

CONFERENCE REPORT

طوارق 24/24
70/744393

URBAN INEQUALITIES AND POVERTY IN LEBANON

WHAT CAN BE LEARNED FROM
THE SOCIAL MARKET ECONOMY?

Leila Kaban



Konrad
Adenauer
Stiftung



AUBPOLICY
INSTITUTE

Published by the Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs,
American University of Beirut.

This report can be obtained from the Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and
International Affairs office at the American University of Beirut or can be downloaded
from the following website: www.aub.edu.lb/ifi

The views expressed in this document are solely those of the author, and do not
reflect the views of the Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International
Affairs or the American University of Beirut.

Beirut, January 2016 © All Rights Reserved

CONFERENCE REPORT

**URBAN
INEQUALITIES
AND POVERTY IN
LEBANON
WHAT CAN BE LEARNED
FROM THE SOCIAL MARKET
ECONOMY?**

Leila Kaban

*Program Coordinator, Social Justice and Development Policy in the Arab World Program
Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs
American University of Beirut*

CONTENTS

06

ABSTRACT

08

THE URBAN POOR IN LEBANON: TRENDS, STUDIES, AND GEOGRAPHICAL DIVIDE

Studying rural and urban poverty in Lebanon: insights from the National Poverty Targeting Program 08

Mapping Beirut's neighborhoods: insecurities, evictions, and real estate development 09

Urban poverty in Tripoli: trends, findings, and a move towards an Urban Deprivation Index 10

11

URBAN REFUGEES: VULNERABILITIES, SHELTER, AND SOCIAL COHESION

Social cohesion between urban refugees and host communities: towards a humanitarian emergency response in urban settings 11

UN-HABITAT: planning for an inclusive urban response 11

Ordinary practices of the public spaces by the urban poor: Insights from the study of the settlements of refugees in Bourj Hammoud 12

14

CONCLUSION

ABSTRACT

The concept of poverty in Lebanon has been extensively studied from the angle of technicality and eradication policies. The spatial dimension of poverty has often been ignored or scattered over works in the disciplines of urban studies, anthropology, and sociology through isolated cases of the urban poor, their access to resources and services, and their informal coping mechanisms.

By the same token, Germany has managed to keep urban inequalities and poverty at bay since the end of the Second World War through adopting urban policies that rely on social justice concepts embedded in the Social Market Economy. In light of these concerns, the American University of Beirut's Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs, in collaboration with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation – Lebanon office, brought together experts on poverty in Lebanon and Germany from academia, the policy-making world, and non-governmental and international organizations. The one-day symposium provided an excellent platform for knowledge production on urban inequalities in Lebanese cities while learning about similar trends and policies adopted in Germany's Social Market Economy.

In his opening remarks, Dr. Tarek Mitri, Director of the Issam Fares Institute, emphasized the importance of such activities not only in generating knowledge on poverty but also on highlighting the importance of integrating the theme of poverty into public policy. He sees that the study of poverty, inequalities, and deprivation in Lebanon is usually reduced into measurements without creating proper linkages into broader aspects of social and public policy. Mrs. Hana Nasser, Administrative Director of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation – Lebanon office, added the aspect of geography in her remarks. She cited data from the UN-HABITAT that poverty in Lebanon is located in urban pockets surrounding major cities such as Beirut, Tripoli, and Saida which are also housing Palestine, and most recently, Syrian refugees. Nasser emphasized that challenges of access to basic services, adequate and affordable housing, and healthcare facilities continuously haunt the urban poor. Thus, she sees that learning and understanding the notion of Social Market Economy from Germany can be a model for keeping those inequalities at bay.



Courtesy of Marianne Madore

THE URBAN POOR IN LEBANON: TRENDS, STUDIES, AND GEOGRAPHICAL DIVIDE

The first comprehensive study of developmental issues in Lebanon was conducted by Institut de recherche et de formation en vue du développement harmonisé (IRFED) mission in 1960. Since then, there have been sporadic attempts to measure poverty, inequality, and living conditions in Lebanon that were interrupted by the fifteen-year civil war. *Mapping of Living Conditions* (1998) became the first post-war national study “which identified deprivation rates at the qada level, provided evidence of the geographic distribution and concentrations of poverty, and established that wide disparities exist between the peripheral and central regions of the country”¹.

In 2006, the *Comparative Mapping of Living Conditions between 1995 and 2004* was conducted using a Living Conditions Index (LCI), comprised of a Housing Index, Water and Sewage index, Education index, and an Income-related index. The LCI showed that 24.6% of households were deprived as of 2004. Isolating the income-related indicator showed that 51.6% of households were income-deprived.

Poverty, Growth and Income Distribution in Lebanon (2007) by the UNDP and the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) is the most recent poverty study on Lebanon. It generated a national poverty line based on household expenditures with the lower poverty line set at \$2.40/person/day and an upper poverty line at \$4.00/person/day. Using these poverty lines, 28.6% of Lebanese households were found to be poor and of these, 8% were considered extremely poor or below the lower poverty line.

The context in Lebanon has changed significantly since the Syrian crisis. Since 2011, the influx of refugees from Syria into Lebanon has gradually brought the issue of Lebanese poverty into sharp focus in public discourses resulting in some short-term poverty reduction measures by the government. According to the UNDP 2008 national poverty assessment², nearly 28% of the Lebanese population

(around one million individuals) was already living below \$4 per day. The UNOCHA and REACH³ review in 2014, suggests that an additional 170,000-200,000 people would be pushed below the poverty line as a result of the economic impact of the Syrian refugee influx into Lebanon.

Thus, in this conference, we approached the issue of urban poverty in Lebanon through understanding its dynamics from different angles starting with the wider scale of national figures on urban and rural poverty and then moving to site-specific research such as mapping housing vulnerabilities in Beirut and deprivation in Tripoli. We then explored the effect of the Syrian refugees crisis and the new humanitarian challenges posed by an influx of refugees into urban settings. All those challenges were then put through the Social Market Economy context and its ability to provide an innovate framework for bridging the societal gap.

Studying rural and urban poverty in Lebanon: insights from the National Poverty Targeting Program

In 2011, and in accordance with the Paris III convention which emphasized the need for developing social protection policies in Lebanon, MoSA launched the National Poverty Targeting Program (NPTP). The program provides targeted, in-kind support for poor households across Lebanon in forms of waivers to schooling fees, electricity bills, and in cases of extreme poverty, food vouchers. According to Bachir Osmat, advisor to the Minister of Social Affairs on the NPTP, around 86,000 households currently benefit from the program with around 5,000 households categorized as extremely poor benefiting from food vouchers.

However, applicants were not geographically categorized into urban or rural dwellers. For the aim of the conference, Osmat arbitrarily categorized applicants to see if any significant differences emerge. With these calculations, households that applied to the NPTP program were 64% from rural areas and 34% from urban areas. The differences between rural and urban applicants to the NPTP are shown in the table below.

1 UNDP, 2007, *Poverty, Growth and Inequality in Lebanon*, <http://www.undp.org/content/dam/lebanon/docs/Poverty/Publications/Poverty,%20Growth%20and%20Inequality%20in%20Lebanon.pdf>.

2 Laithy H., Abu-Ismaïl. K, and Hamdan K, 2008, *Poverty, Growth and Economic Distribution in Lebanon, Country study published by UNDP, International Poverty Centre No. 13*. <http://www.undp.org/content/dam/lebanon/docs/Poverty/Publications/Poverty,%20Growth%20and%20Income%20Distribution%20in%20Lebanon.pdf>

3 UNOCHA and REACH, 2014, *Informing Host Community Target Programming in Lebanon*: <https://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=7172>.

Table 1
NPTP Demographics

DEMOGRAPHIC	NPTP AVERAGE	URBAN	RURAL
Family Size	4.8	4.6	4.95
Health Insurance Coverage ⁴	12.2%	15.9%	10.3%
Unemployment ⁵	76.5%	76%	77%
Public School Enrolment	84%	74%	80%
Illiteracy	12.5%	11.5%	13.5%
Housing	Single Units	13%	50%
	Apartments	73%	36%

Source: NPTP Database, as presented by Bachir Osmat

The data shows that there are no significant differences between the urban and rural populations when viewed on such a macro level. Thus, Nadine Bekdache and Abir Saksouk-Sasso of Public Works Studio followed his presentation by highlighting the need to develop policies that look deeper into micro-levels of urban poverty.

Mapping Beirut's neighborhoods: insecurities, evictions, and real estate development

Bekdache and Saksouk-Sasso introduced their project "To map Beirut through the stories of its tenants"⁶. The project comes from the belief that the debate on housing policies in Lebanon has been limited to the small portion of liberalizing old rent laws. In the meantime, no light is being shed on real estate developments, new rent laws, and the role of the banking sector in facilitating housing loans. Their project aims to shift that debate and to understand housing policies in Lebanon from a social and historical narrative. For instance, Saksouk-Sasso stated that 80% of Lebanese households do not have the income necessary to qualify for a housing loan.

80% of Lebanese households do not have the income necessary to qualify for a housing loan

The project started with mapping the *Khandak Al-Ghameeq*⁷ neighborhood that faces pressures from real estate developers due to its proximity to downtown Beirut.

Then, mapping evictions and the stories of tenants were documented in the neighborhoods of *Tariq Al Jdeideh*, *Badawi*, *Mousaitbeh*, *Roum*, and *Cheyah*.

The methodology starts with drawing borders of neighborhoods under study, and then zooming in, to map the different forms of housing. Neighborhoods were mapped according to the nature of housing in each building: those that house tenants and landlords, those housing tenants on old rent-controlled contracts, and those housing tenants on new liberalized rent contracts. The mapping shows that rent is still the most available means for housing in Beirut. The mappings also show that in light of the absence of a comprehensive housing policy, alternative access to affordable housing mechanisms are common. For example, in the predominantly Armenian *Badawi* neighborhood in Beirut, religious and community organizations provide affordable housing schemes for families in need. Temporary housing (for one or two years) is also provided by the same organizations in order to preserve the social fabric of the Armenian community. Another alternative is real estate whose owners have passed away. However, all those options remain highly unstable and threaten the livelihoods of the tenants.



The mapping exercise also shows a large number of tenants evicted from their households because of real estate development pressures or, in the case of some neighborhoods, gentrification. For instance, Bekdache notes that in the neighborhood of *Mar Mkhayel* households are being transformed into kitchens or storing spaces for the booming nightlife and restaurant industry on Armenia Street. The exercise works on documenting the eviction processes that

4 The overwhelming majority insured by the National Social Security Fund.

5 Urban Employment Trends: 30% full-time, 18% seasonal, 52% part-time.

Rural Employment Trends: 18% full-time, 25% seasonal, 57% part-time.

6. More on the project can be viewed here: <http://publicworksstudio.com/>

7. Full report, in Arabic, can be viewed here: <http://publicworksstudio.com/files/Bachoura.pdf>

target mostly senior citizens in order to understand how evictions alter the neighborhoods' social fabric and livability. Bekdache and Saksouk-Sasso believe policies that understand the social fabric elements are the most appropriate to promote a dynamic of housing that reflects the needs of urban residents. Bekdache and Saksouk-Sasso highlight the importance of knowledge production and surveying in developing solid public policies that ensure that vulnerable groups - who currently only have informal alternatives access to housing - stay inside the city.

Urban poverty in Tripoli: trends, findings, and a move towards an Urban Deprivation Index

Mr. Adib Nehmeh, Regional Advisor at the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA) and expert on poverty and social development, presented his research on urban poverty in Tripoli⁸, which is based on his study *Urban Poverty in Tripoli* published by UN-ESCWA and the Arab Urban Development Institute. Below we present some of the most striking socio-economic findings that Nehmeh highlighted that offer significant deviations when compared to the national averages. All the data and findings can be found in the study referenced below.

Table 2

Social Demographics in Tripoli Compared to National Averages

INDICATOR	TRIPOLI	NATIONAL AVERAGE
Illiteracy	11%	7%
School Enrolment	Public	30%
	Private	70%
Health Insurance Coverage	27%	52%

Source: Nehmeh, Adib. *Al-Fiqr fī Madīnat Tarāblus, al-Kitāb al-Awal. Lebanon: ESCWA, 2010.*

Urban Deprivation Index

The rationale of the study came from Nehmeh's belief in the dire need to develop an Urban Deprivation Index (UDI) that takes into account more than mere money-metric measures. Thus, the index developed takes into account the needs, resources, capabilities, rights, and choices of households.

This index is based on four dimensions: education, health, housing, and economic status of the household. Each dimension is assigned three indicators, resulting in a total of twelve indicators. For instance, for the health dimension there is access to preventive care, health insurance, and treatments. Participants are asked to rate whether they see their households as deprived or not on each of these twelve indicators. Households are

⁸ Nehmeh, Adib. *Al-Fiqr fī Madīnat Tarāblus, al-Kitāb al-Awal. Lebanon: ESCWA, 2010.* <http://css.escwa.org.lb/ECRI/Docs/UNTripolibook1.pdf>.

categorized as deprived if the respondent sees him/herself deprived in more than six categories. If more than eight, the household is considered extremely deprived. Overall, the study concludes that 57% of Tripoli's families are deprived, and of these, 26% are considered extremely deprived. Nehmeh sees that Tripoli is a poor city with pockets of wealth.

It's all about empowerment

The results coming out of Tripoli show that the major form of poverty is income poverty. Around 76% of households' income falls below 750,000 LL while only 5% of households have an income above 4,000,000 LL⁹. In fact, Nehmeh sees that the essence of poverty does not lie in basic services provision but rather within the dimensions of empowerment. Citing the dimension of education, Nehmeh stressed that figures of enrolment are not the problematic factor but rather the fact that 76% of those surveyed do not have a secondary degree (Baccalaureate degree). For Nehmeh, the importance of this methodology is that it shows where the problem lies rather than giving obscure numbers that quantify poverty. Nehmeh emphasizes that the design of this index is comprehensive, yet intentionally simple to facilitate its use by local municipalities and policy-makers to design effective programs and policies.

The importance of this work, similar to Bekdache and Saksouk-Sasso, is that it mapped deprivation through breaking down Tripoli's neighborhoods. For Nehmeh, those studies show the potential and need for real development work that can open up new avenues for economic growth outside the capital.

WHAT IS SOCIAL MARKET ECONOMY?

The Social Market Economy emerged from Germany as a middle ground between socialist and capitalist economies. It recognizes the importance of the free market while also seeing the need for state regulation to maintain social justice and protect against market failures. Matthias Schäfer, Head of the Economic Policy team at the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Germany, explains that the Social Market Economy is thus a third way between the two mainstream models of economic orders.

Thus, the state's role is viewed as an empowerment/enabler role that offers its citizens the needed set of preconditions such as healthcare, public education, and infrastructure. As such, vulnerable groups of the society are helped in a manner that is directly related to enhancing their skill sets and capacities so that they can be better integrated in the market. It is a system that does not promote dependency, yet is aware of social inequalities. The Social Market Economy addresses poverty through this lens of levelling the playing field for the rich and the poor.

⁹ *The minimum wage in Lebanon is 675,000LL (2015). Those are the thresholds used in the study's methodology. They were chosen because the researchers calculated the two necessary boundaries that provide an adequate income for households.*

URBAN REFUGEES: VULNERABILITIES, SHELTER, AND SOCIAL COHESION

Lebanon is home to over one million registered refugees with the UNHCR. Currently, Lebanon has the highest nationals to refugees' ratio in the world standing at one refugee per four citizens¹⁰. However, the demographic and geographic nature of this crisis poses novel challenges to authorities, humanitarian organizations, and the host communities. The majority of the refugees in Lebanon reside in non-camp and urban settings, challenging the traditional cases of refugee crises that are confined within clear-cut boundaries of camps in remote areas. For this reason, we see that a discussion on urban poverty in Lebanon cannot be undertaken without looking at the challenges and vulnerabilities of urban refugees in the light of shelter, social cohesion, and innovations.

Social cohesion between urban refugees and host communities: towards a humanitarian emergency response in urban settings

Aline Rahbany, Urban Programming Advisor at the Centre of Expertise for Urban Programming at World Vision International, highlighted the importance of understanding social cohesion between refugees and host communities in urban settings to mitigate rising social tensions. Those tensions pose serious threats, Rahbany explained, as they can generate secondary conflict in host countries in terms of petty theft, poverty, and radicalization of refugees. By the same token, refugees become victims of scapegoating, intimidation, and discrimination. For instance, Rahbany highlighted that research shows that “isolation becomes an unfortunate coping mechanism for displaced populations, keeping women at home and children out of school”.

In light of these new challenges, World Vision International launched the Social Cohesion research initiative to develop new, pioneering guidelines to humanitarian interventions¹¹.

¹⁰ UNHCR, *Syria Regional Refugee Response, Inter-agency Information Sharing Portal*, <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=122>.

¹¹ The Social Cohesion research initiative was established through WVI's Disaster Management 2020 (DM2020) strategic change program and in collaboration with the Middle East and Eastern Europe Regional Office, with a focus on urban refugee communities in Lebanon and Jordan that are recipients of Syrian refugees. The literature review was led by independent consultant Joseph Guay and the initiative managed by Aline Rahbany and Maya Assaf (Conflict advisor in DM2020).

- ▶ **Pre-existing structural causes** that predate the Syrian crisis and are inherent to the Lebanese system such as existing pressures on basic services delivery, high levels of poverty, and resource scarcity.
- ▶ **Socio-economic aspects** that include cultural, geographic, and religious differences between refugees and host communities.
- ▶ **Proximate causes** that are a result of a sense of competition between refugees and host communities on livelihood concerns such as competition over jobs, services, and affordable housing which can be exacerbated by a service provision perception of fairness, equity, and corruption linked to access to humanitarian aid.

Rahbany adds that all those tensions cannot be assessed without understanding the role of the social, local, and international media in framing and exacerbating these tensions.

Despite the work conducted by World Vision International, Rahbany urges for more research to understand social cohesion as gaps in the literature and operationalization of the term are really wide. This research is essential for developing, testing, and building better tools and frameworks for humanitarian actors engaging with social cohesion in urban, protracted conflict settings such as Lebanon. Moreover, the necessity of mainstreaming social cohesion in humanitarian response strategies and operational plans cannot be overlooked.

Rahbany emphasized that for humanitarian work to be effective, local actors and expertise must be heard and empowered for their knowledge of the ins and outs is essential in service delivery. Moreover, working closely with municipalities and local authorities in Lebanon is key to avoid the creation of parallel structures that not only hinder the work but also cause frictions in perceptions of equitable access.

UN-HABITAT: planning for an inclusive urban response

In light of the need to develop new tools in the humanitarian response, Synne Bergby, Program Planning Advisor at UN-HABITAT, presented UN-HABITAT's work towards that effort. She sees that there is an inherent problem in measurements of

areas marked as highly vulnerable as the vulnerability is measured as a mere ratio of Lebanese to Syrian populations. For example, a town in the Beka'a valley with 5,000 refugees compared to 2,000 Lebanese is marked as highly vulnerable. However, that does not reflect the same reality to an urban setting such as Tripoli, which hosts 70,000 Syrian refugees. Those measurements do not accurately relay the existing reality of vulnerabilities and pressures.

Why cities?

There are new restrictions imposed on Syrian refugees in 2015 which include restrictions on their right to work, visa renewals, and curfew enforcements in some towns. Bergby explains that this increases refugees' desire to reside in bigger, urban areas where the likelihood of integrating in the informal economy is higher and safer. This is a global trend that is not unique to Lebanon. However, the uniqueness of Lebanon is that it is highly centralized, and two out of the three major economic sectors (construction, services) are concentrated in the cities.

The vast majority of Syrian refugees live in apartments while only 18% live in informal tented settlements

Detailed information on refugees living in tented settlements is aggregated, accurate, and continuously updated. However, the challenge lies in aggregating data of the remaining overwhelming majority of refugees who are continuously on the move in fluid, urban environments. Given that Lebanon is 87% urbanized, the probability of refugees living in urban environments is quite high. Thus, UN-HABITAT embarked on a mission of mapping refugees and host communities outside tented settlements. The results showed that 30% of refugees live in Lebanon's four largest cities; Beirut, Saida, Sour and Tripoli, which are the four cities that led to the development of UN-HABITAT's Four Cities Program. Moreover, the shelter survey showed that the vast majority of Syrian refugees live in apartments while only 18% live in informal tented settlements. This is a vital point to understanding how much this crisis is different than previous humanitarian crises.

City Profile

In light of all these challenges, UN-HABITAT developed the *City Profile* tool that aims "to analyze the impact of the crisis on urban setting and for long-term evidence and community-based cross-sectorial city planning". The first *City Profile* was the *Tripoli Rapid City Profile*

which will be published soon and takes into account previously published reports on the city, including the one conducted by Adib Nehmeh.

The tool first works on mapping out the data, which is a key contribution to understand the risks, vulnerabilities, and the population. From the *Tripoli Rapid City Profile*, there are 70,000 Syrian refugees in addition to 35,000 Palestine refugees. From this data, researchers can assess which neighborhoods need further mapping into a neighborhood profile. Neighborhood profiling digs deeper into the inequalities, such as access to shelter and basic services. The neighborhoods of Tripoli undergoing this profiling are *Bab el Tebbeneh* and *Jabal Mohsen* due to existing security tensions, but also because of availability of data.

The *City Profile* tool also captures another aspect to understand how an urban refugee crisis is unique; for instance, it takes into account perceived boundaries because formal maps do not reflect the reality on the ground since no clear-cut spatial divide between refugees and host communities exists as refugees moved into the existing urban structures. Bergby emphasized how the classic existing humanitarian response tools do not fit to an urban humanitarian response where the social fabric between neighborhoods and communities is another key missing dimension.

The last tool, further developed from the 2006 Lebanon War response, is the Regional Technical Offices (RTOs) installed in key urban municipalities. It is a very practical way to respond to emerging pressures on municipalities by enhancing their abilities. It is a unit composed of engineers, mappers, architects and surveyors, who will map out all the strain on the services in impoverished, refugee-dense areas and prepare the needed technical documents that work as a coordination mechanism. There are more than 1,000 municipalities in Lebanon; however, there are only 53 municipality unions, and thus the RTOs can strengthen the work of those unions. Bergby sees that this tool is vital not only for humanitarian workers but also for the empowerment of local municipalities.

Ordinary practices of the public spaces by the urban poor: Insights from the study of the settlements of refugees in Bourj Hammoud

Ms. Marianne Madore, a researcher at Sciences-Po Paris and at the American University of Beirut, looks at the presence of refugees in urban settings from a different angle as she is interested in explaining the relative peacefulness in areas of Beirut, despite the substantial influx of refugees. She examines the different mechanisms that allowed for the absorption

of thousands of newcomers without massive unrest. Madore conducted thorough ethnographic research and interviews with long-term residents of *Bourj Hammoud*, such as refugees, local NGO workers, policemen and municipality officials. Madore's field work was in *Bourj Hammoud*, an eastern suburb of Beirut, which has 20,000 refugees and is also home to a significant portion of the Armenian community in Lebanon.

Despite this rapid demographic change, Madore argues that we can understand the social peace by observing everyday activities/interactions in public spaces, and specifically the mechanisms of control by the receiving communities, but also the mechanisms of learning and gradual appropriations developed by refugees.

Controlling and policing

In July 2014, the municipality of *Bourj Hammoud*, among many others across Lebanon, imposed a curfew on refugees from 7:00 PM to 7:00 AM, which was announced through large billboards on the streets, making the presence of refugees in public spaces illegal. However, when asked if they are living under a curfew, Madore received conflicting responses from refugees ranging from 'yes', 'no', to 'sometimes'. This inconsistency shows how policing happens within the realm of blurred lines in a limbo of official and the unofficial. The policing of those spaces is thus not made through clear-cut lines and is not targeted towards all refugees and follows a flexible pattern. This pattern helps us understand the mechanisms of policing and controlling from the perspective of adaptations to changes. For instance, public spaces became more regulated after the arrival of Syrian refugees, through large billboards that passively limit the uses of those spaces through rules of behavior (no picnics, smoking, playing football, etc.).



Courtesy of Marianne Madore

Figure 2
Households in Bourj Hammoud

Social learning

Madore also argues that newcomers gradually learn about the new environment through "the practice of public spaces". During her interviews, she saw a trend where refugees arrived with preconceived ideas about Beirut, mostly acquired from pop culture references. In many instances, refugees mentioned their shock at women's presence in public life or the normalcy of people drinking alcohol in the streets. This must not be overlooked; refugees discover new realities through the practice of public space through what some sociologists call "folk ethnography". Social peace can be explained from that vernacular of small, repeated, and up-close social activities such as going to the souk. This creates a smoother cohabitation where different factions of the society both learn from, and about each other.

Recovering normalcy

The last aspect that explains social peace is the ability of refugees who went through traumatic experiences to recover a sense of normalcy. Madore's field work exposed the daily to ordinary moments of refugees; parents waiting for their children outside a school, men drinking coffee on the street, and teenagers on the bus. She argues that, gradually, refugee lives become a succession of ordinary moments, where refugees learn the intrinsic locality of their existence within that neighborhood based on learned landmarks. This process of becoming locals allows refugees to no longer be defined through their traumatic experiences, and allows them to build new narratives to their lives.

Anonymity

Anonymity is the last point Madore highlights as a precious asset for urban refugees. In the buses of *Bourj Hammoud*, there is a certain degree of anonymity where you can easily hide in the crowds between the groups of Ethiopian women and Sudanese teenagers; a space where Syrian refugees become unnoticeable. They are protected under the "film of anonymity" which allows the coexistence of thousands of inhabitants to engage "freely" in everyday city life. Through her research, Madore explains that those aspects of policing, social learning, recovering normalcy and anonymity should not be overlooked and are key for understanding a not-so puzzling social peace.

**CONDITIONS FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE SOCIAL
MARKET ECONOMY: LEBANON AS A CASE STUDY**

The Social Market Economy (SME) is based on three pillars: rule of law, democracy, and market economic order. Thus, it is not only an economic system but also a social system that requires a strong subsidiary state. Dr. Ralph Wrobel, Professor of Economics, University of Applied Sciences WHZ, Zwickau, Germany, cited the work of North, Wallis, and Weingast (2009) in stating that those three pillars are the doorstep conditions for the Western version of the market economy. Wrobel then continued to assess the applicability of the three conditions in the Lebanese state:

1. Peace: defined as the consolidated political control of the military; using the 2015 Global Peace Index, Lebanon falls in rank number 145.
2. Rule of law: establishment of a functioning judicial system and successful anti-corruption measures. Using the Corruption Perception Index, Lebanon ranked 137 out of 175 countries.
3. Democracy and Civil Society: defined as continuously lived forms of public and private organizations using the democracy ranking score, Lebanon ranks 88. However, when compared to neighboring countries, it is an outlier which Wrobel cites as a potential for a starting point.

IMPLEMENTATION PROBLEMS:

- ▶ Cultural contradictions when there is a mishap between formal institutions and informal ones creating gaps that need to be revisited before a transition can be made.
- ▶ Resistance by the ruling elites, corrupt bureaucrats, and those that will lose out therefore want to protect extractive institutions that guarantee their privileges.

CONCLUSION

In his concluding remarks, Dr. Nasser Yassin, Director of Research at the Issam Fares Institute, saw that posing the question of the city in today's circumstances is very important. He sees that cities can be viewed as magnifiers for tensions and inequalities, but also places for opportunities for the urban poor to access better services, jobs, and education.

Trends show that urban spaces are net contributors to peace and better economies. Within that light, Yassin commends the new tools presented in the conference whether indices, mappings or other forms of visualizations as key to informing policy-makers, and to understand the reality of urban poverty in Lebanon. Moreover, the need to assess poverty from a comparative perspective is necessary in today's world. Thus, this seminar provided key insights from Germany's Social Market Economy that can be viewed as vital tools and techniques that can be adopted; worthy of mentioning is the redistributive taxes that ensure quality social services for citizens without jeopardizing the forces of the market. Yassin thanked all the participants for enriching the debate on urban poverty and argued that such platforms are vital for opening new channels for addressing social ailments.



PHOTOCOPIE
DISPENSAIRE
تصوير مستندات
مستودع صفة النجاشه

250197
٢٥٠١٩٧

Courtesy of Marianne Madore

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Social Justice and Development Policy in the Arab World Program

In collaboration with the Bobst Center for Peace and Justice at Princeton University, the Social Justice and Development Policy in the Arab World Program tries to further understand through research the many different meanings of the phrase "Social Justice" and its social and economic policy implications. The program looks at social justice in the realm of urbanism, labor unions, social policies, and protest movements. Each component has a dedicated project that aims at establishing a partnership, through research, between scholars, policy-makers, and activists in Lebanon (and beyond).

ABOUT AUB POLICY INSTITUTE

The AUB Policy Institute (Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs) is an independent, research-based, policy-oriented institute. Inaugurated in 2006, the Institute aims to harness, develop, and initiate policy-relevant research in the Arab region.

We are committed to expanding and deepening policy-relevant knowledge production in and about the Arab region; and to creating a space for the interdisciplinary exchange of ideas among researchers, civil society and policy-makers.

Main goals

- ▶ *Enhancing and broadening public policy-related debate and knowledge production in the Arab world and beyond*
- ▶ *Better understanding the Arab world within shifting international and global contexts*
- ▶ *Providing a space to enrich the quality of interaction among scholars, officials and civil society actors in and about the Arab world*
- ▶ *Disseminating knowledge that is accessible to policy-makers, media, research communities and the general public*

- 📍 *AUB Policy Institute (Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs)
American University of Beirut
Issam Fares Institute Building (Green Oval)*
- ✉ *PO Box 11-0236, Riad El Solh | Beirut, Lebanon*
- ☎ *961-1-350000 ext. 4150*
- 📠 *+961-1-737627*
- @ *ifi@aub.edu.lb*
- 🌐 *www.aub.edu.lb/ifi*
- 📘 *aub.ifi*
- 🐦 *@ifi_aub*



Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs

American University of Beirut
الجامعة الأمريكية في بيروت

معهد عصام فارس للسياسات
العامة والشؤون الدولية