex1-objectives-and-purposes.pdf>

hygiene kits, the LCRP I 2015-2016 and the LCRP II 2016-2017 call for projects enhancing “social stability”. It argues that all actors have shifted to a development approach. The distribution of the requirements by sector does not necessarily reflect this strategy as it shows that less than 5% of the funds required for 2016 will be allocated to social stability programs (similar share in the LCRP 2015 in which around 7% were allocated to “social stability”). However, within each sector, the plan emphasizes the needs to develop long-term solutions (for instance renovating the water network instead of donating water trucks; supplying the local communities with generators and water pumps; digging wells; opening recreational centers).



This new approach to respond to the Syrian crisis also implied to increase the capacities of the national institutions. In the context of the donors’ fatigue, it became necessary to involve the Lebanese authorities and to foresee an exit strategy. This is also encouraged by the Lebanese government itself, which, since 2014 has increased its control over the humanitarian interventions. The LCRP 2016-2017 put a strong emphasis on the leadership of the Lebanese government in the response to the crisis. In order to “strengthen the government ownership of the investments”⁷⁷, all the interventions will be channeled through the Lebanese ministries. For instance, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) is now opening bids for particular collaborations with NGOs. All the NGOs which want to operate in the field of education have to apply and the MEHE will then select the winning bid. In a similar fashion, the Lebanon Host Communities Support Projects (LHSP) were launched jointly by the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) and UNDP. These projects seek to increase the capacities of the Lebanese institutions and reinforce the resilience of the local communities on the long-term.

6.3. The municipalities as new target beneficiaries?

In this new development-oriented strategy, what is the place given to local governance? Following the regional prescription of the last 3RP to collaborate with local authorities, the LCRP 2016-2017 is introducing the concern for municipal capacities. It stressed on the importance of empowering municipalities, which faced the influx of refugees with very limited means. The plan indicates that the

⁷⁷ LCRP 2016-2017 page 26.



first interventions will focus on the municipal police (codes of conduct, standard operating procedures and training). It also intends to develop 'Mechanisms for Social Stability', dedicated to dealing with conflicts and incidents between communities. The plan mentions the number of municipalities and union of municipalities to be involved in the response in each sector: for instance 244 municipalities and 33 UoM are supported in the framework of the Social Stability and Livelihood response, 200 municipalities are supported in the framework of the shelter response, 1004 municipalities (i.e. all of them) are supported in the framework of the Energy & Water response. However, the LCRP remains vague on how this "support" will actually take place. In most cases, involving the municipalities is presented as a way to improve service delivery to the refugees and host communities. The empowerment of the municipalities is not an output by itself.

European Union

In Lebanon, the European Union presents local authorities as its first-choice partners and stressed the support it brings to municipalities⁷⁸. Yet, the recent European MADAD fund dedicated to the response to the Syrian crisis has not valued much the collaboration with local authorities. In the document it issued "operational criteria for project selection", the fund requires from the humanitarian actors who want to receive a grant to evaluate if "the structures they will create will continue to be in place at the end of the action" and if there will be "local ownership of the results of the action".⁷⁹ But they do not require the projects to be implemented in collaboration with the municipalities.

United Nations

Prior to the crisis, UN agencies had worked with municipalities. UNDP has worked with local governments since 2006 through various programs. After 2011, the UN built on this experience they had with local governments. In 2014, they launched the Lebanon Host Community Support Projects (LHSP) with the Ministry of Social Affairs to provide physical infrastructure in the municipalities. They organized a series of meetings with the mayors and local committees in the regions where they plan interventions and ask them to validate the projects. They also developed technical support (see: the UNHABITAT project of the Regional technical offices in the Unions of Municipalities).

The World Bank

The World Bank has financed many academic studies on the finance of the municipalities and to assess their credit. They also funded projects to build capacities locally. Since April 2003, they have funded the Cultural Heritage and Urban Development project (CHUD) for \$ 31.5 million. In the main historical Lebanese cities, the project aims at rehabilitating the archeological sites and to help local governments to understand the requirements of the donors.

Decentralized Cooperation

Over the last five years the initiatives of cooperation between the Lebanese municipalities and Western municipalities have decreased. Most of the cooperation is about exchanging good practices,

⁷⁸ They dedicated a €20 million fund to "institutional capacity building" and also directly supported municipalities. For instance they funded together with the French *Région Ile-de-France* the renovation of a few Beirut public spaces (€350,000)

⁷⁹ European Commission, Neighborhood and Enlargement Negotiations, EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian Crisis, the Madad Fund. "The Operational Criteria for A) Concept Notes/ proposals submitted to the Madad Fund Manager, and B) Action Documents submitted to the Madad Fund Operational Board" Page 3 http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/neighbourhood/countries/syria/madad/eutf_madad_operational_criteria_for_project_selection.pdf

trainings, field visits (recently Hydro-conseil took around 20 Lebanese mayors on a field trip in France to visit waste water treatment plants and exchange with local officials). Less infrastructure projects are being funded.

Initiatives funded by international donors and implemented in cooperation with local authorities

Infrastructures projects that were implemented in collaboration with the municipalities					
Donor & Implementing channel	Project description	Localization	Funds	DATE	Role of the municipalities in the project
UN Habitat & UNHCR	The Community Support Projects - physical infrastructures (generators, water pumps, water trucks, bobcats, sweepers, pick-ups, Backhoe loader, Garbage bin, garbage trucks, solar lights, solar energy system, additional rooms for school, machinery for jam production)	In 25 municipalities & 13 unions of municipalities mostly in the South and Mount Lebanon	\$1,016,216	2013	No money transferred to the municipalities' budget but they become owner of the physical infrastructure. The donor came with the projects. But sometimes the municipalities did the studies for the procurement contracts. Sometimes provided staff.
UNDP - UNHCR & Ministry of Social Affairs	The Community Support Projects was complemented by the Lebanese Host Communities Support Projects.	<i>The total amounts of projects and funds are attached to this report in a PDF document</i>		2014	
UN HABITAT & UNHCR & UNICEF together with the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)	"Enhancing the role of the Union of municipalities to respond to the refugees' & Host communities' Needs"	Union of municipalities of Iqleem Kharroub Chemali & UoM Sahel Zahrani (which together comprise 35 municipalities)	?	September - December 2013	
Ile-de-France Region	Public Park	Haut-Metn	€350,00		
Save the children	Cleaning of the streets and sidewalks	Marj (West Beqaa)	150 workers*15days * 15 per dayUSD	2014	The municipality gives the listing of Lebanese residents and Syrian refugees in the area to the NGO, which then conducts interviews and hire the workers
UNHCR and UNHABITAT	Solid Waste Facility	Municipality of Ain Baal - Qada Tyr	\$ 5,000	done	The project was coordinated by the technical office of the Union of municipalities of Tyr
UNICEF	Generators	Tyr	\$ 50,000	done	The project was coordinated by the technical office of the Union of municipalities of Tyr

Council for Development and Reconstruction	sewage line	Toura - Qada Tyr	\$ 80,025	done	The project was coordinated by the technical office of the Union of municipalities of Tyr
Korean Unifil + Unifil	Potable water network	Maaroub - Qada Tyr	\$ 55,800	done	The project was coordinated by the technical office of the Union of municipalities of Tyr
UNIFIL	Retaining wall	Al Bestan - Qada Tyr	\$ 25,000	done	The project was coordinated by the technical office of the Union of municipalities of Tyr
UNIFIL	GPS for surveying	Tyr	\$25,000	done	The project was coordinated by the technical office of the Union of municipalities of Tyr
UNHCR and UNHABITAT	Solid Waste Facility (truck)	Municipality of Ain Baal - Qada Tyr		in process	The project was coordinated by the technical office of the Union of municipalities of Tyr
Norwegian Refugee Council	Artesian well in Borj AL Shamali	Borj Al Shamali - Qada Tyr		in process	The project was coordinated by the technical office of the Union of municipalities of Tyr
World Bank	update and develop the facility of solid waste in Ain Baal (BIOGAZA, PYROLSIS...)	Municipality of Ain Baal - Qada Tyr		in process	The project was coordinated by the technical office of the Union of municipalities of Tyr
UNICEF	Potable water networks	Borj Rahal, Al Kolayla, Aytit, AL Borghliyi, Der Kanoun Ras el Ain , Tyr Debba, Barish		in process	The project was coordinated by the technical office of the Union of municipalities of Tyr
European Union through the ENPI. And with the Office of the Minister of State for Administrative reform (OMSAR)	Upgrading Solid Waste Management Capacities in Lebanon. These programs aim at improving the overall efficiency of solid waste management.	Municipalities			
United Kingdom & the UNDP	Lebanon Municipal Services Programme	over 60 municipalities in wadi khaled, central bekaa and Nabatieh	£5,200,000 & £9,000,000	2014-2016	

European Union through the ENPI and with the Office of the Ministry of State for Administrative reform (OMSAR)	Upgrading Solid Waste Management Capacities in the beqaa an Akkar Regions	municipalities and inhabitants of communities in the Beqaa and Akkar gaining access to sanitary land fills	€14,000,000	2014-2019	
European Union & germany	Lebanese Host Communities Support Programme	Lebanese municipalities	€10,000,000	2014-2015	
French development Agency	Support to Lebanese Municipalities with high density of syrian refugees for the implementation of a sustainable Solid Waste Management System. The project focuses on household waste. It aims to improve waste management in 12 target municipalities. by proposing the establishment of a recyclable waste sorting collection and recycling system. includes awareness, consultation, and training activities	12 municipalities (Halba, Jdideh, Cheikh Taba, Bar Elias, Taanayel, Jditah, Ajaltoun, Antoura, Baabda, Damour, Naameh, Jiyeh)	€999,830	2014-2017	

Projects and programs which direct outputs were the building of local capacities					
Donor & Implementing channel	Project description	Localization	USD	DATE	Role of the municipalities in the project
UN Habitat	Regional Technical Offices. Creation of regional technical offices within the Union of municipalities. They become part of the union and coordinate all the projects and programs funded by foreign donors and implemented in the municipality. The staff is trained with: how to manage a budget, how to write a project proposal, how to keep track of the expenses for a project, data collection, surveying	In six Unions of municipalities in the South and in the Beqaa	\$5000 per month and per union (for four staff: directors, urban planner, data collector, social worker)	since 2006	The RTO becomes full part of the Union administration. Since 2013, UNHABITAT has withdrawn its financial support from a few unions. And unions of municipalities takeover the payement of the salaries.
Italy (bilateral cooperation)	Villes amies des enfants. Program "MOSAIC". Creation of municipal councils for children	Chiyah, Jdeideh, Rachayya el Wadi & Ajaltoun			
Hydroconseil - SIAPP	Training and workshops for municipal officials on water networks and sanitation	Ghobeiry, Joub Jannine, Baalbek		2015	The mayors met their French counterparts and visited waste water treatment plants

European Union through the ENPI. With the ministry of interior, the Council for Development and Reconstruction and the Economic and Social Fund for development (EFSD)	Support to Municipal Finance Program (This program enhances the municipalities' ability to design and implement infrastructure projects for water supply, sanitation and solid waste disposal + upgrade solid waste management. The technical assistance component of the project (€2.9 million) provides institutional support to the Lebanese administration to enhance the capacities at the municipalities' level.	Municipalities and Union of municipalities in the North and in the Beqaa	€20,000,000	2012-2017	
European Union through the ENPI. With the Office of the Minister of State for Administrative Reform (OMSAR)	Improvement of Local Governance in Lebanon (aim: supporting the local development of 12 to 15 municipality clusters throughout the Lebanese territory. The aim is to improve the municipalities' management methods. Creation of local development offices.	15 unions of municipalities & 200 municipalities	€12,000,000	2007-2014	

6.4. Are all Lebanese municipalities receiving help?

The slowdown of the funding stream meant that the humanitarian actors had to further prioritize their interventions. The UNICEF together with the OCHA is responsible for issuing yearly the list of the 251 most vulnerable localities in Lebanon⁸⁰. The ranking focuses on the localities that experienced the largest demographic evolution and the consequent pressures on the infrastructures. This means that some municipalities that do not fall within the category of the “most vulnerable locality” have been sometimes ignored by the international response. As acknowledged by many NGO workers, this classification is sometimes counter-productive as the international community has the means to intervene in every locality. Besides, one of the major complaints of the Lebanese mayors lies in the timing of the project. Once the money is spent and the NGO is gone, the municipality has sometimes to face significant operating costs for the new waste water treatment plant or the new electricity network. They also lack the technical staff to run these new infrastructures.

⁸⁰ UNICEF, OCHA & REACH, February 2015, Defining Community Vulnerabilities in Lebanon