



## **“The Syrian Migration crisis:**

## **Shaping a Developmental Post Conflict Model”**

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### **Summary**

*This paper discusses the newly issued World Bank report on the welfare of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan, based on the analysis of UNHCR data. It points some significant aspects not addressed, especially the effects Syrian pre-crisis public policies. It highlights the gap between the lack of proper socioeconomic assessment of both refugees’ and hosting communities and the fact that resilience and integration policies are already been negotiated with the Lebanese and Jordanian governments. This is while there no such efforts dealing with Egypt, Iraq and mainly Turkey, who are receiving large numbers of refugees. In addition, the Civil Society organizations are channeling a large share of the humanitarian aid, while they have, as well as the Syrian refugees’ and hosting communities, no proper voice in the debate.*

*The paper presents a framework of a post-conflict development model for recovery and reconstruction. It advocates a common cooperative development scheme for Syria, Lebanon and Jordan. Such a scheme is based on cross-border regional cooperation and on creating positive expectations for post-conflict development, which should start swiftly in the regions hosting the refugees. Infrastructures, public services, health and education are priorities. Incentives should be developed to create decent employments, to reduce inequalities, and to fix and encourage the return of refugees, in particular the highly skilled. The efforts of the international community should be coordinated towards enhancing the efficiency and accountability of the local and countries’ governance and institutions, circumventing the dynamics of war economy. The general sanctions on the Syrian population should be reviewed and lifted to enable economic development.*

### **Background**

The past years were remarkably characterized by the ongoing Syrian conflict that took its toll on hundreds of thousands of lives, and which its spillovers have triggered a massive humanitarian crisis and a migration one, crossing the Mediterranean towards Europe. It is estimated that half of the Syrian population has been displaced at end of 2015, then around 11 million, mostly

internally, with nearly 4.4 million of Syrians registered as refugees abroad, while 1.5 million others abroad do not have such status.

Lebanon and Jordan are the most affected countries by this massive migration of population, unprecedented since the Palestinian forced exile, where they constitute a large share of the hosting country population. Although, Turkey and some European countries received significant numbers of Syrian refugees. The response to this crisis and to the needs of the displaced Syrians and to the affected hosting communities has been in most cases confused, short-term, ad-hoc and insufficient.

There is a need for a long-term approach to the crisis of Syrian refugees, taking into consideration that there is no rapid reversibility of this migration flow and that the core problem is that of the internally displaced. Even if the war in Syria stops abruptly, the return of the internally displaced and refugees shall be gradual, function of the speed of Syria's recovery and development and the nature of the "peace agreement".

The effectiveness of the current programs of humanitarian aid, consisting of cash assistance, food vouchers, e-cards, is thus highly questionable in a medium-term perspective, even if they are currently alleviating the sufferings of the most vulnerable population. Their sustainability is also questionable, as the current commitments of donors are far from being fulfilled. This is while there are calls to put more focus in international aid on education, skills, and labor.

A World Bank report (Verne et al., 2016), performed in partnership with UNHCR and based on its data, had tackled the issue of the welfare of Syrian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan. This report has created the occasion to propose WBG policy recommendations for the Syrian refugees in the medium-term (WB, 2016).

The present policy paper discusses the results presented in the report, as well as the draft policy recommendations from a civil society perspective, shared between Syrians, Lebanese and Jordanians.

### **The World Bank vision of the Syrian refugees' situation**

#### ***The UNHCR data and analysis***

The WB report implies significant efforts to analyze the data sets of UNHCR regarding the Syrian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon. However, it report concentrates on the Jordanian data and mentions briefly the Lebanese data in the last chapter. This could be due to the small and reduced Lebanese data sets. Yet, the report makes the conclusion and policy recommendations on all Syrian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon, as if they are with similar characteristics.

Otherwise, the report ignores reference to the data in other hosting countries, and does not mention the lack of transparency on data in Turkey, where UNHCR adopts global indicators of

the Turkish government as if they are UNHCR data (AFAD, 2013). The UNHCR itself lacks transparency on the data, which are not shared with other research or assistance institutions. The non-random home visits survey could have been conducted by an independent agency, in order not to introduce a bias in the information collected, as UNHCR is supervising and distributing the aid assistance. For example, the report shows a weak impact of working status on poverty and/or skills, and this could be linked to the fact that the beneficiaries of aid may avoid mentioning their working status particularly if this work is informal.

The data analysis raises also some concerns. The report indirectly adopts the poverty line of UNHCR, which is substantially lower than the national poverty lines of Jordan and Lebanon. The use of poverty or welfare predictors and its coefficients based on the data themselves to target poverty could lead to misleading results in terms of coverage and leakage. The most important independent variables (case or household size, the number of children, crowding and unofficial arrival in the country) have potential multiple collinearities. The models have also potential omitted variables and endogeneity problems. It is not clear how this has been tackled with? More astonishingly, the report excludes refugees in camps (Zaatari, Azraq, Emirati) from the analysis, *“since refugees in camps benefit from various types of assistance including shelter, free education, and free health care”* (!).

The World Bank acknowledges that the effects of the scale and complexity of the Syrian crisis continue to spread within and beyond the region. *“Since 2011, the humanitarian response has addressed immediate and essential needs among the refugee and local populations in a manner that has surpassed previous emergency assistance programmes both in substance and design”*. Moreover, *“Yet there are few signs that the situation has reached a manageable equilibrium”* (WB, 2016). Meanwhile, the report using databases and home visits performed in 2013/2014, makes conclusions taken as granted without mentioning major changes in the refugees’ situation and numbers since that time.

### **Why Lebanon and Jordan only?**

The choice of these two countries has its significance, as well as the omission of the other neighboring countries, Iraq, Egypt and mainly Turkey. The latter had received since 2014 most of the new Syrian refugees.

The total number of registered Syrian refugees who fled their country rose from 2.8 million mid-2014 to 4.8 in March 2016, then almost doubling (according to UNHCR). Registered refugees in Lebanon were 1.0 million mid-2014, increasing only slightly to 1.1 lately. In Jordan, the numbers stuck around 0.6 million. This is while the population of registered Syrian refugees in Turkey evolved from 0.8 million mid 2004 towards 2.7 million in March 2016, accounting for most of the increase of the total since.

Despite controversies on the numbers of non-registered refugees, the concentration on Lebanon and Jordan reflects the fact that Syrian refugees constitute a significant share of total population, as well as fears in these countries for a permanent settlement of the refugees, even

after the end of the conflict. However, the inclusion of the analysis of the Turkish case would have provided significant insight, owing to the facts that the numbers evolved there significantly, that Turkey is the main passage point to asylum seekers in Europe, and especially that recent evidence shows that poverty is increasing amongst the refugees in Turkey (Azevedo and Al. 2016). From poverty, health and education perspectives, the analysis of the Turkish case, as well as that of Iraq and Egypt, would have given different insights; as reports indicate that the humanitarian conditions of refugees in these countries are in many aspects severe. For example, 400,000 Syrian children in Turkey are accounted not at school (HRW, 2015). Only 14% of children outside camps, i.e. the majority of the refugees there, attend school (Berti, 2015; AFAD 2013). This is without noting that today the 2.4 million Syrian refugees outside camps are reported to impact the life of 8.2 million of hosting communities in Turkey; a percentage similar to that of Lebanon and Jordan.

### ***What about the Syrian Palestinians?***

The WB report and UNHCR survey are silent on the situation of the Palestinian refugees of Syria before the crisis, when they accounted for around 560,000. This is while they experience an even harsher situation than the Syrians do. Both Lebanon and Jordan have made barriers for the Palestinian refugees of Syria. Even though, it is estimated that around 43,000 have fled to Lebanon and 15,000 to Jordan (UNRWA 2015); while 430,000 are in severe conditions inside Syria (UNRWA 2016). The economic integration of these refugees is more difficult in Lebanon and Jordan than that of Syrians.

The situation of the Palestinian refugees in Syria and in the hosting countries need to be addressed at equal foot with nationals, even if a specific UN agency (i.e. UNRWA) is responsible of the management of their situation and of the humanitarian aid.

### ***The Syrians in the Lebanese and Jordanian societies and labor market?***

The WB report, as well as the UNHCR data sets, does not refer to an important issue linking Syrian, Lebanese and Jordanian labor forces; i.e. work migration. A significant circular migration of Syrian workers to Lebanon existed during the 1990's and the 2000's. The size of which had evolved function of the complex relations between the two countries, and especially with the presence of the Syrian army in Lebanon until 2005. The issue was subject to an intense public debate in Lebanon, as some estimated the number of Syrians before the 2005 crisis ranging from 500,000 to 1.5 million (!).

Prior to 2011, this number was estimated to be still at a minimum of 300,000; accounting then for around 20% of the Lebanese labor force and 6% of the Syrian labor force. These circular migrants have then their own work and lodging relationships inside Lebanon; while their families used to stay in Syrian cities or villages. They could have brought their families with them following the deterioration of the security conditions and the war, and settled them where they have old working relations. This had been noted, according field surveys, with the

observation that “many Syrians in Lebanon displaced by the conflict do not feel that they are refugees” (Chatty, 2015).

From the report and the data, it is not clear if the refugees are linked to this pre-crisis circular migrants, or if these latter account only amongst the non-refugee migrants (1.5 million Syrians in total).

Syrian circular work migration to Jordan was less significant. However, the family ties between Southern Syria (Deraa) and Northern Jordan (Irbid) population are very strong, made of kinship, tribal affiliation, social networks and cross marriage (Chatty, 2015). Here also, the influence of these cross border relations on the situation of the refugees would have been worth investigating, especially analyzing the difference between the refugees out of camps and those at Zaatari (around 82,000 out of a total of around a million now in Jordan accounting for the non-registered). ILO reported “51% of Syrian refugees men living outside camps participate to the labor market, while the unemployment rate is as high as high as 17 per cent” (Stave and Hillesund, 2015).

### ***Was the drought what weakened the refugees before migration?***

The WB report notes that “prior to becoming refugees, many had suffered repeated shocks within Syria, leading them eventually to abandon their assets, property, and capital and seek safety in the neighboring countries”. These shocks were identified as “global financial shocks, domestic agricultural shocks, and conflict”; and the agricultural shocks were linked to the “effects of a prolonged drought that affected the country during the years leading to the 2011 crisis”.

However, it had been proven (Aita, 2009) from yearly Labor Force Surveys that the major shock occurred in 2003-2004, long before the drought. The share of those working in agriculture had dropped significantly then, because of government policies, which permitted the informal proliferation of drilling of water wells. A major drop in the level of water tables occurred, making most of the small landowners unable to irrigate their land. In addition, 2003-2004 had experienced a loss of more than 20% of the total of labor force (and employments) in Syria, and a major rural-urban migration. The shock had been felt so strongly that the government had created an Agency for Combatting Unemployment (ACU), funded for with more than US\$ 1 billion. It had operated for around two years delivering micro-credits, and its effects were observed positively in 2005 LFS. Mid 2006, it was abruptly dismantled and replaced mainly by « the Syria Trust for development », led by the first Lady and which needed years before having any significant impact on employment, if any. The shock was not really caused by drought, but earlier by government policies. The surplus in agriculture workers shifted mainly to the low productive services sectors.

A second shock occurred in 2006 and 2007, before the severe drought, with the arrival of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis (from 1.0 to 1.5 million for some estimates), fleeing the civil

war. The Iraqis were allowed to work and open businesses in an urban environment already crowded by informal labor of Syrian rural migrants.

The drought weakened the Syrian economy and made an already vulnerable population, even more vulnerable. Nevertheless, very few of the Syrians refugees in Lebanon and Jordan were directly involved in agriculture, before their migration; as it is demonstrated in the database of the UNHCR. Also, the effects of the global economic crisis of 2008 on the Syrian economy were compensated by subsidization of food goods and oil derivatives; an issue raised by the IMF, the WB and the Syrian government as creating an enormous burden on public finance.

The WB report exaggerates the role of drought and minimizes that of Syrian Government public policies, which pre-crisis openness and reforms were praised, while they failed to manage growth and to regulate the economy, including irrigation.

### ***The impact of refugees on hosting communities***

A recent study (UNDP/UNHCR 2014) had shown that the humanitarian aid to the Syrian refugees in Lebanon was in line with the number of refugees (until 2014), and had positive effects on the Lebanese economy. The injected aid in 2014 created additional supply; a fourth of which was supplied by imports and the rest by increased production of the Lebanese economy. This increase was reflected by an additional growth of +1.3% in the Lebanese GDP. The positive effects of the fiscal package exceed the strict amount paid by a factor 1.6. However, Lebanon suffered significantly from the Syrian crisis, in terms of decrease of tourism, investments and exports. The total GDP growth rate in 2014 was only of 2%, while setting above 8% in the years before the Syrian crisis. Thus, the approach for Lebanon (as well as for Jordan) should be posed not only in terms of resilience and development, but also in terms of recovery.

Jordan GDP growth also suffered, but in fact since 2008, down from an average of 7% to less than 3%. There is no consistent assessment of the impact of humanitarian aid. However, it is expected that the flow humanitarian aid had here also a positive impact, bringing with a multiplier effect additional growth to the economy (+0.7% in 2015), however largely insufficient to retrieve the pre-crisis growth trends. A labor market impact study on Jordan (Stave & Hillesund 2015) depicted that the major problems of the refugee communities are schooling and education. It showed also that 51% of men refugees living outside camps participate to the labor market, as low skills workers (construction, trade, agriculture, etc.). Total unemployment in Jordan is said to have increased. However, it is not clear if this increase is due to the competition between the refugee and hosting communities on low skilled jobs, or to the decrease in the economic growth.

The World Bank report did not correlate its data analyses with such economic and social analyses. There is lack of comprehensive surveys on the socioeconomic situation, with comparisons between hosting communities and refugees. We are far from addressing all the



relevant key issues related to the economic as well as to the social impacts of the refugee crisis, on the refugees themselves and on hosting communities.

It is striking that, with the size of the refugee crisis, and the amounts of humanitarian aid delivered and needed, no major effort has been made to analyze the present situation and its consequences, to sustain policies for insuring the resilience of refugees and hosting communities, as well as to develop a comprehensive program for post-conflict recovery and development. This is while policies are being promoted and negotiated with hosting governments.

### Shaping a developmental post conflict model

#### ***Recovery and reconstruction of Syria***

A post conflict model for the recovery, rebuilding and development in Syria shall not be easy as the scale of destructions that the country is experiencing during the war is tremendous. The mechanisms of the Syrian economies were dismantled, replaced by warlords' economies. Destruction has reached private and public properties, as well as base infrastructures. Entire villages and city areas were transformed to ruins. Factories and industries were destroyed or dismantled. Key skills left the country for a better future. Material and intangible heritage had been lost and need tremendous efforts to recover.

The return of refugees is hindered by several factors, which are directly related to the reasons behind their journeys to neighboring countries and away seeking asylum. The security is not expected to return rapidly everywhere, even if a political solution is reached, as the amount of weapons spread in the country is considerable and as the raise of sectarianism and extremism had reached various categories of the population. The infrastructures for delivering public services had suffered greatly, from clean water distribution to sewage, to health and education. The number of doctors and medical aids per thousand inhabitants had dropped sharply. Each doctor leaving the country leading to the departure of several thousands of inhabitants. The education system suffered similarly, in its infrastructures, in its civil servants and in the polemics around base education colloquium. This is while school is the basis of citizenship.

Moreover, many of the present refugees outside Syria were already internally displaced; living in rapidly built informal suburbs or cities, lacking initially infrastructures and public services. This resulted from the rural-urban migration wave of the last decades and was one of the triggers of the initial uprising in 2011. These suburbs and cities used to experience the highest rate of unemployment and informal employment, which use to hit mostly the young generation constituting now the majority of the populations and especially women. Around 80% of the labor force outside public institutions and agriculture was experiencing informal employment, including circular migration for work in neighboring countries. Thus there will be a clear

mismatch between expectations and possibilities concerning the desired return of most of the refugees.

The development model for post-conflict Syria should then take into consideration the pre-crisis realities and constraints, as well as the consequences of the war. This is to aim at creating proper conditions for the dynamization of the economy as well as a strong involvement of the population in the recovery efforts, in decent conditions. In addition, such a model should be thought in line with the necessary preservation and modernization of the Syrian State institutions during the recovery and reconstruction.

The catastrophic created by war, the displaced and the refugees increases the need to address the negative role of public policies, oppression, large-scale crony capitalism, and huge inequalities.

### ***A cooperative development scheme for Syria, Lebanon and Jordan***

Owing to the numbers of Syrian refugees comparatively to the hosting communities, the medium and long-term approach for what is called now “the crisis of refugees” can only be built in the perspectives of the recovery and reconstruction of Syria, and on a shared vision towards the future cooperation/partnership between Syria, Lebanon and Jordan.

Formally and informally, the three countries had always have strong economic and social ties. Due to its own history, Lebanon had always played the role of entry door to trade and investment in Syria. Former rules on movement of population had allowed the Syrians to constitute a significant share of the Lebanese labor force, and to a lesser extent of the Jordanian labor force. Lebanese banks had always played a significant role in the financial intermediation of trade, investment and individuals in Syria. Many of its managers are from Syrian origin. These Lebanese banks, as well as some Jordanian banks, were the first to open private banks in Syria in 2004. Most of the Syrian business community had chosen to live in Lebanon and Jordan following the deterioration of the security situation. Themselves, as well as the Lebanese and Jordanian business communities are preparing to participate to the recovery and reconstruction market in Syria.

On another hand, the hosting communities in Lebanon and Jordan were already suffering from strong regional disparities of development in their own countries. These strong regional inequalities constitutes a main characteristic of the development model in all Arab countries. The host communities took on their own, through their civil society networks, most of the burden sharing the fate with large numbers of refugees. In addition, in fact, they shared willingly the weak infrastructures and public services in their own regions, while the State institutions had not been able to cope with these deficiencies, before and after the “crisis of refugees”. This is while they shared little of the economic benefits brought by the flow of humanitarian aid from the UN and developed countries.



The shaping of a developmental post-conflict model, including a long term approach for the “refugees’ crisis”, should not only take profit of the strong historical ties between the three countries, but also put the bases for a modern cooperative model of development, strengthening their economic and social ties. In addition, this crisis should be taken as a trigger to reduce regional disparities within the hosting countries, especially improving significantly infrastructures and public services in the regions coping with the largest share of refugees. The benefits of the recovery should be shared, as the burden of the conflict was shared.

### **The proposed framework of development**

The post-conflict development model proposed hereby starts from the basic realities of the three countries and of the main socio-economic needs. It shares some of the recommendations proposed by the World Bank (World Bank 2016), but put them in another perspective.

#### **1. Coping now with the development challenges of the hosting regions**

Surely, the framework should be first based on coping with the development challenges of the hosting countries. However, these challenges are to be addressed not on the long term, but on short and medium-term. The perspectives of the solution of the Syrian crisis are still not clear, and no massive and rapid return of the refugees could be expected soon. The development aid should consider already on the short-term improving the infrastructures and delivery of public services, specifically in the regions hosting the refugees, to address the needs of both communities. This issue should constitute a priority in the dialogue between the aid agencies and the hosting governments. The works involved should create economic opportunities for both the hosting and the refugees’ communities.

A typical example is electricity. Both hosting and refugees’ communities lack public electricity. A short and medium-term scheme to deliver properly electricity will benefit both communities. This scheme could even be designed to deliver cross-border electricity to Syria after the return of refugees and during Syrian recovery. This could also be the case for the delivery of drinking water. In addition, specific financial incentives for the business community to develop base industries in the hosting regions will have similar impact.

#### **2. Creating incentives for the return of refugees**

Whatever the assumed benefits of aid, some refugees are already returning to Syria, whenever the conditions of security improve, as for the case of Al Zaatari camp in Jordan. This willingness to return should be encouraged in conjunction with the efforts to improve economic resilience of the refugees in the hosting regions.

The incentives for the return of refugees should consider first preventing the migration of skills to Europe and the Gulf. Health care, education and SME’s are core issues in that respect. Efforts

for peace, for developing trusted institutions and for inclusiveness are also key to encourage refugees to return.

A framework should be established allowing Syrian doctors and physicians to serve the needing population. This includes those working inside Syria through humanitarian assistance, as well as those present in Lebanon and Jordan, who could exercise their skills in hospitals dedicated to the refugees' community. Similarly, the education of refugees' children and youth should create opportunities within Syria and in the hosting regions for fixing large numbers of skills, as well as for their return to Syria. This includes base education, taking into account the long-term socio-economic threat that a lost generation in education could present. Higher education and technical and vocational training represent also a key issue.

A proper incentive scheme for the return of refugees could be designed on the short run, owing that the return is a free human choice of the persons involved. This scheme should include a financial incentive for starting business or rebuilding of destroyed asset; as well as the gradual transfer of some facilities to Syria, such as dedicated hospitals or vocational training centers.

The development of SME's is also a key issue for fixing skills in the region. Temporary permits should be granted to Syrians to open businesses, as well as temporary working and residency permits. This shall allow governments to collect taxes and regulate a rapidly developing informal developing informal economy and labor.

### **3. Lift general sanctions on Syrians now**

The economic opportunities within Syria and in the neighboring countries could not develop without credit and banking intermediation. This has been limited drastically by the US and EU financial sanctions on Syrians, who cannot open bank accounts in neighboring countries or access credit. The aid agencies themselves, including UN agencies, have tremendous difficulties to transfer aid to Syria or to the neighboring countries.

These sanctions had counter-productive effects on their original human rights goals in Syria. They had increased transaction costs for financial intermediation and profited mainly to warlords. They contributed to the impoverishment of an already vulnerable population, leading it to exile. Only when they get a status of refugee in a European country, they could access again banking and credit services.

The lifting of financial sanctions on the Syrian citizens is thus an essential condition for their economic integration in the hosting countries, as well as for their return to Syria. While working with regional government on the economic development issues related to the "refugees' crisis", the World Bank Group could also work with the US Department of Treasury and the EU for the lifting of the financial sanctions. This does not preclude to the continuation and eventually the reinforcement of individual sanctions and regulatory controls on criminal or terrorist activities.



Similarly, other general economic sanctions have increased the cost of basic goods and services inside Syria dramatically. They affected the Syrian people in terms of poverty and living conditions, encouraging seeking asylum abroad. They should be now reviewed and eased, limiting on them on those responsible of the present war.

#### **4. Think development regionally**

The development paradigm for the Mashreq countries had always been considered taking each of its States separately. This is the case even for the Euro-Mediterranean partnership or with the free trade agreements with other developed countries, such as the United States. The future recovery of Syria and the development of Lebanon and Jordan will be function of a paradigm shift that integrates regional approaches at different levels.

The first level should consider Syria, Lebanon and Jordan as a regional group, addressing the harmonization of free trade and partnership agreements with these countries. This could include opening European and other markets for the products of the three countries on a preferential level, beyond present approaches as the special free trade zones.

The second level should target diminishing regional disparities within each of the three countries. The crisis represented by the refugees and the internally displaced should be considered an opportunity in that respect.

The third level concerns the region-to-region cooperation between the three countries. The framework for development should encourage such region-to-region cooperation. Per example, the recovery and development of the Southern region of Deraa in Syria should be thought in partnership with the development of the region of Irbid in Jordan, taking profit of the strong social ties between the two. Moreover, it should be similarly the case between the Damascus Rif and the Beqaa in Lebanon, and between the Lebanese North and Homs and Tartous.

At this third level, the issue is less creating limited special economic zones than giving incentives through the development of infrastructures and public services for the concerned regions and through favoring the climate and conditions for business creation and growth for these entire regions (Mohafazat).

A fourth level concerns the empowerment of local communities, promoting a bottom-up approach for development. The development scheme should give priority to the needs and the projects as issued by local elected municipalities and regional authorities. They should be directly implicated in the definition and management of the development efforts, as they represent through elections the concerns of the local population who are the direct end beneficiaries.

A fifth level is related to the need of a strong developmental State during transition, that can manage and regulate democratically the inter-regional inequalities and needs for recovery, and upgrade the efficiency and harmony of the reconstruction process.

## **5. Create a decent employment environment**

Already a large share of Syrian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan are economically and socially integrated, but informally. The competition with the local labor market exists for low skill jobs. Only the low skilled in closed camps (as for the Al Zaatari camp) or in large informal areas (such as 'Irsal or the Palestinian camps) cannot access the labor market. It is a question of survival and resilience.

The banning on economic integration exists mainly for skilled labor and middle-class. It forbid these categories from opening businesses and contribute to the local economy, as well as to create opportunities and deliver services to the most vulnerable refugees and to the hosting communities. Typical examples concern the case of opening of local trade services and crafts, and that of doctors and physicists who are forbidden from delivering health care.

In both countries, the economic integration of the refugees' communities had political implications, as there are fears of settling definitely the refugees in a complex social fabric. On another hand, the rapid development of informality distorts the economy and create large areas where rule of law, regulation and taxation are absent. Then the regulation of a decent environment for living and working should be a major concern in Lebanon and Jordan, as well as in Syria.

It starts with improving drastically the scolarization of the refugees' children. This will avoid the most condemned form of informal labor, which is child labor. The international community should assist the national education system in both countries so that public schools mainly integrate those children. In addition, educators and professors could be hired temporarily amongst the refugees to help this mission. Similarly, grants for high education should favor refugees and hosting communities, equally.

Temporary licenses for opening businesses and work could be delivered to help developing the local economy. Local or special hospitals and health care centers could hire Syrian doctors and physicists to deliver their services specifically to the refugees and hosting communities.

The whole issue concerns replacing informality and dependency of the refugees and hosting communities on aid, by better management of a temporary situation, creating opportunities for direct regional cooperation when refugees will return home.

## **6. Create positive expectations for post-conflict development**

The World Bank has acknowledged that the effects of the scale and complexity of the Syrian crisis continue to spread within and beyond the region, and that it has not reached a manageable equilibrium (WB, 2016).

The World Bank devise "more substantial engagement from the international community that goes beyond the traditional short term reliance on humanitarian aid", and "change in policy

and institutional arrangements” critical to “to the of a broader range of longer term economic, commercial and development investments if current trends are to be stabilized and reversed”.

The framework for post-conflict recovery and development of Syria should start now to be established, as well as a master plan for regional development. And the involvement of international community in this effort should be clarified and initiated today, even before the achievement of a political solution of the Syrian crisis. This would generate positive expectations, create incentive for stopping the flow of refugees, and even help the achievement of peace.

This also involves efforts at different levels.

At first, the activities for a recovery and development framework should be started now, addressing the consequences of the war, as well as the realities that caused the initial uprising. A special care should be made at the institutional framework, enhancing the role of post-conflict State institutions and at empowering local and regional elected authorities.

Also, the involvement of donors, the international community and International financial institutions in the financing of the post-conflict recovery and the development of Syria, Lebanon and Jordan should be mobilized and clarified. This include identifying projects that can be started before achieving peace, inside Syria and in Lebanon and Jordan. These projects should effectively be started to create a positive environment for peace.

### **7. Think local, act global**

The governments of the countries experiencing the Syrian refugees’ crisis elaborated national response plans and presented them to the donors’ community. Also, UN agencies and others prepared tentative agendas for the recovery of Syria. The elaboration of such plans and agendas did not sufficiently involve the civil society and the local and regional administrations. Some were not even been made public for scrutiny.

The insufficient respect of the donors’ community of its own commitments for basic humanitarian aid, and the urgent need for funds to cope with the humanitarian needs of the refugees and the hosting communities, explain partly this fact. However, the civil society and the local administrations are the ones who are channeling a large part of the aid, dealing daily with the crisis in its details. The lack of transparency and public consultation with the civil society of the hosting communities and of the refugees can jeopardize any effort to implement much needed policies. Most importantly, the refugees have no voice to discuss policies that shall decide their fate.

This is especially that the crisis has strained State institutions in all countries receiving the refugees, and that State institutions in Syria weakened severely by years of war. Inside Syria, local administrations and civil society organization are now taking in their shoulders most of the

efforts to deliver the necessary aid and public services to the population, including the large numbers of internally displaced.

The war economy inside Syria, its dynamics and interaction with neighboring countries should be specifically addressed. Negative incentives should be imposed on this economy especially on the local level, creating alternative opportunities.

This situation is then to be taken as an opportunity to implement a bottom-up framework for the management structure of the post-conflict development model. Such framework should empower local administrations and communities, in line with the respect of reinforcing the (central) State institutions in each country, making them more efficient. Taking into account the specificities of each country, the international institutions, such as the World Bank, should create a proper platform for the necessary dialogue to achieve both goals, involving central and local administrations, civil society organizations and representatives of the hosting and refugees' communities. In that respect, a key issue is allowing the refugees to elect locally representatives to present their voice, needs and aspirations.

This role is as important as designing and mobilizing financial mechanisms to cope with the resilience of hosting countries and communities, and for the post-conflict recovery and development scheme.

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