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Community Perceptions Report

01 June– 31 August 2025

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Working for
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1. Executive Summary

The ongoing socio-economic instability and uncertain security conditions across Lebanon marked the period between June and August 2025. CPT participants across all six regions continued to face significant challenges, including economic hardship, security concerns, and rising tensions related to Syrian refugees, while still contending with the aftermath of the 2024 war. These concerns further exacerbated psychological stress among participants.

Economic struggles were the most cited trend during this quarter, with participants consistently reporting their inability to afford essential goods and services such as food, water, electricity, rent, and medical care. The findings reflect increasing prices, stagnant wages, and limited employment opportunities and increased transportation costs, driving many into severe financial distress. Education-related concerns were a significant issue, particularly regarding the quality of public schooling. Some families attempted to mitigate this through home-based learning with their children, but this soon proved to be impractical and resulted in frustration. Ultimately, children opted to drop out of school, and this increased child labor in areas. The CPT shows that these conditions have contributed to heightened psychological pressure and, in some instances, have led to gender-based violence (GBV), particularly domestic abuse. Amid these dire times, CPT participants considered emigration in search for better living standards.

Safety concerns were the second most frequently reported trend and were often linked to worsening economic hardships. Participants highlighted growing insecurity in their areas, noting a rise in theft, drug abuse among youth, and ineffective gun control. Parents also expressed anxiety about their children's exposure to harmful content on social media, struggling to monitor usage effectively and citing the lack of safe, affordable recreational alternatives as a barrier to limiting screen time. The CPT portrayed the discrimination and legal challenges some migrant workers and minority groups in Lebanon face. This increased their vulnerability and restricted their access to protection.

The challenges faced by Syrian refugees were a major theme during this quarter. Participants reported heightened stigmatization, hate speech, and community-level tensions, particularly toward new arrivals from Syria. Some Lebanese participants in the CPT viewed Syrians as contributors to crime and instability, while legal restrictions and reduced humanitarian aid exacerbated refugees' hardship and dependency. Several CPT participants described the tightening of legal residency processes and aid cuts as deliberate measures to pressure Syrians into returning to their home country. The UNHCR's voluntary return initiatives were largely

seen as dehumanizing and inadequate, with participants citing low financial support and lack of response from international bodies. While views on return remain divided, many refugees reiterated that conditions in Syria remain unsafe or insufficient for sustainable reintegration.

The ongoing psychological impact of the 2024 war, and ongoing attacks and uncertainty, is still evident. Participants expressed deep anxiety about the possibility of renewed conflict, pointing to ongoing psychological trauma, socioeconomic vulnerability, and distrust in the government's ability to prevent further escalation. Children were described as particularly affected, with fear and paranoia undermining their daily routines and mental health. In addition, with escalating tensions along the Lebanese-Syrian borders, the CPT showed that individuals are also concerned of potential crises with the Syrian regime.

Perceptions in relation to governmental institutions remained polarized. Some participants expressed optimism over recent government actions, including the enforcement of laws banning celebratory gunfire and efforts by certain municipalities to meet community needs. Others, however, voiced disappointment with both local and national authorities, particularly around unfulfilled campaign promises, lack of refugee response planning, and the broader failure to address Lebanon's compounding crises. These stances highlight skepticism and lack of public trust in state institutions and reveal deeper societal divisions about the government's ability to govern effectively.

The final trend in this quarter's CPT was related to pollution particularly surrounding waste management. Participants criticized the ongoing burning of waste and poor landfill management, expressing frustration over broken municipal promises to address these issues. The resulting health hazards further contribute to deteriorating living conditions and highlight the need for effective and transparent governance at both the local and national levels.

Community-led Recommendations

To Civil Society Organizations and UN agencies:

- Conduct awareness campaigns on the health and environmental hazards of waste burning, promoting safe and sustainable disposal practices.

To Local Authorities:

- Enhance coordination between municipal police and Internal Security Forces (ISF) to increase patrols and mitigate risks related to theft, drug trafficking, and the proliferation of firearms.
- Strengthen monitoring and regulation of waste disposal sites and practices near residential areas by conducting regular inspections and enforcing environmental and public health standards.

To GoL:

- Regulate and unify taxi fares to ensure consistency and affordability for commuters by establishing clear pricing mechanisms.
- Enhance oversight within the public education sector by systematically monitoring mechanisms to evaluate teachers, staff, and students' performance. Conduct regular assessments and provide capacity-building opportunities where needed and promote accountability across public schools.

To EU and other Donors:

- Prioritize funding for Lebanon's public schools to assist the GoL in improving the quality of teaching through enhanced teacher training and support.
- Allocate funding to strengthen the capacity of municipal police within social cohesion programmes, enhancing their role in community-based policing and enabling them to better address security threats.
- Support local authorities with targeted funding and technical assistance to improve waste management practices and reduce pollution in residential areas affected by mismanaged landfills and waste burning.
- Provide funding to increase awareness on online safety, supporting parents in monitoring and managing the content their children access, and collaborate with civil society organizations to foster safer digital environments for children.
- Invest in education programs to give underprivileged children the chance to enroll in schools.
- Fund awareness campaigns about the risks and consequences of child labor, helping parents and communities prevent children from engaging in work, and collaborating with local civil society organizations to provide educational programmes.
- Provide technical and financial assistance to the GoL to establish effective monitoring mechanisms for oversight within the public education sector.

2. Background

Project

ALEF – act for human rights is implementing the WE'AM project (Working for Engagement, Acceptance and Mediation), funded by the EU and led by OXFAM, and which aim is to contribute to a people-centered recovery in Lebanon, in line with 3RF and particularly its Pillar 3 that supports a socially cohesive environment. Considering the multi-layered crisis and societal divisions in the country, the project aims at focusing on three key dimensions: drivers of tensions at the community level; conflict prevention processes and awareness raising; and mainstreaming of community level social cohesion into programming, with particular focus on the EU. The project's multi-stakeholder participatory approach helps build consensus among civil society, community groups, religious leaders, political, media, private sector actors, donor community, and the wider audience, to produce recommendations to mainstream social cohesion into EU community-based development programs.

As part of the project, the Working Group for People Affected by the Syrian Crisis (WG PASC), a network of 32 local CSOs facilitated by ALEF, has been collecting timely community perceptions on social tensions, and on the reform processes Lebanon is expected to undertake to address the crisis. WG PASC has been using Oxfam's Community Perception Tracker (CPT) approach to capture, analyze, and understand the perceptions of communities in the 6 areas prioritized by the consortium (Beirut, Tripoli, Akkar, Baalbek, Saida and Barja). PASC's focuses on monitoring social tensions and sentiments of people around the reform processes and its application, through the network's regular day-to-day engagement with their beneficiaries and programming. PASC's strong presence on the ground allows for the tracking of the perceptions of not only crisis-affected communities, but also local service providers, local authorities, wider civil society and UN agencies' staff, and other community groups in a timely manner. PASC members have been collecting perceptions during their day-to-day activities. As such, the nature of every organization's programming might, in some instances, affect the themes of the data collected. For example, a number of PASC organizations work on countering GBV and others work with Syrian refugees. Thus, the local community's engagement with these members and the scope of their activities might be a reason behind why these relevant issues are discussed and then noted down using the CPT, thus influencing the perceptions collected whether directly or indirectly.

To further understand drivers and triggers of social tensions at the national level and the impact of the reform process and its connection to social cohesion, ALEF has been analyzing on quarterly basis the perceptions (qualitative data) collected by PASC using the CPT against incidents, news reports, and other secondary sources to produce quarterly perception reports around social tensions and the reform process. ALEF has been conducting monthly meetings with PASC members using the CPT, in order to discuss any observations, recurrent trends, and potential improvements to the process. Additionally, the findings and recommendations of this report have been validated with PASC and project partners, in order to ensure that the findings are in accordance with observations from the field.

This community perceptions report is the eighth of the series and covers the period between 01 June and 31 August 2025.

Community Perceptions Tracker (CPT)

The CPT utilizes a mobile tool to gather community perceptions during crises, aiding organizations in understanding the beliefs and perceptions of affected communities. Its goal is to give crisis-affected communities the opportunity to shape programs and policies that could potentially impact their lives and contribute to bottom-up change.

Context

Israeli hostilities persisted despite the November 2024 ceasefire, with intensified operations in Southern Lebanon, the Beqaa Valley, and Beirut's southern suburbs. This, combined with other security concerns further strained social, economic, and political stability in Lebanon. However, Lebanon's new government has sought to advance reforms, instilling hope in the community.

Israeli Forces are still violating the ceasefire agreement with attacks on south Lebanon and the Beqaa, indiscriminately targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure, resulting in the deaths of over 200 civilians, and widespread property destruction since January 2025.¹ Israel's use of artillery shelling, low-altitude fighter jet flights, incendiary bombs, and drone surveillance in towns such as Bint Jbeil, Nabatieh, and Tyre, **have generated fear and insecurity among residents, and impacted their psychological wellbeing.**² Notably, on June 5, Israel attacked Beirut's southern suburb on the eve of Eid el Adha, which **generated renewed panic and fear among Dahye residents.**³ These attacks coincide with **rising debates over disarmament of Hezbollah and Palestinian refugee camps.**⁴ On August 7, the cabinet approved a US-backed

1 World Food Programme. (2025, August 27). WFP Lebanon: 2025 mid-year highlights. ReliefWeb. <https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/wfp-lebanon-2025-mid-year-highlights>

2 National News Agency (NNA). (2025, June). منشورات إسرائيلية تهديدية في أجواد يارون لمختار البلدية. [Israeli threatening leaflets in Ajwad Yaroun targeting the municipal Mukhtar]. <https://www.nna-leb.gov.lb/ar/justice-law/785481/-أجواء-يارون-منشورات-إسرائيلية-تهديدية-في-أجواد-يارون-لمختار-ال>

3 Al Jazeera. (2025, June 5). Israel launches several attacks on Beirut's southern suburbs. Al Jazeera. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/6/5/israel-launches-several-attacks-on-beirut-s-southern-suburbs>

4 L'Orient Today. (2025, July 7). Barrack's proposal: Hezbollah should wait for the government, not the other way around, says Geagea. L'Orient Today. Retrieved July 29, 2025, from <https://today.lorientlejour.com/article/1468157/barracks-proposal-hezbollah-should-wait-for-the-government-not-the-other-way-around-says-geagea.html>

Confrontations with traffickers in Sharawneh also resulted in 3 deaths, underscoring the increased insecurity stemming from such operations.¹⁸ In addition, domestic violence remains a major concern, with 59 physical incidents reported to the domestic violence hotline in July.¹⁹

Politically, Lebanon's new government has sought to advance reforms, yet limitations persist, and public trust is still weak.²⁰ While people are hopeful and optimistic about the new government, skepticism remains high as instability prevails.

Restrictive measures against Syrian refugees intensified in August, and were marked by forced evictions, raids, detentions, and curfews. **These measures coincided with the launch of the UNHCR-IOM Voluntary Return Initiative**,²¹ through which the government reported 162,000 cases of returnees, and 71,000 applications under review.²² Despite these efforts, **Lebanon continues to witness significant new arrivals of first-time refugees**, who were forced to flee areas such as Sahel after the new Syrian government took control. UNHCR recorded over 106,000 since December 2024, concentrated mainly in Akkar, Beqaa, and Baalbeck-Hermel.²³ This reflects **deteriorating conditions in Syria** and casts doubt on the possibility of return policies.

18 Ibid.

19 National News Agency. (2025, August 11). Internal Security Forces disseminate number of complaints from domestic violence cases reported on hotline 1745. National News Agency. <https://nna-leb.gov.lb/ar/justice-law/801153/-قوى-الأمن-عم-مت-عدد-الشكاوى-من-حالات-العنف-الأسري>

20 Human Rights Watch. (2025, January 30). Lebanon: Rights agenda for new government. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2025/01/30/lebanon-rights-agenda-new-government>

21 UNHCR. (2025, July 29). UNHCR and IOM Launch Organized Voluntary Return Programme for Syrian refugees in Lebanon. Retrieved from: <https://www.unhcr.org/lb/news/press-releases/unhcr-and-iom-launch-organized-voluntary-return-programme-syrian-refugees>

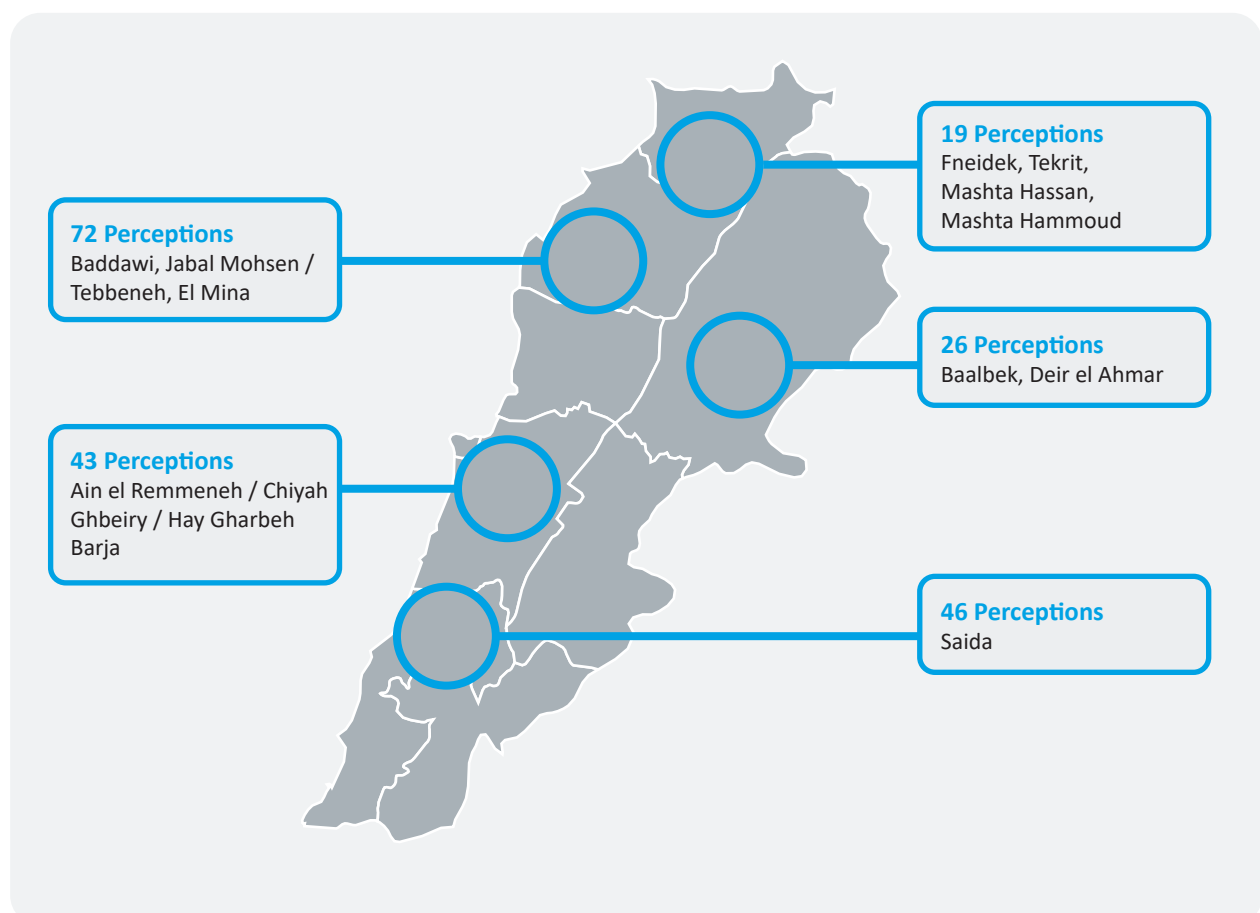
22 L'Orient Today. (2025, August 12). Haneen Sayed: Government processes 71,000 applications for repatriation of Syrian refugees. Retrieved from : <https://today.lorientlejour.com/article/1473283/hanine-sayed-government-processes-71000-applications-for-repatriation-of-syrian-refugees.html>

23 The Century Foundation. (2025, August 11). Home to Syria: Lebanon's New Refugee Returns Plan. Retrieved from : <https://tcf.org/content/report/home-to-syria-lebanons-new-refugee-returns-plan/>

3. Detailed Data

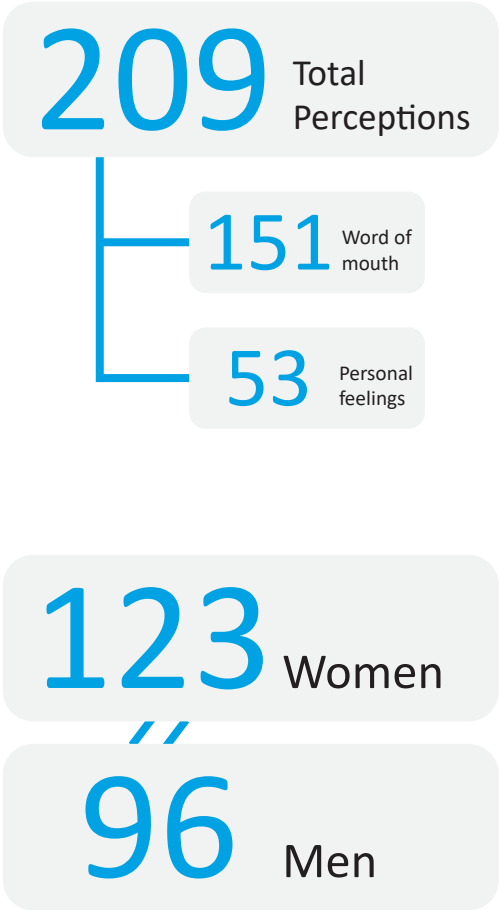
Sources of Perception

The CPT covers six key regions in Lebanon – Tripoli, Akkar, Beirut, South, Mount Lebanon, and Baalbek-El Hermel – each of which has specific areas of focus. In Tripoli, the project’s attention centers on Baddawi, Jabal Mohsen/Tebbeneh, and El Mina. Akkar’s focus includes Fneidek, Tekrit, Mashta Hassan/Mashta Hammoud. The project’s focus in Beirut lies in Ain el Remmeneh/Chiyah, and Hay el Gharbeh/Ghbeiry. Saida is the central focus in the South, Barja in Mount Lebanon, and Baalbek City and Deir El Ahmar in Baalbek-el Hermel.



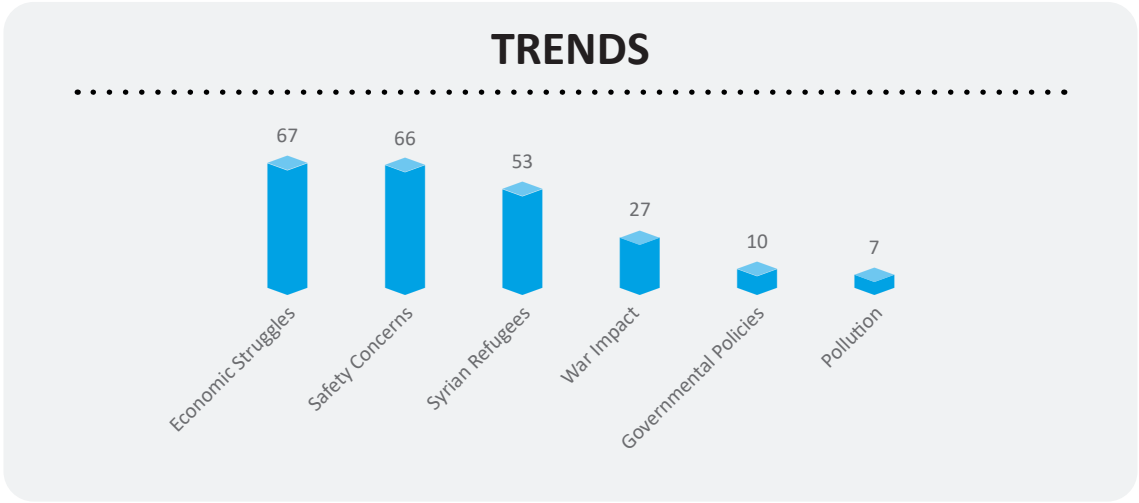
In the eighth quarter of the project, spanning June through August 2025, a total of 209 perceptions were collected. The primary sources of information that influenced or shaped the perceptions collected were word of mouth, based on what the community around is saying (151), and personal feelings, based on one's own beliefs (53).

123 perceptions were collected from women, while 96 perceptions were collected from men. Notably, 43 participants identified facing difficulties in areas such as hearing, seeing, mobility, remembering/concentrating, communication, and self-care, while the majority reported no disabilities. It's important to note that the sum of perceptions disaggregated by gender or disability does not necessarily equal the total number of perceptions collected because perceptions were gathered from both individuals and groups. Geographically, 72 perceptions were from the North, 46 perceptions were from the South, 43 perceptions were from Mount Lebanon and Beirut, 26 perceptions were from Baalbek-Hermel, and 19 perceptions were from Akkar.



Trends Identified

An important observation from this quarter’s findings is the **substantial influence of the local context and community discourse on individuals’ attitudes, views, and perceptions towards drivers of tensions**. This is evident by the fact that 151 out of 209 perceptions stem from word of mouth.



Economic Struggles

Economic struggles were the most cited trend in this quarter's CPT, reflected in **67 out of the 209 perceptions**. Participants highlighted their **inability to afford basic necessities and services**, including rent, electricity, water, and food – an issue raised in 30 perceptions – as their economic conditions continue to deteriorate. **Medical expenses**, particularly treatments and medicine, also posed a significant burden, as reflected in 8 perceptions. Participants in the CPT linked these financial hardships to the **surging prices of goods and services**, as noted in 27 perceptions, as well as to the **persistent unemployment rates** and the inability to secure employment (as raised in 8 perceptions) and the **minimal wages paid to workers**, as mentioned in 3 perceptions. **Transportation costs, and the absence of a reliable public transport** system were found, in 1 perception, to be an added financial burden. Another perception noted that taxi fares are unregulated, with drivers charging inconsistent rates, making transportation both unreliable and costly for commuters. These challenges have been further exacerbated by the **budget cuts** in aid that had been previously available to individuals as noted in 12 perceptions. **Three of these perceptions highlighted the negative socio-economic impact of UNRWA's budget cuts on Palestine refugees**, and their ability to secure basic needs and medical treatment. The CPT further reveals, in 1 perception, that **water shortages**, particularly in Baalbek-el Hermel, resulted in significant job losses among agricultural workers. The lack of water for crops reduced agricultural production, which in turn reduced the need for workers in the sector.

"I work just to cover rent, electricity, generator subscriptions, bills, and payments. I am a widow responsible for a family, and I get paid minimum wage which is far less than the expenses."

(Woman, adult, Ain el Remmeneh/Chiyah).

"My siblings send me money from abroad and I live alone, but nothing is enough to cover the expenses. Just my medication alone is back-breaking, and I can't go without it. By the end of the month, God knows how I manage to eat."

(Woman, adult, Mina).

"There are no regular buses and no clear transportation system. Every day I take a taxi service at a different price, depending on the driver's mood. A single trip now costs me more than half of my daily wage."

(Man, adult, Saida).

"I work for someone in agriculture, and I lost my job because there is no water."

(Man, adult, Baalbek).

Furthermore, 6 perceptions show that participants are **dissatisfied with the quality of education provided by public schools**. Parents reported being unable to enroll their children in private institutions, compelling them to re-teach entire chapters at home to ensure children properly grasp the course material. Three perceptions indicated that this is not an ideal practice, as parents are often overworked and lack the time to provide adequate support at home. In some instances, this has contributed to **school dropouts and a rise in child labor**, as highlighted in 1 perception. **These ongoing economic challenges have placed significant psychological pressure** on individuals as they endure immense financial stress during uncertain times, as reflected in

4 perceptions, with some, in 2 perceptions, considering emigration. **The impact of economic challenges on individuals' psychological well-being and mental health has influenced their behavior**, with many seeking an outlet for their distress. In 2 perceptions, this was manifested in the form of domestic abuse and GBV.

"My children are in a public school. If I don't teach them at home and keep pushing them, they don't learn anything at school. And I can't afford to hire a private tutor or enroll them in a private school."

(Woman, adult, Jabal Mohsen/Tebbeneh).

"Child labor is no longer seasonal or limited to the summer, as it has become widespread and the number of children on the streets is very high."

(Woman, adult, Saida).

"I'm thinking about emigrating through the sea, since I don't have any money. I can't find any way out of this. I can't buy medicine. What's wrong with society? I feel there are a lot of psychological complications because of this. All this pressure causes some to consider suicide."

(Man, adult, Jabal Mohsen/Tebbeneh).

"The difficult economic situation plays a role in increasing violence against women, because men, when under pressure, take it out on their wives to feel relieved. You consider this violence, but to them it feels normal."

(Woman, adult, Tekrit).

In Tripoli, the regulation and prohibition of illegal merchants' carts parked on the side of the roads or in public spaces in certain areas have negatively affected individuals' livelihood and deprived them of their primary source of income. This was particularly challenging for individuals who did not have any alternative solutions to sustain themselves and secure their basic needs, as reflected in 2 perceptions.

"I have a vegetable cart, but the municipality always comes and removes it. When they remove it, I'm left without work or income for 15 days. My children used to be in a private school, but I couldn't pay, and they were denied the chance to sit for their official exams. This upsets me a lot."

(Man, adult, Jabal Mohsen/Tebbeneh).

Safety Concerns

Safety concerns emerged as the second most cited trend during this quarter, expressed in 66 out of the 209 recorded perceptions, revealing that community safety concerns are connected to worsening economic hardships. CPT participants described a general lack of security in their areas, as evident in 15 perceptions. Individuals in the CPT attributed the lack of security to a variety of factors, notably the rise in theft and absence of effective gun control, each reflected in 3 different perceptions. Indeed, theft is frequently attributed to economic hardship, with some participants justifying it as a means of survival. However, these insecurities left families reluctant to leave their houses or allow children to play outside, reflecting the impact of safety concerns on

daily lives. Drug use among youth has also emerged as another concern visible in 3 perceptions. Participants linked the increased use to limited job opportunities and the absence of initiatives targeting young people, which leaves them vulnerable to drug abuse as a coping mechanism. Parents voiced, in 1 perception, their concern over their inability to afford rehabilitation services for their children, further underscoring how financial strain restricts families from addressing these risks.

"On top of the stress and problems, with no work and our inability to cover the children's expenses, we've stopped even going out of the house, we do not feel it is safe anymore."

(Man, adult, Saida).

"My wallet was stolen in broad daylight. I am a widow raising my children, and I lost my ID, this is what almost made me lose my mind. But I want to understand: where is the state in fulfilling its duties towards its poor people?"

(Woman, adult, Jabal Mohsen/Tebbeneh).

"We can't get rid of the issue of uncontrolled weapons. My son got injured, and who is responsible? When will the state take action to stop stray bullets? If I lose my son, who will compensate me? And they ask me why our youth are leaving the country."

(Woman, adult, Jabal Mohsen/Tebbeneh).

"Lack of job opportunities and poverty have driven our youth to turn to armed groups and to drugs."

(Man, adult, Saida).

Safety concerns also extended to social media, with 6 perceptions describing digital platforms as harmful for children, with parents struggling to monitor their usage effectively. These platforms were seen as promoting harmful content and exposing children to risks that include life-threatening trends. Simultaneously, parents acknowledged that they could not fully restrict access, since outdoor activities are scarce and largely unaffordable, making mobile phones and social media the only recreational activities for children. In fact, the lack of public gardens and the high costs of outdoor activities reinforce the role of economic hardship in intensifying safety risks.

"I've done my best to manage and limit my children's phone use, but I can't because they feel bored. I haven't been able to take them outside to play and eat like other kids, and this puts them at risk of becoming addicted to electronics. It would help if there were public parks where children could play. When will we be able to have that?"

(Woman, adult, Baddawi).

These safety concerns were compounded by reports of preventable tragedies, especially in North Lebanon, including deaths on public beaches, mentioned in 1 perception. Participants in the CPT criticized and blamed the government for its lack of monitoring of such spaces, which threatened people's lives. Additionally, during August, the CPT portrayed, in another perception, concern over dining in restaurants as cases of food poisoning were increasing.

"The municipalities are extremely negligent. Every few days, there are deaths on the beaches of both children and adults. I know there's some ignorance from families, but if there were care and coordination from the municipalities, we wouldn't be losing people."

(Woman, young, Mina).

"The heat is unbearable, the electricity is cut off, and hospitals are full of people with cases of food poisoning because there are no refrigerators."

(Woman, adult, Tekrit).

Finally, GBV, particularly domestic abuse, was reflected in the CPT as another major concern, reflected in 12 perceptions. Women reported often feeling unable to escape situations that exacerbated their sense of insecurity and vulnerability. Alarming, 1 perception expressed by a man, suggested that victims of domestic abuse are responsible for their situation and that abuse is justified and deserved.

"My husband is beating me, and I can't do anything about it because there's no one to protect me."

(Woman, adult, Ain el Remmeneh/Chiyah).

"So now every woman who's beaten by her husband wants to make a big deal out of it? Any woman who gets beaten surely deserves it, and it's definitely her fault."

(Man, adult, Tekrit).

The cumulative effect of insecurity and instability contributed to increased psychological stress, apparent in 6 perceptions. Participants in the CPT constantly feel anxious, afraid, hypervigilant, and paranoid, particularly impacting children.

"Every day we hear about crimes, theft, and drugs... we've lost hope."

(Woman, old, Saida).

"We're living in a jungle. Security has collapsed, every now and then there's a clash or tension, and no one feels at ease, we are constantly waiting for bad things to happen."

(Man, young, Saida).

Additionally, 2 perceptions raised concerns regarding the safety and wellbeing of migrants in Lebanon. Participants reported feeling discriminated against, noting that the complex and costly legal requirements to renew their legal residency leave them vulnerable to exploitation and abuse and limit their ability to access protection mechanisms. Furthermore, 1 perception recounted how a sponsor exercised coercive control, threatening and preventing a migrant domestic worker from leaving Lebanon despite her wish to do so.

"My sponsor is controlling me, threatening me all the time, and I can't do anything. No one can protect me from him, and I'm stuck here in this country."

(Woman, adult, Ain el Remmeneh/Chiyah).

Challenges faced by Syrian Refugees

The third most prominent trend during this quarter relates to the challenges faced by Syrian refugees, reflected in 53 perceptions. Widespread stigma and hate speech continue to be key issues, noted in 13 perceptions, frequently arising from growing tensions and animosity between refugees and the host community. New arrivals from Syria are also perceived to be contributing to these tensions and exacerbating social instability in some areas, as reflected in 7 perceptions. Some participants expressed strong opposition to welcoming these groups, viewing them as complicit in the crimes of the Assad regime, illustrated in 3 perceptions. Additionally, Syrians are often scapegoated and blamed for the rising crime rates and insecurity in these areas, mentioned in 2 perceptions. This further exacerbates hostility and deepens social divides, stigmatization, and discrimination. The CPT showed, in 2 perceptions, that this has also further intensified calls for the return of Syrians.

*"I'm being subjected to the worst kinds of verbal abuse just because I'm Syrian. We endure all this for the sake of our children, but we can't do anything about it."
(Syrian Woman, adult, Hay el Gharbeh/Ghbeiry).*

*"No one should expect us to host people from Syria, especially minorities who fought with the Bashar regime, like the Druze and Alawites. These are criminals, and they will be harassed by the locals and create tensions in our areas."
(Man, adult, Jabal Mohsen/Tebbeneh).*

*"The Syrians have become scary. Every day we hear about a new crime committed by them in our areas. They should return to Syria, it's no longer acceptable."
(Man, adult, Ain el Remmeneh/Chiyah).*

Regulations imposed by the Lebanese government on Syrians, particularly related to the renewal of their legal documents, their enrolment in schools, and the increased scrutiny at checkpoints are additional challenges faced by Syrians in Lebanon, as was expressed in 3 perceptions. Moreover, the budget cuts humanitarian organizations are facing, and the subsequent reduction of aid, has increased refugees' vulnerability and inability to access basic needs and services, such as food and medical treatment, underscored in 5 perceptions. As a result, eight perceptions articulated Syrian refugees' belief that the increased government restrictions coupled with the reduction of aid as tools for coercion towards return to Syria.

*"The hardest thing is the racism, it's very difficult to renew our residency. My children are in school, and it seems impossible to re-enrol them this year. Everything has become so difficult."
(Syrian Man, adult, Jabal Mohsen/Tebbeneh).*

*"The landlord asked us for a very high rent and is trying to evict us just to make us leave, claiming it's because we're Syrian and should return to Syria. If we could, we wouldn't hesitate to leave."
(Syrian Woman, adult, Hay el Gharbeh/Ghbeiry).*

The UNHCR's Facilitated Return for Syrian Refugees in the region is perceived by Syrian participants in the CPT as insufficient. In fact, 2 perceptions claimed that the cash-based support falls far short of covering the full costs required to rebuild lives and houses in Syria. Moreover, individuals who have inquired about the voluntary return programs organized by UNHCR and IOM reported, in 2 perceptions, receiving no responses, with delays in communication further fueling frustration and uncertainty.

Simultaneously, Syrian refugees continue to hold different positions on return. Six perceptions showed that some still deemed Syria as too unsafe, making repatriation impossible. Others, in 2 perceptions, preferred to remain in Lebanon, having already established their livelihoods and social networks here. One perception even noted that refugees who attempted to return often re-enter Lebanon illegally due to the inability to secure livelihoods and rising insecurities in Syria, and inability to enter Lebanon legally due to General Security border restrictions, thereby jeopardizing their safety in Lebanon by migrating illegally. This reinforces the reluctance of many to consider return, as reflected in 2 perceptions, and highlights the impact of insecurity, economic hardship, and the absence of effective durable solutions. In 2 other perceptions in the CPT, return is viewed as conditional, with some refugees expressed that they would only consider going back once Syria is deemed unquestionably safe and able to provide essential services such as schools, hospitals, electricity, water, and internet. Others stated that return would only be possible if they were guaranteed sufficient financial support to rebuild their houses and restore their livelihoods.

"How can UN Agencies think that a 100\$ is enough to rebuild my destroyed house in Syria?"

(Syrian woman, adult, Jabal Mohsen/Tebbeneh).

"The UN is taking too long to respond regarding voluntary return. We have registered a while ago and we are still waiting."

(Syrian man, adult, Baddawi).

"They are talking about Syrians' return to Syria and say they want to give us money as an incentive to leave, but no one is asking about our situation there or our lives after returning. No one is providing an actual solution."

(Syrian Man, adult, Jabal Mohsen/Tebbeneh).

"I don't want to return to Syria unless it is safety, and there are schools, hospitals, electricity, water, and internet. Where would we go otherwise?"

(Syrian man, old, Mina).

"During the holiday period, there were many returns to Syria. Afterwards, we were surprised by people coming back to Lebanon again because there are no job opportunities there and, until now, no reconstruction has taken place. So those who leave end up returning."

(Syrian Woman, adult, Jabal Mohsen).

On the other hand, two perceptions highlighted positive relations between newcomers to Lebanon and host communities. Refugees in these cases reported feeling welcomed, safe, and grateful for the support received.

"We fled from oppression and discrimination and came to Lebanon, and we found so much kindness. The Lebanese community has helped us a lot, and I'm truly thankful to all the organizations that are working hard to support us."
(Syrian man, adult, Akkar).

War Impact

The fourth trend in this quarter was related to the ongoing impact of the war and its consequences and was mentioned in 27 perceptions. Fears of renewed or expanding hostilities remain widespread among participants in the CPT. Eleven perceptions reflected deep anxiety over the possibility of another widespread armed conflict with Israel, with participants stressing that they have not yet recovered from the last round of hostilities. Many are still recovering psychologically and financially from the last conflict, and the prospect of renewed hostilities raises serious concerns about their socio-economic stability. These fears were heightened following the recent attack on the North, which further reinforces a sense of vulnerability and solidifies the fear of a renewed war.

The CPT, additionally, reflected concerns about the government's inability to stop Israeli Forces from attacking, and avoid further aggressions, as articulated in 2 perceptions. Participants felt that authorities lack initiative to address this matter, leaving communities feeling exposed and unprotected.

"The attack that happened in Tripoli is proof that the war is coming back and that it will be worse than the previous one."
(Woman, young, Akkar).

"All the news is warning that there will be war, and we still haven't recovered from the effects of the last one. We're truly exhausted, and the financial situation and daily life are very difficult, we haven't even managed to get back on our feet yet."
(Man, adult, Hay el Gharbeh/Ghbeiry).

"The government isn't taking any effective measures to solve the crisis. We're living on edge every day, not knowing when the next blow will hit us."
(Man, old, Hay el Gharbeh/Ghbeiry).

Simultaneously, participants in Northern areas expressed, in 2 perceptions, anxiety about potential clashes along the Syrian-Lebanese border, particularly with the Syrian government, adding another layer of insecurity.

"They're saying that ISIS-affiliated Syrians are now at the border and preparing for clashes to enter the Beqaa. Honestly, we don't know whether to flee from Israel or from ISIS."
(Woman, adult, Baalebk).

Two perceptions pointed to the perceived double standards within Lebanon, where some communities live in relative safety without fear for their wellbeing, while others endure constant stress under the threat of recurrent attacks and the persistent presence of Israeli jets over their homes.

*"We're divided in this country: some people are living their lives normally, while others' homes are destroyed."
(Woman, adult, Ain el Remmeneh/Chiyah).*

This situation has impacted individuals' psychological wellbeing, and fostered a persistent sense of paranoia, hindering individuals' ability to function properly, as specified in 10 perceptions. One perception specifically underscored the impact of the post-war situation on children, noting that fear prevents them from sleeping well at night.

*"Everyone is expecting the war to start again, and that terrifies me because I'm really afraid of war, and we don't even have the money to flee."
(Woman, adult, Baalbek).*

Perceptions related to the Government

The fifth trend, reported in 10 perceptions, portrayed different views on government performance and governance. On the one hand, 3 perceptions highlighted a sense of optimism, considering authorities as qualified and their decisions as prioritizing public good. This perception of good governance sparked hope among citizens for a better future, as reflected in 3 perceptions. Additionally, 1 perception commended the government's decision to enforce the law banning celebratory gunfire, considered a positive measure, contributing to a sense of improved safety and order. Similarly, in 2 perceptions, municipalities were praised for their active role in serving their communities and responding to local needs. However, this was contrasted by 3 other perceptions, as participants expressed dissatisfaction with the new government, criticizing its failure to devise a refugee response plan or concrete solutions to Lebanon's multiple, pressing challenges. These contrasting views underscore the fragmented trust in state institutions and reflect broader divisions within society regarding the government's capacity to effectively govern. Similarly, 2 perceptions, pointed to ongoing disappointment with inactive municipalities, especially given unfulfilled promises made during electoral campaigns.

*"Honestly, this prime minister turned out to be better than all those who came before him. I swear he's proven to be capable and more. Hopefully, we can finally get rid of the rest of the corrupt ones who robbed Tripoli and other areas."
(Man, adult, Mina).*

*"There's been a lot less gunfire in Tripoli recently after the state imposed a fine of \$1,000 on anyone caught with a firearm and confiscated the weapons. We're still definitely scared, but it's better than before."
(Man, young, Jabal Mohsen/Tebbeneh).*

"Finally, someone has been appointed who truly fits the saying 'the right person in the right place.' The mayor of Tripoli decided to clean up the Abu Ali River, install surveillance cameras, and take action against anyone who throws garbage into the river."

(Woman, young, Jabal Mohsen/Tebbeneh).

"The state is ignoring Israeli Jets, the wars, the dollar crisis, and all these problems, yet it's chasing us, the tuk-tuk owners."

(Man, young, Baalbek).

Pollution

Pollution is the sixth trend of this quarter, reported in 7 perceptions, and highlights the mismanagement of waste. Participants highlighted, in 3 perceptions, ongoing practices of waste burning, which have generated widespread concern over the spread of diseases and harmful bacteria. One perception also shed light on unmanaged landfills near residential areas which produce foul odors and exacerbate the problem. In another perception, participants noted that candidates who ran for the municipal elections had pledged to prioritize waste and landfills management in their campaigns and were elected based on such commitments. However, frustration among CPT participants has grown as these promises remain unfulfilled, with municipalities failing to take tangible steps to address the issue. This has fueled calls for stronger government action and accountability, as pollution is increasingly viewed not only as an environmental hazard but also as a direct threat to public health and quality of life.

"The municipality made a plan for the garbage mountain. We elected them hoping for relief, but it's hard to see whether their actions will do more good than harm. Still, hope is weak."

(Woman, adult, Saida).

"Garbage is being burned everywhere, even on the roads. When I leave my house in Tebbeneh and head to Daher el-Ain, there's garbage all along the main road. It's such an uncivilized sight that doesn't suit us, and the smell of burning trash is toxic. But people have no other choice but to burn it. Honestly, it's a complete disgrace."

(Woman, adult, Jabal Mohsen/Tebbeneh).



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