

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

CHANGES IN THE LEBANESE AGRARIAN LABOR
REGIMES IN LEBANON AFTER THE SYRIAN CRISIS

by
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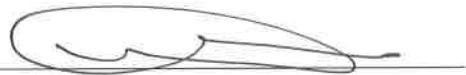
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AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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Population displacement in the Middle-East has constantly been a spark of heated debates on the refugees' rights and the burdens the hosting countries are enduring, especially after the Syrian Crisis which drove 5.5 million Syrians into displacement (UNHCR, 2020). Lebanon is the country hosting the highest number of refugees relative to its population size. Being a country that suffered from numerous civil wars and wars with Israel, Lebanon suffers from security, economic and infrastructural challenges that are constantly impeding its growth. From the governmental perspective, Syrians refugees who mainly work in construction and agriculture, are causing major labor competition and pressure on infrastructure. Nonetheless, what render this context peculiar is that Syrians have always occupied jobs in the informal economy in agriculture and construction in Lebanon. In fact, Lebanese agricultural labor comprises only 3% of total labor (ESCWA, 2013). Despite that, officials ignore this fact by claiming that the overwhelming trend in the labor market is "replacement" rather than "integration". Using qualitative methods, this thesis studied the impact of the increased inflow of Syrian agriculture workers on Lebanese large scale and family farmers by highlighting the different forms of adaptations and struggles of laborers and farmers in these different forms of agriculture where tobacco represents family farming and citrus represents capitalist farming.

In terms of the findings, the most substantial challenges the Lebanese farmer suffers from can be diagnosed on the level of production when it comes to input prices (for both tobacco and citrus), and on the level of marketing specifically for citrus. For both farming systems (capitalist and family), the resilience of the sector was proven by how each system coped with this influx: the allocation of the increased supply of labor was very fluid and adaptive to the innate traits of the present farming systems. This does not negate the different forms of exploitation that were encountered such as gender-based pay discrimination for Syrians and menial child labor for Lebanese tobacco farming families. But since the Lebanese agriculture sector has demonstrated its potential to act as an element of economic and social stability for host communities and refugees, adequate policies and extension services that enhance the competitiveness of the local produce, decrease production cost and end abuses are a must.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Migration is an ancient phenomenon yet there is a popular perception that it somehow causes a disruption in the balance of societies and economies especially for forced migration. Despite the plethora of reports written by different agencies tackling this issue, the academic literature on the labor market impacts of forced migration is small compared to the corresponding literature in the ‘voluntary’ migration context (Ruiz, 2015). Many studies have shown that migrants represent a pool of cheap and flexible labour that is rendered vulnerable by restrictive laws on transnational mobility. Agriculture is one of the economic sectors where the irregular work of migrants is widespread. The common practice of utilizing irregular migrants creates economic advantages for employers but it also distorts competition and denies migrant workers their social rights. In many cases, there are incidents of labour trafficking that raise questions about the respect of human rights in intensive agriculture areas.

In the context of the Middle East, The Arab Spring in 2011 resulted in food crises which led to the restructuring of agriculture, the marginalization and dispossession of rural populations due to neoliberal policies (Corrado et al., 2019). The lack of security drove many to leave their homelands and seek shelter in neighboring countries. Syria is the country which suffered the most and longest with 5.5 million Syrian refugees registered with UNHCR. In Lebanon, the number of UNHCR registered refugees reached 1.2 million in 2015, then slightly decreased to 914,648 Syrian refugees in 2020 (UNHCR, 2020). Lebanon, the smallest neighboring country to Syria, comes second after Turkey in terms of number of hosted Syrian refugees. This is partly because, up until 2015, the open-border policy with Syria allowed unrestricted access for

refugees. Furthermore, there are historical ties between the two countries where goods and services were exchanged for centuries prior to the crisis. Syrians have been working in Lebanon before the independence of the two countries: the Syrians' migration to Lebanon can be best described as cyclic depending on seasonality and harvest seasons both in Lebanon and Syria. Before the crisis, 80% of agricultural workers in Lebanon were Syrian, amounting to 200,000 workers (FAO, 2010). As of 2011, this cyclic migration has been replaced by forced migration. Today, 47% of working age refugees are economically active in Lebanon with the main source of income being agriculture, in addition to construction and services (ILO, 2015). Most Syrians are staying in informal settlements in the Bekaa due to its proximity to the borders and agricultural plains which many Syrians are familiar with. In other Lebanese regions, Syrians did not settle in informal settlements or camps; instead, they infiltrated into urban and rural communities while looking for jobs mainly in Akkar, North of Lebanon and South of Lebanon districts. In the south of Lebanon, which records the highest economic activity rate in general compared to other districts, 36% of Syrian refugees in Nabatieh and 32% of refugees in South-Lebanon governorates, work in agriculture (UNHCR VASyR Report, 2018).

Villages in the South of Lebanon have suffered on numerous occasions from displacement because of the Israeli occupation and several wars with Israel. But, despite the general common phenomena of rural exodus across the country and region, most residents always returned to their villages. In the south of Lebanon, inland tobacco farming is the epitome of small scale family farming where all the members of the family owning a tobacco license participate in the different stages of production typically with a minimal recruitment of outside labor. Lebanese tobacco farmers obtain their licenses and sell their tobacco to the state-owned tobacco monopoly: Régie Libanaise des Tabacs et Tombacs. Lebanon is one of the countries

where the government invests directly in the tobacco industry through state-owned companies, thus making profit directly from the industry over and above the taxes collected on consumption and production (Chaaban, 2014). In 2010, 11,094 farmers grew tobacco in Lebanon on an overall area of 8,328 ha, representing 3.43 percent of all agricultural land in the country. While this is a seemingly small percentage, Lebanon is among only five countries in the world that farm more than 1 percent of their agricultural land with tobacco (Hamade, 2014). On the other hand, coastal lands have been characterized with large ownerships and more capitalist forms of agriculture and production of citrus, and as of recent bananas with other tropical high value crops.

Lebanon is a country that was devastated by a civil war that started in 1975 and ended in 1990. In spite of efforts to revive the state's infrastructure and economy, Lebanon to date is still facing serious economic, socio-political, and security challenges. The influx of Syrian refugees complicated the situation and overall, the narrative was always about the burden caused by the refugees in Lebanon. From the governmental perspective, Syrians who mainly work in construction and agriculture, are causing major labor competition and pressure on infrastructure. The alleged increase in consumer demand is seen as negligible compared to the massive damage to income distribution, as the overwhelming trend in the labor market has been labeled as "replacement" rather than "integration" in the production cycle.

1.2. Aim Of The Study

According to Garner et al., formulating a uniform definition of family farming is difficult because the term is not applicable to all contexts. The notion of family farming seems to go beyond farming capacity, size and orientation. The term is sometimes also used to capture ecological, social, cultural and environmental objectives and therefore has close ties to the local

culture and the rural community. Instead, they propose a concept of the term that highlights the most defining characteristic of family farms: Family Farming is a means of organizing agricultural, forestry, fisheries, pastoral and aquaculture production which is managed and operated by a family and predominantly reliant on family labour, both women's and men's (Garner et al., 2015). The family and the farm are linked, coevolve and combine economic, environmental, reproductive, social and cultural functions (FAO, 2013). In Lebanon and especially in the South, tobacco cultivation has been considered a family farming activity for years, ever since reforms have allowed small farmers to apply for licenses. On the other hand, capitalist farming pertains to large scale activities mainly dependent on hired labour and technology, which theoretically enhances farming's profitability. This was the case for citrus orchards in the South that were owned by the elite landlords recruiting peasants from different villages, Palestinians after their exodus, and Syrians after the crisis in Syria in 2011. Citrus farming was highly profitable when Lebanon was exporting to the neighboring countries and to the Gulf but today, we can say that citrus is a capitalist agriculture only when it comes to the size of the cultivated land and its reliance on waged labor and not regarding profitability. Today, numerous production-related, marketing and regulatory factors, have made the citrus value chain an aging and relatively weakly competitive subsector of Lebanese agriculture (Hamade, 2017).

Different roads to waged labor lead to stages of capital development which can either yield economic development or economic underdevelopment and peripheralization which most likely occurs in rural areas with peasants (Arrighi, 1987). How is capitalist and family farming changing in Lebanon? What are the patterns of social conflict and cohesion? What are the different social structures created by a mass migratory flow?

For Syrian migrants, family bonds are of great importance: parents and wives are left home but are sought to please and impress with success and money which was the case before the crisis and displacement of the families (Arrighi, 1987; Chalcraft, 2009). Therefore, for Syrians, the drives of labor have changed from improving livelihoods in Syria prior to the crisis to surviving in Lebanon today.

The many works that look at agri-food immigration, gender, race, and labor flexibility focus predominantly on the personal experience of these members of the working class. Their biographies and personal experiences often constitute the core of the analysis. These ‘invisible’ workers, producers of the ‘food from nowhere’, are removed from the context of the system that generates their exploitation (Corrado et al., 2019). This thesis aims at studying the impact of the increased inflow of Syrian agriculture workers on Lebanese large scale and family farmers in addition to understanding the impact of this increased supply of waged labor on the Syrians themselves and on the Palestinian refugees who live in camps in the coastal cities of Saida and Sour by highlighting the different forms of adaptations and struggles of laborers and farmers in these different forms of agriculture.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. History

A reading of migration and agricultural change in the Mediterranean area should be placed in a broader historical frame that includes the socio-economic and political dynamics under which the conditions of mobility and the valorization of labour and capital are defined. (Corrado et. al, 2019). Voluntary labor migration in the Middle-East took its modern shape two to three generations before the independence of the countries making up Bilad-Al-Sham (or Greater Syria). Seasonal labor migration existed in the region both within the same country and across borders for planting and harvest seasons mostly. The “down time” left room for other activities or travels such as grazing for the nomads that were a major labor reserve (Chalcraft, 2009).

Lebanon became a hub for a new pattern of “South-South” migration leading both the ministries of labor in Lebanon and Syria to sign a labor exchange agreement in 1948 followed by a decision by the Lebanese Ministry of Social Affairs two years later, exempting the ten thousand Syrian workers at the time from work permits mainly due to their seasonal presence. Over the years, as the inflow of Syrian workers started to increase reaching around half a million workers in 1970, the ministry of labor began to complain of “serious competition”. Many attempts to legalize and formalize the presence of Syrian workers in Lebanon failed. In 1977 The League of Syrian Workers was established but had no concrete accomplishments especially with the trigger of the civil war which led many Syrians to leave essentially due to the inflation. During the nineties, the end of the war unlocked employment doors for Syrian workers who consisted 20 to 40% of the total Lebanese workforce with remittances reaching 8% of the Syrian

GDP (Chalcraft, 2009). In 2005 the flow slightly decreased due to political tension between the two countries. Until recently, after the onset of the war in Syria, the Syrian migration flow became less and less cyclic in nature.

2.2. Labor Migration Models

Different authors defined different labor migration models across the region of the Mediterranean, and North-Africa. But the case of Syrians in Lebanon does not fully conform to the definitions set in these different contexts despite having some aspects in common. Syrian migration in Lebanon is a South-South migration (both countries belonging to the Global South), the concept of borders between the two nations was volatile before the war when Syrians' mobility was very high depending on seasons and availability of opportunities. Syrians mainly occupied jobs in agriculture and construction which resulted in a predominantly male migration. The most similar labor migration model would be the "South European" model of labour immigration describes by King which is based on a demand for cheap and flexible workers in the secondary and informal labour markets, where low wages are imposed on migrants because of their often illegal or semi-illegal status and the lack of opportunities in their home countries. The workers are highly concentrated in certain segments or niches of the labour market, some of which are monopolized by migrants of one specific nationality and gender (King, 2000). In the context of Southern Europe, agriculture served as a gateway to work for the recently arrived immigrants, not just because it was a sector with an intense need for manual work, but also because it was possible to work without the necessary permits, which is why for most unskilled migrants, agriculture is the main area of employment (King, 2000).

For the neighboring Mediterranean countries of Southern Europe, King categorizes the widely variable forms of migration according to their typology (lifetime, temporary, seasonal, international, internal, etc.), their geographical destination (Mediterranean, European, overseas, etc.), and to their link to a particular regime or epoch in the development of the global economy (mercantilism, colonialism, Fordism, etc.) (King, 2000). If we use this categorization in our context, firstly, the typology of the voluntary Syrian migration to Lebanon before the war was both seasonal and temporary: most of the Syrian workers' families stayed in Syria living off the remittances sent to them. Moreover, Syrians hoped to save money and return back home and open their own business. Secondly, when it comes to the geographical destination, Lebanon is usually the final destination and isn't considered as a stepping stone to other countries. Thirdly, this migration dates back to pre-colonial times and subsisted throughout the French mandate in Lebanon and Syria and after the independence of the two countries who formed different political and economic regimes where Syria has had Baathist socialist regime since the 1963 Baathist Coup, whereas Lebanon has been a parliamentary democracy with an economy following a *laissez-faire* model.

Many scholars confirmed that the circular short-term migration is a common pattern to the South-South migration processes. In fact, "Middle Eastern peasants' movements lacked well-formulated ideas for social change" (Beinin, 2001). The geopolitics of the region played an important role in the unique relationship between the people of Lebanon and Syria and thus, in this context, "Migration did not stem from world economic growth but was a trait in the region due to complex socio-economic dynamics" (Chalcraft, 2009). This is inconsistent with the conventional economic models of migration depicting a flow from labor abundant capital poor to labor scarce capital rich regions in accordance to demand and supply.

According to Chalcraft who studied in his book “The Invisible Cage” the Syrian and Lebanese labor relations, the Syrian-Lebanese migratory process is formed by circulatory migrant labor shaped by temporary and repetitive movement of migrant workers between home and host areas for employment. “Workers are at home in both societies where neoliberal policies offer less social benefits for migrants and reinforce pressure on them to return” (Chalcraft, 2009). History demonstrated that Syrians have always been fundamental as casual labor in Lebanon where they have always been recruited informally mainly in construction and agriculture. It is undeniable that their numbers reached a higher peak with the spark of the crisis and their residence shifted to become semi-permanent in the hosting country. This major alteration in the labor flows certainly causes changes in the economies refugees take part of. “Different social structures are created by mass migratory flows” (Offe, 1995).

“Economic theory suggests that population displacements affect both labor market competition and product demand. The magnitude of these impacts depends on the substitutability of new labor for existing workers on one hand as well as on the products that they choose to consume” (Garciaa et al. 2015). In the Lebanese-Syrian context, the nature of labor exchange before the crisis between the two countries adds a different element to the analysis. Therefore, the aim should be to understand to what extent do the previous labor relations between the two countries affect the situation today.

The contextualized effects of refugee presence are elucidated by Hagstrom where he stresses that the impact of refugees on the local economy depends greatly on how they fit into the local labor markets (Hagstrom, 2000). Due to the cyclic movement of casual Syrian labor to Lebanon prior to the Syrian war in 2011, and due to the fact that the Syrians used to occupy jobs unsought by the Lebanese people, it is expected that the presence of a competition between the

labor forces would not cause a massive threat to the Lebanese citizen for the low-skilled jobs mainly in agriculture and construction. In addition, informality was one of the main features of the ‘South European model of migration’ (King *et al.*, 2000).

Regarding the economic category of migrants, the literature divides them into two groups: those who seek migration in the search for better economic conditions and those who we might term “economic refugees,” driven to migrate from their communities and way of life by extreme poverty, conditions such as deprivation, social exclusion and lack of economic opportunity (Corrado *et al.*, 2019). Before becoming refugees in Lebanon, Syrian workers were considered “economic refugees” according to this categorization: they were desperate for jobs and sought jobs unwanted by the Lebanese.

It is clear that notions of competition between Lebanese and Syrian agricultural labor are unlikely. In fact, Lebanese agricultural labor comprises only 3% of total labor according to the ESCWA report (2013). Hence, understanding the different forms of labor agreements and how they changed is a must from the economic perspective in addition to investigating any form of exploitation from the ethical perspective. From the Lebanese officials’ perspective, any apparent positive outcomes of the presence of Syrians are reckoned as secondary effects. Although the reduction of the supply of Syrian products to the Lebanese market led to increased demand for local produce. This was triggered by the need to cater for the new demand created by the continuous influx of refugees which was sustained thanks to the World Food Program cash for food program, which is estimated to have injected up to half a billion US dollars into the Lebanese economy (Hamade, 2016).

Agriculture in Lebanon has demonstrated adaptive capacities that were highlighted by its ability to respond quickly to short term changes which simultaneously allows arranging for long

term adjustments. Rural areas have been resilient to the Syrian Crisis owing to the agricultural and agro-industrial sectors that have not only contributed to securing a large number of refugee livelihoods, but also sustained the incomes of host communities. The higher local demand for food products has been a key in alleviating the negative impact of the closure of export paths passing through Syria by the increased investments in agricultural and agro-industrial production. In addition to the expansion of the Lebanese market of agricultural produces, another consequence of the influx of refugees is the provision a high supply of low wage agricultural labor, which in turn has lowered cost of production and thus encouraged investment (Hamade, 2016).

Despite the overwhelming negative narrative that is overseeing the situation from a bird's eye view, we hold a different outlook based on rooted facts. Macro-figures are not sufficient in measuring the social and economic well-being: in fact, macro-level indexes only count goods that pass through official, organized markets, missing all the unofficial exchanges in services and casual labor activity. This is why we chose to inspect this case from a different more grounded approach that interviews the individuals of concern and measures their wellbeing.

Context matters greatly in assessing the organic adaptation processes that occur after large population displacements which can only be truly captured with "bottom-up" approaches in research, especially for informal economic activities. Finally, any qualitative data and observation of the concerned population is significant and supportive to the macro-figures reported by officials. In order to understand the linkages between restructured agricultural production, labour mobility and the construction of a vulnerable labour force, in addition to the processes of incorporation and expulsion of migrant workers in Lebanon, it is important to

outline the social, political and economic contexts in which workers were mobilized (Corrado et al., 2019).

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Study Design

Qualitative work highly relies on Ethnographic tools which are according to Bush geographically generalizable where fieldwork should challenge powers and inequalities while focusing on the negative impacts of economic reforms in rural zones characterized by conflict and war. Fieldwork requires time, space, opportunity, and invention to build trust and direct engagement with farmers (Bush, 2018). Gender is another aspect that was taken into account while interviewing some women who seemed uncomfortable, in this case it was necessary to indirectly arrange for some privacy to ensure utter comfort for these ladies. In his piece on women in rural Australia, Pini focuses on the importance of customizing and tailoring the research technique in order to serve sensitive topics such as the cases where women were not open to discussion due to the presence of some relatives in the group (Pini, 2002).

The formulation of the semi-structured interview guide and the course of the fieldwork relied on different qualitative research concepts and tools in rural settings. In addition to taping the interviews, which some participants asked not to do, the main reliance was on the field notes which were divided into two virtual columns: the participant's answer to the question or topic presented and the personal observations regarding body language, peculiar observations, concrete visual details and possible probing questions. While dealing with farmers from different nationalities and backgrounds, the most challenging to interview were the Syrians, they were scared at first and most of them refused to be recorded. On the other hand, Lebanese farmers felt more comfortable during discussions especially after small ice breaking chats. Palestinians exhibited a sort of numbness and hopeless attitudes while discussing their lives, they were

neither scared nor enthusiastic. Since they feel like no matter what they do, they will always be stuck in this cycle with no hope for better opportunities. Interviewing an old Palestinian citrus worker who told all about his childhood memories back in Yafa while helping his father in their own orchard resonated with Pirinoli's piece, where the author explains the important concept of the Palestinian "collective memory" which is a dynamic construction continuously actualized by the actual context and not by a constructed one. It permits the construction of the sense of the past from elements judged pertinent in the present (Pirinoli, 2005).

3.2. Field Work

In terms of the fieldwork conducted, numerous qualitative methods were employed throughout the interviews. Firstly, the semi-structured interview guides were developed after secondary data analysis from the literature on the topic and the recent regional reports on agriculture and the Syrian crisis. A few preliminary interviews were conducted which helped better formulate the questions, ensured a coherent flow for participants and allowed the addition of certain questions after some of the first participants presented additional valuable insights. Some of these preliminary interviews were conducted with personal acquaintances, which allowed practicing the interview guide and the mandatory oral consent form required by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the American University of Beirut, which can seem intimidating to some participants because it creates a formal ambiance. For example, starting with the general questions was a great ice-breaker which allowed participants to feel free to express their knowledge and expertise instead of starting with the socio-demographic questions which can be uncomfortable for some to answer before discussing anything else avoiding creating an "Insider-Outsider" relationship with the participants.

The bulk of the data was collected in spring and summer months of 2019 with some interviews with key informants that took place in 2018 which helped better formulate the research questions and interview guides for both labor and land tenants.

16 Tobacco farmers were interviewed representing family farming in South of Lebanon's following villages: Adchit, Aytaroun, Bint Jbeil, Blida, Breykeh, Qaqahiet El Jisr, and Tebnine. The interview selection process was mediated through key informants in the Régie for tobacco, wholesale vegetable distributors for citrus and bananas and personal references for both agricultures.

16 land tenants were interviewed to get the quantitative data from the capitalist agricultures represented by citrus, banana and other tropical crops. In addition to 16 laborers working in these orchards in the coastal villages of: Damour, Zahrani, Adloun, Sarafand, Saida, Qaqahiet El Jesr, Sour and Naqoura. The two semi-structured interview guides used for the land owner/tenant and for the labor are attached in the annex.

CHAPTER 4

CONTEXT

4.1. Agriculture in The South

In the south, cultivated land comprises one fifth of the total cultivated lands in Lebanon. Different topographies led to the diversification of crops in this region where more capitalist agricultures spread on the coast whereas traditional and smaller scale plantations are common inland. This region lost around half of its agricultural labor between 1950 and 1986 to the increased rural migration caused mainly by war and the decreased reliance on rain-fed agriculture. To be able to adopt advanced agricultures, land ownership should consist of at least 10 dunum/capita whereas the South recorded 0.38 dunum/capita of rain-fed agriculture and 0.17 dunum/capita of irrigated lands, which explains why new technologies were not incorporated (Zeineddine, 1994).

4.2. Tobacco

Tobacco was first introduced to Lebanon in the 17th century by princes and “*zaims*” for personal consumption which later evolved to become a source of income and was illegal for a while since notables found smuggling more profitable. Under the ottoman rule, the “Régie” was created and legally became a monopoly that owned exclusive rights to the procurement, manufacturing and marketing of tobacco goods. In 1960, the Régie became a private corporation under governmental control issuing permits, equal to private property as they can be rented, inherited, sold or mortgaged. During this period of time, issuing permits was a political game and

the prices of permits increased as the need and demand augmented especially in the Nabatiyeh Qaza. Tobacco, known for its high requirement of time and labor is prominently a family oriented agriculture which involves women and children in all the tedious steps of production. The transfer of girls to neighboring villages lacking labor was very common. Children whose parents were indebted to landlords were considered as capital with no laws protecting them, this kept wages low for all tobacco workers.

After Lebanon gained independence in 1943, new governments continued the Ottoman and French policies of focusing resources on the development of Beirut and Mount Lebanon, giving little attention to outlying rural areas. “Following independence, the tobacco monopoly had opened its doors to new shareholders. Under the Chehabist reforms, the Régie Libanaise des Tabacs et Tombacs kept its monopoly status, which allowed it to control all aspects of tobacco leaf production, the trade in manufactured tobacco products and the distribution of tobacco products. However, the reforms fixed the level of profit by the company to four percent of the sector’s output. It also introduced price subsidies on tobacco leaf, taxes on tobacco consumption and custom duties for the import of tobacco leaf. These statutes were renewed every year until 1964, when the monopoly itself was renewed for another 10 years. This occurred after an agreement between the government and the Régie, in which the latter agreed to provide licenses to small-scale farmers and not just to landlords with large estates. These arrangements continued de facto throughout the Lebanese civil war that spanned 1975 to 1991 (Hamade, 2014).

When it comes to its cultivation, tobacco will grow in any warm and moist environment. However, several factors influence the characteristics of the final product, including climate and soil conditions, harvesting methods and curing procedures. Among these, the curing method generally defines each type of tobacco. The most widely used curing methods are flue-curing,

fire-curing, air-curing and sun-curing. After curing, which is the last stage in the production of tobacco, leaves are manufactured into the final tobacco product (Chaaban, 2014).

Tobacco production starts in January with the cultivation of seedlings, an operation performed in the house backyard or on one part of a field. The farmer prepares the soil and transplants seedlings in late March and early April in order to benefit from the late April rains. Afterwards crops are not irrigated, a stress that increases the nicotine and tar content of the harvested plant. Harvest occurs during summer over a period of about two months, from mid-June to mid-August, and usually requires 50 days of labor. Stringing, hanging and curing processes happen at home with household labor. Once the leaves are cured, they are packed and stored at home for collection by the Régie in October (Hamade, 2014).

4.3. Citrus

After the Palestinian Exodus of 1948 “Naqba”, citrus was increasingly spreading in the coastal regions of South Lebanon. Numerous varieties of citrus were produced and marketed locally and for export to neighboring countries and the GCC countries. Palestinian refugees have brought their skills and know-how at a time of increased demand for fruits and vegetables from the Arab gulf countries following the high investment in oil production in the 1950s.

The dispersion of harvesting time offers farmers an opportunity to diversify varieties and reduce risk by planting a diversity of citrus fruits such that they are able to spear revenue over the year.

Such practices would also allow them to be less dependent on a single yearly income, and therefore be better placed to bargain prices with middlemen and wholesalers (Hamade, 2017).

Today, 63% of total citrus orchards are located in South Lebanon’s coastal area (FAO, 2016).

Most large scale land properties in the south are citrus orchards where the most common form of

land tenure is sharecropping with Lebanese and Palestinian labor especially since the majority of land owners reside in the cities and may have other sources of income.

There are many summer and winter citrus varieties cultivated in this region: common orange (Shamouti, Valencia, and Khettmali), navel orange (Washington navel), blood orange (Moro), lemon (Meyer, Saasly, Interdonato, and Monachello), grapefruit (Pomello Ruby, Shambar, Red Blash and March Segueless) and clementine (Seedless Montreal and Clementino de Nules) (FAO, 2016).

The main challenges faced by the sector, as defined by the Lebanese ministry of agriculture's strategy (2015-2019), revolve around the need to increase the competitiveness of agricultural production by increasing its productivity while ensuring conformity with international sanitary and phytosanitary requirements, thus facilitating access to international markets (Hamade, 2017). Total citrus production varied significantly throughout the years, triggered by political upheavals on the local and the regional level. Citrus production started increasing in 2001, mainly after the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the South, and peaked in 2004, reaching 395,300 tons. This number decreased to 374,200 tons due to the July War of 2006, recuperated in the couple of years to follow, then plunged significantly in 2008, as a result of the replacement of citrus groves in the South with avocado and banana. Citrus production stood at 230,497 tons in 2013 (Mikhael, 2016).

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS: FAMILY VERSUS CAPITALIST FARMING

5.1 Tobacco General Insights

In family farming, represented here by tobacco, small farmers retain capital by avoiding the employment of non-family laborers (Corrado, 2019). Ray Bush describes the main factors affecting family farming in the MENA region firstly by the series of regional conflicts and wars in all the MENA countries and we can see how this changed the nature of the Syrian peasant' migration to Lebanon from cyclic to more or less permanent until further notice; the majority of participants in this study did not express interest of returning soon to Syria. The second major factor impacting family farming in MENA has been the 35-year period of economic reform and structural adjustment. And finally, water scarcity drives the response to climate change and the regional government's hydro-politics.

In the context of tobacco, based on the license a farmer owns, the Régie purchases 100 kilograms of premium quality tobacco per dunum (1000 m²) for 13 000 LBP per kilogram. Most interviewees reported that nowadays, with meticulous work, yields are as high as 250 kilograms per dunum. Some farmers plant in a smaller land than their license when they can achieve the desired yield. In South Lebanon, yields of tobacco per hectare are much higher than elsewhere in Lebanon (1.15 tons per ha compared to 0.51 in Beqaa and 0.88 in the North) (Hamade, 2014). The majority however, grow as much as they can and sell the excess non-processed tobacco to other farmers in need at a discounted price or to some license owners who do not cultivate tobacco but do not want their license revoked. "In order to keep their licenses active, license holders' annual production must not fall below 200 kg for more than two consecutive years" (Hamade, 2014) Prices of tobacco sold between farmers fluctuate depending

on the quality, the level of processing and the demand and supply for every season; they range from 8,000 LBP to 10,000 LBP per kilogram.

When it comes to the cultivation and processing of tobacco, mechanization is completely absent. Farmers still rely on manual labor and use the same tools the previous generations of tobacco farmers used mainly due to the increased costs. One participant from the village of Breykeh told the story of how she bought a machine from Turkey that automatically transplants and irrigate seedlings: unfortunately, it wouldn't work properly on soils that are not well leveled and contain a lot of rocks which is common for all lands in our context. Hence, production technology and forms of work organization in Southern Lebanon have remained virtually unchanged since the introduction of the tobacco leaf in the mid-1930s (Hamade, 2014).

When it comes to profit perception, many farmers perceive the profits they make as a mere compensation to all the efforts they put in as labor throughout all the phases of production. Especially if the profits are theoretically distributed to all the family members who participated. With high labor cost, farmers who make the most profit are the ones who rarely rely on external sources of labor. For many, tobacco farming had become less attractive due to the effects of inflation: the price paid to tobacco farmers and the amount of tobacco they could sell remained relatively unchanged between 1996 and 2012, even though inflation was high after 2006 (Hamade, 2014).

Families interviewed in the peripheral villages whose only source of income is tobacco, tend to be slightly more entrenched in the cycle of poverty. In fact, most children who belong to

these families can't keep up at school which is very probable for any average student with this kind of work load and a low school attendance.

Most farmers stressed on the countless demands of tobacco farming and affirmed that labor is the most expensive cost of this production; this is why family labor is a main characteristic of this agriculture. After analyzing the different costs these farmers have, labor was in fact the highest when compared to the other factors of production. (37% of total cost)

	Labor cost Ratio	Land rent ratio	Input cost ratio	Water cost ratio	Plough cost ratio
Tobacco	0.37	0.10	0.29	0.08	0.15
Citrus and banana ¹	0.61	N/A ²	0.19	0.19	0

Table 1. Average cost ratio for 16 tobacco farmers and 16 citrus and banana farmers taking into account that some costs were null by some farmers (for example farmers who do not hire any labor)

When it comes to the total cost of production, almost all interviewees (especially the ones who do not hire labor) have inflated perceptions regarding the general costs and underestimate the profitability of their work.

Most farmers either believe or hope they will be the last generation in their families to grow tobacco, they call it “bitter bread”, “Trading execution for a life sentence”. In general,

¹ Note that ratios for citrus and banana do not take into account land rent.

² Land rent for coastal agricultures differs greatly by season and from citrus to other crops, therefore farmers could not give exact figures for land rent.

many of the adult sons and daughters of tobacco farmers work in other fields and are educated although having helped with tobacco as children. When asked about the future of this agriculture, several farmers perceive it as the last resort to uneducated individuals who have no other choice to earn money.

Farmers with small families or children who do not participate are replacing tobacco with other less labor-intensive crops such as '*zaatar*'. A 65 year old woman in Qaqahiet and Jisr and another one from the village of Adchit said that she prefer planting oregano, sumac and sesame seeds. She then prepares the '*zaatar*' mix consisting of these three ingredients and sells the kilo for around 50,000 LBP. "Working with Zaatar is cleaner, easier and more profitable" according to both of them.

5.2. Tobacco Farmer Profiles and Arrangements

- *Full time tobacco farmers*

License owners who solely rely on tobacco, they tend to rely more on family labor during all the phases of production. The majority of farmers in Bent Jbeil's villages that are closer to the southern borders, tend to rely on this activity as a main source of income whereas the farmers in the Nabatiyeh Qaza tend to have other sources of income.

In the Bent Jbeil Qaza villages, child participation is a pillar in the production. Children go to school but prioritize their work with their parents in the most demanding times of the year which drives them to miss up to one month of school during spring. All the schools in the region are

aware of this trend and tend to adjust the load of their curriculum until attendance rates get back to normal.

- ***Part time tobacco farmers who have other sources of income***

In general, farmers perceive tobacco farming as an agriculture with a guaranteed revenue which is the main reason why they pursue it. Families who have other sources of income still grow tobacco thanks to extra cash flow that helps them drastically improve their families' livelihoods. It is interesting to note that all the farmers under this profile have sent their children to universities and many of them sent them abroad for higher education from the extra income provided by tobacco farming. Many of these farmers are from the Nabatiyeh Qaza, where child participation is essential but in most cases supplementary to the parents' who take the load and resort to hiring supplementary labor in the most demanding periods. In 2010, only 48.3 percent of license holders actually farmed the land themselves that year (Hamade, 2014). Although, the percentage of tobacco license owners who actually farm tobacco is the highest in the South (59%) compared to 32.4% and 38.1% in the Bekaa and the North respectively.

- ***Syrian labor and a minority of tobacco growers***

Despite their modest incorporation in tobacco farming, Syrian workers are slowly gaining more experience in the agriculture and processing of this crop.

In the past, Lebanese tobacco farming families used to “exchange favors” “*moujemalet*” during the most arduous periods of production which is no longer possible today. Nowadays,

farmers rarely have time to finish their own duties especially after the decreasing fertility rates and increased school enrollment rates. Any Lebanese who is experienced in tobacco will most probably be busy in his or her own land. Hence, Syrian workers, despite their lack of experience are being hired as supplementary labor to the most renowned form of family farming in Lebanon.

5.3. Perceptions, Changes in Recruitment and Coping Mechanisms in Tobacco

Lebanese tobacco farmers manifested negative attitudes towards a minority of Syrians who plant and sell tobacco to license owners at competitive prices in the village of Breykeh. They claim that they cannot sell their excess yield to license owners at desirable prices anymore. They're competing with the Lebanese who sell their excess produce since most of the full time farmers get a yield higher than 100 kilograms per dunum (1000 m²).

The closest the village to the southern borders, the more its tobacco farmers are committed to this crop. This comes in congruence with the role tobacco farming has played historically in the villages between the Litani river and the borders that were occupied by Israel. Since after 1993, The Régie was fully nationalized under the auspices of the Ministry of Finance and all previous licenses cancelled. New criteria gave all households permanently living in rural areas and farming on their own land or on leased land the right to obtain a tobacco license. This process of "democratization" of tobacco licenses was motivated by political aims related to the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon and postwar reconstruction. Where Access to a tobacco license provided households in South Lebanon with sources of cash and income that would allow them to remain in their villages without having to collaborate with the occupation (Hamade,

2014).

When it comes to other regions in Lebanon, the promotion of tobacco production in the Beqaa Governorate (Baalbek and Al-Hermel districts) provided a means to support an alternative to cannabis cultivation, which had become widespread during the civil war years. Making tobacco-farming licenses available in the North Governorate (especially the Akkar district) sought to support economic development within a predominantly Sunni Muslim area. This was a way to balance faster development in regions elsewhere with a predominantly Shiite Muslim population. Due to the dry climatic conditions in the region, only *tumbac* varieties of tobacco can be cultivated, which limits the commercial value of the crop. (Hamade,2014)

One of the most challenging characteristics of family farming in general and of tobacco in particular is child labor. The agricultural sector accounts for by far the largest share of child labour. The sector accounts for 71 per cent of all those in child labour worldwide. (ILO,2017) Children who work in tobacco are exposed to the toxins at a very young age, they are put at increased risk of becoming smokers and they miss out on their studies and normal childhood activities. Parents are aware of that but they are helpless, they have no other choice. One of the mothers in Aytaroun said: “My children miss out on so much: they do not play like regular children; they have never been to the beach or to a Luna Park because they never have the time to do that. They must study in their free time when they are not helping us with tobacco”. Her daughter was holding the history book studying for the second round of official exams after failing the first, while helping out sorting the tobacco leaves.

Women play a very important role in tobacco farming, especially in families where the husband has another source of income. Women who grow tobacco work very hard and are very talented especially in the harvest and post-harvest phases of production. They tend to answer most of the questions relating to the technicalities and calculated the costs with confidence although many of them are illiterate or uneducated.

Lebanese tobacco farmers are coping with the lack of skill of Syrian labor by paying them based on piecework in contrast to an hourly wage. Syrians are mainly hired during the planting phases that are very demanding but to a lesser extent, during processing. During processing, Lebanese tenants started paying Syrian workers 1,000 to 1,500 LBP per thread instead of paying them 5000 LBP by the hour. This, to compensate for their lack of experience since as reported, an average Syrian worker would finish at most two to three threads per hour. Syrians are hired as a last resort to supplement the family's work during harvesting and processing to minimize costs as much as possible.

Local labour regulation is characterized by strongly asymmetrical power relations between growers and farmworkers. This consolidates the informal and subordinate relationships that exist between a single worker and those who enable them to work. Piece-rate wages are largely determined by demand and are dependent on market trends and the farms' pursuit of profit. As Karl Marx first recognized, the 'piece-wage is the form of wages most in harmony with the capitalist mode of production' (Corrado et al., 2019).

On a broader level, a further relevant feature of the transformation of Mediterranean agriculture is the 'defamilization', or individualization of family farming, the growth of wage

labour and the structural dependence on a non-local labour force. In this context, internal and/or transnational migrants not only allow farmers to replace the withdrawal of family labour, but most of all, constitute a reserve of vulnerable, cheap and flexible labour force to meet the downward pressure on costs and the requests of just-in-time production by the agri-food chains.

Asking agrarian questions establishes the importance of investigating the extent to which capitalist production has become generalized, and how family farming may mediate the impact of markets, traders and pressures of local monopoly, entrepreneurs and global demands (Bush, 2016). In this context, family farming is increasingly relying on more waged labor (a capitalist trait) but this does not ensure its sustainability. On the contrary, it is a measure tobacco farmers are taking as a final resort due to social changes in some villages where family members are becoming less and less involved. And due to the increased cost of hiring workers, farmers are slowly realizing that this is the end for tobacco as their source of income despite their efforts to minimize the cost of wage labor by the different techniques we discussed above.

5.4. Citrus General Insights

Citrus in the South of Lebanon has been suffering for years from marketing challenges. Farmers are responding by either replacing citrus orchards with banana on a larger scale due to its higher profitability and demand locally and for export, or by slowly integrating more profitable crops such as avocado, papaya and dragon fruit that sell out quicker in the local niche market.

Workers in citrus are mainly Lebanese and Palestinian. The latter's involvement is due to their expertise which was transferred across generations and because it is illegal for them to be

officially employed in Lebanon. Hence, working as casual labor is one of their few options to make ends meet. As for Syrians who lack expertise during the critical stages of citrus production, they tend to be employed by banana cultivators and work with other tropical crops as well.

There has been an increased incorporation of women labor in citrus and banana compared to previous years whereas child labor is still rare to encounter in these agricultures. Most Syrian men who used to work in Lebanon before the war in Syria used to leave their families back home and send them their remittances. Nowadays, with their families having fled to Lebanon, Syrian women are increasingly participating in labor especially in banana. Land tenants arrange for them to live with their families in small shacks in the fields they work in.

Overall, we notice different hiring profile with different nationalities: According to most land tenants, Syrian labor has been spreading mainly in banana and to a lesser extent in citrus agricultures as they are quickly gaining more knowledge in this field.

The case of Calabria, portrays a fragmented picture of the workforce across different nationalities in which competition between different national groups is deliberately manipulated by intermediaries and employers. Bulgarians and Romanians are more likely to be employed in core teams for longer and more continuous work, while sub-Saharan Africans, especially young men, represent an agricultural ‘reserve army’ that is more often recruited informally for short and occasional periods during the harvests (Corrado et al., 2019).

Early morning shifts are very common in these coastal agricultures especially in citrus where work starts at 6:00 am and finishes at 10:00 am. This allows many workers to seek other sources of income after they finish their early shifts. For example, a Lebanese man in Adloun working in the orchard in the morning, also works an afternoon shift in a company to cope with

the increased costs of living. An eighty-year-old Palestinian worker who was interviewed still remembered his family's own citrus orchard as a child back home, he said that working in citrus is the only thing he still owns from his roots. Although some Palestinian workers expressed fear of Syrians stealing their jobs, no major incidents were reported regarding this concern. Lebanese land tenants are familiar with the labor they have been hiring for years and won't easily replace them especially that wages were reported equal regardless of the nationality, hence no wage-based competition exists. Most of the labor involved in citrus and banana are compensated on an hourly basis where wages consist of 5,000 LBP per hour for men while women earn 3,000 LBP per hour. Sometimes during harvest times, workers get payed based on piecework: 15,000 LBP for the harvest of 20 boxes of citrus equaling almost 400 kg of citrus.

Land tenure agreements differ for different crops, citrus land rent "*daman*" is an agreement between the land lord and manager "*damen*" depending on the profitability of the season. Whereas banana land rent "*daman*" is done based on the land size, the number and quality of banana plants per dunum which generally starts at 2 million LBP per dunum.

5.5. Citrus Farmer Profiles

- ***Owners***

The official owners of the land who do not participate in any activity and are generally absent.

- ***Owners/managers***

Some interviewees were the owners of the lands who fully manage the activities while having other sources of income generally related to agriculture.

- ***Managers***

They can either be managers with a fixed salary or sharecroppers who manage the work on the land and hire additional labor whenever needed to complete the duties.

- ***Labor***

This category consists of casual workers who are payed either based on hourly wage or on piecework.

5.6. Perceptions, Challenges and Coping Mechanisms in Citrus

For citrus, the most reported challenge is marketing especially during winter months where supply exceeds the demand in local markets and export is becoming increasingly difficult.

Citrus export markets to the GCC countries have been severely restricted after the Syrian war although many stated that competition gradually started way before with the European produce invading these markets. For citrus, it was more difficult for farmers to give fixed figures for costs and revenues because they fluctuate greatly across different seasons depending on the demand and varieties. Furthermore, almost all farmers are gradually incorporating more profitable fruits which are boosting their profits. Citrus farmers' in the Southern European context, have responded to the shrinking of profit margins and the tightening of market conditions with a range of similar actions: they abandon the cultivations; they plant new varieties of citrus fruit or change type of cultivation altogether; or they continue to sell the same product

attempting to cope with the lowering of prices by containing labour and maintenance costs (Corrado et al., 2019).

Aside of marketing, the loss of profitability is reported with the spike of input prices: in general costs range between 500,000 LBP to 1,000,000 LBP per dunum per year while net profits range from 500,000 LBP to 2,000,000 LBP per dunum. Banana plantations share the same cost range as citrus but generate net profits starting at 1,500,000 LBP per dunum for well maintained and healthy plants. Farmers complain from the late payments they receive when they export, therefore whenever they have the choice, they prefer to sell locally and guarantee prompt payments. On an international level, the globalization of the citrus trade has dramatically increased the level of competition. The modest cost incurred by buyers when replacing suppliers ultimately increases the bargaining power of the big supermarket chains over fixing prices and requesting additional services (Corrado et al., 2019).

To date, relatively few studies have attempted to analyze the interconnected changes in agri-food chains and labour relations and fewer still have directly looked at rural areas in Mediterranean Europe. When it comes to citrus in Italy and Spain which is the largest citrus exporter in the world, there are relatively few professional farmers among the small and medium landowners. In both areas, the majority of this group comprises people who continue to own land but are no longer directly involved in cultivation, since their main job is in other sectors. (Corrado et al., 2019). We find that this phenomenon is also apparent for the Lebanese citrus farmers. The reasons for keeping land are similar in both areas: either because it is considered a safe-haven asset or due to a sentimental attachment to family property.

Migrant laborers maintain their insecure places at the bottom of the social pyramid of local society through a number of factors including: the precarious legal status of migrant labourers; the 'ethnic' segmentation in the labour market and the informal system of recruitment. This is how the claims of migrant labour have been contained and their participation in the local economy and society has been kept at a minimum level without leading to social unrest in the area. In the south of Lebanon, the scattered settling of Syrians and the absence of camps helps reduce xenophobic fears by the locals, in addition to the presence of powerful political parties in the region whose role in maintaining order is more influential than the official police's role. In some villages, Syrians have curfews and are not allowed to be seen in large groups since many locals believe that: "when you see a group of Syrian men, you should know they are up to no good". Racism, processes of ethnicization and the spatial segregation of migrant workers are key elements in disciplining the migrant workforce, in overcoming instances of resistance and in preserving a well-ordered labour market and social relations in rural areas (Corrado et al., 2019).

5.7. General Outlook on Labor Migrants in Agriculture

There are different types of agricultural labor models with the majority including migrants as labor. *Why migrant workers choose agriculture and why agriculture chooses them?* Labor mobility in agriculture is key due to seasonality and fluctuating demands for labor. This is why foreigners are more flexible and tend to seek these jobs more than the local population. Agricultural work is considered low-level and low-paid work, but that does not mean anybody can do agricultural work. Farmers and labour brokers are always looking for workers with

specific qualities. The ideal agricultural worker should not only know how to prune and thin out trees or to handle fruit quickly and carefully but, above all, should be someone who is willing to make sacrifices, to obey and to endure hard work. Perhaps the most sought-after and valued quality in these workers is their disposition to mobility. Judging by the composition of the workforce, ethnicity and immigration appear to have become warranties of suitability (Corrado et al., 2019).

Highlighting the conditions under which intensive agriculture operates opens up a discussion about the social sustainability of rural areas. Migrant labour has been of immense importance for increasing productivity in labor-intensive agricultural systems. The hierarchy of migrants, the ‘ethnic’ and gender divisions of labour, and the often dramatic employment and living conditions of migrants represent ways of controlling labour and lowering production costs in agriculture (Corrado et al., 2019).

In general, the number of wage farm workers in the MENA region is also rapidly growing. Due to the crisis of rural areas, people have moved to urban areas or abroad, or towards intensive agricultural production areas. Both smallholders and landless rural families are increasingly relying on wage labour in response to additional household needs. A significant trend is the increased participation of women in the agricultural wage labour – rising from 34 per cent in 1995 to 45 per cent in 2011 – which sees them also involved in post-harvest activities and agro-processing industries (Corrado et al., 2019).

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

In this study, agriculture in the south of Lebanon represented by both tobacco inland farming and citrus and tropical fruits on the coastal areas was affected in different ways by the increased influx of Syrians. For both farming systems (capitalist and family), the resilience of the sector was proven by how each system coped with this influx: the allocation of the increased supply of labor was very fluid and adaptive to the innate traits of the present farming systems. One example is how family farming is slowly starting to incorporate external labor and adapted to the high labor cost by replacing hourly wages by piecework. Reliance on external labor is slowly increasing for tobacco license holders mainly due to social and cultural changes and not due to increased supply of cheap labor. Hence, the authority of the Lebanese farmers was prominent in how they were able to benefit from the presence of this foreign labor by imposing more convenient modes of payment. Although some informants expressed xenophobic judgments, most of them were not based on factual evidence proving the detrimental impact of refugees. In all the villages studied without any guidance or official strategies, labor organically found its way and trickled to fill in the gaps while imposing minimal competition with existing labor regimes. Lebanese farmers also exhibited resilience and adaptability in the case of citrus coastal plantations, by firstly responding to the citrus marketing challenges by introducing banana and

other tropical crops with higher demand and prices. This step naturally opened the door for the Syrian men and women to work in banana and left the majority of the work in citrus for the Lebanese and Palestinians. Hence, the Syrian Crisis has acted as a catalyst for re-structuralizing the Lebanese agriculture from the perspective of labor where family farming is slowly hiring labor at their own terms whereas more capitalist forms of coastal agricultures are starting to incorporate more female labor consisting of the wives of the Syrians in Lebanon.

After conducting this study, the most substantial challenges the Lebanese farmer suffers from can be diagnosed on the level of production when it comes to input prices and on the level of marketing where the lack of extension and guidance are rendering citrus farmers unable to export due to lack of compliance with European and Gulf standards. When it comes to tobacco the low profitability of this crop especially when labor costs are factored in, make it unsustainable at the level of small-scale production without being subsidized. The absence of rural development policies and the lack of political will to develop rural areas only deepens the crisis. (Hamade, 2014)

The Lebanese agriculture sector has also demonstrated its potential to act as an element of economic and social stability. Therefore, the Lebanese government should prioritize developing adequate policies which come in support of farmer efforts, help advance the agriculture sector and last but not least hinder the different forms of exploitation such as gender-based pay discrimination and menial child labor. The ILO's Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention states that: "*The minimum age for assignment to work in agriculture which by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out is likely to harm the safety and health of young persons shall not be less than 18 years*". Governments have a responsibility to protect their citizens and

fulfill their obligations under international human rights law, but politics and the tobacco industry's lobbying efforts have had a large influence on tobacco control policy around the world (Ramos, 2018). On a macro level, Lebanese policy makers should implement strategies that increase the resilience of local farmers and stakeholders, as well as enhance their competitiveness in local and foreign markets while eliminating any form of exploitation.

When it comes to the Syrian workers, their work conditions pretty much fall in the hands of their Lebanese recruiters. In tobacco, we notice a peaceful relationship between the farmer and the workers, Lebanese farmers are struggling to make ends meet and seem almost as pressured financially as the workers they hire. We observe this friendlier environment since the employer and worker both have their hands immersed in the same work, both seem understanding and try to reach common grounds regarding the work conditions.

According to the different case studies presented Corrado's book on agricultural and immigration policies across different Mediterranean countries, it is evident that the success of labor integration in terms of the profitability of the producer and the ethical treatment of migrant labor cannot be narrowed down to the adoption of a specific labor system. In some cases, immigration legislations limit the chances of integration and labor mobility of migrant workers (context of Spain) forbidding the natural flow of excessive labor to areas with more labor shortages. In other cases, the lack of policies has also proven detrimental when recruiters can discriminate, abuse and take advantage of their workers. This is why interventions that help alleviate the challenges of the agricultural sector must occur at the level of farmer guidance and extension, import-export laws while taking into account the context of the local economy in order to boost local production as whole. The process of utilizing irregular migrant workers has economic advantages for employers although it distorts competition and denies social rights to the

migrants. In the case of Palestinians in Lebanon, this highly sensitive political issue is subjects to massive debates; Palestinians have been in Lebanon since 1948 and have no chance to become Lebanese citizen due to alleged fears of distorting “sectarian balance” of Muslim Sunnis in Lebanon in terms of presence and voting. Palestinians are still refugees in Lebanon and are unable to work officially. The Syrian scenario is completely different, where the previous cyclic nature of their migration adds a different feature to their work opportunities today: Lebanese in general are more familiar with them being employed in construction, agriculture and as of recent increasingly in services. Hence, despite all the challenges both face in Lebanon, Syrians are a little bit more advantaged than Palestinians since they still have the option to hope to return one day to their country. Whereas Palestinians seem hopeless and have no option for the time being of returning or of coexisting in the Lebanese official labor market.

Even after the end of conflicts in certain Syrian regions in 2019 and the beginning of the return of some Syrians back to their towns, the majority are still displaced and will still be for a long time, not only because of the time needed to re-build the infrastructure and economy in Syria, but also due to political reasons and fears that will take a long time to overcome.

Therefore, when it comes to the future of agriculture in Lebanon post-conflict, we do not expect issues in labor scarcity since the return of Syrians would be gradual and slow especially for the Syrians who either rely on aids or have secured sources of income in Lebanon. Migrant labour has been fundamental both for the reorganization and competitiveness in the agri-food system and for the resilience of small-scale and family farming. In addition, it generally contributes to household reproduction and peasant agriculture in the country of origin.

This work also opens questions to the nature of supply chains in the region when it comes to food crops such as citrus: Retail-controlled supply chains have substituted producer-driven

chains in many Mediterranean agricultures. Retailers have increasingly influenced production by not only determining the characteristics of the products, but also defining the ethical and social standards in labour relations (Corrado et. al, 2019) To what extent do retailers control the Lebanese agriculture? And are they being able to impose the required market standards on the producers?

ANNEX

Labor Interview Guide

PERSONAL DATA

1. Age
2. Nationality
3. Education
4. Marital status
5. Number of children
6. How many are working in the farm as (table)

	Full time	Part time
Husband		
Spouse		
Male children		
Female children		

7. Where do you currently live?
8. Where did you come from before settling here?

9. Was your previous work related to agriculture?
10. When did you first come to Lebanon? And to this area specifically?
11. Do you still go to your hometown? (If yes how often compared to before the war?)
12. Why did you choose this area? Describe how did he get information about this place, (which people told him about, etc.) anyone contributed in your presence in this area? (wakil?)

WORK DATA

13. Is your work on this land full-time?
 - a) If your work is full-time, do you earn enough from this work or do you rely on other sources of income?
 - b) If your work is part time, what are your other sources of income?
 - c) If your work is seasonal, what do you do in different seasons? (location and work)
14. What is your average daily/monthly income?
15. Was it hard for you to find work in this area? If so, how much time did it take? And how did you find this work?
16. How many people are working in this land?
17. What is your main role on this land? (land, irrigation, harvest...) Describe the main job performed (time/salary/working conditions/ crops planted/irrigation/protective tools/machines, utensils (masks, etc), use of fertilizer/remuneration? Hours of work. Contract (time)

18. Describe your work as agricultural worker/tenant/sharecropper over the full agricultural cycles. Specifically interested in sharecropping arrangements. Pay/job conditions/work hours/ n. of people working.
19. Does your work agreement change according to crop? How does it work? Is this piece work? (ie not paid according to hours but for example to quantity of produce harvested), or it is based on time, hours /wage?
20. Provide all details, including remuneration, duties, and responsibilities, risks, quotes and so on. Is there any change of agreement according to crops being planted/harvested?
21. Do you have a regular work contract?
22. Do you ever get access to land for your own cultivation?

CHANGES BEFORE AND AFTER THE WAR

23. Did you used to come work in Lebanon before 2011? Where and when was the first time?
24. IF #28=yes, how would you describe the changes in work conditions in terms of:
 - a) Work intensity
 - b) Labor security
 - c) Recruitment
 - d) Relations with employers
 - e) Seasonality of work
 - f) Wage changes

25. Do members of the family contribute to your work? If yes, is it paid?

26. How did you cope with increased cost of living?

27. What are the main challenges that you face in Lebanon?

Land Tenants Interview Guide

PERSONAL DATA

1. Age
2. Nationality
3. Education
4. Marital status
5. Number of children
6. How many are working in the farm as:

	Full time	Part time
Spouse		
Male		
Female		
Children		

7. What is your average annual gross farm income (based on the last 5 years?)

8. Do you have another sources of income

a. Yes

b. No

if yes:

9. Please specify: a. type of job(s):

b. Average annual income:

10. What are your annual agricultural expenditures, (in average)?

LAND AND ACTIVITIES

11. Do you rent or rent out in any land?

a. Area du b1. Shared % b2. Leased \$

(Please provide the Price for Dunum/Hectare).

12. Lately, has there been any changes in your choices for cultivated crops? Why?

13. Have you been motivated to increase your production capacity lately?

LABOR INFORMATION

14. Has there been a change in labor employment? (increased or decreased?)

15. In your opinion, do you think your village have labor shortage or labor surplus?

a. Labor shortage b. Labor surplus

If 15a:

When do you experience any labor shortage?

a. Harvesting times b. All year around

16. What is the cost of labor per hour? Foreign labor or other? Women/men (age – seasonality – recruitment, contract) describe

17. Do you recruit foreign workers in your land? If so, how many/ season and do they work with the support of their families?

18. Are your employment arrangements formal?

19. Describe the process of labor recruitment? Has it changed after the Syrian war?

20. Are the new flows of labor changing your labor organization/ structures? (individual labor vs. family farming)

21. How do you describe the recent changes in your production as a whole?

22. What are the most important factors that affect your production?

IV- FINANCING INFORMATION:

23. How do you finance your operation costs?

- a. Personal cash
- b. Credits
- c. Borrowing from others (with no interest rate)

24. Do you have any problem(s) in finding cash to finance your farm operation?

a. Yes

b. No

If Yes: Please explain.

25. Explain the details of the different costs and revenues per year.

V- MARKETING INFORMATION:

26. How do you market your crops?

a. Middle agents

b. Take directly to the markets

c. Others, please specify

27. Do you experience any marketing/prices problems?

If Yes:

What are these problems?

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