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Spotlight on

Youth in Lebanon

December 2015



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From the People of Japan

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PREFACE

I am happy to present to you “**Spotlight on Youth in Lebanon**”, a report which reviews the existing literature on the situation of youth in Lebanon and benefits from opinion polls undertaken for the preparation of the UNDP Regional Arab Human Development Report.

The report shows that although Lebanon has made progress towards human development in the past decades, major obstacles remain in creating enough job opportunities for youth. At least a third of them, the most highly educated, are looking to emigrate. Obtaining a university degree does not guarantee a major improvement in employment opportunities; though overall youth unemployment rests at 20.6%, it is even worse for more educated individuals. The median tertiary educated youth only earns \$733 per month on average – very low when measured against the cost of rent, healthcare and living expenses.

While the majority of Lebanese students are enrolled in private schools and nearly all Lebanese (97%) have access to primary education, less than two thirds complete their lower secondary education. In comparison, only half of secondary school aged Palestinians are enrolled in school and a mere 22% of primary and secondary age Syrian children are in formal education. Furthermore, due to the privatized nature of a high percentage of the quality healthcare, youth from poorer backgrounds do not have access to these services.

Results of the Gallup survey conducted over a period of eight consecutive years indicate, among other things, that all subpopulations residing in Lebanon are very displeased with the current state of the job market. Compared to the pool of Arab states, Lebanon is the most supportive of gender equality by a wide margin. However, two-thirds of youth would not consider marrying from a different sect and almost half of them do not trust members of other religious groups. More than two thirds of citizens consider Syrian refugees as an existential threat. The majority of the Lebanese do not believe they can make a difference regarding the most important challenges around them, both at the national and communal level. While Lebanese youth are amongst the most active demonstrators in the Arab region, outside protests, they seem disengaged politically as they do not widely participate in national and local elections.

The report includes recommendations such as quelling the “brain drain” as well as improving the quality of public education and expanding the scope of basic education. It also advises to spread awareness about certain health issues among youth and to implement more effective drug policies. An important part of the recommendations focuses on employment, including improving employment opportunities in terms of adjusting training for the needs of the economy, supporting youth entrepreneurship, enhancing information about employment, further developing public employment through administrative decentralization, protecting workers and ensuring workplace rights, and removing work restrictions on Syrians and Palestinians.

I hope this report will incite various stakeholders in engaging in a constructive debate on how to improve the situation of youth in Lebanon, building on the National Youth Strategy and other relevant existing policies.

Philippe Lazzarini

UNDP Resident Representative in Lebanon



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Abbreviations

ACTED – Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development
AUB – American University of Beirut
CAPMAS – Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics
CAS – Central Administration of Statistics, Lebanon
CDR – Lebanese Council for Development and Reconstruction
CERD – Center for Educational Research and Development, Lebanon
CRDP – Centre de Recherche et de Développement Pédagogiques
DALY – Disability Adjusted Life Years
EU – European Union
GSBSHS – Global School-based Student Health Survey
IEA – International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement
IFAD – International Fund for Agricultural Development
IHME – Instituted for Health Metrics and Evaluation
ILO – International Labor Organization
ITU – International Telecommunications Union
LABN – Lebanon Anti-Bribery Network
MOE – Ministry of the Environment, Lebanon
MOPH – Ministry of Public Health, Lebanon
MPC – Migration Policy Centre
PACE – Promoting Active Citizenship Engagement
PRB – Population Reference Bureau
SoL – Standard of Living
UAE – United Arab Emirates
UNAIDS – Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA – United Nations Population Fund
UN-HABITAT – United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF – United Nations Children’s Fund
UNDP – United Nations Development Programme
UNOCHA – United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNPD – United Nations Population Division
UNRWA – United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
USAID – United States Agency for International Development
USJ – Université Saint-Joseph de Beyrouth
WHO – World Health Organization
YLD – Years Lived With Disability



Executive Summary

In the midst of severe regional and internal pressures Lebanon has shown a remarkable, and perhaps unexpected, degree of resilience. A look at basic development indicators suggests the country has made massive gains towards human development in recent decades. However this cursory glance fails to illuminate the major blockages which continue to mire further progress and restrict the human capabilities of those in Lebanon. At the center of this situation are the youth of Lebanon who are personally confronted by many of these development challenges on a daily basis and whose empowerment is central to the well-being of the nation as a whole. This study aims to provide an updated analysis of the socio-economic situation of Lebanese youth and illustrate the wide development disparities between different groups within the country. The study also includes updates about the welfare and living conditions of non-Lebanese resident youth (mostly refugees). This paper serves to promote more factually informed decision making among all parties seeking to advance the human development status of Lebanon.

Main findings

Demographic Profile: Approximately 27.4% of Lebanon's total resident population is youth (aged 15-29). 24% of these youth are Syrian, 5% are Palestinian and the remaining 71% are Lebanese or of other nationalities. Across these subgroups the proportion of youth to the total population is fairly consistent. Lebanese youth are split almost evenly between Beirut/Mount Lebanon and the periphery areas of the country (North, Bekaa and South) while about 4/5ths of other youth are concentrated in these outlying areas. With birth rates and the dependency ratio having dropped Lebanon is in the midst of a demographic transition, there is an urgent need to take advantage of this period of high productivity as dependency rates are expected to begin increasing again in 2025, sooner than most Arab states.

Migration: One third of all youth wish to emigrate at least temporarily and 77% of emigrants from Lebanon are below the age of 35. The emigration share was equal to 14.4% of the total resident population between 2010 and 2014, among the highest in the Arab world. The inflow of migrants during this same time period was 21.6% of the resident population. Because emigrants are frequently highly educated (47% of those between the ages of 23-40 holding a university degree) and imported labor is generally low skill, this 'replacement migration paradigm' constitutes a major loss to Lebanon's youth skillset.

Family Formation: The average age of marriage has moved back considerably for both males (29 to 32) and females (23 to 27.7) since 1970, though there remains a small subset of female youth (6%) who were married before the age of 18. Marriage decisions are mostly restricted along religious lines, with two thirds of youth saying they would not consider marrying someone of a different sect. Marriage between Syrians, Lebanese and Palestinians is also fairly infrequent. Partially as a result of these restrictions consanguineous marriages remain very common.

Health Outcomes and Access to Health Services: The leading cause of injury and death for youth is automobile accidents, and rates of traffic fatality are very high by international comparison (15 deaths per 100,000 people annually). Mental health issues are also widespread and the leading cause of Years Lost to Disability (YLDs) among Lebanese youth. Dietary habits and body mass constitute serious risk factors for this population, 64.6% of men aged 25-34 are overweight and 22.2% are obese. Additionally, rates of youth tobacco consumption are among the highest in the world.

Lebanon hosts many world class medical institutions; however youth access to these private facilities depends on their ability to pay. Over half of the Lebanese population is uninsured, though the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) does help subsidize hospital visits for these individuals on an ad-

hoc basis. 31% of Syrian refugee youth had sought health services not related to pregnancy or delivery. Although international organizations play a major role in funding their healthcare, many Syrian youth still express difficulty paying for health services and medications. Palestinian refugee youth are heavily dependent on UNRWA facilities all of their healthcare needs and the staff of these facilities are stretched thin, the average doctor seeing 117 patients per day.

Education: Primary enrollment figures are very strong for Lebanese nationals across the country (97%) however intermediate education has a dropout rate of 17.3% and only 62.0% of students complete lower secondary education. Lebanese students perform relatively well in international measures of mathematical and scientific competence compared to the surrounding countries, but fall short of the international median in both categories. There is a high degree of educational inequality represented by large differences in test performance between regions, income level and public and private school students. In fact, the majority of Lebanese students are enrolled in private schools, with an additional 23% of primary students attending subsidized private schools. The gross enrollment ratio in tertiary education is 45.8% with only a 26.4% gross graduation ratio, partially due to the limited seats in the public university and high price of private universities. Vocational and technical education programs have become increasingly common in recent years, with vocational programs sporting high completion rates. Only half of secondary school aged Palestinians are enrolled in school, generally UNRWA institutions. A mere 22% of primary and secondary age Syrian children were in formal education, many of these children integrated into the public school system, though new multi-lateral initiatives seek to enroll more students.

Access to Work: Both skilled and unskilled youth struggle to transition out of school and find employment in the crowded labor market, taking an average of 10 and 16 months respectively to find their first job. A large percentage of female youth do not enter the labor force or exit very early and become economically inactive, especially in periphery areas. Youth unemployment is high in Lebanon at 20.6% for that age 15 to 24. Rates of unemployment are worse for women and more educated individuals.

The subset of young women who do work is on average more educated than the average young employed male. This is reflected in their higher distribution in professional (29.6% vs. 18.2%) and clerical/office positions (22.4% vs. 10%). The majority of employed youth were in monthly paid positions, which were more likely to be formal, though sizable numbers worked for wages or were self-employed, largely not benefitting from social security or worker protections. The median informally employed youth earned \$467 a month. The median formally employed youth with only primary education earned \$600 month. Secondary and tertiary educated youth earned only marginal wage increases at \$633 and \$733 a month respectively, indicating the relatively low returns on education.

While many educated Lebanese do not work due to low wages offered to them, employers in Lebanon complain about not finding the skilled labor they need at a rate almost double the world average. 41% of employed individuals held that their education was not relevant to their current occupation, further suggesting skills mismatch in the labor market. Additional issues are presented by the high levels of personal favoritism active in many corporate and public sector hiring and promotion processes. While Lebanon's fairly permissive labor regulations do not appear to inhibit company hiring processes majorly, laws do exist which explicitly restrict the participation of Syrians and Palestinians in the labor market.

Livelihoods: Stretching low incomes to cover high costs of living is a central challenge for all individuals in Lebanon including youth. Median household income is \$13,004. 28.5% of the Lebanese population is impoverished by monetary measures, with 8% in conditions of extreme poverty. Poverty is much more severe in the North, with 53% impoverished and 18% extremely impoverished. Inequality in Lebanon is rampant with the top quintile receiving 7.8 times the income of the bottom quintile, and nearly half the country's wealth (48%) in the hands of 0.3% of the working population. Vulnerable segments of the population are left widely dependent on patronage systems which encourage youth involvement in sectarian political groups.

The present cost of housing is drastically beyond the reach of the average young family, between \$3,8000 and \$4,500 per square meter across the country, with the average Beirut apartment costing 1.09 million dollars. Rent is similarly exorbitant with rates near Beirut averaging at \$495 a month, 65% the median tertiary educated individual's salary. Additionally, power outages occur on a daily basis from between 3 to 21 hours depending on location, and most households do not have drinking water piped into their homes. Dependable alternatives to the public supply of these utilities (private generators and clean water sources) and telecommunications services are also very expensive. A lack of public transportation options also makes car ownership critical to mobility. While the majority of Lebanese families already own their home these prohibitive costs are major factors inhibiting youth transitions to their own households.

Large portions of the Lebanese as well as the majority of Palestinian refugees evade high housing costs by living in informal slums.

Air quality in both Beirut and Tripoli is very poor, well exceeding WHO standards for maximum acceptable levels of particulate matter. Public spaces, such as parks and beaches, are continually being diminished and sold off to private interests while youth are left without free areas to gather and recreate. Outdoor spaces in more remote areas are rapidly shrinking and deteriorating due to pollution and lack of maintenance.

Attitudes, Values and Civic Engagement: Youth in Lebanon had a level of life satisfaction close to the Arab world average,

but low relative to national income level. Youth did not report higher levels of satisfaction than non-youth, however they were more likely to consider their lives meaningful (90%). Support for gender equality among youth in Lebanon was above the average for Middle Income Countries (MIC) and far beyond that found in any other Arab country. Regarding minorities there were a substantial percentage of youth who preferred not to have any of the following as neighbors: religious minorities (40.5%), racial minorities (29.1%), immigrants (34.6%) and homosexuals (77.0%). Over 90% of Lebanese citizens perceived an economic or symbolic threat from the Syrian refugee population in the country and more than two thirds considered them an existential threat.

While most citizens of Lebanon cite their nationality as their primary identity, 39% cited community identities as more important than national loyalty. Youth expressed blatant bias towards their own sects, with equal prevalence across confession, region and gender, though 67% also expressed acceptance of members of other sects. The family is undoubtedly the strongest unit of support for youth (95% expressing trust in close relatives) and major life decisions

like marriage or career choice are often a matter of familial consensus.

Youth rates of volunteering (11.9%) were lower than elsewhere in the region (14%) and much lower than the MIC average (19.2%). The majority do not believe they can make a difference regarding the most important challenges they identified at the national and communal level. Still most individuals have confidence in civic organizations (81%) even though there is a general lack of knowledge about these groups.

Lebanese youth participated in protest demonstrations at a much higher rate than the MIC average and greatly preferred these activities to participation in the formal political process. The population had low turnout to elections, influenced by a minimum voting age of 21, and only a small percentage (6.7%) voiced their opinions directly to public officials. Young citizens have many reasons to feel disenfranchised from the political system which is widely acknowledged as corrupt, and only 36% expressed confidence in the judicial system and government at large.





1 Introduction and Overview

a. Purpose

This study aims to provide an updated analysis of the socio-economic condition of youth in Lebanon today. An important aspect of this project is to demonstrate the extent to which viewing Lebanese youth along traditional lines of demarcation exclusively is an oversimplification. To illustrate the particularly wide range of lifestyles and levels of development experienced by the different subgroups within the country the study delineates information along nationality, gender, region and other relevant demographics. References are drawn to other segments of the population and young people in other countries to highlight the status of youth within Lebanon and on the regional map.

b. National Background

Lebanon occupies a unique position in the contemporary layout of the region. Throughout much of the 20th century Lebanon was touted as the Switzerland of Middle East, admired for its financial prosperity and widespread appeal to tourists. However the events of the brutal and enduring Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990) would devastate the very foundation of this society. Reaping an estimated 120,000 fatalities and displacing a tremendous proportion of the population (UNHRC 2006), the conflict would serve to painfully reinforce divisions along ethnic, religious and political lines, redefining the essence of Lebanese identity altogether.

Since the end of the war there have been tremendous efforts put into rebuilding the economy, infrastructure and nationhood of the Lebanese state. Major achievements have been made in improving some essential components of the standard of living for the general population. The fact that Lebanon now has one of the highest life expectancies in the developing world stands as evidence to the material progress made in the last 25 years (WHO 2015b). Yet the gains of this development have been distributed in a highly unequal

manner and the country remains mired in a state of inter-group competition for resources and political power which continues to inhibit the effective operation of the Lebanese state. The consequences of this stalemate manifest in multitude of ways, from rampant corruption to the restricted availability of basic public services, to periodic outbursts of violence and instability.

In the massive upheaval that has occurred across the region since 2011 the tenuous balance of Lebanese society has been placed under further pressure. The war in neighboring Syria has resulted in the spillover of 1.1 million refugees into Lebanon (counting only UNHCR registered individuals) (UN Inter-Agency Coordination 2015), equal to one fourth of the tiny Mediterranean nation's citizen population (World Bank 2014). This unprecedented influx has pushed resources and utilities which were already insufficient into even greater scarcity. Sectarian tensions have been inflamed by regional conflicts, and this friction has sporadically erupted into acts of localized violence.

Yet in the face of these serious threats Lebanese society has proven remarkably resilient, continuing to function as many surrounding nations have fallen into chaos. It is thus that the opportunity remains to study the condition of human development among Lebanon's youth today, and the impetus to examine the possibilities and challenges they encounter in their transition to adulthood in this difficult environment they live in.

c. Measuring Human Development

Chosen metrics have an indispensable influence over the conclusions reached regarding a population's development status. Measuring by the standards of the Human Development Index (HDI) the Arab region was experiencing unprecedented improvements in the first decade of the 21st century and appeared to be performing strongly in health, education and living conditions. Several countries in the region featured the fastest progress of human development recorded over the last few decades. Yet these figures would seem to lie in

direct contrast to the rapidly growing levels of discontent and instability across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) since 2011. A possible explanation of this phenomenon is that with increased education and income may come from a diminished willingness to accept conditions of broader political and social injustice. For citizens who are aware of these disparities and not quite at the margins of survival, the scales may be tipped in favor of oppositional action. Regardless of the explanation, the ongoing instability which continues to engulf the region clearly demonstrates that the three categories of HDI do not provide a sufficient picture of human development in the Middle East as it is experienced on the ground.

Our analysis refers back to the idea of human development put forth by Amartya Sen (1985), upon which the HDI is based. Sen emphasized the examination of an individual's capabilities over the resources available to them, and promoted the process of human development as one of expanding these capabilities. In evaluating development under these criteria it is necessary to consider factors which help create the conditions of human development, such as participation in political and community life, environmental sustainability and the general status of human rights, alongside the traditional measures of standard of living (health, education and income). While lacking the ability to be reduced neatly to a comparable number or rank of development, this approach aims to depict human development in a manner which more accurately and completely fits the experience of individuals.

d. The Importance of Youth in Human Development

From the age of adolescence and onward, individuals begin to make their own decisions and take responsibility for the outcomes of these choices, thus becoming active participants in their own personal development (Dauphin et al. 2011). At this stage they also carry influence in household decision making negotiations, and the wider discourse of the society they belong to. Their perspectives can supply innovative approaches to old problems and push political and social systems to adapt and evolve. As a healthy, energetic population they can also serve as the driving force of the economy, working steadily and supporting dependent members. Furthermore they represent the group which will hold the positions of power in the future, and the skills and experience they acquire in youth will come to have direct impact on younger generations. These roles are all the more important in developing nations which seek to surmount the struggles of poverty and break the limiting and destructive cycles which inhibit their progress.

In order to take advantage of these benefits, youth must be properly supported to reach their full creative and productive potential. Fundamentally, young people must have access to quality education, proper nutrition and adequate health care in order to develop their skills and vitality. Equally necessary are employment opportunities which enable these youth to support their own livelihoods by engaging their personal efforts and capabilities.

However this process is often obstructed, as youth are frequently those caught at the crossroads of social strife, economic hardship and intercommunity violence. Children, adolescents and youth are the most vulnerable to harsh living conditions, rapid shocks to livelihood and general deprivation. Humanitarian and governmental support is often directed primarily towards children under the age of 18 while older youth, judged to be more resilient, are often provided with far less assistance. The unfortunate consequence of this morally just prioritization is that the young people, which could act as a catalyst to human development are frequently left marginalized and without agency. At present youth exclusion is rampant throughout the Arab world, and these forces were a major influence on the series of social movements and instability which took off in 2010-2011.

These are among the reasons the 2015 AHDR places 'youth empowerment' as its central focus, describing this empowerment as essential to the progress of human development. This idea of empowerment is summarized as "the expansion of people's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them" (AHDR 2015). At the heart of this goal is the mission to increase the agency of youth to expand their human capabilities. As such efforts to improve youth outcomes must ensure that they are significant actors in the process of change taking place. This seeks to embed attitudes of self-reliance and decision making in youth and encourage their social inclusion and participation in civic life.

Though Lebanon may at present be 'holding together' relative to the regional climate, youth exclusion is no less important a factor contributing to internal frictions and societal dysfunction. Youth in Lebanon remain vulnerable to many surrounding factors which limit their capacity, yet still hold tremendous potential to advance the country in which they live. By laying out some of the key challenges and strengths of youth in Lebanon today the study hopes to shed some light on how this critical component of the development puzzle might be best addressed and utilized.

Box 1.1 Youth Definition and Population of Interest:

Youth is best described as the period of transition from the dependence of childhood to the self-sufficiency of full adulthood. For the purpose of this report youth are defined as all those between 15 and 29 years of age. This age range is chosen in consideration of the prolonged transition to adulthood experienced by many individuals in Lebanon and throughout the Arab region. Where necessary other definitions of youth are used to accommodate data from sources with alternate youth age ranges, such as the 15-24 range used by the ILO, UNICEF and the WHO. In these instances the age range used will be explicitly stated.

Syrian and Palestinian youth living in Lebanon are considered alongside Lebanese nationals, because they constitute a major component of the total youth residing in Lebanon today. In the case of Palestinian youth, the vast majority have spent their entire lives inside the country. Many Syrians have also been in Lebanon for years and might remain in the country indefinitely. To exclude these youth groups from the analysis on the basis of their nationality would be to ignore a huge subset of the Lebanese population and render a censored depiction of the overall human development of youth in Lebanon.



2 Demographic Profile

a. Youth Profile

Youth profile of the entire population residing in Lebanon: Lebanon today hosts a number of different populations; however, youth are similarly prevalent across these national subdivisions. Lebanese citizens, as well as Palestinian refugees and displaced Syrians within the country all feature a consistent youth share at 27.4% of their respective populations. In total there are an estimated 1,616,740 young people in Lebanon today out of a resident population of around 5.9 million individuals¹. Taken together, youth in Lebanon are more prevalent than the average for this age bracket across the world and make up a greater segment of the national population than total youth do across West Asia (Figure 2.1). Of the neighboring states only Palestine has a larger percentage of youth (30%) (UNDP 2015)².

Youth profile of Lebanese citizens: Youth between the ages of 15 and 29 comprise 27.4% of the resident population of Lebanon, excluding Palestinians and waves of Syrians who arrived after 2009 (CAS & UNICEF 2009). Applying this youth ratio to the most recent figures on Lebanon's citizen population leads to an estimate that there are 1,235,740 of such young residents in Lebanon today (World Bank 2014)³. Males make up the majority of this age group, consisting of 51.8% of total youth. Of those holding temporary residence permits in Lebanon (mainly economic migrants from Africa and Asia, as this figure excludes all Palestinians and those Syrians who arrived since the start of the conflict, 54.7% were youth (CAS & UNICEF 2009).

(1) Ratio found by summing the population of young Palestinians, Syrians and other residents in Lebanon (including nationals) and dividing this figure by the combined total population of all these groups.

(2) For the sake of consistency UNPD figures are used in these comparisons, they place Lebanon's youth ratio at 28.8% of the total resident population.

(3) This is calculated simply by multiplying the ratio of youth to adults by the most recent population figures

Box 2.1 Youth Profile of Palestinians and Syrians in Lebanon:

Among the estimated 313,000 Palestinian refugees (UN Inter-Agency Coordination 2015) in Lebanon approximately 86,000 are youth (27.4%). A greater portion (55.9%) of this Palestinian youth population is female (AUB & UNRWA 2015)⁴.

Syrians in Lebanon also had a very similar youth cohort proportional to their local resident population at 27.3% (Oxfam et al. 2013), or an estimated 295,000 individuals (UN Inter-Agency Coordination 2015). The extremely consistent youth prevalence among all the subpopulations may be surprising, however within the cohort age composition was somewhat different for Syrians with a greater number in the 15-19 range (11.9% vs. 9.5%) and a smaller number in the 20-24 range (7.7% vs 10%). Though the overall Syrian population featured more females (52.4%) the difference in youth gender distribution was drastic (58.1% female) especially in the 25-29 age range where 92 of the 121 sampled individuals were women. This is likely a result of the large portion of males of this age that are engaged in combat, as well as the practice of sending women and children out of harm's way while men remain in Syria for work and various other reasons (Oxfam et al. 2013).

Youth population distributed by Mohafaza: The distribution of resident young persons across regions (Mohafaza) reflects the overall distribution of residents in the country, especially after the recent trends accounting for the influx of Syrian refugees. While the Lebanese national population (including youth) accounts for more than 70% of the resident population in the regions of Beirut and Mount Lebanon, North, and South, there has been a drastic change of population composition in the Bekaa, where almost 50% of the resident population is non-Lebanese (Figure 2.2). Young persons (15-24) account for a large share of the population in the North and Bekaa regions, especially with large numbers of young Syrian refugees (shares exceed 10% in both regions).

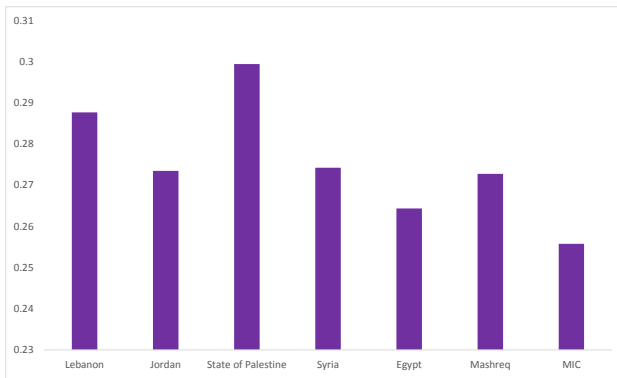
As for the distribution across regions, one notices that Lebanese youth's residency is almost equally split between

(4) Same method as above, with total population taken from the UN Inter-Agency Coordination source and youth-to-adult ratio taken from the 2015 AUB survey

(5) Same method as above, with total population taken from the UN Inter-Agency Coordination source and youth-to-adult ratio taken from the Oxfam survey

Beirut and Mount Lebanon on one hand, and the North, South and Bekaa region on the other (Figure 2.3). The situation is markedly different for the young Syrian and Palestinian refugees; only 20% of their youth population resides in Beirut and Mount Lebanon. The fact that a majority of non-Lebanese, including youth, now live in the peripheral regions, poses great challenges on the Lebanese government and additional pressure on the already deprived remote regions of the North and Bekaa.

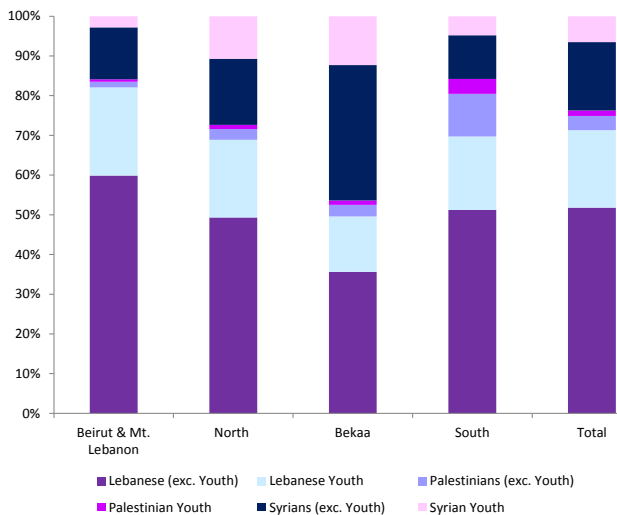
Figure 2.1 Youth Population by Country



Notes: Mashreq includes Egypt, Sudan, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Lebanon, Oman, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Palestine, Syria, UAE and Yemen. MIC: Middle Income Countries average. The Lebanon figure accounts for resident youth (including Palestine and Syrian refugees, but excluding foreign migrant workers)

Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2015). World Population Prospects: the 2015 Revision. New York: United Nations

Figure 2.2 Distribution of Population and Youth (15-24) by Mohafaza (regions)⁶



Sources: Lebanese: Central Administration of Statistics, Lebanon & UNICEF (2009). Multiple indicator cluster survey III. Palestinians: UNDP.(2015) Palestinian refugee study. Syrians: UNFPA, UNICEF, UNESCO, Save the Children, UNHCR (2014). Situational analysis of youth in Lebanon affected by the Syrian crisis.

(6) This graph is calculated by multiplying the percentage of each subpopulations in each area (as presented in the data sources listed) by the total population of each subgroup. These regional subpopulation figures are then divided by the total population of all residents in the country to yield their share of the cumulative total. The regional distribution of Syrian youth represents ages 15-24 adjusted up to account for 27.3% of the total Syrian population, as the 15-29 age range does.

Figure 2.3 Distribution of resident youth (15-24) across Mohafaza

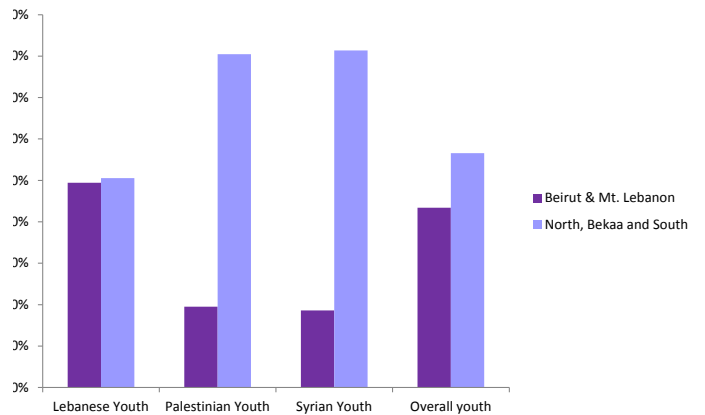
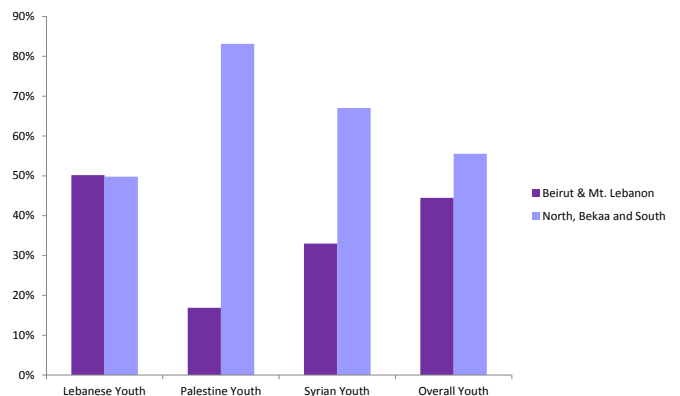


Figure 2.4 Distribution of Resident Non-Youth across Mohafaza



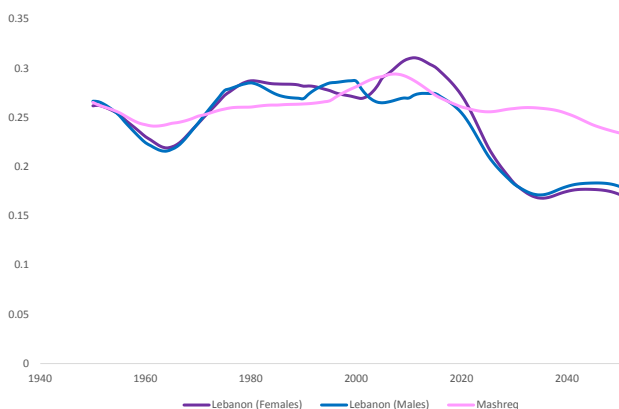
Source: Same as figure 2.2

Demographic transition: A major demographic transition has been underway in Lebanon since the 1980s, with fertility, birthrates and crude death rates all dropping over the last several decades. The proportion of youth in Lebanon (age 15-29) increased significantly between 1965 and 1980, held steady for the next 25 years and then took 1.17% larger share of the population from 2005 to 2010. Though birth rates among Syrian refugees have increased significantly in the last two years, UNPD estimates show the percentage of all youth in Lebanon to have just leveled out and begun to drop in 2013 (UNPD 2015). The percentage of the total working age population will also begin to fall within the next 20 years (UNFPA 2014). This demonstrates that while Lebanon is experiencing the highest proportion of youth in its history, the window of opportunity to take advantage of this demographic dividend is closing. Having such a large youth cohort provides the state with a tremendous amount of human capital to fuel economic growth and support dependent members of the population among others. However fully utilizing this youth advantage requires careful policy aimed at integrating youth into the labor force and society at large (Chaaban 2009). Should efforts not be taken to this effect, a large unemployed, socially excluded youth cohort holds the potential to serve as a catalyzing factor to a situation of national instability (UNDP

2015). An additional time constraint exists as Lebanon's youth population is expected to drop faster than other states in the region, with the proportion of 10-24 year olds projected to be on par with the group of more developed states in 2050 (PRB 2013).

Dependency ratio: Lebanon's dependency ratio is also expected to begin increasing in 2025, much sooner than in most of the Arab states (UNDP 2015). Members of the civil service, military and security forces are granted generous retirement benefits which already impose a heavy burden on national accounts. Private sector employees who have completed at least 20 years of work are entitled to a lump sum payment at the end of their career, though no public health insurance is offered and these payouts are usually quickly spent. Together these plans cover only 34.7% of the labor force, leaving the majority (informal workers and the self-employed) uncovered by any support program. Even though the cost of these plans will continue to soar and will require reform to remain economically feasible, already being the most expensive in the region relative to GDP, the majority of the age burden will fall directly on the younger relatives of these retirees, namely today's youth (Kronfol & Sibai 2013).

Figure 2.5 Youth as % of Total Population



Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2015). World Population Prospects: the 2015 Revision. New York: United Nations

Youth with Disabilities: Approximately 4.3% of Lebanon's population has some form of disability, with 1.8% having a severe disability.⁷ Some of the main causes of disability identified across the MENA region which apply in Lebanon are poverty, malnutrition, violence and consanguineous marriage. The majority of children with disabilities are in special care institutions, with very few schools catering to students with special needs. This has the double negative effect of isolating these children from others and creating an artificially sheltered environment. This contributes to difficulties as these youth attempt to engage with a society which is largely not outfitted for accessibility to those with special needs. Cultural links to disability plays the largest role marginalizing these youth, for some the social consequences of disablement outweigh the obstructiveness of the physical impairment itself (Peters 2009).

(7) Pan Arab Survey for Family Health, 2004

b. Migration Trends

Emigration vs inflow of migrants: Lebanon has the longest history of migration of the Arab states, with an emigration share equal to 14.4% of the total resident population between 2010 and 2014 (MPC 2013). Of all the Arab states only Libya (17.8%) and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (24.1%) have a greater share of emigrants. This outflow is offset by an inflow of migrants equal to 21.6% of the resident population though these immigrants are largely of a much lower skill level (UNDP 2015). This migration was initially stemmed by a need to replace workers who had emigrated during the civil war and did not wish to return during peacetime, a phenomenon known as 'replacement migration paradigm' (Tabar 2010). In the past five years the vast majority of these immigrants, often forcibly displaced, have been Syrians (UNDP 2015). Though the history of mass Syrian migration to Lebanon stretches back to their establishment as separate states, this migration was largely on a temporary or seasonal basis before the outbreak of the Syrian crisis (Tabar 2010). Today, the most common places of origin for those Syrian immigrants registered with UNHCR are: Homs (20.8%), Aleppo (20.5%), Rural Damascus (14.0%) and Idlib (12.9%) (2015). Additionally, there were approximately 200,000 immigrants from Africa and Asia in the period between 2010 and 2014 (UNDP 2015). The most common countries of origin for these immigrants are Sri Lanka, the Philippines and Ethiopia, and they are most commonly women employed in domestic labor (Tabar 2010).

Profile of migration: In leaving the country, Lebanese youth have been more willing to take on the tremendous risks and lifestyle changes involved with international migration. A 2009 survey carried out by the CAS and UNICEF found that 77% of recent emigrants were less than 35 years old with 33% younger than 25, confirming migration as a primarily youth action⁸. Of these emigrants the majority were men (76%) and half were without work in Lebanon, most of them (66%) leaving to find work outside the country (CAS and UNICEF 2009). OECD data details that a greater proportion of Lebanese emigrants in Europe are youth, as compared to North America and Australia (OECD 2011). 47.2% of these migrants between the age of 20-34 held a university degree compared to 16% of the overall resident population (MPC 2013). Additionally, 29% of the migrants had a secondary diploma as their highest degree compared to 17% of the total population (CAS and UNICEF 2009). Among graduates of the top four universities (by number of students) in Lebanon 45% of women and 67.5% of men were living abroad (AUB et al. 2009). This constitutes a major loss to the Lebanese economy not only in youth but in a highly educated and skilled subset of the population. These skills are widely dispersed across the globe, between 2010 and 2014, 40.5% of migrants moved to Arab countries (primarily the Gulf states), 27.0% to North America, 20.1% to Europe, 10.1% to Australia and non-Arab Asian states, and 2.1% to non-Arab African states (UNDP 2015). A higher portion

(8) Their methodology involved asking households about their members who had migrated in the last 5 years, figures could be skewed as older migrants may be more likely to take their entire household with them.

of the migrants to North America between the ages 25-29 has completed tertiary education (OECD 2011). However, across the OECD states, Lebanese are primarily employed in highly skilled occupations as professionals and technicians (29.2%), legislators, senior officials and managers (15.7%), and clerks (10.3%) (MPC 2013).

Pull and push factors: With one third of all Lebanese youth reporting that they would like to leave the country for a set period of time and 17% wishing to emigrate permanently, emigration is an issue that must be addressed (Kasperian 2007). While removing the “pull” factors which attract Lebanese youth to the countries of their emigration is both impossible and undesirable, there are a number of “push” factors which should be relieved in order to diminish the effect of this severe brain drain. Some of the most important push factors influencing these aspirations are: political instability, very high cost of living relative to wages, disconnect between the market needs and education, and the limited availability of skilled employment. Poverty also cannot be ignored as one of the primary push factors with the highly impoverished suburbs of Nabatieh having the highest rate of desired migration (Chaaban 2009). 47% of those who were unhappy with their financial situation wished to emigrate, while only 25% of those who considered their salaries fair and sufficient had the same desires (Kasperian 2003).

c. Family Formation

Youth marriages: The dynamics of family formation have shifted considerably over the last several decades. The average age of first marriage has steadily moved back for youth, from 29 years for males and 23 years for females in 1970 (Naufal-Rizkallah 1997) to 32 for males and 27.7 years for females in 2009. Only 12.8% of youth are married (CAS & UNICEF 2009) but across all age groups, Lebanon has the highest proportion of unmarried women in the Arab world (Rashad, Osman & Roudi-Fahimi 2005) though in peripheral areas female married youth were 19% more prevalent relative to Beirut and Mount Lebanon (Gallup 2009-2013).

Reasons behind delay in marriages: The delay in decision to marry was first markedly witnessed during the economic turmoil following the civil war, which made family formation materially unfeasible for many youth at the time. Additionally, there existed a population-wide imbalance of men and women, due to the high rates of male mortality and migration during the war (Saxena, Kulczcki, & Jurdi 2004). Modern marriage decisions are also restricted by sectarian identity as two thirds of youth would not consider marrying someone of a different sect and one third were opposed to others doing so (Harb 2010). Not only does inter-sectarian marriage remain taboo in some communities, but the state does not actually have a civil code for marriage, with only a handful of such marriages ever being registered domestically⁹.

Trends for female population: Despite the fact that these marriage decisions are generally delayed there remains a subset of the female population which married very young. 6% of women between 20 and 24 were married before reaching their 18th birthday (UNICEF 2011). Statistics from 2009 reveal that 45% of married women between 15 and 19 years of age had husbands at least 10 years older than them (CAS & UNICEF 2009). Consanguineous marriages are also still common, with a 2004 PAFAM survey indicated that 25% of all marriages in Lebanon occurred between relatives (CAS 2004). Similarly, a 2013 study of Shi’a populations in Lebanon found a frequency of consanguinity equal to 28.4%, with marriages between first cousins (21.3%) being the most common (El-Kheshen and Saadat 2013). Polygamy is fairly uncommon nationally, with only 2% of married women reporting their current husband had at least one additional wife at present (CAS & UNICEF 2009).

Son bias and family size: OECD’s Social Institutions and Gender Index categorizes families in Lebanon as having moderate son bias¹⁰. A general preference for male children can influence household size as couples may continue to have more children if they judge that they have an insufficient number of boys. This results in somewhat larger household sizes and higher fertility rates.

Box 2.2 Palestinian and Syrian Youth Marriage:

Palestinian youth have much higher rates of engagement than their Lebanese counterparts, 27.8% were married in 2015, including a small percentage of girls under the age of 18 (1.4%). 86.7% of married Palestinian youth were wed to another Palestinian, demonstrating that marriage norms regarding nationality remain rigid (AUB & UNRWA 2015).

Syrian refugees had the highest rates of youth marriage, 23% of men and 64% of women in the 19-24 age range were married. On average, interviewed youth stated that 19 years was the most appropriate age for females to marry versus 25 years for males. They also generally expressed willingness to obey their parents on marital decisions. Many young Syrian women seek marriage as a means to have their own space, escape harsh living conditions and relieve economic burden from their parents. Protection against sexual harassment is also an important influencing factor. Rates of marrying non-Syrians are very low, one survey recorded zero instances of this in female youth who had married since coming to Lebanon (UNFPA et al. 2014).

(9) Lebanese law does respect civil marriages made outside the country. In this case the couple’s personal affairs are governed by the rules of the system in which they were married.

(10) <http://genderindex.org/country/lebanon>



3 Health and Education

a. Health Outcomes and Access to Health Services

H **Health Outcomes:** Though Lebanon performs relatively well regarding basic healthcare indicators, such as life expectancy and rates of infectious disease, this masks significant healthcare problems developing among youth today. Young people in Lebanon carry a number of the major risk factors which hold the potential to develop into more serious issues later in life. In seeking treatment they face much higher costs than elsewhere in the region with very minimal safeguards in place to assist them. Those with money have access to very high quality institutions and medical personnel, while those without may go untreated. Additional anxiety is brought about the healthcare system as a whole, which is under particular strain from the influx of Syrian refugees. This dilemma serves to reinforce familial dependence and complicate the process of self-establishment for Lebanese youth.

Regardless, Lebanon has made considerable strides in health over the last few decades, both for youth and the broader population. The country saw a steady decrease in under-5 mortality from 32 (per 1,000 live births) in 1996 to 9 deaths per 1,000 in 2013 (World Bank 2014b). Similarly considerable attempts have been made to improve vaccination rates and quality, with 94% of infants fully immunized against DPT, OPV, Measles and Hepatitis (MOPH 2012a). Incidence of maternal mortality (per 100,000) has plummeted from 107 in 1996 (MOPH 1996) to 15 in 2015 (World Bank 2015) though in the Bekaa and North local rates are two and 1.5 times higher than the national average (MOPH 2009). The vast majority of these births are also attended by professionals (98%) with 95.6% making at least one antenatal care visit (CAS 2004). Unfortunately with this, Cesarean section rates have become extremely high in Lebanon, well beyond necessary usage and WHO guidelines at 44% of total deliveries (Moussawi et al. 2015).

For youth, age-specific mortality rate rests at 1.06 per thousand

(MOPH 2012a), having dropped approximately 50% between 1990 and 2010 (IHME 2010). The health conditions leading to the most years lived with disability (YLDs) for these youth are mental & behavioral disorders, musculoskeletal disorders, chronic respiratory disease, injuries, nutritional deficiencies and other non-communicable diseases (IHME 2010).

The leading cause of injury and death for young people in the country is automobile accidents. 31% of traffic accident victims were between the age of 20 and 29, and 76.4% were male. With nearly 15 traffic deaths per 100,000 people annually, Lebanon has a very high rate of road fatality when compared globally (Choueiri 2010). In 2015 new traffic laws were passed in an attempt to reduce road deaths, though it remains to be seen whether these laws will continue to be upheld and have a lasting impact on road safety, especially for young persons.

Incidence of the main diseases targeted in the MDGs (HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis) is very low in Lebanon. Yet in recent years the age profile of people with HIV has begun to shift with more young people reporting infection. In 2013 roughly one third of the new reported incidence of AIDS was among youth (UNAIDS 2014). Additionally, the influx of Syrian refugees has increased national exposure to some other threatening communicable diseases. This is primarily as a result of the Syrian population's poor living and sanitary conditions, and their frequent movement to and from Syria. Hepatitis, measles, leishmaniasis and increased incidence of tuberculosis have been brought into the Lebanon by this channel (UNDP 2013).

Widespread mental health issues also exist among Lebanon's youth. A 2012 study of adolescents in South Lebanon found 18.2% had experienced at least one high-magnitude, war-related, traumatic event (Khamis 2012). Among 13-15 year olds who participated in the GSBSSHS, rates of seriously considered (15%) and attempted suicide (13.5%) are shocking. However, all the other countries in the region which included the question had results that approached (UAE) or exceeded (Tunisia, Kuwait, Iraq, Jordan) those of Lebanon (WHO 2011) (Table 3.1).

Box 3.1 of Health Outcomes of Syrian and Palestinian Youth:

18.9% of Palestinians had some type of chronic disease, with the most commonly reported issues including neurological diseases, psychological disorders and chronic pulmonary diseases. 45.2% of Palestinian youth surveyed stated that they felt depressed a lot of the time or more, with 59.1% responding that they never felt happy (AUB & UNRWA 2015). The majority of Syrian youth state that they feel depressed, anxious or afraid most of the time, with only 11% describing their state of mind with positive emotions. 24% these youth also reported having considered suicide (UNFPA et al. 2014).

Table 3.1 Mental Health Indicators of Students Age 13-15

	Total	Boys	Girls
Percentage of students who ever seriously considered attempting suicide during the past 12 months	15.0	12.5	17.3
Percentage of students who actually attempted suicide during the past 12 months	13.5	13.5	13.5
Percentage of students who had no close	3.4	4.1	2.9

Source: World Health Organization (2011). Global Student Health Survey: Lebanon National Fact Sheet

Risk Factors: Overall the risk factors associated with the greatest burden of disease in Lebanon are dietary risks, high body-mass index and tobacco smoking (IHME 2010). The GSBSHS yields particular insight on the health and risky habits of children entering the youth cohort (age 13-15), and illuminates a few alarming trends in Lebanon.

Rates of overweight and obese youth are alarmingly high and also somewhat more common than in Syria, with nearly double the proportion of daily soft drink consumption (60.2% vs. 30.8%). Palestinian refugees within Lebanon showed even higher overall rates of obesity and soda consumption (8.7% and 70.9%) though male specific rates of being overweight were lower (WHO 2011). 77.1% of Palestinian youth surveyed indicated that there had been at least one time in the last 6 months where they had not been able to eat nutritious food because of financial constraints (AUB & UNRWA 2015). The sharp gendered dimension of being an overweight youth in Lebanon and the greater frequency of underweight Lebanese females is worth noting here. Contrarily, among Palestinians in Lebanon 6% of boys are underweight as compared to 3.5% of girls. Additionally, Palestinian youth are more sedentary than Lebanese with only 17.3% active for one hour or more, five days a week. This could be viewed as a result of their greatly restricted public space, though many Lebanese youth in urban areas also suffer this (WHO 2011). Among the Lebanese population weight trends become drastically worse in the later stages of youth. 38.6% of 25-34 year old women and 64.6% of men are classified as at least overweight, 14% and 22.2% are obese. Similar developmental trends could be expected to hold across Palestinian and Syrian subpopulations.

Table 3.2 Diet and Activity Health Risk Factors among Students age 13-15

Dietary Behavior			
	Total	Boys	Girls
Percentage of students who were underweight (less than -2SD from median by BMI for age and sex)	5.3	4.2	6.5
Percentage of students who were overweight (greater than +1SD from the median by BMI for age and sex)	24.1	34.0	14.1
Percentage of students who were obese (greater than +2SD from the median by BMI for age and sex)	6.7	9.1	4.2
Percentage of students who usually drank carbonated soft drinks one or more times per day during the past 30 days	60.2	65.0	55.9
Physical Activity			
Percentage of students who were physically active for a total of at least 60 minutes per day on five or more days during the past seven	34.6	42.4	27.7
Percentage of students who went to physical education class on three or more days each week during the school year	33.1	36.1	30.3
Percentage of students who spent three or more hours during a typical day doing sitting activities	48.8	45.9	51.4

Source: World Health Organization (2011). Global Student Health Survey: Lebanon National Fact Sheet

While there are other countries with a similar prevalence of smokers, Lebanon has one of the highest rates of cigarette consumption in the world. Total consumption stands at 12.4 packs per person per month, and male smokers average one and a half packs per day. Over a quarter of the younger adult population aged 25-34 currently smoke (27.7%), with 40.5% of males. These figures are still less than those of the 45-54 range where 50% of men and women smoke cigarettes (Sibai & Hwalla 2011). Water pipe usage (hookah, narghile, seisha) is especially prevalent from a very young age, 36.9% of 13-15 year olds had smoked tobacco using this method within the last 30 days. A study of 25 Eastern Mediterranean and Eastern European countries found water pipe usage to be highest in Lebanon (Jawad, Lee & Millett 2015).

Alcohol consumption is much higher for Lebanese youth than those in Syria, 28.5% vs. 7.4% among 13-15 year olds. While the latter is abnormally low on a global scale, most apparently due to religious reasons, rates in Lebanon are on par with many South American countries. Yet in the 25-34 age range,

only 36.8% of males and 11.1% of women self-described as current drinkers, 58.5% and 31.1% respectively identifying as former drinkers. (Sibai & Hwalla 2011). One study of university students in Beirut found that Christians were 10 times more likely and Druz 3 times more likely to have ever consumed alcohol than their Muslim peers. However among the group of students who had tried alcohol, rates of dependence and other issues were equally prevalent (Ghandour, Karam & Maalouf 2009).

Table 3.3 Alcohol Use among Students age 13-15

	Girls	Boys	Girls
Percentage of students who drank at least one alcoholic beverage on one or more of the past 30 days	28.5	36.5	21.6
Among students who ever had a drink of alcohol (other than a few sips) the percentage who had their first drink before age 14	87.5	88.9	85.9
Percentage of students who drank so much alcohol that they were really drunk one or more times during their life	21.2	27.1	16.0

Source: World Health Organization (2011). Global Student Health Survey: Lebanon National Fact Sheet

No official statistics on drug use exist in Lebanon, however field experts estimate there are between 10,000 and 15,000 individuals suffering from drug addiction nation-wide (Skoun 2011), including between 2,000 and 4,000 injectable drug users (UNAIDS 2012). The age of first consumption is between 14 and 19 years for 58% of the drug using population, and an additional 25% initiate use between the ages of 20 and 25 (IGSPS et al. 2012). A sample of students from one private university revealed they had taken the following categories of prescription drugs non-medically: pain (15.1%), anxiety (4.6%), sleeping (5.8%) and stimulants (3.5%) (Ghandour, Sayed & Martins 2012).

Another study of private university students found that 51.3% had engaged in some form of penetrative sex during their lifetime. The most frequent socio-cultural concerns mentioned regarding sexual activity were: gaining a bad reputation (47%), social rejection (58%), religion (70%) and parental disapproval (61%). Women were four times more likely to be concerned than men about loss of reputation and self-respect, six times more regarding parental disapproval, and three times as likely to be worried about societal disapproval (Yasmine et al. 2015). Among the general population contraception use was less common among young people with 21% of 15 to 19 year olds using contraception, 43.6% of 20 to 24 year olds and 53.7% of everyone 15-49 (IGSPS et al. 2012). Most secondary and university students had a high level of knowledge regarding the transmission and prevention of AIDS however knowledge of other STIs was less complete. They mainly acquired this information from school, their peers, the internet and less

frequently from parents. A small portion had knowledge about abortions and where they could be performed (La Sagesse et al. 2012).

Box 3.2 Syrian Youth and Contraceptives:

Among Syrian refugee youth only 45% state they have knowledge about contraceptive methods. However it is estimated that no more than 20% of unmarried youth are sexually active. Still, among those who had given birth since arriving in Lebanon 41% stated they did not intend to have additional children yet do not use any form of contraception (UNFPA et al. 2014).

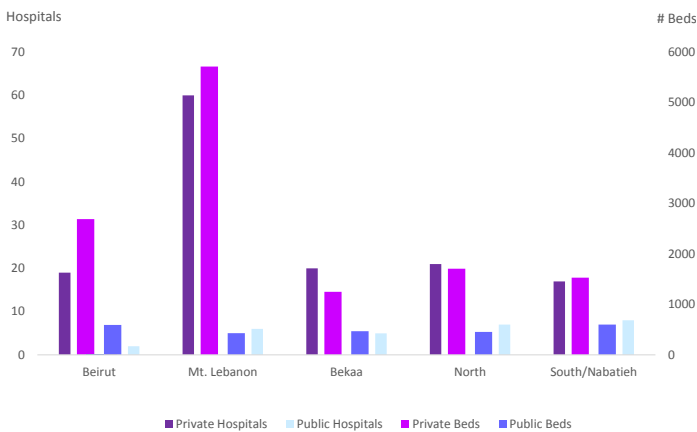
Expenditure and Access: Lebanon has a total of 950 dispensaries and primary healthcare centers. The government intends to transform many of the dispensaries into primary healthcare centers, as presently they are not well stocked in terms of human and physical capacity and cannot offer a full range of services. Though the primary healthcare centers host a multitude of functions (including prevention programs, family planning, reproductive health programs and prenatal care), the quality of service varies by location. Additionally the specific healthcare needs of young people are generally given the least attention, with most services tailored to children or the elderly. Many youth avoid utilizing formal healthcare services due to worries about confidentiality or being judged by health practitioners, especially regarding STIs and substance issues (El Kahi et al. 2012). While no more than 20% of the population makes use of these centers, the number of beneficiaries increased by 2.3 times between 2002 and 2010. This increase has only expanded in the period since 2010 with large numbers of Syrian refugees accessing primary healthcare centers as well, pushing the existing system well beyond its capacity (MOPH 2014).

National health expenditure represents 7.17% of GDP (MOPH 2012b) though healthcare indicators lag behind other countries with similar spending levels (Ammar 2009). Of the \$751 dollars per capita spent on healthcare only \$89 come from the Ministry of Public Health. The largest source of funding for this expensive system comes directly from households (53%) (MOPH 2012b), with the average household spending \$1,623 dollars on healthcare each year (CAS 2012). Of these household expenditures 70.4% cover out-of-pocket services, while the remainder goes towards health insurance contributions and premiums. Government funds make up 31.1% of total healthcare expenditures, including the large portions designated for civil servants (17.2%), the army (16.6%) and the security forces (8.7%). This also includes related payments given out by the national social security fund (10%). Employers collectively cover another 15.4% of health costs through contributions to insurance (MOPH 2012).

This heavily privatized healthcare system comes at a cost of access for some segments of the population, reflected in the distribution of the hospitals themselves. Combined, municipal Beirut and the Metn district house 54% of the entire country's private hospital capacity. Meanwhile, the North, South and Bekaa Valley have a total of 3 long stay private hospitals, capable of holding 375 individuals (Syndicate of Private Hospitals). Even when public hospitals, which are distributed

somewhat more evenly, are taken into account Beirut and Metn (comprising 21.7% of the total resident population) still hold 52% of the national inpatient capacity (MOPH 2011).

Figure 3.1 Hospitals and Beds by Mohafaza



Source: Syndicate of Private Hospitals (2013); Ministry of Public Health (2011), Statistical Summary.

The lowest expenditure quintiles of the population incur healthcare costs more frequently, despite having a diminished ability to cover these costs out-of-pocket. They also spend a smaller share of their income on healthcare, even when food expenses are removed. Incidence of disability is shown to be almost 3% for the poorest fifth compared to 1.2% for the richest segment. Contrarily, rate of chronic disease increases with expenditure level, suggesting a higher frequency of accurate diagnosis (Salti, Chaaban & Raad 2010). In the event that individuals cannot cover their full bill, some hospitals, both public and private, use harsh tactics to collect payments, such as refusing to release corpses, newborn babies or, more commonly, holding the patients ID card (Sidahmed 2015). One study also demonstrated that individual political involvement can be influential in access to quality healthcare (Chen & Cammett 2012).

Over half of the Lebanese population is uninsured and coverage varies greatly by mohafaza (CAS 2007). Beirut and Mount Lebanon have 60% and 54% of their populations covered by insurance while the North, South and Nabatieh only feature around 34%. Public insurance plans generally predominate, with the highest rate of private coverage being approximately one third of the total insured population of Beirut. Across localities, poorer segments of the population are less likely to be insured, which leaves them vulnerable to catastrophic health expenses (Salti, Chaaban & Raad 2010).

The MOPH plays an important role subsidizing hospital visits for uninsured individuals. In 2012 there were nearly 170,000 in-patients who benefitted from these subsidies, with the greatest numbers coming from Tripoli, Baalbak and Akkar. These subsidized hospital admissions have increasingly taken place in private institutions, which made up 30.6% of all subsidized visits in 2012 as compared to 14.1% in 2005 (MOPH 2012). Still coverage is determined on an ad-hoc basis and cannot be confidently relied upon for all components of

healthcare. Uninsured patients could be turned away from private hospitals that have reached their government funded annual quota. There have also been instances where the MOPH has temporarily stopped its coverage of all uninsured patients (Zbeeb 2013).

Box 3.3 Health Access of Syrian and Palestinian Youth:

Aside from pregnancy and delivery related visits only 31% of Syrian refugee youth (age 15-24) have sought health services. Most of these services were accessed at dispensaries or hospitals. 56% of those who had utilized these healthcare services were satisfied with them. The two most common complaints were "high cost of medication" (66%) and "high cost of service" (55%). This is despite the fact that the median cost of medical visits for these youth is \$50, with less than 25% paying more than \$200. Most expensive treatments, generally those for major or chronic problems, are covered by international organizations (UNFPA 2014). However there is a limit on what these organizations will pay, for UNHCR all cases costing more than \$1,500 are reviewed on an individual basis. For many refugees this means that expensive-to-treat, life threatening illnesses, such as many types of cancers, go unabated (Amnesty International 2014). Reportedly, some have actually chosen to remain in Syria in order to maintain access to healthcare (Sidahmed 2015).

UNRWA provides basic health services to Palestinian refugees, with primary health care and mobile clinics used as the backbone of this system. 54.9% of refugees had access to UNRWA hospitals (UNRWA 2015), however the staff of these facilities are stretched thin with the average doctor seeing 117 patients each day (UNRWA 2014). Without this support Palestinians in Lebanon would have much more restricted health access. 95% of these refugees have no health insurance and average health expenses are \$1,228 per family each year (IGSPS et al 2012).

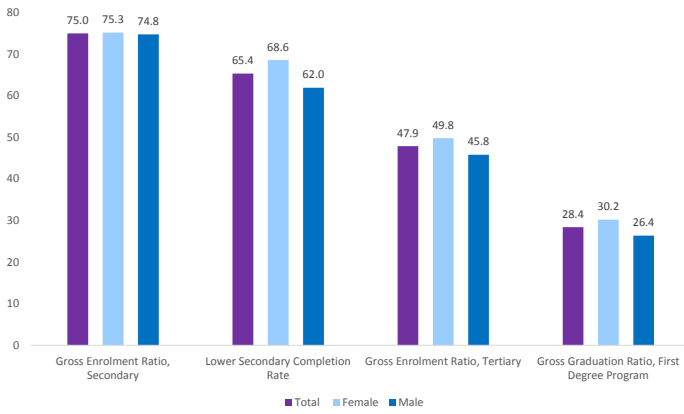
b. Education

Historically, a great deal of importance has been placed on education within Lebanese society, an emphasis which remained strong even during the years of the civil war. In 2009-2010 pupils, university and vocational students represented 32% of the total population of Lebanon, compulsory education consisting of a minimum of 8 years of school.

Though illiteracy for the entire Lebanese population is twice as high for women than men, there is little difference in gendered outcomes beyond primary education (Yacoub & Badre 2012a) and youth literacy rates were actually higher for girls than boys, at 99.1% and 98.4% respectively (UNESCO 2013). The primary net enrolment rate for citizens is 97% which represents nearly universal primary education (CRDP 2012). Moving from primary to complementary levels of education 97% percent of students were able to transition successfully and on time (CAS & UNICEF 2009). Figure 3.2 demonstrates that while the gross secondary enrolment ratio is about 75% for both girls and boys the lower secondary completion rate 6.66% lower for boys. This gap is then reflected in tertiary enrolment and graduation rates. Additionally, net secondary enrollment lies at 57.3%, indicating a large portion of repeating and over-age students. The dropout rate for intermediate education was 17.3% in 2012 indicating serious problems with retention as students transition to higher levels of education

(UNESCO 2013). While primary attendance is consistently very high across mohafaza, outcomes begin to diverge at the secondary level (Figure 3.3) (CAS & UNICEF 2009).

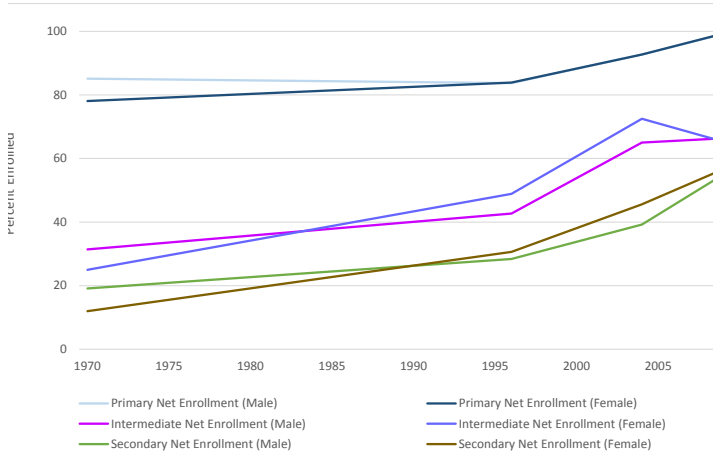
Figure 3.2 Enrollment, Completion Rates by Gender



Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2013). EduStats.

Despite imbalances in current educational achievement the outcomes of the entire country have improved greatly in recent history, except for a steady decrease in secondary enrollments from 68.1% in 2007 to 62.6% in 2012 (UNESCO 2013).

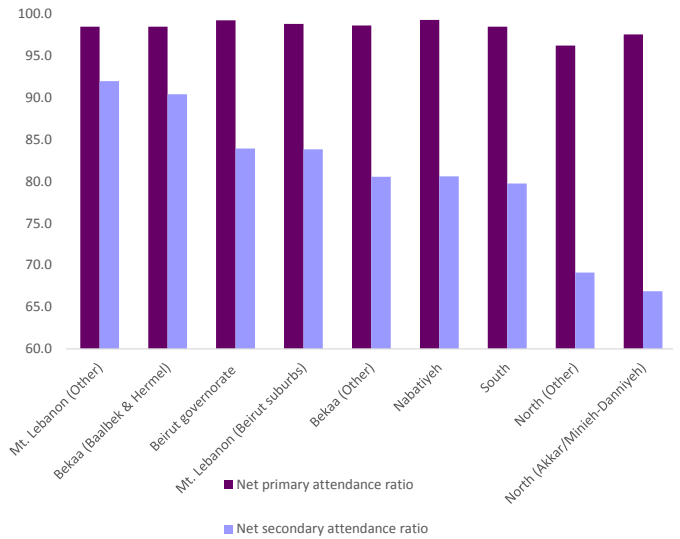
Figure 3.3 Historic Trajectory of Primary, Intermediate and Secondary Enrollments



Source: Lebanon Ministry of Planning (1970), Lebanon Ministry of Social Affairs and UNFPA (1996), Central Administration of Statistics, Lebanon (2004), CAS & UNESCO (2009)

Figure 3.4 Net Primary, Secondary Attendance by Mohafaza

Net Primary and Secondary attendance by Mohafaza



Source: CAS Lebanon & UNICEF (2009). Multiple indicator cluster survey III.

Box 3.4 Syrian and Palestinian Enrollments:

Primary enrollment rates for Palestinian refugees are not far off nationals at 95%. However when it comes to secondary education these students are much worse off, the dropout rate for children 6 to 18 is approximately 18%. Only half of secondary school age children (16 to 18) are enrolled in schools or vocational training centers, generally in free UNRWA institutions. Approximately 6% of Palestinians in Lebanon hold a university degree (ILO 2012).

Syrian refugee children in Lebanon experienced an estimated 70% dropout rate in 2012 (Shuayb, Makkouk & Tuttunji 2014). Previously the enrollment rate among primary and secondary school age children in formal education was around 22%, with an additional 6% in non-formal education programs (UNHCR 2014a), however a joint initiative launched by UNHCR, UNICEF, the World Bank and bilateral donors aims to double the number of children who have school access this year (UNHCR 2015b). For refugees enrollment rates are generally higher inside camps than out of camps. There are no specific programs to support Syrians wishing to attend university (UNHCR 2014a).

The budget allocated to the Ministry of Education and Higher Education represents 11% of the total public expenditures (CRDP 2012). Overall spending on education constitutes 6.6% of Lebanon’s GDP. The majority of this burden falls on households, as 73.6% of these expenditures come from private individuals with the remaining 26.4% from the government and external donors. On average, educational costs make up more than 10% of a household’s total expenditures. (BankMed 2014).

Education Quality: The quality of education students in Lebanon receive is proxied by the TIMSS score for Lebanese 8th graders. In mathematics, 73% of students reached the low-benchmark, 38% intermediate, 9% high and 1% advanced (benchmarks are cumulative). From 2003 when the TIMSS

was first administered in Lebanon, national performance in mathematics improved across the board, most notably in an 11% increase of students achieving the intermediate benchmark (from 27% to 38%). Science scores for Lebanese eighth graders were lower, 54% achieving the low benchmark, 25% intermediate, 7% high and 1% advanced. These scores fall well below the median international values, even when correcting for Lebanon's income. Science scores have also improved since 2003 but these changes are less substantial, and not statistically significant for the advanced or low benchmarks (IEA 2011).

This depiction does not, however, represent the existing disparities between groups within the country. Girls were shown to have an advantage over boys in the four subjects featured in the PASEC study (Arabic, French, English and Math). More significant was the effect of the student's school characteristics, most importantly the status of a school as public, subsidized private or fully private. These characteristics had the most explanatory power for results in English at the second grade level and the least influence on Arabic (CRPD 2012). A 2012 study found Lebanon to have the 3rd worst inequality of opportunity in education for the MENA region, following Turkey and Dubai. Alarming, the percent difference in TIMSS scores between the highest and lowest score quintiles was nearly 40% percent. Community variables contributed more to Lebanon's overall inequality of opportunity than they did for any other country in the study (Salahi-Isfahani, Hassine & Assaad 2012). This differing achievements are attributed to the highly segmented nature of Lebanese society and the low level of government involvement in the provision of comprehensive education.

The education system is characterized by a very large proportion of private institutions, many with religious

affiliations, alongside the public schools. Some of these private institutions, known as 'semi' or 'free' privates, are subsidized by the Lebanese government, religious groups and other organizations and are thus able to offer reduced tuition. Regardless of the status of their school, all students are required to pass official examinations at the end of their primary and secondary education.

Of Lebanese nationals, the majority of students are enrolled in private schools. At the primary level, 22.7% of all students are enrolled in subsidized private institutions (vs. 48.0% in fully private institutions). All of the 53.6% of students in secondary private education go to paid institutions (CERD 2014). This trend towards private schools has only increased in recent decades, with an ever greater percentage of new schools being built by private holders. A clear relationship exists between the household head's education and the type of schooling chosen for children, with only 31% of pupils from households with an illiterate head going to private school as compared to 82% of those with a university educated head (CAS & UNICEF 2009).

Students from the lowest economic group were shown to benefit the most from being enrolled in a private payer school, with second year students performing 18.5% better in Arabic and 26.9% better in math than their peers of similar background in public or subsidized private schools. Surprisingly, the PASEC study showed no significant difference in the performance of students of different economic levels in the same private payer schools (CRDP 2012). Still, the prohibitive cost of these higher quality schools cannot be overemphasized, with private institutions ranging between \$1,500 and \$15,000 each year. Even the subsidized private institutions, which are often referred to as 'free private schools' cost families between \$450 and \$533 a year in tuition (Hamdan 2011).



Figure 3.5 8th Grade TIMSS Benchmarks (Math)

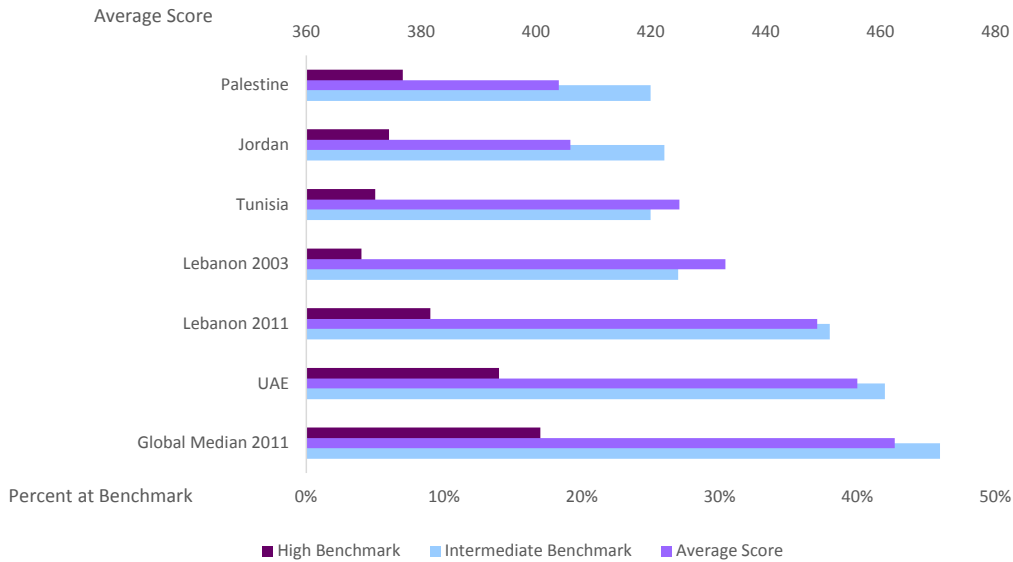
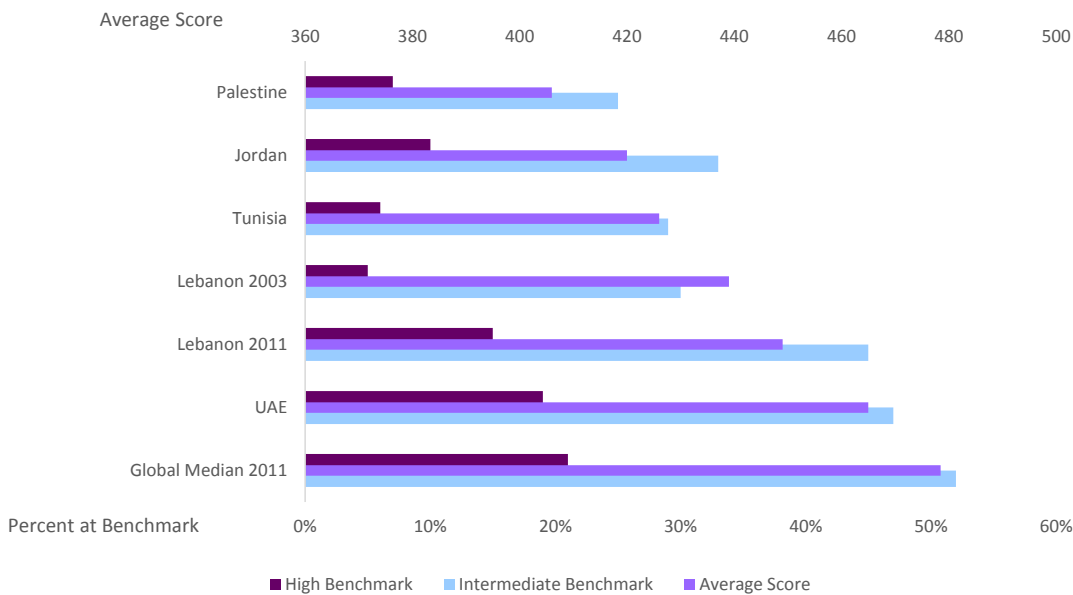


Figure 3.6 8th Grad TIMSS Benchmarks (Science)



Source: IEA (2011). Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study, Fifth Cycle.

The suburbs of Beirut have the largest concentration of private schools followed by the city of Beirut, and then the remainder of Mount Lebanon. North Lebanon has the highest percentage of their population in public schools, followed by Nabatieh and South Lebanon. Subsidized private schools are most common in the Bekaa. As such, the benefits of a strong education are unevenly distributed across Lebanon's geography in correlation with the ability of individuals to afford private schooling. Other nationalities in Lebanon, making up 9% of the total active students have very different enrollment patterns. Syrian students rely heavily on the public system, while Palestinians are mainly in UNRWA schools, and have actually been shown to perform better than their public school counterparts in many instances (World Bank 2014a).

Table 3.4 Distribution of Students by Nationality and School Type

	Total Student	% Private	% Public	% Public Free	% UNRWA
Lebanese	861.956	57%	29%	14%	0%
Syrian	27.234	17%	70%	12%	1%
Palestinian	43.469	16%	11%	4%	69%
Other Arabs	4.965	48%	38%	12%	2%
Non-Arabs	4.827	89%	8%	3%	0%
Unspecified	1.313	18%	74%	7%	1%

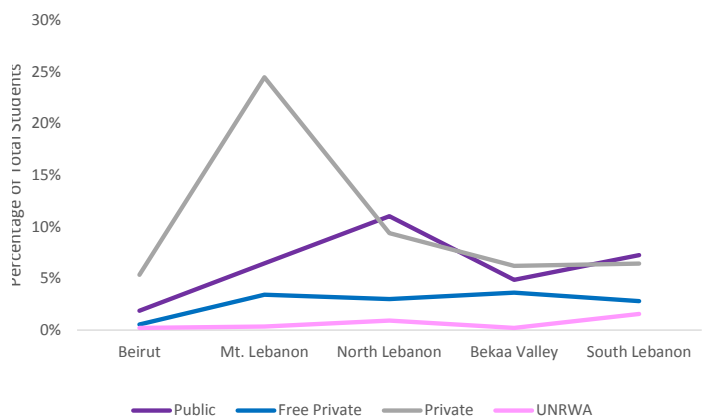
Source: CERD, Ministry of Education, Republic of Lebanon (2012). Statistical Bulletin 2011-2012.

Efforts must be made to improve public schools, separate from expanding their teaching staff which is already excessive. On average public schools have a student-teacher ratio of 1-to-7, which is lower than that for private schools standing at 1 teacher to 12 students (CAS 2013). 87% of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education’s budget is spent on staff salaries as compared to only 6% on school buildings and teaching supplies (Chaaban 2009). This illustrates the need for better classroom equipment to facilitate a modern learning environment. Methods to ensure teacher accountability to classroom performance would also be useful. Presently, the lower qualifications of public school teachers and a mismatch between their skills and course requirements are critically detrimental to the quality of public education.

Tertiary Education and Vocational Programs: Lebanon hosts many quality higher education institutions, however enrollment remains fairly low. This is largely due to the limited availability of public higher education and the rising tuition fees at the private institutions, which currently range between \$8,000 and \$13,000 per semester at some of the top institutions.^{11,12} 83% of University students reported that their parents had helped pay their tuition with only 30% receiving funding from outside entities and 3% taking out student loans, highlighting the importance of family income in access to tertiary education (AUB et al. 2009). Females represented 54.3% of the total university population, however at Lebanese University, the public institution which enrolls over a third of all university students in the country, the student body is 65.9% female (CRDP 2012). 49.5% of surveyed alumni who had graduated from the largest four universities (representing 70% of total enrollment) between 1995 and 2005 had gone on to complete graduate degrees, with another 15.2% currently enrolled (AUB et al. 2009).

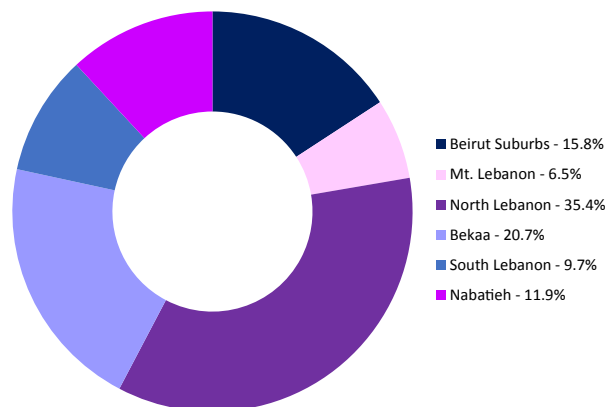
Lebanon’s vocational and technical education sector has expanded to include an increasing number of students in recent years. Today, nearly 75% of these schools are privately administered. Within this sector, vocational training programs generally prepare students for manual trades and place more emphasis on application, while technical education provides more extensive general knowledge necessary for more technological and scientific trades. Vocational programs sport completion rates ranging from 71.3 to 91.1 percent while technical education has a lower rate of success ranging from 41.9 to 54.4 percent completion (CERD 2012). Students enrolled in these programs are most highly concentrated in North Lebanon and the Bekaa (CERD 2014).

Figure 3.7 Distribution of Students by School Type, Mohafaza



Source: CERD, Ministry of Education, Republic of Lebanon (2014). Statistical Bulletin 2013-2014.

Figure 3.8 Vocational and Technical Students by Region (2013)



Source: CERD, Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Republic of Lebanon (2014). Statistical Bulletin 2013-2014.

(11) <https://www.aub.edu.lb/comptroller/Documents/docs/Tuition%20and%20Fees%20A%20Y%202014-2015.pdf>
 (12) <http://www.lau.edu.lb/fees/2014-2015/>



4 Access to Work

a. School to Work Transition

The transition from education to the job market is generally not an easy one for Lebanese youth. The dramatic inequalities of the Lebanese education system create two groups of students, each with their own difficulties finding work. Firstly there are the less privileged youth who are more likely to attend lower quality schools and suffer lower learning outcomes (Salehi-Isfahani et al. 2012). Though the Lebanese University plays an important role in providing relatively affordable tertiary education, there is limited availability of space in the institution and as such many students are unable to continue to tertiary education (BankMed 2014). These youth face the difficulties common to all unskilled labor in the country. On the other hand, graduates holding a high level of education must struggle to compete in a saturated labor market, as Lebanon produces considerably more educated job seekers than the domestic labor market demands (Kawar & Tzannatos 2013).

The overall rate of labor force participation for Lebanese youth stands at 43.6% (CAS & UNICEF 2009). This number is high compared to other MENA states but low by global standards (Roudi 2011), primarily because of the large number of the younger members of the age group who are still in school. Among 15 to 19 year olds 77.8% were students as compared 18.4% who were either working or searching for a job, although boys of this age were 3.8 times more likely than girls to be engaged in the workforce. Labor force participation was higher for 25 to 29 year olds than any other age bracket at 70.5% (CAS & UNICEF 2009). Again, wide gender disparities exist here. Figure 4.1 and 4.2 demonstrate that while the vast majority of men age 15 to 29 transition from school to the workforce, the larger part of women transition to economic inactivity at this age, many of them taking on childrearing responsibilities. That said, women in the central area are

much more likely to participate in the workforce than their counterparts in periphery areas.

Personal contacts remain a vital resource for individuals seeking jobs in Lebanon, as advertisements, recruiting firms and the National Employment Office are only minimally influential in the search for work. This fact is no less relevant to youth, one study showed that 68.1% of all salaried first-time employees obtained their position due to the help of personal contacts or family (Kasperian 2003). This process is highly inefficient, with many workers depending on their family, friends and colleagues as the only means to learn of alternate career options. Of workers wanting to change jobs 60% do not act on this desire due to the difficulty, lost wages and time absorbed by the job search (Robalino & Sayed 2012). The internet is helping provide another option as 42% of Lebanese in Beirut and Mount Lebanon now search online for work, however rates of success with this method are not known (ACTED 2014). This overall climate would assumedly create more difficult conditions for individuals entering the job market for the first time who have few established connections.

As a result, employment seekers with no formal education spend an average of nearly 16 months looking for their first job (Robalino & Sayed 2012). Though this is within the normal range of employment searches for other Mashreq states (similar to those reported for Egypt and Jordan) it is high when compared globally (ILO & CAPMAS 2012). At the other end of the educational spectrum the initial job search is not much faster. Those with tertiary education take an average of 10 months to find their first position, with significant differences existing within this group (Robalino & Sayed 2012). Being in abundance, social science, business, agriculture and law graduates took the most time to find a job, while education, humanities, engineering, health and welfare majors were the quickest to find work (AUB et al. 2009). Students hailing from the top universities usually find employment relatively easily,

but the rest commonly take more than a year. All of these youth still find work much quicker than members of older age groups that have become unemployed, however in many cases the jobs gained, often self-employment activities or informal labor, are of shorter duration (Robalino & Sayed 2012).

Figure 4.1 Male Employment Status by Age, Center (C) v. Periphery (P)

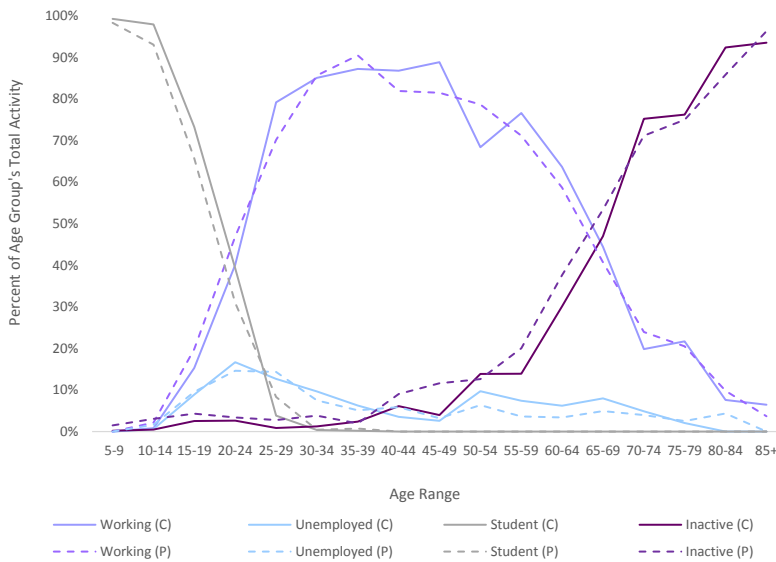
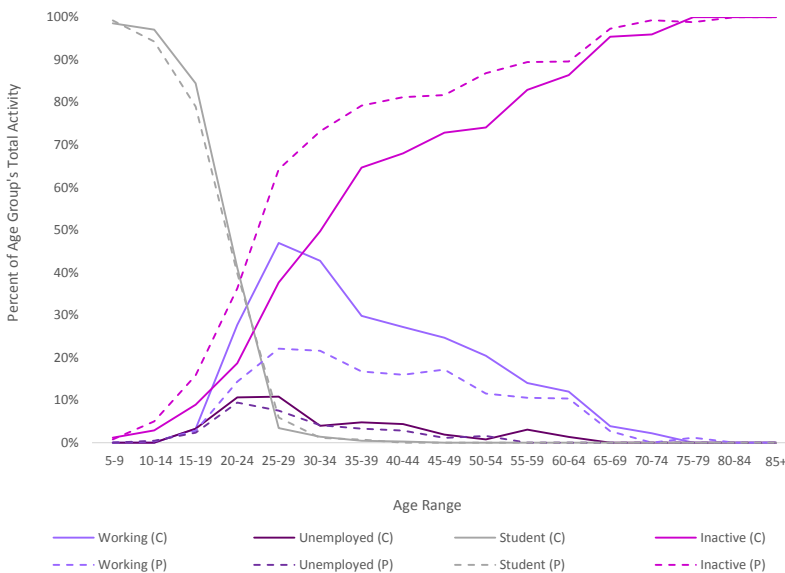


Figure 4.2 Female Employment Status by Age, Center (C) v. Periphery (P)



The MENA region has among the highest rates of youth unemployment and youth underemployment in the world (Silatech & Gallup 2013). Youth unemployment in Lebanon is also high reaching 20.6% for those age 15 to 24 in 2013 compared to 6.5% for the overall population (ILO 2014). In 2011 young people constituted 70% of the total unemployed population (IFAD 2011). Unemployment becomes more prominent with greater education, from a rate of 4.4% of illiterate job seekers to 8.8% of university graduates (CAS & UNICEF 2009), however average length of time unemployed is comparable (Kawar & Tzannatos 2012).

Unemployment was more rampant in graduates whose studies related to services (25%), agriculture (20%) and education (17%) (AUB et al. 2009). Across age, education level and specialization women experience higher unemployment than men, and these discrepancies are most pronounced among more educated women (CAS & UNICEF 2009). Gallup survey data shows that 9% of employed youth are actually underemployed, as compared to 7.7% of the total employed population (Gallup 2009-2013).

Sources estimate that about 20% of the labor force is informally employed with an additional 30% self-employed in low productivity activities. Neither of these groups, which combined represent half of the national labor force, are covered by social insurance or national labor regulations (World Bank 2013). Only 34.5% of employed Lebanese were registered in the National Social Security fund. Both employers and employees viewed the NSSF as inefficient and its high cost has led many businesses to hire consultants and freelancers rather than full-time employees (PACE Lebanon 2013).

Box 4.1 Syrian and Palestinian Youth Labor Force Participation:

Syrians in Beirut and Mount Lebanon had lower rates of employment for males (71% vs. 81%) however differences in rates of female employment were much more drastic at 46% for Lebanese women compared to only 8% for Syrians (ACTED 2014). Only 12% of males age 19-24 were economically inactive as compared to 77% of women (UNFPA et al. 2014). Palestinian youth were closer to Syrians in this respect, featuring 68% labor force participation for males and only 18% for young females (AUB & UNRWA 2015). The heavily connection-based employment system would expectedly be more difficult for these youth to navigate, considering the extent to which their communities are socially isolated and the smaller number of Syrians and Palestinians in high ranking positions within Lebanon.

b. Labor Market Outcomes

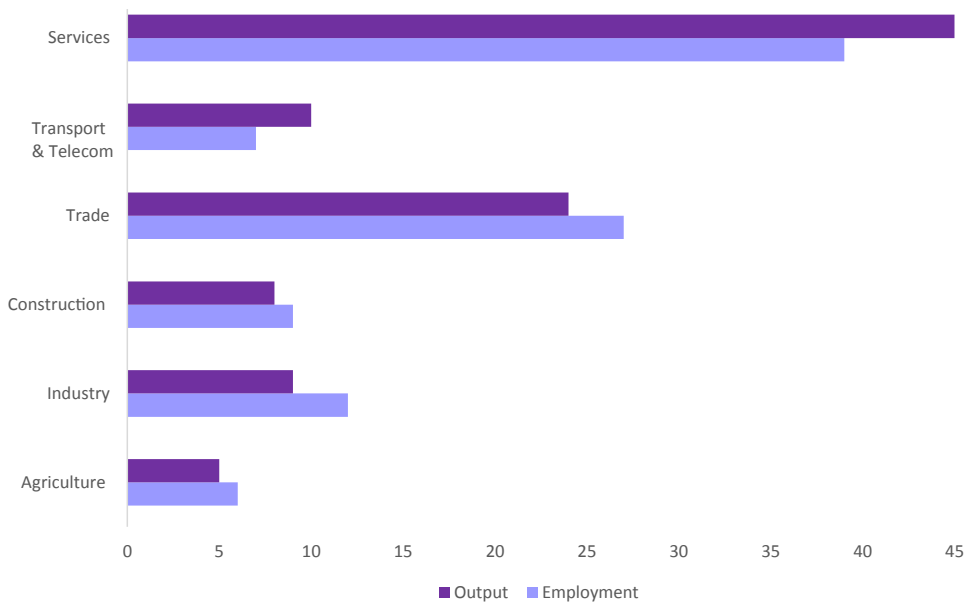
Over the last 50 years, industry and agriculture have become much less significant to national production, with agriculture's share of employment dropping by two thirds. Today most output and employment in Lebanon is concentrated around the service and trade sectors of the economy, with the transportation and telecommunications operations becoming increasingly important (Robalino & Sayed 2012). The heavy reliance on the services sector has also been criticized for its inability to create adequate job opportunities, especially of the high skilled variety (Aspen Institute 2012). Yet many youth are headed into this sector, in the restaurant in nightclub sub-

sector approximately half of all employees are under the age of 30 (Lebanese Parliament, & UNDP 2013a). Lack of economic opportunity outside the greater Beirut area leads many youth in peripheries to pursue public sector work, often in the army (CAS & UNICEF 2009).

In terms of job type, occupations are fairly evenly spread among youth but carry strong gender associations. For example 29.6% of employed young women work in professional occupations compared to 18.2% of young men, though young men still outnumber women in sheer numbers due to the low female participation rate. Clerical and office jobs were more than twice as common for young women, at 22.4% of the workforce compared to 10% of working male youth. This reflects the reality that the female workforce has a higher percentage of more educated workers. Managerial positions were equally as common for male and female workers, though they only made up about 1.4% of the youth workforce (Gallup 2009-2013).

In Beirut and Mount Lebanon a 20% larger share of youth is engaged in monthly paid employment compared to those in peripheral areas. Conversely, centrally located youth less frequently work for wages, family members or are self-employed (Figure 4.6). This distinction is significant as monthly paid employees are more likely to be formally employed and have access to social insurance and labor regulations. Most self-employed are also low-skilled and engaged in low-earning activities, generally lacking insurance and other protections (Robalino & Sayed 2012). Working young women were much less likely to be self-employed (5.8% versus 12.7%) and virtually none were hiring employers (.3%). They were also less likely to be engaged low-skilled wage labor, but much more likely to be monthly paid employees. 78.6% of the young female workers were monthly paid employees compared to 54.9% of young male workers (Figure 4.7). Only a marginal fraction of youth are involved in apprenticeships, which could help address training mismatches. 3.6% of employed youth are in unstable seasonal occupations, which are much more concentrated in periphery areas (CAS 2007).

Figure 4.3 Distribution of Output, Employment by Sector



Kawar & Tzannatos (2012). Youth Employment in Lebanon: Skilled and Jobless.

Figure 4.4 Public Sector Employment by Mohafaza

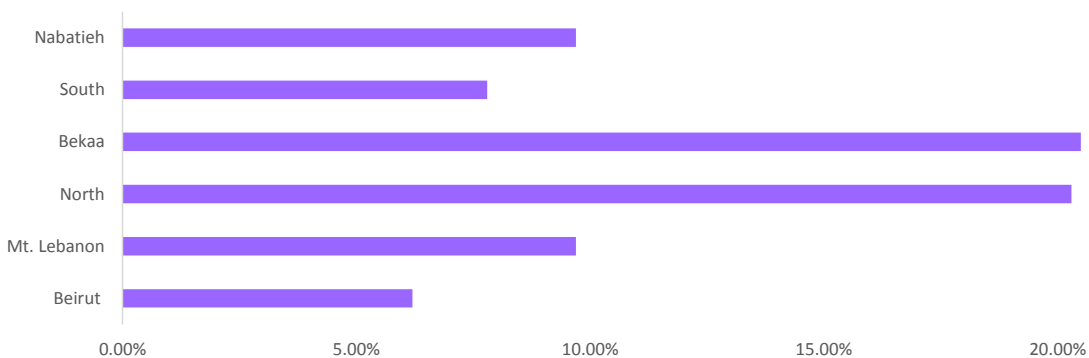
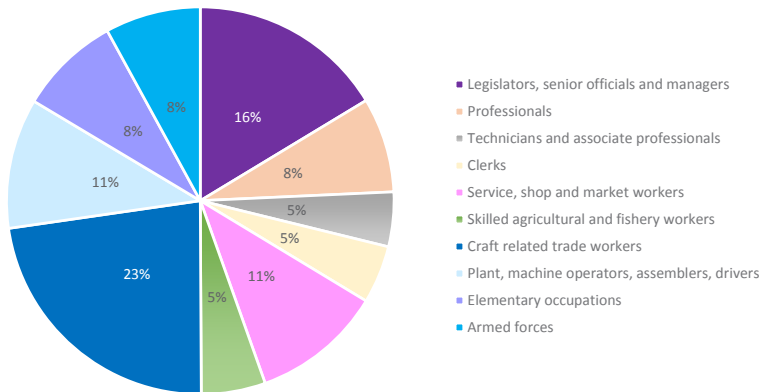


Figure 4.5 Worker Distribution by Job Type



Source: CAS & UNICEF (2009). Multiple indicator cluster survey III.

Figure 4.6 (Left) Type of Youth Employment by Region

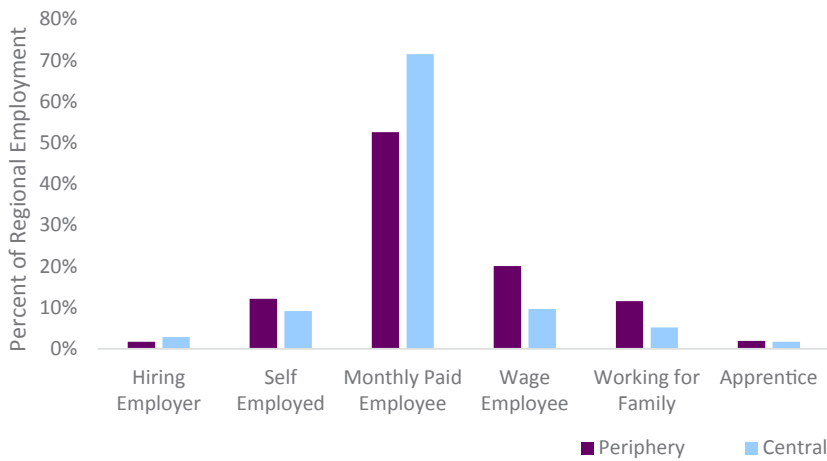


Figure 4.7 (Right) Type of Youth Employment by Gender

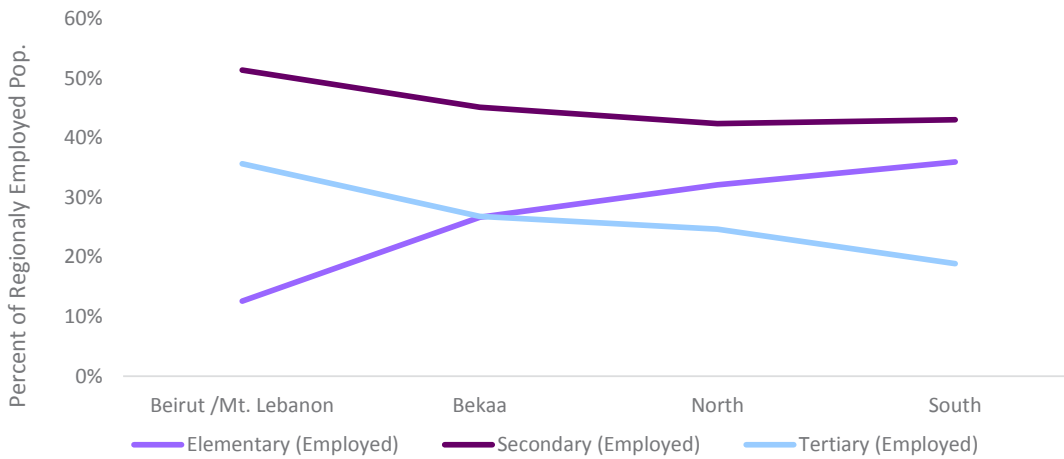


Source: CAS (2007). Living Conditions Survey 2007.

Of the overall youth employed population 29.9% had completed some level of tertiary education, 47.6% had completed only secondary and 21.8% held only elementary education or less. More educated young workers were most prevalent in Beirut and Mount Lebanon and least so in the South (Figure 4.8). Unemployed youth had a similar educational distribution with a smaller percentage of tertiary educated individuals represented (19.2%) (Gallup 2009-2013).

A study of young graduates¹³ from universities in Lebanon,¹⁴ including those who had since emigrated, found that real estate and business activities were the most common types of work these youth were engaged in (AUB et al. 2009). These fields combined with transportation, storage, communications, health and social work made up half of all employment (Figure 4.9). The additional training topics most desired by these graduates across sector were business management (28%), human resources management (19%) and accounting, finance & audit (11%).

Figure 4.8 Education Level of Employed Youth by Region



Source: Gallup (2009-2013), Gallup World Poll.

Figure 4.9 Employment Distribution of Young Graduates



Source: AUB, UNDP & Hariri Foundation for Sustainable Human Development (2009). Higher Education and Labor Market Outcomes in Lebanon.

Wages: Among university graduates the lowest earners were those who had specialized in education, agriculture and services (AUB et al. 2009).¹⁵ Wage data for workers inside Lebanon is notably scarce (Ajluni & Kawar 2015). In 2010, the median monthly earnings for Lebanese nationals residing in the country was \$616. As one would expect, individuals working informally earn lower wages on average than those formally employed and wages do increase, modestly, with greater education (Table 4.1). The minimum wage has increased since 2010, so real median wages would likely be somewhat higher today. 29% of youth, said they had difficulty getting by on their current household income, which were generally bolstered by other (probably older) household earners (Gallup 2009-2013).

(13) Average age 29.6 years with a standard deviation of 4.6 years

(14) Specifically: Lebanese University, American University of Beirut, Université Saint-Joseph de Beyrouth and Beirut Arab University

(15) It is important to remember that these numbers include emigrants and incomes are likely correlated with the proportion of different majors going abroad, where available salaries are probably higher (e.g. if more business graduates emigrated to work in Gulf states their average wages might appear higher as a result).

Table 4.1 Median Monthly Earnings (2010 USD) and Distribution of Employees by Employment Status, Education

Age group	No formal education	Primary education	Secondary education	Tertiary education	Total
Formal employees					
[15-34]	700	600	633	733	667
	.2%	8%	16%	35%	60%
[35+]	467	667	667	950	700
	.2%	13%	10%	14%	40%
Informal employees					
[15-34]	350	467	433	533	467
	1%	19%	22%	25%	68%
[35+]	333	400	600	667	400
	4%	17%	5%	6%	32%
Self-employees					
[15-34]	1000	667	800	667	667
	1%	16%	11%	5%	34%
[35+]	567	667	800	1000	667
	9%	37%	12%	8%	66%
Weighted Average					
All	516	595	671	768	616

Box 4.2 Labor Market Outcomes for Palestine and Syrian Refugees:

Syrian youth (age 15-24) were most commonly engaged in casual labor (22%) and factory or bakery work (14%). Approximately 13% of these males worked in construction and about 29% of females were agricultural workers (UNFPA et al. 2014). Even in Beirut and Mount Lebanon, the monthly average wage for all ages was well under the legal minimum, at \$380 for males and \$207 for females (ACTED 2014). Almost 61% of all employed Syrian youth expressed dissatisfaction with their current wages, the frequency of this grievance exceeded every other complaint by more than 3 times. The main reason these youth accept poor wages is the staggering 52% unemployment they experience. On average these unemployed youth had been searching for work for 6 months and 62% of them were first-time job seekers (UNFPA et al. 2014). Palestinian youth were primarily employed in elementary occupations (47%) and craft and related trade works (27%), with a sizable portion also working in the service sector (14%). The median wage for Palestinians across age and sector was around \$330 (ILO 2012). Unemployment was also extremely high for Palestinian youth at 54% and on average they had been searching for work for 13 months (AUB & UNRWA 2015). Syrian and Palestinian young women were each more likely to be unemployed than their male counterparts (UNFPA et al.; AUB & UNRWA 2015).

CAS data from 2007 listed significantly lower monthly wages, especially in the agriculture, manufacturing and trade sectors. This data also noted a fairly small gender wage gap, with men earning 6% more than women. However, because educated women are much more likely to participate in the labor force than those with little schooling (CAS & UNICEF 2009), the female workforce is on average more educated than the male. So this figure may mask much wider disparities in earnings of men and women within the same position and with the same level of qualifications.

Decent Work: As a result of all their high unemployment, low wages and the ease with which they can be replaced, many young workers in Lebanon are lacking in the ILO defined dimensions of decent work: employment, social protection, workers' rights and social dialogue (Ghai 2003). The Lebanese government is limited in its capacity to enforce existing labor regulations, thus violations of workers' rights regarding safety, child and forced labor cannot be reliably prevented (Robalino & Sayed 2012). Ethnic discrimination is not only present among employers; in an interview of 41 firms, 18 openly stated they

would not hire Syrians (ACTED 2014), but actually legally imposed. Palestinians, including those born in Lebanon, are forbidden from working in 30 separate occupations, including as doctors, engineers and in virtually every liberal profession, crippling their career aspirations and motivation to pursue education. Additionally, all working Palestinians are legally considered foreigners and are thus required to pay for an employment permit, costing a staggering \$1,900 each year. In practical terms this annual fee, equal to nearly 6 months of their median wages, forces almost all Palestinians and many foreign workers into informal and unprotected work (ILO 2012). Similarly, new laws have recently been passed which force Syrian refugees to sign a pledge not to work while in Lebanon. Regarding social dialogue, workers in Lebanon do exercise the right to unionize and hold protests. A Freedom House report found Lebanon to be among the few MENA states considered open to the expression of labor demands and grievances (Freedom House 2010). However workers' ability to genuinely negotiate with employers is severely compromised by the high unemployment rates and low levels of labor-intensive industry in Lebanon.

c. Labor Market Constraints

Supply Side Constraints: Less educated Lebanese workers face a tremendous amount of competition from the huge scale of unskilled migration to the country. This abundance of available labor keeps wages extremely low relative to the cost of living. The current minimum wage is \$450 a month and an estimated 26% of laborers earn wages equal to or less than this value (Robalino & Sayed 2012). The long hours and harsh working conditions of these positions also discourage many Lebanese from signing up to work in them. Many hold a cultural stigma against certain types of labor, such as construction work or cleaning, despite that it was common for Lebanese women to be employed as domestic laborers prior to the Civil War (Tabar 2010).

Production in Lebanon is mostly concentrated around labor intensive, low-skill and low-wage activities. As a result, the job market places minimal value on human capital and awards a low skill premium to education. Local returns on higher education are a modest 6% for the Lebanese University and are actually negative for the private universities (Chaaban 2014). This is a major factor which drives the high unemployment of educated Lebanese many of whom believe they should be better compensated (Kawar & Tzannatos 2012). The most common reasons unemployed males in Beirut and Mount Lebanon had left their previous employment was low salaries (52%) (ACTED 2014). The reservation wages of these skilled workers, which widely exceed what the market is willing to pay, are both a hindrance to the operation of the labor market and an impetus for youth migration.

Ironically, employers in Lebanon express more issues finding the skills they need than employers in other states in the region, and almost double the world average. This is hard to reconcile with the abundance of poorly compensated and unemployed skilled workers, but would suggest a mismatch of education and market demands. This idea is supported by weak correlation between field of work and education once licensed professions (such as doctors and lawyers) are removed (Kawar & Tzannatos 2012). A 2012 World Bank survey revealed that 41% of employed people found that their education was not relevant to their current occupation and considered the educational system as an obstacle to employment (Lebanese Parliament & UNDP 2013). Moreover, employers in the MENA region were among the least likely to offer job training, MENA being the only region where employers complained about lack of skills more often than they actually offered training (ILO 2007).

Demand-Side Constraints: Lebanese firms identified a wide variety of other constraints to the operation of their enterprises. As might be expected political instability is the most common concern, with almost 90% of businesses citing it as a “major” or “very severe” constraint. Electricity is the next biggest issue was listed by over 75% of these businesses. The third most significant obstacle pointed to by these companies was the extent and pervasiveness of corruption (World Bank

2010). In 2013 survey of business owners and managers 61% confessed to having paid bribes in order to obtain official documents more quickly. This is illustrative in that it shows bribes are not just employed to win undue political favors but are actually used to get through highly inefficient and disorganized bureaucratic processes in a timely manner. 23% of businesses reported that they gave 1-5% of their revenues in gratifications for public officials, 14% gave 6-10%, and 5% gave 11% or more with an additional 29% stating they were unsure of the amount of bribery. This problem only appears to be expanding as 80% of these respondents believed that corruption had become worse in the last two years (LABN 2013). Additional constraints emphasized as important by the majority of firms include: tax rates, cost of financing, illegal competition from the informal sector and macroeconomic uncertainty (World Bank 2010). The main issues which keep the economy stuck in a low productivity, low-wage equilibrium can be summarized as uncertainty regarding the national political and economic outlook, weak public infrastructure and poor governance (Kuwar & Tzannatos 2012).

Though not referenced by employers themselves, the predominance of nepotistic attitudes in Lebanon¹⁶ is undoubtedly a major obstacle to a well-functioning job market. Nepotism and sectarianism not only permeate political life but also play a major role in social structure and private sector decisions regarding hiring and promotion, even in large corporations. Additionally, family-run SMEs and family-owned businesses make up approximately 85% of companies. Thus graduating youth are primarily left to either subject themselves to nepotistic processes of public sector and corporate employment, or seek work in a family owned business where career opportunities will likely be limited. Many youth compete to get into multinational organizations to avoid these undesirable options but the number of available positions are highly limited (AUB et al. 2009).

Labor Regulations: Labor regulations in Lebanon include time restrictions on the use of short term contracts, long periods of advanced notice of dismissal (9 months for workers of 5 years or more) and a discretionary minimum wage. These regulations probably do not greatly affect the demand for workers as they are fairly permissive compared to other states in the region and the labor market is solidly tipped in favor of employers at every level (Robalino & Sayed 2012). Moreover these ordinances are frequently evaded and are altogether one of the issues employers list least often as a major constraint (Kawar and Tzannatos 2012). On the other hand firms do complain about the lack of consistent enforcement of regulations, which means they must compete with other businesses which do not comply with all the laws and thus have an advantage (ACTED 2014). Some argue that the existing regulations (including the \$450 minimum wage) and poorly trusted social insurance system incentivize the creation of jobs outside of the formal sector (Robalino & Sayed 2012).

(16) That is, the showing of favoritism based on personal relationship rather than objective evaluation of merit or suitability

Thus while labor regulations may not greatly inhibit overall employment figures they may have harsh impact on the number of workers who receive due social protections. This is even more applicable to foreign and Palestinian workers who are required to pay for a prohibitively expensive work permit.

Though starting up a business in Lebanon is bureaucratic and costly (AUB et al. 2009), it is worth noting that youth are not discouraged from starting their own businesses by regulations or red tape, much more frequently listing their own lack of skills as an issue (Kawar & Tzannatos 2012). However, this may merely reflect that youth, having not yet experienced the regulatory procedures businesses must go through, are unaware of the challenges these processes present.



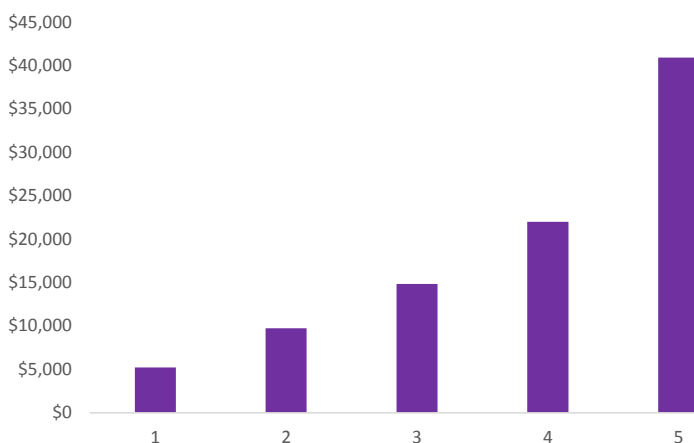


5 Livelihoods

a. Income and Poverty

One of the largest sources of pressure for all individuals in Lebanon, including youth, is the inadequacy of the average person's income to cover the expenses necessary to maintain a decent standard of living. Gallup data for Lebanon shows self-reported median income (including sources other than employment earnings) to be \$2,960 per capita and \$13,004 at the household level. By quintile, the poorest segment of the population reported an average household income of \$5,231 while the richest group reported \$40,925 of annual income (Gallup 2013). 90% of all youth (18-25) estimated their households' earnings were below \$2,000 per month, the majority placing these earnings between \$500 and \$1,500 (58.3%). There were significant disparities in income by region, with Akkar and Bint Jbeil having the lowest incomes (Harb 2010).

Figure 5.1 Mean Household Income by Quintile (Current USD)



Source: Gallup (2006-2013), Gallup World Poll.

Migrant remittances are a vital component of household income and the Lebanese economy at large. A 2009 survey indicated that 49% of migrants who left Lebanon between 1992 and 2007 provided financial assistance to their families in Lebanon on a regular or occasional basis (Kasparian 2009). Though shrinking from 24.9% of GDP in 2008 (UNDP 2015) to 17.7% of GDP in 2013, the \$9 billion of remittances received in 2014 still left Lebanon the 10th largest recipient of these cash flows worldwide.¹⁷ Earnings from abroad are critical in helping many households bridge the gap between the low local wages and high cost of living. They also help provide initial capital for business and real estate investments, particularly for individuals who do not have access to the financial market. Youth are thus not only pulled abroad to seek better wages for themselves, but also pushed to establish a means of support for their families remaining in Lebanon. At a national scope these massive remittances have distortionary effects on the Lebanese economy and certainly do not compensate for lost value which these widely skilled migrants could be adding domestically if properly employed. (MPC 2013).

There appears to be some discord between these fairly consistent income figures and the expenditures presented by the CAS which show average Lebanese household at \$21,164 with individual spending at \$5,220. These data also showed a fairly narrow gap between the highest spending mohafaza Mount Lebanon (\$22,030) and the lowest, which in this case was the Bekaa (\$18,589) (CAS 2012).¹⁸ The disparity in figures could be attributed to a strong skew from very wealthy individuals, loans, the value of imputed rents¹⁹ or inaccurate reporting.

(17) <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2015/04/13/remittances-growth-to-slow-sharply-in-2015-as-europe-and-russia-stay-weak-pick-up-expected-next-year>

(18) Figures adjusted for inflation

(19) Equal to \$2,729 for the average household and \$673 for individuals

Box 5.1 Syrian and Palestinian Income

Syrian refugees have a median income of \$3,582 per worker and average income was actually lower at \$3,327, indicating the presence of extremely few high earners (ILO 2013)²⁰. In 2015 the main livelihood sources most frequently listed by Syrian refugees were food vouchers (54%), debts/loans (15%), non-agricultural casual labor (15%) and skilled work (9%). This marks a dramatic shift from 2014 where food vouchers were listed as a primary source of livelihood by 40% of refugees and debts/loans were generally only present as a secondary source of income. Over the same time period non-agricultural casual labor and skilled work dropped from being the main livelihood source in 43% households to only 26% (World Food Programme 2015). When interviewed, 87% of Syrian youth considered their total income insufficient to cover family expenditures, 9% stated that it was almost sufficient while only 1% indicated these sources were fully sufficient (UNFPA et al. 2014).

At \$4,776 the median Palestinian household income was less than what of the poorest quintile of Lebanese lived off on average. 93% of households listed the UNRWA ATM card as one of their main sources used to cover expenditures though assistance from other organizations (22%) was also important. A shocking number of households relied on credits and loans (59%), eclipsing the number dependent on wage earnings (34%) and self-employment (20%) combined (AUB & UNRWA 2015).

Poverty: 28.5% of the Lebanese population is impoverished by monetary measures with nearly 8% living under conditions of extreme poverty. Beirut had very low levels of regular and extreme poverty (below 6% and 1% respectively) while the North had over half of its population in poverty (53%) and 18% percent in extreme poverty. Poverty is even more acute in the rural regions of the North, specifically Akkar and Minnieh-Dinnieh, where it affected over 60% of the population (UNDP 2008). This deprivation also manifests in food access. 51.7% of surveyed households in the Bekaa Valley with one child between 0 and 2 years registered some degree of food insecurity (Naja et al. 2014). The poverty share of widowed heads with more than three children, was five times higher than that of the rest of the population (UNDP 2008). The education of the household head was a major determinant of poverty, 45% of all poor households were headed by an individual with less than elementary education. Youth unemployment is also aggravated by poverty, as half of extremely poor youth (15-24) with a secondary degree and one third of those with a university degree were unemployed (UNDP & Ministry of Higher Education 2008). This could be a result of lower educational quality, less ability to emigrate or a lack of necessary personal connections. Regardless, this demonstrates that even if the cycle minimal education induced by poverty can be broken, youth still have greater difficulty utilizing their skills towards gainful employment.

Box 5.2 Palestinian and Syrian Poverty:

Palestinians experienced a poverty rate of 65% in 2015 with 3% living in extreme poverty, unable to afford even basic food requirements. Overall poverty is highest in the North and Tyre, extreme poverty is most prevalent in these regions as well as the Bekaa. Incidence of extreme poverty among Palestinians has been halved since 2010, however most of these improvements occurred in Saida and Tyre and extreme poverty actually increased by 17% in the North. Across the country poverty is both more frequent and deeper in camps as compared to gatherings (AUB & UNRWA 2015).

Syrian refugees are highly concentrated in the poorest areas of Lebanon and their presence serves to amplify these already difficult conditions.

This has generated tensions with locals who recognize the additional stress the situation has placed on their communities and basic services such as healthcare, education and waste disposal (UNHCR 2013b). Additional friction is created by the perception that incoming refugees receive much more support than local populations, who are also in need of assistance on many levels. Host communities wonder about the duration and intensity of sacrifices they will have to make, themselves experiencing an increased cost of living and greater competition for work and housing. It is likely that the heavy Syrian presence in these areas has increased poverty among the local community as well, though no up-to-date statistics exist to validate this expectation (ILO 2013).

Inequality: Wealth distribution in Lebanon is incredibly unequal, with 0.3% of the estimated workforce, a total of 8,000 people, owning nearly half the country's wealth (48%). Median wealth is just over \$6,000 and two-thirds of the country have less than \$10,000. When a GINI score is applied Lebanon placed 6th worldwide in terms of severity of wealth inequality (Credit Suisse 2014). Inequality in expenditures and income are less extreme but still significant. Households in the top quintile receive approximately 7.8 times the income of those in the bottom (Gallup 2009-2013). The bottom quintile accounts for only 7% of total expenditures while the top quintile accounts for 43% or over 6 times the poorest segment's spending (UNDP & Ministry of Higher Education 2008). These numbers are similar to those found in other middle income countries and averages over the MENA region. However in order to appreciate the true impact of national inequity on youth, it is critical to simultaneously consider the extent to which access to quality healthcare, education and other essential rights are dependent on the individual's ability to pay.

Facing very low incomes relative to the cost of living and complete lack of government social and welfare support many individuals rely on the political parties to provide essential services. Though these parties can offer a means of securing fairly stable access to vital functions (such as those related to healthcare, education, monetary assistance and water) the system of patronage serves to reinforce sectarian-political divisions which have continually been proven fatal to the effective operation of the state. The most vulnerable segments of the population are left widely dependent on the support of these political groups, and those without religious or political affiliation are marginalized further (UN-HABITAT 2011). Undoubtedly, securing these benefits for themselves and family members is a significant motivation for youth involvement with these groups.

b. Shelter and Access to Basic Services

Lebanon is subject to a disheartening trend which has developed across the MENA region in the last decade, an oversupply of up-scale, luxury housing with an utter lack of affordable alternatives (Plumb et al. 2011). Rural-urban migration and foreign laborers settling at the outskirts of major urban centers have led to a shortage of this housing and sent real estate prices on a drastic upward climb (UN-HABITAT 2011). Many of the initial waves of Syrian refugees to Lebanon

(20) These data only include income from employment

also settled among the local population.²¹This placed still greater upward pressure on housing costs, especially in the low-income neighborhoods that absorbed the most refugees (Loveless 2013). Furthermore, the real estate sector is only minimally regulated, property taxes are low, and real estate speculation is untaxed and thus rampant (UN-HABITAT 2014). Major investment inflows from Gulf states, mostly geared in the form of large-scale urban developments designed for tourists, wealthy expatriates and the small number of local elites, have not addressed the needs of the bulk of population and only further driven up prices (UNDP 2013a).

As a result of these pressures, the average price of an apartment is 1.09 million dollars²² in Beirut and between \$3,800 and \$4,500 per square meter throughout the country.²³ This is well beyond the reach of the vast majority of the population (youth or non-youth), considering one would need approximately 147 years of median wages to purchase the average Beirut apartment. Banque du Liban has consistently provided subsidized lending for housing as well as the Public Housing Institute and Banque de l'Habitat, however actual public housing is not available at any capacity (UN-HABITAT 2014). Thus home ownership, which 70% of the Lebanese population enjoyed in 2012 (Yacoub and Badre 2012b), is becoming an impossibility for many youth seeking to start their own households today (UN-HABITAT 2014). On average housing costs represent the largest share of spending, 25.6% of yearly expenditure for median household (CAS 2007) and 47% for the lowest income groups surveyed in 2004 (UN-HABITAT 2014).

Box 5.3 Palestinian and Syrian Refugee Access to Housing:

As of August 2014, the vast majority of Syrian refugees had secured shelter through market channels, with 57% renting a finished apartment or house (UN-HABITAT 2014). Among Syrian youth 85% indicated they or their families were paying for their accommodation, including some of those living in makeshift arrangements who made monthly payments to the land owner. On average 31% of these families' expenditures went to rent, followed by food and utility expenses (UNFPA et al. 2014). Of refugees who had moved recently 30% stated the high cost of rent was the main reason, including 17% of those in informal settlements. As the crisis continues there has been an increasing trend of Syrians to move into informal settlements, indicating saturation of the housing market and further impoverishment of this group (UN-HABITAT 2014).

The most critical factor limiting Palestinian refugees' access housing options goes beyond their financial resources to a racist law which actually prohibits them from registering property in their name. Even those Palestinians who owned property before the law was passed in 2001 are forbidden from bequeathing their homes to descendants. As a result only 1.2% of Palestinians own the house they live in, with the vast majority 84.4% having to rent and the remainder mostly living for free or squatting, vulnerable to arbitrary eviction. The instability of this lifestyle is highlighted by the fact that 35% of surveyed youth reported having moved at least once in the last year. The most common reason listed in 60% of these cases was to seek out an area with a cheaper cost of living (AUB & UNRWA 2015).

In this housing climate youth, regardless of background, are almost entirely excluded. Even after completing tertiary education and struggling to find employment, starting wages are not at all sufficient to cover housing costs, particularly in the greater Beirut area. Youth are able to utilize loans

for housing less frequently than other segments of the population (UNDP 2013a). Renting is also widely out of reach, a one bedroom apartment averaging \$806 per month in the city center and \$497 outside (Numbeo 2015), correspondingly 105% or 65% of the median tertiary educated individual's salary. Youth must generally remain dependent on their families up until marriage, and decisions to marry are almost certainly delayed as a result of the high cost of establishing a household. This lack of affordable housing contributes to a social exclusion of Lebanese youth by obstructing their transition to independent adulthood (UNDP 2013a).

Utilities and Infrastructure: The great majority of Lebanese households (97.7%) utilize improved water sources, however in some areas access is less universal, such as in the Nabatiyeh mohafaza (93.8%) and the Baalbek and Hermel districts (92.9%). Critically, only about a third of households benefit from having clean drinking water piped into their homes, many rely on gallons (36.6%), bottles (10.1%) and wells (10%) which require additional time or money (CAS & UNICEF 2009). Though 88% of urban households are connected to the public water network, the quality and quantity provided of water varies greatly. Bacteriological contamination is low in rural areas but can reach up to 90% in the cities, and level of chemical contaminants also depends greatly on locality. Renewable water sources, which were already slightly below their per capita scarcity limits prior to the influx of Syrian refugees, are now significantly insufficient. Ineffective wastewater systems along with open dumping, industrial effluent and heavy pesticide and fertilizer use in the Bekaa all contribute to the contamination of the public water supply. Prior to the Syrian crisis approximately 60% of households had access to the wastewater network (Inter-Agency WASH Working Group-Lebanon 2014). Sanitary pits are widely used (28.3%) where individuals don't have access to the public network, especially in Nabatiyeh (85.5%). In North Lebanon around one fifth of the population relies on open air sewers (CAS & UNICEF 2009).

Power is expensive in Lebanon and the country's infrastructure is not sufficient for the needs of the population. Outages are scheduled daily to ration the limited capacity and businesses and households must rely on generators, which are both unreliable and very costly, to cover these gaps in coverage. Under normal conditions households in Beirut have 21 hours of power each day while many peripheral villages, particularly those in the north, only receive four hours or less. Such infrastructural issues serve to obstruct the high human potential for Lebanon to move towards a knowledge based economy. Internet speed in Lebanon is among the slowest in the world, ranking just behind Togo at 173 out of 198 globally. Internet access is also extremely expensive relative to the level of service provided (Ookla 2015). Almost half of youth used the internet every day (49.5%) and only 18.5% indicated they didn't use the internet at all (Harb 2010). Youth focus group respondents in Beirut, Tyr and Baalbek indicated a strong desire for some public locations with free web access (Nahnoo 2012).

(21) camps were actually forbidden in the first years of the crisis

(22) See Ramco Study findings in Al Akhbar, Feb. 14, 2014.

(23) Bank Audi, Annual Report, Lebanon Real Estate Report, Dec. 2013.

Among the Syrian youth 58% had access to potable water in their dwellings, and 89% benefitted from some form of running water. 90% of their homes are connected to either a generator or the electrical network, though number of hours of coverage a day is often quite low. A limited number of Syrian youth also had access to the internet via their cellphones (14%) or public networks (7%) (UNFPA et al. 2014). 21.5% of Palestinian youth indicated that their households did not have access to sufficient water supply and 80% were without a home internet connection (AUB & UNRWA 2015).

Transportation: Transportation options throughout the country are basically limited to busses, taxis (shared and private) and personal vehicles. Bicycling is only rarely used as mode of transit because of the hazard posed by the poor quality of the roads and chaotic traffic patterns. Lebanon is left a highly car reliant society with an estimated 300-500 cars per thousand people (Belgiawan et al. 2014). This constitutes high rate of car ownership even compared to those of OECD states and is at least double the MENA average (Stephan & el Sayed 2014). A cross-national study of student transportation found that 89.7% of students at the American University of Beirut were car users, and 60.9% commuted by car. These numbers greatly eclipsed those of every other university in the study which included institutions in China, Indonesia, Japan, Netherlands, Taiwan, and USA. (Belgiawan et al. 2014). The high price of rent in Beirut has played an important role in pushing individuals into the suburbs, and encouraging a car-commuter culture (UN-HABITAT 2011). Despite the widespread prevalence of motor vehicles some subpopulations are widely without possession. Only about 2% of surveyed Palestinian households owned a car, truck or motorcycle (AUB & UNRWA 2015). This car-centric society greatly marginalizes individuals who cannot afford a personal vehicle and those living in periphery areas may need hours to move fairly modest distances by the private, uncoordinated bus routes.

c. Environment and the Living Space

The quality of youth living space is, like other aspects of livelihood, highly variant and related to national background. The majority of Lebanese live in apartments (67%) and the size of homes was fairly large, with a median area estimated at 30 square meters per person. The median household contains four rooms excluding kitchens and bathrooms, and there were only a marginal number of one room dwellings (3%). However, these official figures only include a minimal number of individuals living in improvised dwellings (2%), and thus does not represent the living situation of a large segment of the population (Yaacoub & Badre 2012).

Many Lebanese nationals, including rural migrants and those displaced by internal conflict, live outside the jurisdiction of official housing regulations. Even before the Syrian crisis at least a quarter of Greater Beirut's urbanization could be described as informal (Fawaz 2009) and it is estimated that up to half of Lebanon's urban population is in slums (UN-HABITAT 2010). These settlements have sprung up in lieu of

affordable housing options, strong social policy to address shelter needs and state which can effectively enforce its zoning laws. Although these settlements have played a crucial role in making up for lack of housing options and giving the impoverished access to the urban environment, the quality of housing is often quite poor (Fawaz 2013b). The unregulated conditions and construction of these developments, both temporary and permanent, puts their inhabitants' safety at risk. Most residents suffer from high humidity levels, inadequate airflow and a lack of natural lighting (UN-HABITAT 2011). A study of these settlements in the Hay el Sellom suburb of Beirut found them to be directly correlated with worse health outcomes, as is supported by the general literature (Habib et al. 2009). Correspondingly, these slums are also the least likely to have access to basic urban services and vital infrastructure (UN-HABITAT 2011). There have been almost no attempts at property regularization or neighborhood upgrading, with policymakers generally criminalizing informally settled populations. Thus, the inhabitants of these areas are not only subject to bad housing conditions, but are also excluded from any legal protection of their residence, if not prosecuted as squatters outright (UN-HABITAT 2014).

Box 5.4 Living Space Quality of Palestinian and Syrian Refugees:

While it is important to recognize the existence of Lebanese living in these harsh conditions, Syrian and Palestinian youth are the most likely to inhabit these areas. UNHCR's August 2013 shelter survey revealed that just over half of Syrian refugees were at shelter risk, indicating they were: facing potential eviction, overcrowded in their homes or in a poor quality shelter. The policy of banning refugee camps in the initial years of the crisis also had the consequence of a number of camps developing in a highly disorganized manner (Loveless 2013). Of Syrian youth 30% reported living in makeshift accommodations such as tents or buildings still under construction. 40% of these dwellings, makeshift or otherwise, do not provide safety against leaks or flooding, and many are missing very basic features, such as heating (72%), hot water (39%), windows (23%) or a toilet (indoor or outdoor) with a locking door (21%). On average 8 people share each living space, with 10% of homes containing 12 people or more. The average youth slept in a room shared with three other people; for 22% this included a non-related adult of the opposite sex, something repeatedly cited as a source of distress. Overall, 49% of these youth expressed dissatisfaction with their current living conditions, yet 72% were relatively comfortable in the general area around their residence (UNFPA et al. 2014).

Though the majority of the Palestinian population (56%) still lives in camps their housing situation is more normalized than that of the Syrian refugees. Indeed after decades of inhabitation these areas do not have the all the characteristics typically associated with a refugee camp but perhaps more closely resemble slums. 60% of Palestinians live in apartment structures, with an additional 28% in stand-alone houses, the remainder either residing in huts or barracks (4%), or other situations (9%) which could likely include makeshift arrangements. The median Palestinian household held 6 individuals with 7.5 sqm per person and consisted of 2 rooms (excluding kitchens and bathrooms). 23.6% of Palestinian youth lived in one room dwellings. A substantial percentage of youth lived in households which were either largely or totally effected by: damp stains or humidity (46%), water leakage (36%), poor ventilation (22%) or darkness (25%) (AUB & UNRWA 2015).

Outside of their homes, many youth lack a good places to congregate freely. Lebanon's urban areas, where 87% of the population lives, suffer from scarcity of public space and the limited areas of its availability are continually shrinking. Beirut has only .8 sqm of green space per person, not even

approaching the WHO minimum recommended 10 sqm per person. Tragically, the largest public park in the capital city, Horch Beirut, has actually been kept closed to the public for supposed fears of sectarian violence and improper conduct on the part of denizens, requiring a special permit to enter. This off-limits park has shrunk from 800,000 sqm in 1967 to 255,000 sqm today, with plans in motion to reduce its size further to make way for a large stadium. This trend is shared with Jesuits' Garden in Ashrafiyah which has been reduced to an 1/8th of its original size since the 1950s. This erasure of the final vestiges of public space also includes the demolition of invaluable archaeological sites, such as Beirut's Phoenician port, a cultural artifact thousands of years old which was destroyed in 2012 (Nahnoo 2013).

As a result most youth in urban environments must either pay for access to private recreation and meeting areas or resort to using streets, parking areas and abandoned lots for these purposes. The quashed attempt to sell Ramlet al-Baida's El Dalleh, Beirut's only remaining public beach, to private developers stands out as an example of the continued appetite of many public officials to privatize the few remaining areas of public domain.²⁴ Private beaches regularly have entry charges between \$12 and \$30 per person and prices have continued to climb. Such a scale would likely put Lebanon's coastline out of reach for many immobile, low-income youth and families in Beirut, as is already the case in other areas on coastline.²⁵ These trends are also prevalent in the other major urban centers (Nahnoo 2013). Focus groups in the smaller, considerably more open cities of Tyr and Baalbek both found residents unanimously asking for more public areas. Youth in these groups cited cleanliness as one of the biggest issues with existing parks and recreational areas. Security was also of chief concern, especially for young women who feared harassment or being stereotyped inappropriately. Unanimously these youth also desired more physical activities through access to football fields, swimming pools and biking areas (Nahnoo 2012).

Of the few natural recreation sites near urban areas which remain free from private ownership many are deteriorating physically due to pollution and lack of maintenance. Natural resources in Lebanon have been strained by rapid demographic growth, urban expansion and improved standards of living. The environment suffers from elevated pollution levels, great losses of arable land and shrinking biodiversity (Chabarekh 2010). At the national level forested areas dropped from 35% in the 1930s to 13.4% today (Nahnoo 2013), with an estimated 10km² of natural areas further lost to urbanization each year. This is especially true along the shoreline and coastal zone, where 50% of the Lebanese population resides (CDR 2005). The ever expanding developments and massive dumping of this polluted wastewater into the ocean not only affect beach use, but threaten the operation of the fishing sector and the entire coastal aquatic ecosystem (UN-HABITAT 2011).

(24) <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2015/Jun-15/302202-beirut-only-public-beach-will-remain-open-minister.ashx>

(25) <http://english.al-akhbar.com/node/8513>

Compounding this problem, the volume of solid waste generated in Lebanon has risen with the rapid demographic growth and increased consumerism to .96 kg/c/d. Urbanites produce much more trash (1.1 kg/c/d) than rural populations which range between .5 and .75 kg/c/d (Chabarekh 2010). Dumping sites are not well managed being neither monitored nor maintained on a regular basis (CDR 2005). The World Bank estimated that an equivalent of \$10 million per year are lost to degradation from pollution and illegal waste burning and dumping (World Bank 2004).

Likewise air pollution has continued to diminish the quality of outdoor space and threaten public health. Average levels of PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ in the air significantly exceeded WHO annual standards (10 ug/m³ and 20 ug/m³) in Beirut (20 ug/m³ and 63 ug/m³) and to an even greater extent in Tripoli (29 ug/m³ and 81 ug/m³) (WHO 2014). These pollutants, along with finer particulate matter not yet measured in Lebanon, contribute significantly to respiratory illnesses, cardiovascular problems and certain types of cancer. In 2004 the World Bank estimated that Lebanon lost \$170 million each year to health expenses related to air pollution caused illnesses (World Bank 2004). Indoor air quality is further adulterated by tobacco smoking, solid fuel sources, inefficient stoves, building materials and asbestos-containing insulation. This pollution can have serious irreversible effects on the health of individuals spending a lot of their time inside, including damage to the central nervous system (Chabarekh 2010).

Though public and natural space are vital for all segments of society, it is particularly necessary for youth, who have more free time and energy to utilize these spaces. Importantly these youth are less likely to have cars, and thus disconnected from the rural, greener areas where many city dwellers spend their weekends. This environment poses huge barriers for youth wishing to live an active, healthy lifestyles, as many in Beirut complain that they do not even have an area to jog safely (Nahnoo 2012). Expensive gym memberships are for some the only exercise option, and for others not an option at all. In this manner physical wellbeing, like so many other essential rights, must be purchased in Lebanon.

It is thus that youth in Lebanon are trapped as they seek adulthood. Necessarily dependent on their parents for shelter, they are unable to establish their own living area, nor participate in a decent, shared space with their peers. Instead they must contend with the frustration that they live in a country of immense natural beauty which they cannot enjoy without meeting a minimum bar of financial requisites.





6 Attitudes, Values and Civic Engagement

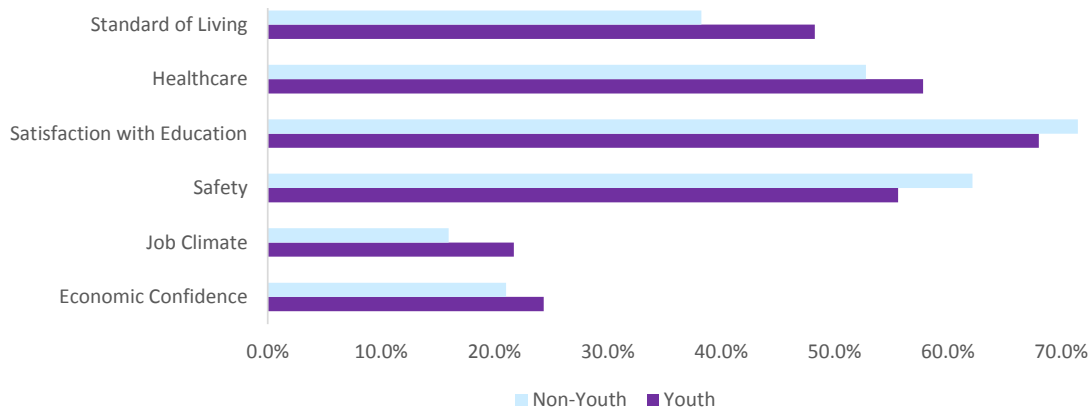
a. Attitudes and Values

In drawing together the previous analysis of the socio-economic standing of youth in Lebanon, it is also crucial to consider their own outlooks. The following composite indicators incorporate subjective responses and evaluations in order to approximate the perspective of youth on these important topics. This data is drawn from the Gallup World Poll, a survey which has been administered with a common set of core questions in more than 160 countries, encompassing 99% percent of the global population. The poll is representative of the entire non-institutionalized, civilian population age 15 and older in each of these states. Gallup surveys were conducted in Lebanon every year from 2006 to 2013 with each year having approximately 1,000 individuals interviewed.²⁶

Youth were 10% more satisfied with their standard of living²⁸ than older adults. Predictably, secondary and tertiary education each improved individuals' evaluation of their living conditions, although the leap from primary to secondary was of greater significance. Residents of the Beirut and Mount Lebanon expressed slightly greater dissatisfaction with these outcomes than others because of lack of affordable housing options.

Healthcare approval (a combination of individual satisfaction with local availability of healthcare and confidence in the overall system) stood at around 55% of the total population and did not vary meaningfully over demographic factors. The periphery areas, which quantifiably have lower access to quality academic institutions, were approximately 13.7% less satisfied with their schools than those living in Beirut and Mount Lebanon.²⁹ Christians and Druz were also more satisfied with their schools than Muslims (Figure 6.3). Surprisingly lower educated individuals did not seem to put the blame on the local schools, their evaluations of these systems was consistent with those presented by tertiary educated individuals. Overall educational satisfaction is perhaps higher than would be expected for such a highly privatized system.

Figure 6.1 Key Socio-Economic Factors Described by Youth¹



Gallup (2006-2013).²⁷ Gallup World Survey.

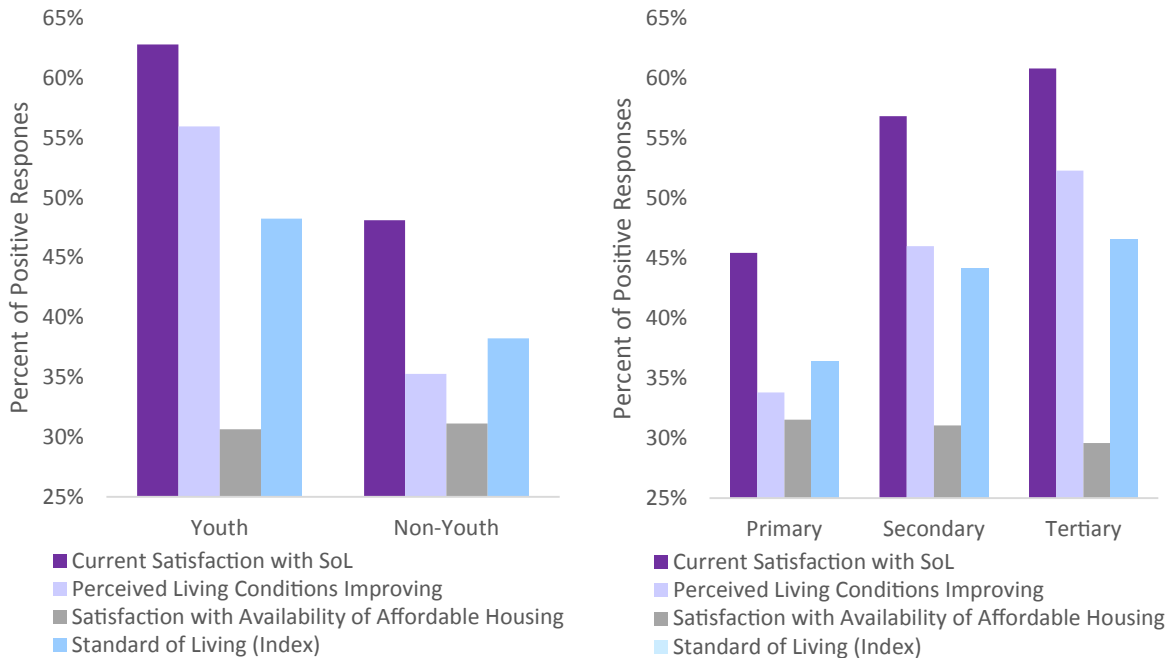
(26) Here data all the years have been merged to create one large sample, using only waves from 2009 to 2013 except in instances where the question was only asked between 2006 and 2008.

(27) All data are from the 2009-2013 waves of the survey, except healthcare which draws on the 2006/2008 rounds and Law and Order which is sourced from 2011-2013.

(28) Standard of Living Index includes a self-evaluation of living conditions, expected likelihood of these conditions to improve and satisfaction with the availability of affordable housing

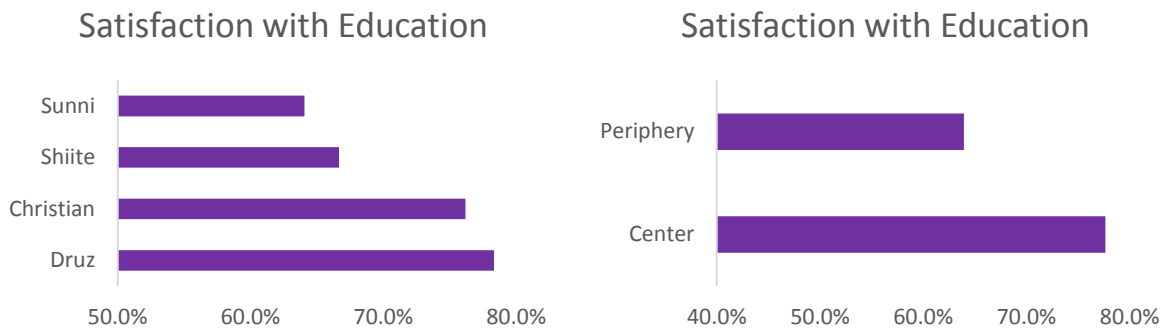
(29) See appendix for explanation of chart calculations.

Figure 6.2 Subjective Standard of Living by Youth, Education Level



Source: Gallup (2009-2013), Gallup World Poll.²⁷

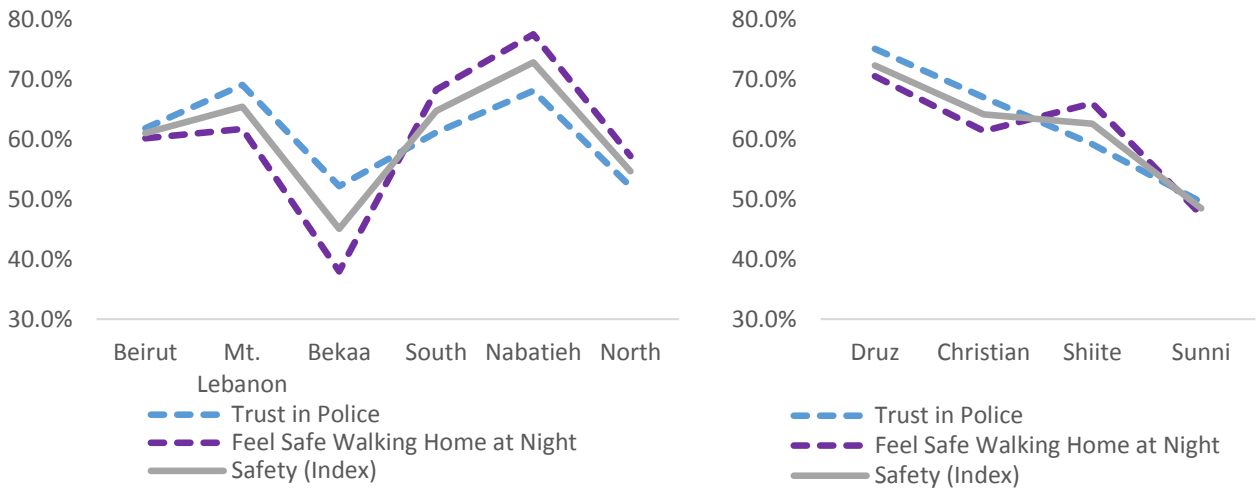
Figure 6.3 Youth Satisfaction with Education System by Confession, Center Status



Source: Gallup (2009-2013), Gallup World Poll.

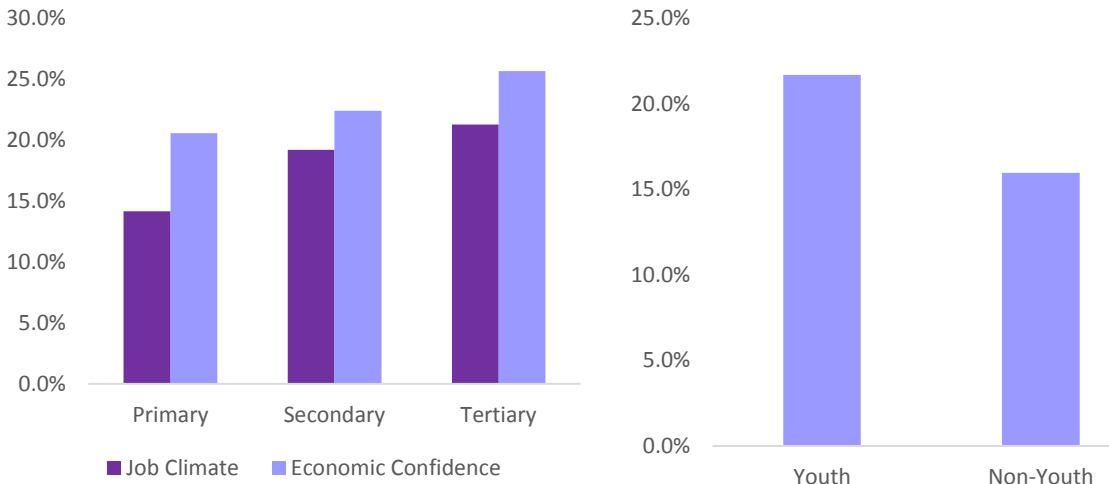
The safety composite indicator combines confidence in the police force and feeling of safety when walking home at night. By this metric both women and youth felt less secure with the systems in place. Those in Akkar and Bekaa unsurprisingly appeared the most at risk, while Nabatieh ranked most secure followed by Mount Lebanon and the South. Sunni Muslims reported the least safety while Druz were significantly more secure than any other confession (Figure 6.4).

Figure 6.4 Perception of Security by Mohafaza, Confession



Source: Gallup (2011-2013), Gallup World Poll.

Figure 6.5 (Left) Job Climate, Economic Confidence by Education Level
Figure 6.6 (Right) Perceptions on Job Climate by Youth Status



Source: Gallup (2009-2013), Gallup World Poll.

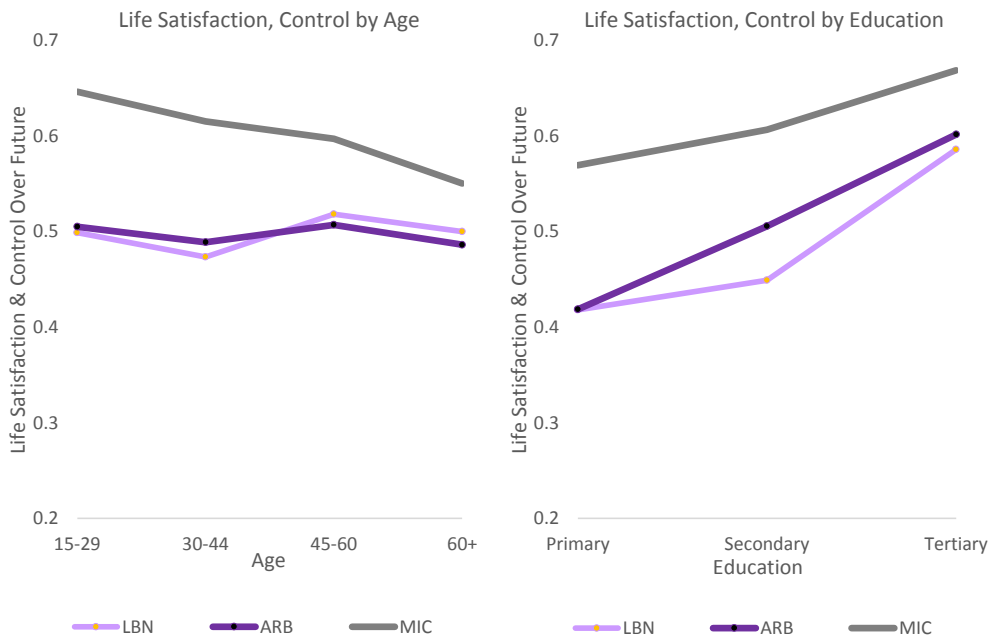
Job climate represents the extent of satisfaction with the community efforts to increase employment. All subpopulations were very displeased with the current state of the job market and government efforts. Despite having worse outcomes in terms of unemployment, youth viewed the situation 5% more favorably than adults. Individuals with less education and those living the Bekaa and South were more greatly dissatisfied. Confidence in the economic situation, which takes into account both current evaluation and future projections, followed most of the same trends as job climate opinions. The one key difference was that residents of the South were the most confident in the overall economic health of the country (Gallup 2009-2013).

Subjective Happiness and Personal Values: Subjective happiness is not only important as an end in itself, being one of the fundamental goals of human development, but for its feedback effects on social values. Unhappiness is associated

with social and religious intolerance (Herrmann et al. 2009), greater support for patriarchal outlooks (Alesina & Giuliano 2007), and less inclination towards civic action (Inglehart & Welzel 2010). This is attributed to an increase in survivalist attitudes resulting from unhappiness and the tendency for individuals to seek refuge in ethno-religious groups and family clusters amidst a dysfunctional society and weak state.

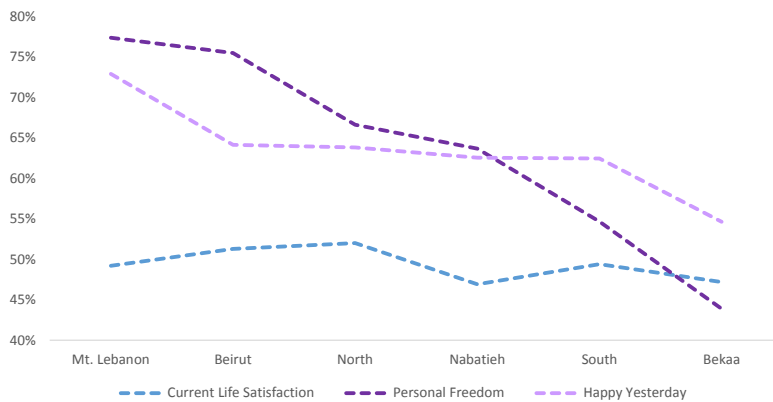
The following data come from the 6th wave of the World Value Survey, conducted in 2013 for Lebanon and between 2010-2014 for the 56 other countries in the wave. This round includes 1,200 interviews in Lebanon, adequate for national representation but not for discerning subgroup differences (where similar Gallup questions are used instead). The other Arab states surveyed in this wave and included in the unweighted Arab world aggregate are: Algeria, Bahrein, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Qatar and Yemen.

Figure 6.7 Life satisfaction and control over life by age and education³⁰



Data Source: United Nations (2010-2014). World values survey, wave 6.
Methodology: UNDP (2015), Arab Human Development Report.

Figure 6.8 Youth Life Satisfaction,³¹ Personal Freedom,³² Happiness by Mohafaza



Source: Gallup (2009-2013), Gallup World Poll.

Though youth in Lebanon had a level of satisfaction close to that of the Arab region average, this value was very low relative to income level. The aggregate of Arab states is unique in that younger populations are not generally happier, as is also the case in Lebanon. In a two-part index combining how satisfied individuals were with their lives as a whole (retrospective happiness) and their perceived control over their lives (a prospective value) Lebanon ranked far below the average for middle-income countries, despite the fact that Lebanon is in the upper range of these countries in terms of spending. Contrary to the general trend of Arab states, female youth were not less satisfied with their lives than men. Variations in current satisfaction by mohafaza were small, however there were wide gaps in freedom to choose what to do in life. In periphery regions a 17.55% smaller share of the youth population felt free to determine their own future. Youth in

the Bekaa valley perceived the least personal freedom, 32.3% less so than those in Beirut and Mount Lebanon.

Despite not being more satisfied with their lives in general than their elders, youth in Lebanon were much more likely to have experience current happiness, with a greater portion reporting that they felt happy the day before (64% vs 50%). In this measure there were again major differences between levels of this contextual happiness between mohafaza, peaking in Mount Lebanon and bottoming out in the Bekaa. Though the differences in current life satisfaction were not significant across mohafaza, this is consistent with literature which has shown that in intranational comparisons life satisfaction is only weakly correlated with income, and not influenced by education and climate (Kahneman et al. 2004).

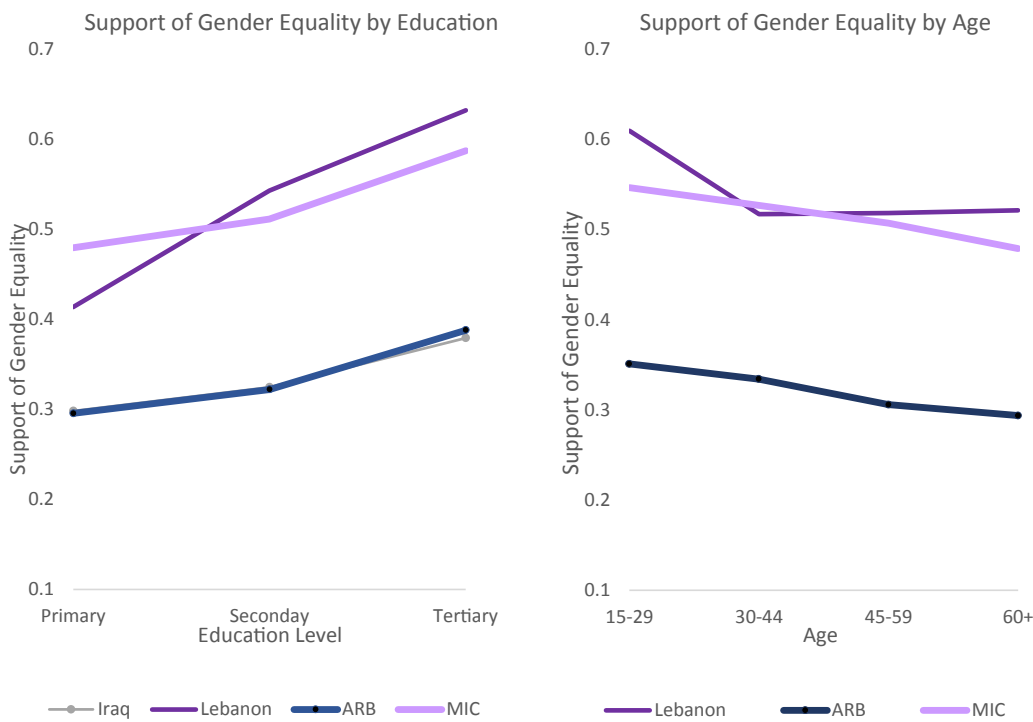
(30) See appendix for explanation of chart calculations.
(31) Percentage of respondents who ranked their current life satisfaction as a 7 out of 10 or greater
(32) Percentage of respondents who were satisfied with their level of personal freedom

Across locality youth ardently considered their lives to be meaningful. They did so more frequently than adults with over 90% stating belief that their lives have purpose (Gallup 2009-2013). These youth prioritize Arab emic values (honor, hospitality) which are not typically the most emphasized by other young people worldwide. Conversely, they placed somewhat less importance on benevolence and universalism than is common for the age group globally, though these values are essential in building and maintaining functional communities (Harb 2010).

Support for Gender Equality: One of the components of the MDGs, achieving gender equality is a central tenet of forming just and flourishing societies. Support for patriarchal family

structure and gender inequality are confirmedly much more prevalent in the Middle East (Moghaddam 2004) and Muslim countries (Alexander & Welzel 2011) than is common globally. Across the Arab states these inequalities are not only widely tolerated, but often reinforced by law (Zaatari 2014). Here we proxy these attitudes with an index of responses to questions regarding whether men should have more rights to a job when employment is scarce, whether a university education is more important for males, and whether men make better political leaders. Compared to the pool of Arab states Lebanon is the most supportive of gender equality by a wide margin. Still overall openness to gender equality falls significantly short of MIC values except for youth, who are somewhat more open than the middle-income average.

Figure 6.9 Support of Gender Equality



Data Source: United Nations (2010-2014). World values survey, wave 6. Methodology: UNDP (2015), Arab Human Development Report.

After age and education level the most influential trait regarding gender perspective was religion, with Muslims being more likely than Druz or Christians to prioritize male employment and favor male leadership (Moaddel 2008).

Youth also revealed the following perspective on whether Lebanon was a good place for the following potentially vulnerable groups:

Table 6.1 Perceptions of Youth on Minority Groups

	Religious Minorities ³⁴	Racial Minorities	Homosexuals	Immigrants
Consider Lebanon a good place for group*	63.2%	44.9%	13.1%	56.4%
Would prefer not to have member of group as neighbor**	40.5%	29.1%	77.0%	34.6%

* Source: Gallup (2006-2013). Gallup world survey.³³

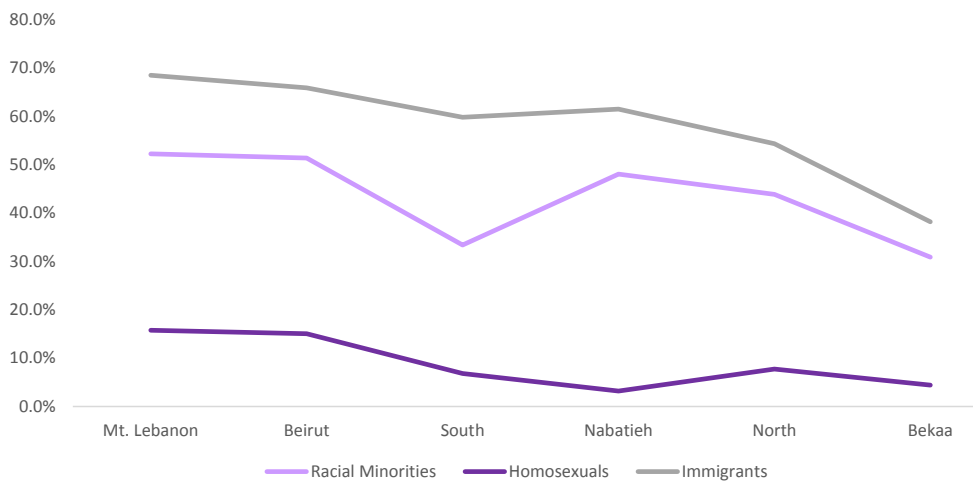
** Source: United Nations (2010-2014). World values survey, wave 6.³⁴

(33) For the WVS the questions ask whether the respondent would prefer not to have a member of a different religion or race as a neighbor.

(34) The religious minority category uses data from 2006-2008. The remaining data is from 2009-2013.

These perceptions didn't change significantly across age, gender or education, except that youth were about 10% more likely to accept homosexual neighbors. Beirut and Mount Lebanon did show higher perceptions of acceptance³⁵ than the other regions, especially the Bekaa valley.

Figure 6.10 Perceived Acceptance of Minority Groups by Mohafaza ("Is Lebanon a good place for...")



Source: Gallup (2009-2013), Gallup World Poll.

Over 90% of Lebanese citizens perceived an economic or symbolic threat from the Syrian refugee population present in the country, and more than two thirds felt these Syrian's constituted an existential threat. Around 90% of Lebanese also supported nightly curfews and political restrictions against Syrian refugees. The majority of Syrian refugees also viewed Lebanese nationals as an economic and symbolic threat, though very infrequently as an existential challenge. In the Bekaa Valley and Akkar more than two thirds of Lebanese nationals viewed an outbreak of violence as likely, while only around a fifth of Syrian refugees in these areas perceived this threat (Harb & Saab 2014).

b. Community Engagement

Community identities play a crucial and complex role in the way individuals in Lebanon engage with their society. These communities are still most commonly formed around the basis of sectarian-ethnic identities, with the majority of respondents preferring to have neighbors of the 'same background.' 48% of Lebanese indicated that they did not trust members of other religious groups either very much or at all. These biases were deeply entrenched with 45.8% indicating that their own faith was "the only acceptable religion," and 24.9% disagreeing that members of other groups were equally as moral (United Nations 2010-2014). Levels of sectarianism did not vary significantly by religious denomination, but they were linked negatively to liberal values and inter-confessional trust and linked positively to religious fundamentalism and support for foreign intervention (Moaddel, Kors & Gärd 2012).

Still, interactions and perceived competition between these

identities and national unity are far from straightforward. While 39% of Lebanese cited community identities as more important than national loyalty, 50% still identified themselves as Lebanese first and foremost, compared to much smaller numbers on the basis of religion (8%), political affiliation (7%) and by locality (2%) (Hanf 2007). Family and national identity also modestly outranked religious affiliation for youth, who almost completely dismissed political associations as a basis for identity. However youth still expressed blatant bias towards their own sects with equal prevalence across confession, region and gender. Acceptance of members of other sects was moderate, averaging at 67% and notably highest in the South and Bekaa valley (Harb 2010). Educational curricula intentionally avoid addressing the role and history of these confessional groups within Lebanese society and the means by which intergroup power relations have developed (UNDP & MEHE 2008).

Regardless of these identifications the strongest unit of support by far remains the family. Many restrict their trust to individuals inside the close social circle of friends and relations. As of 2006, 95% expressed trust in their close relatives as compared to 41% trusting in their religious community and 27% in people from the same village (Hanf 2007). The value of family loyalty is highly emphasized within kin group, extending to the expectation that family members will help each other secure work, including by nepotistic means. Yet these values do not necessarily translate into ability to rely upon family for all Lebanese, as only 72.2% felt they had a support network present, significantly lower than the Arab world average (Gallup 2009-2013).

(35) Here perceived acceptance refers to whether or not respondents felt Lebanon was a good place for the minority group

Though much less evident than elsewhere in the region, major life decisions like career choice or marriage continue to be viewed as a matter of family consensus for many, especially young women. Though protection and nurturing are emphasized in approaches to parenting, traditional norms and a mismatch of values often restrict dialogue between youth and the household authority (Issam Fares Institute 2011). Youth-adult relationships are construed vertically and orders, instructions, threats and shaming are regularly employed as means of communication (Barakat 1993). This denies youth the opportunity to practice decision-making for active participation at a societal scope and leaves many frustrated with their lack of agency (Melhim Abu-Hamdan 2008). From a sample of university students nearly 40% perceived their families as unhealthy and family functioning was generally taken to be indicative of individual status and identity (Kazarian 2005). Parental control does not necessarily stop at 18 but can continue as long as the youth live in their father’s residence.

Volunteering: 11.9% of Lebanese had volunteered in the month before being surveyed by Gallup,³⁶ less than the average for non-oil rich Arab states (14%) and well under the MIC average (19.2%). Overall residents of the Beirut and Mount Lebanon were more likely to partake in charity (volunteering or donating), however the Bekaa valley was the single most active mohafaza.

Men and tertiary educated individuals were also more likely to engage in these activities, perhaps reflecting an income or leisure time effect. Among youth 13.5% of males and 10.2% of females volunteered for an organization. Scouting organizations are a major cultural factor in Lebanon (with more than 35 associations in the country) which promote volunteer activities among children and younger youth. As a whole youth were more likely to volunteer their time but less likely to donate money (Gallup 2009-2013). Across the Arab region, youth who followed the news were three times more likely to be involved in volunteer activities (Mercy Corps 2012). Government initiatives have also tried to encourage greater youth participation. In 2013, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education issued a decree requiring that all public school students complete a minimum 60 hours of volunteering and civic engagement to receive their baccalaureate (Ministry of Education and Higher Education, 2013). While the groups this volunteering and donating is directed towards is not known, it is worth noting that Christians were less than half as likely to list refugees among the most vulnerable members of society (USAID 2012). In terms of helping strangers, Lebanese youth fell right on par with the rest of the Arab world and better than the average MIC, 52% had helped someone they didn’t know in the last month (Gallup 2009-2013).

Figure 6.11 Youth Self-Expression by Age, Education

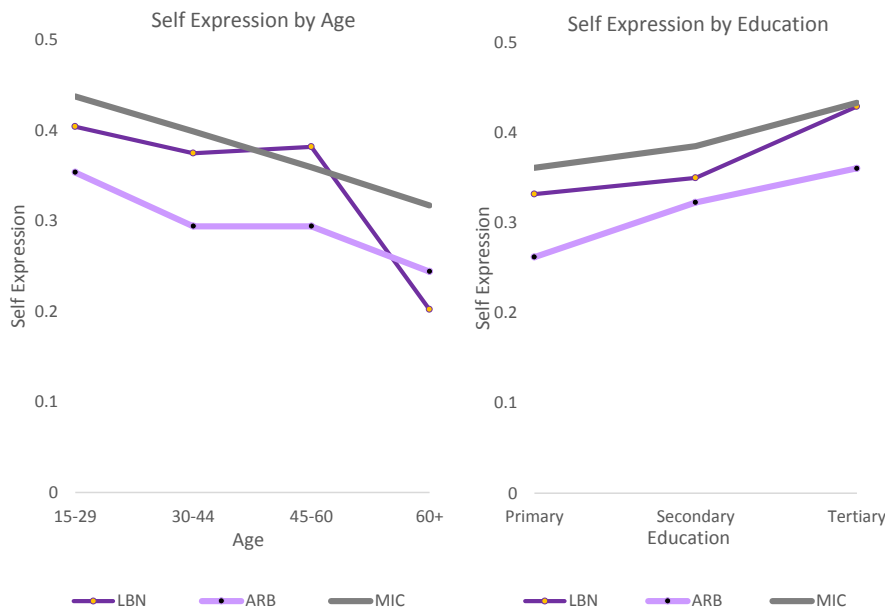


Figure 6.11 Youth Self-Expression by Age, Education

Data Source: United Nations (2010-2014). World values survey, wave 6. Methodology: UNDP (2015), Arab Human Development Report.

(36) The Gallup survey responses were collected the following months: April (22%), August (11%), July (11%), March (22%), November (11%) and October (22%)

Self-Expression and Civic Engagement: Self-expression is the capability of individuals to make independent decisions and adapt without facing excessive social constraints. For the following analysis, it is measured by a composite of three World Value Survey (WVS) questions relating to parental encouragement of imagination and self-expression to their children and respondents self-evaluation of their creativity and critical thinking. Self-expression is often associated with pressure for positive social change and egalitarian values (Inglehart & Welzel 2010). It is likewise generally correlated strongly with youth and increased education, and more prevalent in countries with higher incomes (UNDP 2015).

Youth in Lebanon experience greater self-expression than the Arab world average, but still fall short of the mean for middle-income countries. Interestingly, when individuals over the age of 60 are excluded, youth do not score higher than older segments of the population regarding self-expression, nor does education greatly increase these outcomes.

While Lebanese population could be considered reasonably self-expressive, the majority do not believe they can make a difference regarding the most important challenges they identified around them, both at a national (61%) and communal (53%) level. Notably, youth are not more idealistic than older members of society in this respect (USAID 2012). The education system has been criticized for not adequately addressing notions of citizenship and national identity, despite emphasizing them in the general curricular goals. Critics note that classes fail to draw connections between these concepts and those of cultural openness and pluralism, and only rarely address the rights of individuals, equity, the power of law, justice and other concepts related to democracy. Nor is the functioning of the government branches and institutions evenly explained, leaving students unclear as to how they can influence the process of policy and decision making (UNDP & MEHE 2008).

Despite antipathy towards many aspects of public involvement, individuals do widely place importance in civil society. Public confidence in civic organizations is second only to the Lebanese Armed Forces and 81% of the population considering them to be effective. Christian and urban populations viewed these groups particularly favorably, while Shiites were the least confident in their abilities. Despite these mostly positive outlooks knowledge of these organizations is scarce, only the Lebanese Red Cross is widely recognized. The other frequently cited CSOs were all relief focus with very little attention paid to advocacy oriented NGOs. 16.5% of respondents were unable to mention even a single CSO by name. This suggests the public does not readily recognize these groups as effective advocates of citizen demands, indeed only 35% of survey respondents felt they best represented their own interests (USAID 2012).

Still support of these organizations was high ranging from 91% of Christians to 71% of Shiites. The vast majority of this support was through donations (68%), with smaller numbers

participating in activities (17%) and volunteering (14%), the latter of which was again more common among youth. Only marginal number of individuals (6%) were actually members of a CSO (USAID 2012). Among youth, 23% of males and 18% of females were members of civic groups, compared to 25% of males and 15% of females for the youth of the entire Arab region (Arab Barometer 2014). Arab youth participate in these organizations less than is common in other regions. In Africa, for example, 32% of youth are involved in civic groups. Regionally youth who have internet access and those who follow the news are much more likely to belong to a civic group (Mercy Corps 2012). ICTs have also been noted for their ability to allow young Arab women to participate in civic activities without needing to receive permission or leave their homes (Issam Fares Institute 2011).

c. Political Participation

Even amidst the Arab Spring uprisings Lebanese youth were among the more active demonstrators in the MENA region. Youth across the region participate in protest events far more frequently than the MIC average for their cohort (Mercy Corps 2012). As expected, youth more frequently took part in these demonstrations than older segments of the population, yet contrary to regional and global trends (Desai et al. 2014), education was not associated with greater involvement in demonstrations among the Lebanese population (United Nations 2010-2014). Outside protest activities, youth were fairly disengaged politically. Across the region, citizen participation in electoral actions is weak and this was also the case for Lebanon (Arab Barometer 2014). Lebanon also had particularly low rates of voicing opinion to public officials (6.7%). Those with secondary education or less were half as likely to be in contact with officials compared to tertiary educated individual, while males, non-youth and residents of the North interacted relatively more frequently (Gallup 2009-2013).

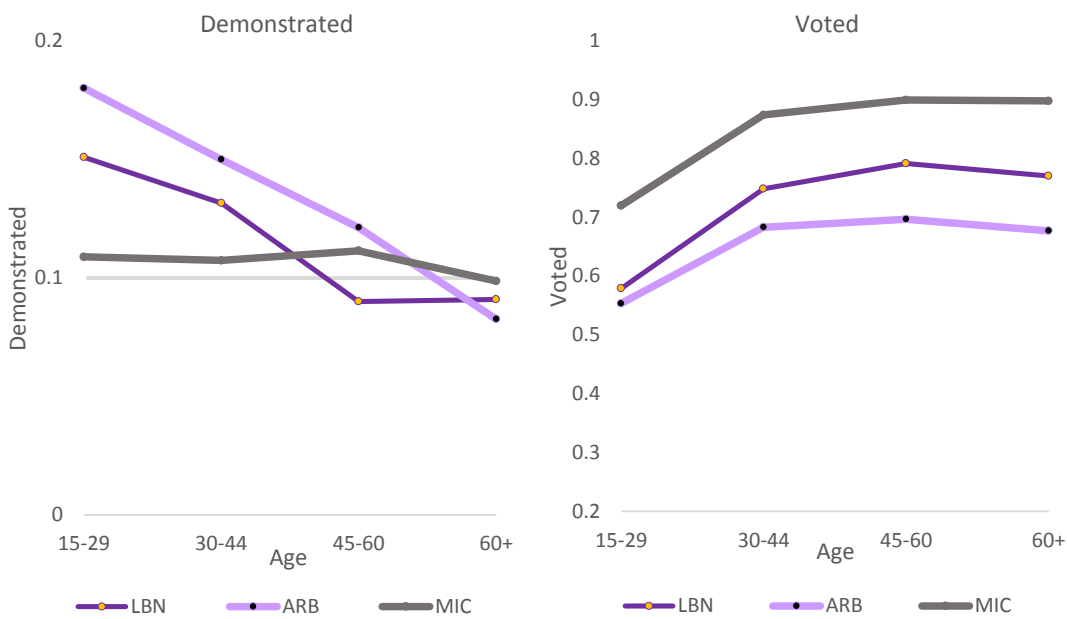
Despite stating a stronger preference for democracy than youth in other Arab countries, Lebanese did not widely participate in national and local elections, voting about as frequently as the MENA average and much less than their counterparts in other middle-income countries (UNDP 2015). Additionally, a smaller percentage of the population indicated that they would participate in the next parliamentary election than had voted previously (USAID 2012). The preference for public demonstration over voting, aside from being a common trait of youth worldwide, is influenced by the electoral system. The youth voice is critically excluded from these political decisions by a minimum voting age equal to 21 years old. Secular leaning youth may also be disenfranchised by the confessional foundation of this system, which dictates the high ranking positions and number of parliamentary seats reserved for each religious group. An additional problem is posed by the division of counties, or qadaas, which are frequently gerrymandered to manipulate electoral outcomes and help maintain political control within the hands of a select

elite (Aspen 2012). This has had the effect of making candidacy close to impossible for individuals who are not, extremely wealthy, from traditionally powerful families or associated with the large sectarian parties. It has also almost entirely barred women from political representation, despite the fact that they participate equally in the elections.³⁷ Holding only 3% of parliamentary seats and no ministerial positions women’s political empowerment was judged to be second to worst out of 142 countries ranked by the Gender Gap Index³⁸ (World Economic Forum 2014).

The current parliament, elected in 2009, has caused further distress by deciding to extend its own term limit twice, from 2013 to 2017. This action sparked public outrage and has been called illegitimate and unconstitutional by groups in Lebanon and internationally.³⁹ Youth are left with a plurality of reasons to view public demonstration as a more authentic form of political involvement. The discouraging effects of this system are reflected by the tremendously low level of confidence in the elections themselves (27.2%) present among all subpopulations and in all regions (Gallup 2009-2013) and the fact over half of Lebanese declare that none of the parties reflect their opinions (PACE Lebanon 2013). The participation of these disenfranchised individuals has the potential to be particularly beneficial because non-voters in Lebanon are on average more supportive of gender equality, secular politics and national unity (Moaddel 2008).

The lack of faith in the electoral system ushers a distrust of public institutions in general. Combining the self-reported confidence in the military, judicial system and government for Lebanon yields 57% approval, yet this masks the huge discrepancy which exists between public perception of the military, which was fairly good (89%), versus the judicial system and government at large (both around 36%). Beirut and Nabatieh had the lowest confidence in these public bodies, while the Bekaa, North and Mount Lebanon were the most supportive. The Druz population was more confident than either Christians or Muslims, while education level, gender and age did not significantly affect opinions on this matter. Another key barrier and disincentive to participation is the extreme level of government corruption in Lebanon. This corruption is noted equally by all segments of the population and stands out as exceptional even when compared to other Arab states (Gallup 2009-2013). According to Transparency International’s Corruption Perception Index the only MENA states that rank worse than Lebanon are Syria, Yemen, Libya, Iraq and Sudan (Transparency International 2014). 85% of Lebanese stated preference for “an honest and clean government that rules with a firm hand” over a government that is “perhaps a bit corrupt but respects civil freedoms,” indicating that the everyday experience of corruption and injustice has come to undermine the public’s conviction to a liberal society (Hanf 2007).

Figure 6.12 Participation in protests and voting by age group



Data Source: United Nations (2010-2014). World values survey, wave 6.
 Methodology: UNDP (2015), Arab Human Development Report.

(37) <http://lb.boell.org/en/2013/09/23/womens-political-participation-lebanon>
 (38) Index comprised of percent of parliament female, percent of ministers female and percent of the last 50 years with a female head of state
 (39) <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/11/05/us-lebanon-parliament-idUSKBN0IP18T20141105>

7 Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

Youth exclusion is a major issue in Lebanon particularly affecting those from poorer economic backgrounds. As such a high percentage of the quality healthcare and educational facilities are privatized, youth access depends directly on the funds available to them. The tremendous costs of housing in central areas, where most work opportunities are located, drive many into informal, crowded living arrangements and substandard shelters. Additionally public green spaces for youth are mostly unavailable in major urban areas and transportation is extremely restricted without ownership of an automobile. All these factors serve to amplify the significance of major income disparities into a broader inequality which pervades all aspects of life, complicating the fault lines along ethnicity, confession and locality with sharp divides in quality of life experienced.

Within this system securing a flow of income capable of supporting all these various expenses is essential. Yet for youth there is no clear path of personal advancement to such an end. Achieving greater levels of education, even obtaining a university degree, does not guarantee a major improvement in employment opportunities available, as youth unemployment, which rests at 20.6%, is actually worse for more educated individuals. Should they find a job in the formal sector, the median tertiary educated youth still only earns on average \$733 a month, a figure which pales in comparison to the cost of rent, healthcare and day-to-day living expenses. With the high cost of education, money spent pursuing a degree at a private university actually results in a negative return on investment on average. Thus youth lack the assurance that hard work and developing a skillset will render them capable of supporting themselves in the future.

The pressures of earning enough income to maintain a decent standard of living converge on youth as they enter adulthood and attempt to attain self-sufficiency and personal independence. As both a matter of culture and mandate of their financial means, most youth do not break off from their household much before preparing to start their own families. Marriage decisions are in many cases delayed because couples lack the money necessary to establish their own household. As they attempt to grow their own families, some are simultaneously burdened with the challenge of supporting parents or other relatives. In a critical point in life many youth lack the agency and capabilities which human development holds as its central tenets and are unable to secure basic necessities for their loved ones.

Furthermore, the vast majority of youth have no faith in the political system and their ability to influence positive change within this structure through democratic participation. Dishearteningly, the attitudes of sectarianism and in-group bias which contribute to current political dysfunction and corruption are no less present among youth and thus one could reasonably expect these issues to persist into the future.

In this situation of disempowerment, many youth view their only real options for a thriving independent livelihood as lying outside of Lebanon. The push to emigrate is widespread (with a third of all youth wishing to leave the country) and has led to siphoning off of a huge portion of Lebanon's most highly educated youth. This constitutes a double loss of both the skills these individuals possess and a squandering of the demographic dividend from which Lebanon should currently be benefitting. In other developing countries, such as India and China, this window of low dependency has ushered a period of rapid growth and economic development. In Lebanon after a child is raised to adulthood and provided with a full education, the resources endowed in this human capital are often exported with only the hope of a remittance flow in return. For youth who do stay their skills are often squandered as they are employed in unrelated fields which do not maximize their productive potential, or worse they go without work altogether. Lebanon is left ill-prepared for the looming dependency crunch, an inevitability of the aging population of the final stages of the demographic transition.

As such, the issues affecting youth in Lebanon are critical not just to the well-being of youth themselves, an end which is undoubtedly worth pursuing, but also to the long-run health and durability of the Lebanese state.

Addressing youth issues is a multi-sectoral challenge and requires the collaboration between the various state ministries as well as with agencies outside the government. It is also key to base these policies on the factual realities described in the wider body of research, as well as allowing the input of youth themselves into the policy-making process. Additionally, determined policies must be open to modification and update in order to adapt to the changing national situation and new information which will continue to appear. The following sections presents a number of policy recommendations for the Lebanese government, local NGOs and international agencies wishing to improve the socio-economic situation of youth in Lebanon. Many of the policy recommendations relate to those called for in the National Youth Policy presented by the Youth Forum for Youth Policy and endorsed by the Lebanese parliament. This reflects a commitment to allow the participation of youth in guiding the policies which directly affect them.

a. Quelling the Lebanese 'Brain Drain'

As expressed above, addressing the desire of Lebanese youth to leave country requires improvements in all the issues they are faced with. The first step towards solving this issue is developing a more complete picture of the problem by gathering more information on emigration patterns. As has been previously advocated, a permanent committee should be formed to regularly produce statistics and analysis on migration, with special focus on youth migration (Chaaban 2009b).

In the short- and mid-term future the government must promote an economic environment where youth can support

their own livelihoods, as so many cite a lack of this ability as a primary reason for wanting to emigrate. This issue warrants a two-pronged approach of both reducing the high costs of living and improving the income opportunities which support youth. In reducing costs, the provision of larger more affordable housing loans to recent graduates could be very effective. An active stance must also be taken to counter the excessive inflation of the housing market and reign in construction to serve the needs of the wider population. By taxing large-scale, luxury real estate and apartments which are left empty, as well as providing tax breaks to projects which offer affordable homes to young couples, the government could encourage a healthier, better functioning housing market. The climate of excessive high-end real estate projects also contributes to a national Dutch Disease situation by inflating the prices of a variety of essential goods and reducing the competitiveness of other sectors of the economy, stifling job growth (Chaaban 2009b).

From the other angle youth must be provided with a greater range of employment opportunities that provide a livable income. This is especially applicable to youth finding their first job after completing education, a transition which takes particularly long and may have a major impact on career trajectory and migratory decisions. Some of these options are explored below.

b. Employment

Training for the Needs of the Economy: There is a need to actively address the skills mismatch present in the Lebanese economy by training labor for the current needs of employers and guiding youth towards prosperous career paths which would not require emigration. Career guidance programs should be integrated into secondary schools to raise students' awareness of the options available to them. Universities, both public and private, should revise the majors they offer and unroll more programs which directly consider the needs of the domestic job market. The expansion of vocational and technical education should be promoted to a wider audience to counter social reluctance to this type of work, with in demand fields being highlighted. Formal, government-backed apprenticeship programs should also be developed to connect poor youth with an opportunity to earn income and develop applicable skillsets simultaneously.

Supporting Youth Entrepreneurship and Strategic Sector Growth: Many youth are already engaged in self-employment activities though generally in low-skill fields. Expanding business incubators and small-scale financial support for the entrepreneurial and innovative ambitions of youth, as well as general competitive clusters (set up through public-private partnerships) could help encourage the formation of more high-skill enterprises. This is especially critical in sectors like IT and knowledge translation where the Lebanese youth workforce has a competitive advantage which is largely not being employed at present. This could help foster the growth new, more knowledge based sectors of the Lebanese economy. Empowering these youth to create

innovative products, which could be marketed internationally, could transform skilled but unemployed youth into job creators.

Improving Employment Information Availability: Another key improvement to the general employment situation would be to address the lack of information available to youth about job opportunities and the most in demand labor market skills. The government should establish a permanent taskforce to assess the composition of the labor market and its unmet needs. This promote a unified, feely available platform where employers and job seekers can access this information and connect with one another. Additionally there is great need for more, regularly updated information on unemployment and its causes disaggregated by region, to help policymakers find employment solutions which are the most applicable to their locality.

Public Employment: Although many youth in periphery areas are already employed in public sector work, additional actions could be taken to reduce regional employment disparities and provide more skilled public sector jobs. Activating administrative decentralization through establishing new infrastructure and pursuing more balanced development in all regions, could help spur job growth in more periphery areas. Investments in infrastructure and public projects should be charged with using young labor from the area local to where the work is taking place. Central to the equitability of this effort would be to install additional mechanisms to ensure merit based qualification for public sector work.

Encouraging Private Sector Hiring while Protecting Workers: The national labor market must be actively addressed with a national employment strategy. Labor laws should be reconstructed to modernize labor relations in a way which benefits workers while minimizing obstructions to the hiring process. Pension schemes and the structure of social security should be complemented with unemployment insurance, which could be financed by contributions of no more than 2-3% of the payroll. Termination of employment provisions, which currently add up to 8.5% of salaries to labor costs, should be modified to allow businesses more flexibility in times of financial distress. Frameworks should also be established to allow for temporary layoffs, with laid off workers covered by unemployment insurance (Chaaban 2009b).

Ensuring Workplace Rights: While providing adequate work opportunities is essential to the retaining youth in Lebanon and allowing for their successful transition to adulthood, ensuring this work offers both low- and high-skilled youth their full rights and decent compensation is also vital. Labor laws should be expanded to provide protection to young people with part-time or unregulated jobs. School and vocational curricula should inform youth of their rights as workers and the obligations of their employers, as well as direct and confidential channels for reporting abusive employers. Inspections should also be more actively applied across different sectors and in large companies verifying the

Labor Law implementation and holding non-compliant firms accountable. These inspections should also enforce that workplace health and safety requirements are applied for all workers.

Special care needs to be given to the protection of young female workers, particularly those in the unregulated sector, ensuring they are able to participate in labor organizations and don't face sexual harassment or workplace discrimination. Additionally workers with disabilities should be served by applying the Ministry of Labor's Commission for Activating the Rights of the Handicapped in the Workplace. Promoting the skills of unregulated young workers would help more transition into the formal sector, allowing current labor regulations to be more effective for a larger segment of the workforce.

Removing Work Restrictions on Syrians and Palestinians:

Restrictions which require Syrians to pledge not to work, or deny Palestinians the right to employment in liberal occupations only serve to marginalize these large segments of the population of Lebanon today. This does not substantially improve labor market prospects for Lebanese citizens as many of these individuals have entirely different skillsets and continue to work informally, where they can be paid less and do not benefit from even basic workplace protections. These process serves to reduce the effectiveness of the labor market in providing decent livelihoods to individuals in Lebanon and reduces the hiring options of firms. Additionally these discriminatory policies play a negative role in heightening antagonist relationships between groups in Lebanon and provide tacit state support to racist and xenophobic outlooks.

c. Education

Improving Enrollment: Education plays a natural role in shifting more of the youth workforce into regulated and generally better employment. While primary enrollment figures are strong in Lebanon, additional efforts should be placed into improving enrollment and attendance rates for the intermediate level. This includes implementing the law of compulsory and free education until the age of 15, and accompanying this with assisting impoverished families in supporting the regular attendance of their children. The integration of therapists into schools could additionally help improve the retention, performance and overall mental health of troubled students. Special attention should be given to improving secondary enrollment rates as they actually decreased among Lebanese youth between 2007 and 2012 (UNESCO 2013).

Improving the Quality of Public Education: Improving the quality of public education would serve to both diminish the educational inequality resulting from the current heavily privatized system and encourage more students to reach secondary completion and move on to higher education. The Ministry of Education and Higher Education should devote less of their budget to teacher salaries by limiting the hiring of new teachers and reallocate these funds towards

to teaching supplies, classroom equipment and expanding infrastructure such as playgrounds, libraries and computer labs. Teachers should be required to hold a university diploma and hiring preference should be given to those with degrees in education, following existing legal stipulations. All teachers should be subject to regular accountability measures which objectively measure their performance and classroom progress. Additional training should be provided to faculty regarding modern teaching and student management methods.

Expanding the Scope of Basic Education: Academic curricula should put greater emphasis on civic education, including the responsibilities and importance of citizenship and national unity. The classroom should be used as a space to encourage constructive political and social dialogue among students. Spreading student committees and associations could play an important role in allowing students to practice decision-making and democratic participation. Curricula should also be expanded to include life skills, ensuring that students build skills relevant to their future inside and outside the workplace. Active learning methods should also be introduced to schools.

d. Health

Preventing Risky Behavior: Recent efforts to enforce stricter traffic standards, including mandatory seatbelt usage are important to counter the high road fatality rate, which stands as the number one killer of youth. The alarmingly rate of youth tobacco consumption should be directly targeted by serious efforts to prohibit the sale of tobacco to minors, imposing fines upon businesses which do not comply.

Spreading Awareness of Health Among Youth: There should be increased support for programs to spread health awareness and preventative education, especially regarding the risky behaviors most commonly engaged in by youth. This should include promoting awareness of contraceptive options. These programs should also seek to reduce the stigma associated with receiving care for drug or sexual health related issues, which discourage many youth from seeking treatment. This is especially important for youth in remote areas and young women who haven't engaged in the workforce. These lessons could be integrated into schools, universities as well as youth clubs.

Implementing More Effective Drug Policy: The state should adopt laws which accurately distinguish between drug distributors and drug users, and prioritizing the rehabilitation rather than criminalization of the latter group. This as well as utilizing a harm-reduction policy towards drugs is critical to encouraging drug abusers to seek assistance and start on the path toward sobriety and their re-inclusion into society. This would allow more individuals to escape addiction and help reduce drug use nationwide, as well as reduce demands on the overburdened prison system.

e. Other

Enable Full Youth Participation in Political Processes: The voting age should be reduced from 21 to 18 as is the case across most of the world.

Supporting Public Spaces: Increasing the number and quality of public spaces and activities for youth to take advantage of would be critical in allowing for greater social interaction between individuals from different backgrounds and achieving greater levels of social integration. These goals could be achieved while simultaneously providing entertainment, cultural enhancement and much needed physical activity for youth.

Appendix:

Key Socio-Economic Subjective Response Indicators (Gallup 2013)

All of the following indicators are formed by normalizing their components on a scale from zero to one, with the worst possible response given a zero and the best given a one. Any instances where the respondent stated that they didn't know or refused to answer the question were dropped from analysis. A simple arithmetic mean is used to combine the scores into one value. Probability weights for the sample are used to combine these individual values into a population wide average. Any of the demographic or regional factors which are said to impact these scores have been tested for significance ($\alpha = .05$) in a multivariate regression with the remaining demographic variables present as controls (youth status, gender, education, mohafaza of residence, religious group). All data for these indicators are taken from the Gallup World Poll.

Standard of Living includes a self-evaluation of living conditions, expected likelihood of these conditions to improve and satisfaction with the availability of affordable housing.

Healthcare combines individual satisfaction with local availability of healthcare and confidence in the overall healthcare system.

Satisfaction with Education simply represents Gallup question wp93: "In the city or area where you live, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the educational system or the schools?"

Safety combines individual trust in police with whether or not they felt safe walking alone at night in their local area.

Job Climate is an index presented in the Gallup World Poll (index_jc) which measures attitudes about a community's efforts to provide economic opportunity.

Economic Confidence is also presented within the Gallup dataset (index_ec). It combines individuals rating of economic conditions in the country today and whether they think economic conditions in the country as a whole are getting better or getting worse.

Regional Comparison Graphs Using World Value Survey Data

These charts are based on methodology used in the 2015 Arab Human Development Report and utilize data from the sixth wave of the World Value Survey (2010-2014). Individual variables are normalized on a scale from zero to one and then combined by arithmetic mean to form the indicators listed below. The values presented in the graphs are the percentage of each subpopulation (based on education or age) within a state that scored higher than the unweighted average for that composite indicator across all middle income states. In these comparisons the "middle income countries" and "Arab world" values consist of only those states which participated in the 6th wave of the WVS. They are as follows:

Arab World: Algeria, Palestine, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Qatar, Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen

MIC: Algeria, Azerbaijan, Argentina, Armenia, Brazil, Belarus, Chile, China, Colombia, Ecuador, Georgia, Palestine, Ghana, India, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Russia South Africa, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, Egypt, Uruguay, Uzbekistan and Yemen

Life Satisfaction is a composite of two questions: one which asks individuals to rate their satisfaction with their life up to this point on a scale from one to ten and another which asks them to rate their ability to control their future.

Support for Gender Equality is represented by an index of responses to questions regarding whether men should have more rights to a job when employment is scarce, whether a university education is more important for males, and whether men make better political leaders.

Voting measures how often people vote when elections take place.

Self-expression is an index covers the questions: whether imagination and self-expressions are qualities that children should be encouraged to learn at home (v15 and v22), and whether it is important to think up new ideas, be creative, and to do things one's own way.

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