Feasibility study to prepare a call for proposals to select a “neighborhood approach” urban project in Lebanon

INCEPTION REPORT

January 2022
1. INTRODUCTION ................................................................................................................................. 3
2. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY ................................................................................................. 4
   2.1. INCEPTION REPORT .................................................................................................................... 5
   2.2. GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE REPORT ............................................................................................... 6
   2.3. KEY ISSUES RELATED TO THE CALL FOR PROPOSAL .......................................................... 6
3. LITERATURE REVIEW ......................................................................................................................... 7
   3.1. POVERTY, VULNERABILITY AND MARGINALIZATION ............................................................ 7
   3.2. MEASURING POVERTY ................................................................................................................ 9
   3.3. URBAN POVERTY ....................................................................................................................... 13
       Introduction ...................................................................................................................................... 13
       Definitions ....................................................................................................................................... 13
       Urban poverty versus rural poverty ............................................................................................... 14
       Deconstructing the concept of urban poverty .............................................................................. 15
       Cumulative effect of urban poverty .............................................................................................. 16
       Urban perspective in the Lebanese context .................................................................................. 18
   3.4. URBAN POVERTY FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE ............................................................... 19
       Introduction ...................................................................................................................................... 19
       Literature review - Gender Perspective ...................................................................................... 19
       Economic inclusion of women ..................................................................................................... 20
       Female-headed households (FHHs) .............................................................................................. 21
       On Gender-based Violence ........................................................................................................... 22
       On Migrant Women ..................................................................................................................... 23
       On Children .................................................................................................................................... 24
       On LGBTQI Community ............................................................................................................... 25
4. CRISIS CONTEXT ................................................................................................................................. 26
5. AFD ACTIVITIES IN LEBANON ......................................................................................................... 28
6. THE “DO NO HARM” ANALYSIS ...................................................................................................... 29
7. IDENTIFICATION OF URBAN POOR NEIGHBORHOODS .............................................................. 30
REFERENCES ........................................................................................................................................ 32
1. INTRODUCTION

AFD seeks to fund a new local development project in urban settings, with a strong social and gender dimension in response to various crisis Lebanese vulnerable urban neighbourhoods are facing. The project(s) will be selected through a Call for Proposals, which will be launched in the second quarter of 2022 with the aim of starting the funding in 2022, via the MINKA funds (an AFD dedicated financing instrument for peacebuilding).

To respond to the challenges imposed by forced displacements due to the wars in Syria and Iraq, AFD launched the Minka Middle East Initiative in 2017. Its objective is to provide multiannual support to Syria’s neighbours. This regional program seeks to finance development projects that mitigate the vulnerabilities generated by population displacements and strengthen the resilience of the host countries.

The Initiative has three main objectives:

i) sustainably improve living conditions and access to essential services (drinking water, primary health care, etc.);
ii) support socioeconomic livelihood through education, vocational training, and job creation;
iii) reinforce the recovery of areas affected by the crisis (via infrastructures, economic sectors, and social cohesion).

Moreover, it is important to mention that the present study will follow a gender rights-based approach, and hence be in line with:

i) the French Gender and Development Strategy for 2022
ii) the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) No. 5: "Achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls."
iii) the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) gender equality policy marker;

In other terms, Gender is a crosscutting thematic area, meaning it concerns all areas of action (poverty, education, water, health, climate, justice, etc.) and all countries of intervention, and is therefore mainstreamed into all AFD’s activities.

At this stage of the project, AFD is aiming for a DAC2 (OECD marker) in terms of promoting gender equality. In this sense, the empowerment of women and the structural reduction of inequalities between women and men is one of the main project’s objectives (the project is designed from the outset to reduce gender inequalities) or a transversal objective (gender promotion is developed in all the components of the project but is not a main objective).

Through this Call for Proposals, with an estimated amount of funding of around 11 million euros granted to local or international non-profit organizations, AFD seeks to finance a “neighbourhood approach project», with a strong social and gender equality dimension, targeting both refugee and host communities living in vulnerable urban neighbourhoods. The projects should respond to their expressed needs, strengthen social cohesion, and enhance trust between local authorities and the communities living in these areas. The projects will mainly focus on women and youth, and may include investments or soft components, at both short or medium terms. The call for proposal will target 4 to 6 neighbourhoods in at least three cities located in Greater Beirut, Southern governorates (Saida, Tyr) and Tripoli.
2. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The present assignment is a “Feasibility study to prepare a call for proposals that aims to select a neighbourhood approach project in Lebanon”.

More specifically, the objectives are defined in the terms of reference, and divided in two folds (two phases):

1. Firm Phase: Support AFD in the definition of the scope of the call for proposal: context analysis (including a do no harm analysis), geographical areas to target, implementation methods to support; sectors of intervention to prioritize and the most relevant gender approach to adopt depending on the context;

2. Optional phase: Support the selected consortium to consolidate a gender approach within their project.

The Consultation and Research Institute (CRI) was contracted by AFD in December 2021 to conduct this assignment. Three experts were mobilized (socio-economist, urban planner and gender experts) in addition to a team of field investigators. The study will be implemented in 2022 over a duration of 5 months (for the “firm Phase”). The “Optional Phase” duration is 12 months.

Below is a brief description of the proposed methodology, in line with the terms of reference and as presented in the technical proposal. It should be noted that the below approach may be subject to amendments based on the outcome of the regular discussions between AFD and CRI, and/or based on the project progress and the outcome of the analysis.
2.1. Inception Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Comments and Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kick-off meeting (AFD-CRI)</td>
<td>Held on the 14th December 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up meeting (AFD-CRI)</td>
<td>21th December 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gathering of literature</td>
<td>AFD provided a set of documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CRI collected during the period Dec 21 and Jan 22 several documents related to Poverty, Urban vulnerability, Gender, Lebanese context, and other related topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Note: Data gathering will not stop at the end of the inception phase. It will be maintained during the whole lifetime of the study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td>The outcome of the literature review is presented in the Inception Report. It is composed of the following sections:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|                               | 1- Poverty, Vulnerability and Marginalization  
|                               | 2- Measuring Poverty                                                          |
|                               | 3- Urban Poverty                                                                |
|                               | 4- Urban Poverty from a Gender Perspective                                      |
| Inception Report              | The objective of this report is to present, to the extend possible and among other topics, the various profiles of urban vulnerability existing in Lebanon in the four cities (Tripoli, greater Beirut, Saida and Tyr) |
|                               | Note: while the technical proposal suggested to present in the Inception Report a preliminary list of vulnerable urban neighborhoods (or clusters), the present report modified the approach (based on the outcome of the kick-off meeting) and proposed to present the various “profiles” of urban poverty. During the fieldwork phase, the study team in collaboration with AFD will select a number of case studies (neighborhoods) to illustrate each profile. |
| Duration                      | 1 month                                                                          |
2.2. Geographical Scope Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Comments and Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meeting (AFD-CRI)</td>
<td>To be held after submission and approval of Inception Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of eligibility criteria</td>
<td>The study team will review the proposed list of eligibility criteria proposed by AFD and amend this list based on the outcome of the literature review. The list should be aligned with the various profiles of urban poverty identified in the Inception Report.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Quick Field Assessment       | The objective of this task is to perform a quick field assessment of a selected number of neighborhoods, in each of the profiles of urban vulnerability identified in the Inception Report. This task comprises the following sub-tasks:  
  - Logistic preparation of the field visits  
  - Preparation of the technical tools  
  - Training of investigators  
  - Field visits and data collection  
  - Consolidation of data and analysis |
| Geographical Scope Report    | The objective of this report is to present the outcome of the quick field assessment and to select the final list of neighborhoods (representing/illustrating each of the urban poverty profiles) that will be addressed in phase 3. |

Duration 2 months

2.3. Key Issues related to the Call for Proposal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Comments and Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meeting (AFD-CRI)</td>
<td>To be held after submission and approval of Geographical Scope Report</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Field visits     | Within each of the selected neighborhoods, the study team will conduct an in-depth fieldwork aiming at:  
  - Identify and describe the profile of potential beneficiaries  
  - Mapping of actors and interventions: lessons learned and opportunities/synergies  
  - Priorities, eligibility criteria and main orientations and recommendations to be included in the Call for Proposal  
  - “No harm” analysis |
| Final Report     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Duration         | 2 months                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
3. LITERATURE REVIEW

The study team, in collaboration with AFD, collected a significant number of documents and studies relevant to this assignment. The review of these sources was performed during the period December 2021 and January 2022, and the results of this review are presented in the following sections:

1- Poverty, Vulnerability and Marginalization
2- Measuring Poverty
3- Urban Poverty
4- Urban Poverty from a Gender Perspective

3.1. Poverty, Vulnerability and Marginalization

The study is targeting vulnerable/poor neighborhoods. In this regard, there are several definitions of poverty.

- “Poverty is the state of one who lacks a certain amount of material possessions or money.” Britannica
- “Fundamentally, poverty is a denial of choices and opportunities, a violation of human dignity.” The United Nations
- “Poverty is pronounced deprivation in well-being, and comprises many dimensions.” The World Bank
- “Absolute poverty is a condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs. Copenhagen declaration-World Summit for Social Development 1995

The international literature shows clearly that poverty is:

- not limited to income, revenues or expenditure capacity and purchasing power of individuals and households; although these “money metric” indicators are important for measuring poverty.
- a relative and dynamic concept: basic needs change in time (new needs immerge, e.g. telecommunication since the 90s). Basic needs are also related to geographic locations (e.g. urban vs rural) or cultures (social, anthropological dimensions) which are reflected in the different consumer behavior characteristics.
- a subjective concept: poverty can also be a perception, self-perception or the perception of other community members. It may be reflected as well in a “common-knowledge” image perceived by the public opinion.
- composed of several dimensions and is in fact a multi-dimensional concept. Access to education, health coverage, employment, housing, public services/infrastructure (e.g. water, electricity, energy) are part of the poverty definition.
- difficult to capture. Poverty may be measured at various levels (country, region, household, community, neighborhood, etc.) and these measurements may use different methodologies (income, calories intake, Unsatisfied Basic Needs, etc.).
The above definitions show that poverty is a complex concept and hence is difficult to measure. Researchers developed several methodologies each one responding to a Poverty Definition or for a particular purpose. In other terms, there is no unique poverty, hence no unique methodology.

In general, three concepts are commonly used: Poverty, Vulnerability, Marginalization. The main difference between Vulnerability and Marginalization resides in the fact that Marginalization represents individuals, households, communities or geographic areas that are already in a social exclusion situation. They are not anymore part of the socio-economic development. Marginalization describes a present situation, while vulnerability represents a potential situation. Vulnerability is related to the capacity to resist to external socio-economic shocks. In other terms, vulnerability represents a group of people that are not resilient to external shocks, and hence are already poor or at the edge of poverty. Marginalized people are usually part of extreme poverty. Upper and lower poverty lines are indirect indicators for vulnerability and marginalization. In addition, it is important to note that while marginalization is only a part of extreme poverty (under lower poverty line), vulnerability is not totally included in the upper poverty line category and it may belong as well to middle social classes who are extremely sensitive to external shocks.

In the context of this study, the concept of “Vulnerability” will be adopted, rather than marginalization or poverty, in order to enlarge the scope and the geographical coverage. The current economic crisis in Lebanon, being a significant socio-economic shock, has and will push vulnerable households that were belonging to middle classes toward poverty. Opting for the vulnerability concept will allow to encompass all these categories: households that were already below the upper poverty line (including extreme poverty), in addition to the “emerging new” poor households that were in the near past vulnerable.
3.2. Measuring Poverty

The literature review shows that there are three different “approaches” of poverty measurement. The first is based on macro-economic indicators. The second, focuses on the household living conditions, while the second is based on the geographical dimension and the assessment of the community quality of life.

The macro-economic approach uses indicators such as: distribution of GDP per capita, or distribution of income and expenditures, or Gini coefficient, or indexes (Human Development index), etc. Macro-economic and national poverty indicators remain too general reflect only income variables and do not cover other significant dimensions of the living conditions.

The United Nations has elaborated an index that takes into account other dimensions than income, such as education and health. The Human Development Index measures these multi-dimensional factors of the living conditions. Lebanon ranks 80 in 2017. The “Global Multidimensional Index - 2021” report recently published (in October 2021) by the UNDP also opted for a multidimensional approach of measuring poverty.

It is important to note that poverty measurements are not limited to the above-mentioned indicators, but these are the most common ones.

Measuring poverty at the country level provides significant knowledge but remains limited. It does not allow to describe the main characteristics of poor households or marginalized regions. Other methodologies were developed to reach this goal.

Poverty can be measured at the level of the household. In Lebanon, three main types of approaches were implemented to measure poverty at the household level: desk research approach, Unsatisfied Basic Needs (UBN) approach, and consumption/calories intake and expenditures approach. Unfortunately, all these approaches do not include an accurate geographical dimension and remain valid at the governorate and/or the district levels.

Finally, another approach was developed by researchers that, instead of adopting the household as the main statistical unit, researchers opted for the smallest geographical unit (the cadaster). The aim of this approach is to identify poor areas instead of poor households. In order to reach this objective, two approaches were developed.

Approach 1: qualitative approach

In this approach, researcher identify poverty pockets through a desk study or a series of consultations with stakeholders: local authorities, key informant at the regional or local level, social workers, MoSA or its Social Development Centers, international or local NGOs working in this field, experts and researchers, etc. This approach was implemented in several studies and provided a list poverty pockets.

Approach 2: systematic approach

The systematic approach starts by listing the whole Cadastre data. Lebanon is composed of around 1500 CF\textsuperscript{2}. Researchers gathered data (indicators) for each of these CF (e.g. number of registered populations, voters, estimated number of residents, number of establishments). Then, only significant variables (correlated with poverty, as an explanatory variables) were kept for the elaboration of a scoring system. Once the scoring system was implemented, the CF were sorted and the poorest regions were identified.

The geographic approach was rarely applied in Lebanon. CRI conducted in 2006 a Rapid Social Assessment\textsuperscript{3} aiming at identifying poverty pockets and describing poverty characteristics in these areas. The objective was to develop a methodology that will help in identifying poverty pockets (priority areas) which will benefit from World Bank funds through NGOs to finance developmental initiatives. The study concluded that poverty is not one single phenomenon but its characteristics varies. Indeed, 4 different types of poverty were identified, namely:

- Poverty Type 1: Lumpen urban areas (social issues constitute the major problem)
- Poverty Type 2: Deserted rural areas (demographic issues constitute the major problem)
- Poverty Type 3: Agricultural rural areas (infrastructural and partnership issues constitute the major problem)
- Poverty Type 4: Stop and Move areas (historical background constitute the major cause for the current situation)

The poverty characteristics of each profile are different and subsequently policies that address poverty problems should also be adapted (and should vary) according to cluster. In other terms, there are no one poverty problem but several types of “poverties” which require several types of responses.

Other studies that adopted a geographical approach to determine poverty were also able to identify a list of poverty pockets (but not necessarily focusing on urban poverty) such as the ESFD in 2004. More recently, various UN agency (UNHCR, UNDP, UNICEF, UN-Habitat, etc.) published regularly a list of most vulnerable communities in relation with Syrian refugees\textsuperscript{4} (maps below). Moreover, several ad-hoc studies and research papers identified poverty pockets, but did not cover the whole Lebanese territories (e.g. Poverty in Tripoli – ESCWA 2010).

The present assignment will focus on the geographic approach, and will use literature review and field work to identify the most vulnerable urban neighborhoods.

---

\textsuperscript{2} CF: Circonscription Foncière, the smallest administrative geographic unit. It reflects in most of the cases the municipal level.

\textsuperscript{3} Rapid Social Assessment, CRI-CDR-WB, 2006

\textsuperscript{4} The list includes approximatively between 250 localities
Poverty Areas in Lebanon (2006)

The above map shows the CFs that were identified as being poor areas, for each of the poverty types (in red=poor urban areas, in green=agricultural rural poor areas, in grey=deserted poor areas, in black="stop and move" areas).
Calculation of the Most Vulnerable Localities is based on the following datasets:

1 - Multi Deprivation Index (MDI)

The MDI is a composite index based on deprivation level scoring of households in five critical dimensions:

i. Access to Health services;
ii. Income levels;
iii. Access to Education services;
iv. Access to Water and Sanitation services;
v. Housing conditions;

MDI is from CAD, UNDP and MoSA Living Conditions and Household Budget Survey conducted in 2004.

2 - Lebanese population dataset

Lebanese population data is based on CDR 2002.

3 - Refugee population figures

The refugee population includes all registered Syrian refugees. PPL and PRL Syrian refugee data is based on UNHCR registration database as of November 2014 and Palestinian refugee data is based on 276,000 AUB/UNRWA figure (PPL as of 2011 and PRL 2016).

Legend

- 50% - 99% High Pressure on Resources (Ratio 1:1 and above)
- 25% - 50% Substantial Pressure on Resources (Ratio 1:1 up to 1:2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deprived Lebanese</th>
<th>Refugees</th>
<th># of Cadastres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>35.8%</td>
<td>54.1%</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.8%</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ratio of refugees to Lebanese, by cadaster, is included to highlight the potential degree of population pressure on services and resources.
3.3. Urban Poverty

“...Rural poverty is poised to decline, while urban poverty is likely to persist... “.

Homi Kharas, Constanza Di Nucci, Kristofer Hamel, and Baldwin Tong

Introduction

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

Study of poverty, inequalities, and deprivation in Lebanon is usually reduced into measurements without creating proper linkages into broader aspects of social and public policy.

Data from the UN-HABITAT shows that poverty in Lebanon is located in urban pockets surrounding major cities such as Beirut, Tripoli, and Saida which are also housing Palestinian refugees, and most recently, Syrian refugees. Challenges of access to basic services, adequate and affordable housing, and healthcare facilities continuously haunt the urban poor.

Municipalities are unable to fully play their (often front-line) role and to respond to urban challenges due to a number of constraints. These mainly include poor financial capacities and an over-reliance on revenues centrally transferred on adhoc basis, weak human resources and technical bureaucracy. Today, cities and urban communities in Lebanon embody the typical, globally recognized features of a malfunctioning urban system.

Definitions

Urban Area

"Urban area" can refer to towns, cities, and suburbs. An urban area includes the city itself, as well as the surrounding areas. Urban areas are created and further developed by the process of urbanization and are categorized by urban morphology as cities, towns, conurbations or suburbs.

Most inhabitants of urban areas have nonagricultural jobs. Urban areas are very developed, meaning there is a density of human structures such as houses, commercial buildings, roads, bridges, and railways.

Throughout the world, the dominant pattern of migration within countries has been from rural to urban areas. This is partly because improved technology has decreased the need for agricultural workers and partly because cities are seen as offering greater economic opportunities.

Neighborhood

A neighborhood is a geographically localized community within a larger city, town, suburb or rural area. Neighborhoods are often social communities with considerable face-to-face interaction among members.
Researchers have not agreed on an exact definition, but the following may serve as a starting point: "Neighborhood is generally defined spatially as a specific geographic area and functionally as a set of social networks. Neighborhoods, then, are the spatial units in which face-to-face social interactions occur—the personal settings and situations where residents seek to realize common values, socialize youth, and maintain effective social control."\(^5\)

Urban studies use neighborhood as a unit of analysis. The neighborhood mirrors the fluidity, growth, and social class differentiation wrought by the larger society.

In our study, we believe that the size of the Neighborhood will be identified on a case-by-case, according to various criterias (mainly the spatial, communautarian and economic divide) that will presented and clarified each time.

**Public realm:**

The term ‘public realm’ is often used loosely, sometimes interchangeably with ‘public domain’, to refer to external urban spaces that are publicly. Public realm relates to all parts of the built environment where the public has free access. It encompasses: all streets, squares, and other rights of way, whether predominantly in residential, commercial or civic uses...

The term can also be used as a means of describing the physical manifestation of community and of human interaction outside the private home. The 'everyday spaces' that are used by people to socialize, play, work, shop, traverse and use for activities such as exercise, enable social processes among residents and citizens.

**Urban poverty versus rural poverty**

Rural poverty often stems from limited access to markets, education, quality infrastructure, employment opportunities (including informality of labor), health, and financial products. Unlike rural poverty, urban poverty is complex and multidimensional—extending beyond the deficiency of income or consumption, where its many dimensions relate to the vulnerability of the poor on account of their inadequate access to land and housing, physical infrastructure and services, economic and livelihood sources.

There appear to be several reasons that suggest that urban dwellers both earn more and spend more on necessities. First, some goods are more expensive in urban areas, especially in larger and/or more

prosperous cities. There is extensive evidence to suggest that, in general, prices are higher in urban areas (although the price of specific items may be lower). Second, some goods that are essentials for everyone have to be purchased in urban areas but may not be marketed in rural areas (for example, fuel, water and shelter). Many empirical studies have shown the high costs paid by particular urban groups (or those living in particular settlements) for non-food essentials such as housing, water and fuel. Finally, different livelihoods require different costs, and these may not be adequately taken into account in a standardized bundle of “basic needs” goods and services. For example, the nature of urban labor markets may require expenditure on transport and clean smart clothes for work.

Moreover, in urban settings we can note a competition for scarce resources that may also increase prices. Urban households, all over the world, including Lebanon, may face particularly high costs related to:

- **Housing** – housing markets can be expensive and low-income households may spend a considerable proportion of their income on rent. Most rental contracts are not registered at the municipality, which makes tenants very vulnerable to eviction with the ongoing strong devaluation of the current currency. Even those who squat on land illegally may need to make payments to community leaders who manage the land, or to local “strongmen”.
- **Transport** – low income households spent a substantial percentage of their revenue on transport services. This trend is exacerbated by the lack of public transport as it is the case in Lebanon.
- **Basic services** – in many urban contexts, prices for water for those who lack official connections, and for sanitation for those with no toilets in their home are high, same applies to heating and electricity.
- **Undertaking informal** – and in some cases even illegal-enterprises may require bribes and/or fines when the activities are discovered.
- **Direct expenditure on health** can be high, in part because of the high levels of ill-health or injury and in part because of the high costs of treatment, knowing that most of these families have no access to private insurances and are deprived of public health funds.

The combined effect of the economic collapse and the sanitary crisis due to Covid has exacerbated the vulnerabilities of urban population in Lebanon. Lately, access to power through neighborhood generators have become limited to only few, and low-level income dwellings had to let go of their monthly subscription, leaving them with almost no electricity at home (knowing that Electricite du Liban provides power only one hour per day to most urban areas)

**Deconstructing the concept of urban poverty**

The “urban poor” is a very diverse group. The urban poor represent different groups with diverse needs and levels/types of vulnerability. These differences may be traced to gender, physical or mental disability, ethnic or racial background, household structure, and people in long term poverty and in temporary poverty etc.
Urban poverty can be transitional and temporary, or persistent. Poverty is a dynamic condition from which people move in and out e.g., due to major macroeconomic shocks…. The informal sector and casual laborers who are often at the brink of poverty are especially vulnerable in times of economic recession.

Poor people are very capable of helping themselves and can take pro-active roles in development, as long as they have access to decision making, and are given the rights and responsibilities of other urban citizens.

Income (or consumption) is the most frequently used proxy for poverty. Money-based poverty definitions and assessments provide a standard scale so that different population groups can be compared. Most definitions and measurements of poverty are based essentially on income-levels. And income-based poverty lines are usually set too low in relation to the costs of food and non-food needs for urban population. Social indicators such as life expectancy and infant mortality are also important. Currently several scholars suggest, worldwide, to take into consideration other factors, when assessing urban poverty, such as:

- Poor quality, overcrowded housing
- Risk of forceful eviction: not having tenure security and legal titles to property made households extremely vulnerable in times of crisis
- Lack of safe, readily available, water supplies
- Poor provision for sanitation, drainage and solid waste collection
- Lack of access to healthcare, emergency services and policing
- Difficulty accessing government schools, and
- Locations at high risk of disasters and with risk levels increasing because of climate change.

These indicators need to be customized and adapted to the Lebanese context, especially in light with the ongoing economic context combined to the sanitary crisis. A specific section in this report is dedicated to the elaboration of indicators of urban poverty areas.

Cumulative effect of urban poverty

Urban poverty is often characterized by cumulative deprivations—that is, one dimension of poverty is often the cause of or contributor to another dimension. This is illustrated in the below figure:
Causes of Urban Violence

The causes that can lead towards urban violence are multifarious and differ across areas and neighborhoods. Persistent structural inequality and a lack of rights among the population can be the drivers of urban violence. Political repression over many years and weak and corrupt institutions can as well significantly contribute to this phenomenon. Inhabitants of disadvantaged, often informal urban settlements suffer more immediately from impoverishment, unemployment, social exclusion and discrimination. People in these communities experience violence and fear of violent threats on a daily basis. Young people are often forced to become members of criminal gangs, which strengthen the supposed sense of belonging to a group with power and respect. By incorporating an urban and spatial framework of analysis, violence can be examined from a more dynamic perspective.
Urban perspective in the Lebanese context

The weak position of the central government as well as the limited inclusive governance, coupled to the traditional laissez-faire economic policies, are part of the main obstacles for balanced urban growth in Lebanon. The country also deals with the legacy of feudal structures of society and its ramifications on land property as well as destructive events (civil war, Israeli bombardments and disasters) and their aftermath.

Lebanon is a highly urbanized country with more than 87% of its population living in urban areas and 64% living in large urban agglomerations (Beirut and its suburbs, Tripoli, Sidon, Zahle and Tyre) (UN-Habitat, 2011). In the last fifty years, rates of urbanization have increased dramatically, primarily due to rural exodus, suburbanization, war displacements and the influx of refugees and displaced.

This rapid urbanization, added to poor management, and unequal development of urban areas have contributed to the growth of informality and the creation of underserviced urban neighborhoods around big cities. It is important though to notice that the construction of most of these poverty clusters in and around major cities dates from the late 1940s until 1975 (except neighborhoods like Bourj Hammoud, that dates to the French mandate period). Moreover, these vulnerable neighborhoods were hit severely by the undergoing economic meltdown, leading to an unprecedented crisis with level of basis services reaching a record low.

Since the start of the Syrian crisis in 2011, the number of displaced soared in Lebanon. More than 40% of Syrian displaced live in inadequate shelter with minimal infrastructure, such that conditions are worsening over time (UNHCR, 2019 and Fawaz et al., 2014). The majority (69%) is living in urban and peri-urban areas. This resulted in high demand for affordable housing which prices have increased in the market, making it even less accessible to many. Observations of settlement patterns indicated a clustering of displaced creating over-dense pseudo-camps in urban areas.

No action was taken to properly settle the displaced, as this would be seen as legitimizing their presence in the long term. As most of the displaced do not pay municipal taxes since they reside in informal housing, municipalities became ever more reluctant to upgrade infrastructure and public services. The outcome simply has exacerbated pressure on electricity, water, sewage and waste services, all of which were insufficient even before the crisis.
3.4. Urban Poverty from a Gender perspective

Introduction

The dynamic and multidimensional concept of poverty is the best tool to measure the levels of deprivation being experienced by the residents of Lebanon. The dramatic deliberate collapse brought upon the country in the past 2 years has created new pockets of poverty, new categories of poverty and new profiles of poverty. The compounded crisis in its multi-faceted manifestations whether financial, monetary, economic, social, political, medical, educational and securitarian is exponentially devastating the population along with the total meltdown of the public institutions and public utilities and the high jacking of the people’s savings and deposits by the banks. The situation is worsening by the day amid lack of structured strategies and reforms plans. The numbers that are mentioned in reports dating to one or two months back could be considered outdated. That’s how much the situation is deteriorating and complexifying any work.

Another important nuance to be made on the concept of neighborhoods of poverty is that, in today’s context, the majority of the middle class found itself falling down the ladder, some able to survive above the poverty line and others who have sunk down the line. However, this sudden downfall into poverty has probably not manifested in their original living situation, in the housing situation and in the visuals of the neighborhoods they live in.

These categories of ‘new poor’ are ill-equipped to face the new living conditions with the psychological toll that comes with it, they are not aware of the channels of survival that exist in poverty or where to seek assistance – should they find the courage to accept the process. These categories are somewhat stranded in a new difficult environment amid a collapse. Thus, it seems important to also look at them when developing the material for this study and to see how they can be integrated – to a certain extent – in the projects.

Literature review - Gender Perspective

Gender is cross-cutting dimension that will be deployed throughout the different phases of the project and on the different layers of intervention. The gender lens provides a thorough understanding of the ways in which the project, the activities and the interventions impact women and men, girls and boys differently. It also allows to grasp the lived realities of the beneficiaries of a program and to nuance the intricate intersections between gender, age, socio-economic background, marital status, nationality, religion, ethnic background, etc. Thus, gender holds a central and multi-layered place in the study.

A wide range of gender inequalities persist in urban poor settings whereby women are usually deprived of financial and economic resources, have less access to resources and services than men and are confined to their reproductive and caregiving roles in dire conditions. In fact, urban poverty has a distinctive gender dimension whereby it puts a disproportionate burden on women as they are the members of the
communities who are responsible for unpaid work and are represented as caregivers, above all\(^6\). A gendered perspective of urban poverty highlights fundamental inequalities and gender-based discrimination by revealing women’s unequal position in the urban labor market, their limited ability to assets and/or income and/or livelihoods independently from male relatives and their greater exposure to violence.

Understanding urban poverty from a gender perspective includes both paid and unpaid care work as well as dependency and powerlessness in gender relations.

A gendered perspective of urban poverty reveals the significance of non-income dimensions such as time poverty and the ‘feminization of poverty’\(^7\). Time poverty refers to the double and sometimes triple burden carried by women in poor urban settings, where they are left with practically no time for themselves. The related emotional stress is an important and specifically gendered element of multi-dimensional poverty and one which is made considerably worse by economic crises.

The poorest residents in urban settings are usually living in exceptionally unhealthy and dangerous conditions, with little access to public potable water, to proper electricity and internet coverage and to quality health services and education. Recognizing the needs of the urban poor in the selected neighborhoods will require to take a closer look at the gendered aspect of the scarcity or lack of services, and how urban poor women, and more specifically elderly women, are differently and disproportionately impacted\(^8\). Lack of access to already inadequate infrastructure, inadequate shelter, restricted mobility, gender-based violence, etc. are issues that make up the holistic and gendered understanding of each urban context.

**Economic inclusion of women**

The participation of women in the labor market in Lebanon is one the lowest regionally, standing at around 25%\(^9\) of the total labor force. In some cases, poor women are faced with the reality that the male breadwinner – who is commonly designated as the head of the household – can no longer solely sustain the needs of the family and thus these women venture in the labor market, usually in informal work settings that lack social protection, sustainability and decent working conditions.

Women’s labor force participation for both Lebanese and Syrian is the highest in Beirut and amounts to 37%. In other urban centers the percentage is in the low twenties and in Akkar and other rural areas it can go down to 15%.

The share of women in the labor market is considerably lower in northern and southern governorates\(^10\), which is also the case for younger women. For example, a young woman (20-24 years old) in Beirut or Mount Lebanon is three and a half times more likely to seek a job and enter the workforce than a young woman of the same age in Akkar.

---

\(^6\) UNFPA, 2012.
\(^7\) Ibid.
\(^8\) UNFPA, 2012.
\(^9\) World Bank, June 2021
\(^10\) World Bank, 2021
Women represent an important constituent of the informal economy.

Based on the analysis undertaken by a recent UN Women report, a 25 percent contraction in real GDP from 2017 to 2020 is expected to have increased women’s unemployment rate from 14.3 percent before the crisis to 26 percent by September 2020. This translates to a 63 percent — from 81,200 to 132,500—in the number of women in unemployment. This finding merges with the dynamic concept of poverty that the research will be working with.

The disparities in access to education and vocational training, as well as housing ownership between women and men in poor urban areas can be linked to unequal access to services and time limitations that most women endure because of the extensive time spent on unpaid work. The latter represent barrier for women’s economic inclusion and participation in income-generating activities or in local politics, at least in its formal aspect. As mentioned above, the assigned gender roles perceive women as caregivers and their main duties are above all taking care of the children, the elderly and the household as a whole.

Improving the participation of women in the labor force can be facilitated by providing access to quality and affordable childcare services which would enable more women to join the labor force and be able to remain economically active. This would positively impact low-income household since they are not usually able to pay for help in housework and Syrian refugee women more specifically. In a recent recently conducted by UN Women in Lebanon, 45% of women who participated in economic empowerment programs were not working in the two years after the completion of the programs. They all shared the same main reason: overwhelming unpaid care responsibilities at the household.

Working with Social Development Centers (SDCs) is an important modality, as they support the longer-term objective of developing sustainable and quality childcare services across Lebanon to populations most in need.

In the EU sectoral gender analysis report, the main areas of potential growth over the next 5 to 7 years have been identified are the following: knowledge economy, tourism, agriculture and industrial production of consumer-facing products. Thus, engaging the involvement of women in these sectors is crucial in working towards equal representation of men and women in these sectors. The links between education / vocational training and the types of work that has been identified with the highest rates of growth comparatively.

However, the potential growth in these sectors is intricately determined by immediate efforts to implement urgently needed reforms, as soon as possible. Amid the lack of a consistent and holistic redressal strategy, the small-scale efforts might not be as sustainable as needed.

Female-headed households (FHHs)

An interesting finding from the ESCWA survey is the lack of gender-based differences when it comes to the reporting of multidimensional poverty. In fact, 81 per cent for female-headed households, and 80 per cent for male-headed households have declared they are experiencing multidimensional poverty. However, a nuance should be made between what is reported regarding poverty and the differences in the lived realities between men and women. Access to resources, assets, job opportunities, social protection as well as access to equal laws and gender justice cannot be considered equivalently between
men and women. Thus, although multidimensional poverty is omnipresent regardless of gender, female-headed households face added layers of marginalization than male-headed households do not face similarly.

Women head nearly one in five households in Lebanon\textsuperscript{11}. This can be partly explained by the higher life expectancy of women over men, which means an important number of the total of FHHs are represented by 65+ old women. Within marginalized communities, FHHs are more vulnerable than men to poverty.

In the 2020 Vulnerability assessment of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, it was noted that a far higher proportion of female-headed households (68%) than male-headed households (13%) were using coping strategies categorized as “crisis level or emergency level” when it comes to securing basic food needs whether through reducing the portion of the meal or reducing the number of meals per day. 7% of all households reported restricting the food consumption of female members of the household specifically.

In a study published on food insecurity in the Arab world in 2021\textsuperscript{12}, it was found that females in the Arab region, regardless of the country, are differently impacted by food insecurity (more insecure than male-headed poor households) and have significantly lower subjective wellbeing measures compared to males. In the case of female-headed households, the situation would also represent a more marginalized situation for women whereby on top of carrying the burden of unpaid care work, they carry the burden of the full livelihood of the household. The wellbeing aspect does probably not even transpire on the list of things that they look for.

On Gender-based Violence

GBV is on the rise amid the socio-economic crisis, primarily linked to patriarchal social norms and the manifestation of toxic masculinities and as a response to negative food insecurity coping strategies and increasing levels of debt.

In addition to the above, both Kafa (Enough) Violence & Exploitation and ABAAD documented an important increase in the number of calls to the hotline during the COVID pandemic. Amid a legal framework and laws that are openly discriminating against women, alternative solutions need to be provided to the women living in poor urban dwellings where promiscuity leaves little room for privacy and the community/neighbors have a say in each other’s’ lives.

Additionally, women have less mobility than men, in general. In poor urban settings, with the predominant presence of men in public spaces, the feeling of safety is put at stake, especially for younger women and when using public or private transportation. The decreased mobility combined with increased gender-based violence in the past 2 years\textsuperscript{13} sets additional challenge for women, that is detrimental to their empowerment.

\textsuperscript{11} World Bank, 2021.
\textsuperscript{12} Diab-El-Harake et al, 2021. Gender-based differentials in food insecurity and wellbeing in Arab countries
\textsuperscript{13} Abaad, 2021
Gender-based violence, although prevalent in urban poor areas, where usually violence has higher and more dramatic ways of manifesting, can be reduced by upgrading or changing the urban infrastructure and physical fabric of the area making it safer for everyone, but mostly for women, girls and boys.

Informed by patriarchal and racist attitudes, violence against migrant domestic workers is well documented and highly prevalent. These women are viewed as second class citizens, and their exploitation is normalized.

Lebanese society is still largely homophobic, and homosexuality is criminalized, making it effectively impossible for LGBTIQ+ individuals to report GBV against them, even though they face high rates of discrimination and violence.

Period poverty is becoming a reality for women in Lebanon, more specifically poor women with the prices of the pads that have quadrupled to say the least in the past year. Women and girls are resorting to alternative ways/products that are usually not safe and would put them at a higher risk of sexual and reproductive health issues and diseases14.

On Migrant Women

Exploitation and trafficking

In the rapid needs assessment conducted by the International Organization of Migration in the areas mostly affected by the Beirut Port Explosion on August 4, 2020 and targeting migrant workers, a group of women who were interviewed confirmed that they have resorted to degrading, exploitative, dangerous or illegal work to ensure their basic needs, and more specifically basic food needs. Sex work is indeed one of the ways that some migrant women are faced to accept in order to survive.

It is also the case for Syrian refugee women and girls living in urban dwellings who are lured into unconsented sex work through well established and highly influential human trafficking networks - the case of ‘Chez Maurice’ in 2016 is only an example of intricate correlation between poverty, marginalization, absence of the rule of law, racism and violence against women15. It is important to mention here that the laws in Lebanon do not protect sex workers, but on the contrary, highly criminalize them and dehumanize them, which further increases their marginalization and their exploitation.

In such context, migrant workers in general, more specifically domestic workers, face extensive stress on their mental health, with increased diagnosis of depression, anxiety and PTSD16.

Access to quality and affordable healthcare services is quite challenging for women more than men, and more specifically for migrant women and Syrian refugees.

16 https://www.reuters.com/article/lebanon-migrants-health-idINL8N2I4SC
On Children

“Life is very hard, it is becoming harder every day. Today I sent my four children to school without food. I am not sure if I will be able to sustain this life. I have suicidal thoughts and the only thing stopping me from doing this is my children. I feel so bad for them.” Hanan, 29 who lives in Tripoli, northern Lebanon – UNICEF report

The devastating impact of the compound crisis and collapse on children is getting worse by the day. In the UNICEF report published in November 2021, the figures and the testimonies are heartbreaking. Living conditions of children in Lebanon have dramatically deteriorated between April 2021 and October 2021. For example, children skipping a meal because there was not enough food on the table 36.7% to 53.4% in less than 6 months. 71.1% of households said they were buying food on credit or are borrowing money to do so.

The alarming part is that if the numbers were to be updated in January 2022, the figures would be even worse. In fact, in the month of December 2021, prices of some basic products soared by 32%.

More than 8 in 10 people live in poverty and 34 per cent in extreme poverty, according to 2021 multidimensional poverty estimates\(^{17}\). The figures are even starker for Syrian refugee families, with almost 9 out of 10 living in extreme poverty\(^{18}\).

Thus, many households are obliged to adopt survival strategies that put at risk children’s upbringing, health and future. The desperate measures include increasing the debt of the family to buy food, reducing the spending on education, obliging the children to work at a very young age and early child marriage for girls in order to reduce the spending within the household. The devastating crisis has increased children’s vulnerability and exacerbated inequality.

The proportion of families surveyed for the UNICEF assessment who sent children to work rose to 12 per cent, from 9 per cent in the case of Syrian refugees, and increased sevenfold to 7 per cent in the case of Lebanese households.

“Our parents need the money we earn. What would they do if we stopped working now?” Amal, 15, who picks fruit in southern Lebanon. Her parents have no work. “When I look to the future, I see life getting harder. My biggest worry is the rent. We don’t want to lose our home. It’s our safe space”.

Overall, in Lebanon, there are more school-aged boys than girls out of school\(^{19}\). Coping strategies in Lebanese households could entail taking the boys out of school to send them for work in order to support their families. This is either done for additional income or could be the only income-channel for the families. Within the Syrian communities, child labor has been widespread in agriculture and manual technical services whereby young Syrian girls are the most exploitable the cheapest labor for agriculture – in rural areas - and young Syrian boys for other type of manual work in both rural and urban. Child labor in urban areas might affect more boys than girls because of traditional stereotypes.

\(^{17}\) Multidimensional Poverty in Lebanon (2019-2021)
\(^{18}\) 2020 Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon
\(^{19}\) World Bank, 2021.
In the coming months, child labor is expected to rise amid the loss of livelihoods channels. The impacts of such a dreadful trend are of long-term nature and still to be sensed within the society.

According to UNICEF’s poll, primary healthcare for children has also been highly impacted by the crisis whereby almost 34 per cent of children who required primary health care in October 2021 did not receive it, up from 28 per cent in April for the same year.

**Access to water and how it impacts children**

More than 45 per cent of the households had insufficient drinking water at least once in the 30 days prior to the survey, as compared with under 20 per cent in April 2021. The main reasons they did not get enough water were the cost (35 per cent in October, up from 29 per cent) and the inability to reach the source (14 per cent, up from 9 per cent.)

**Impact of missing school**

In addition to learning loss, missing school can lead to mental distress, exposure to violence and reduced development of social skills. It also means children miss out on school-based meals and vaccinations.

... what about street children? The risks of being involved in illegal future activities? --- lost generation and through this neighborhood approach one can find activities to recuperate this risk. Public spaces, informal schooling, clubs, skills building, etc.

**On LGBTQI Community**

The study conducted by Oxfam in 2021 on the situation of the LGBTQI community in Lebanon and the impacts of the socio-economic collapse, the Beirut Port Explosion and the COVID-19 pandemic on them. What came out is that the community is facing:

- a shrinking access to safe spaces since a lot of these spaces were located in the Port’s surrounding neighborhoods
- a housing crisis with the decrease of their livelihoods and their income. On that level, the situation of the LGBTQI community is complex since a lot of them cannot live with their parents, or if they do, they might face extreme challenges
- a dire need of basic assistance, whether food, medication or cash assistance to survive
- an extensive stress on their mental health, in addition to the stress of having to find the needed prescribed medication if any

In such context, the most vulnerable within the community seek jobs in the informal economy with a few resorting to sex work (taboo, criminalized and unsafe) in order to survive.

Trans individuals, non-binary individuals, and queer refugees seem to be suffering the impact of the crises the most acutely.

As it shows from this brief context introduction, delving into the realities of people living in poverty in urban areas from a gender lens brings out the complex layers of marginalization. These will be at the core of our work throughout the different phases and will serve as an analytical guide in order to achieve the most relevant outcome for the targeted population by providing spaces for their agency to manifest.
4. CRISIS CONTEXT

Lebanon is recently subject to an unprecedented economic, financial, monetary and social crisis that is driving the country to a rapidly failing State, or even more to a quasi-complete collapse. The World Bank has recently qualified the present Lebanese economic crisis as one of the three most severe crises registered in the world since mid-nineteenth century\textsuperscript{20}. In addition to the economic collapse, Lebanon has also been severely affected recently by Beirut port blast of August 4th 2020 and the Covid-19 pandemic, knowing that many other external shocks are still perpetrating their long-term negative outcomes, mainly the Syrian refugees’ crises.

At the macroeconomic level, the sharp and continuous decrease in yearly growth rates since 2018 is confirming the end of the rentier economic model that prevailed since early ninetieths. As per the World Bank Economic Monitor\textsuperscript{21}, Lebanon’s GDP fell by around 40% from 55 billion USD in 2017 to an estimated 33 billion USD in 2020, a contraction that never occurred in times of peace. Unfortunately, within the framework of “free fall” policies expressly adopted by the Government, the decreasing growth trend is expected to continue in 2021, because the status of the major determinants of economic growth (namely public and private investment and consumption) is still worsening.

At the financial level, huge decreases have been registered in public direct and indirect revenues, accompanied with a growing public finance deficit. Also, a steadily decline in capital inflows is still prevailing since 2011, due mainly to the tremendous decrease in exports of services and FDI in addition to the end of “Paris conferences” process after 2008. The effects of this decline have been aggravated by the fact that Lebanon has heavily depended on imported consumption since early nineteen, as a result of the abrupt liberalization of foreign trade, and this has generated huge cumulative deficit in the current account and the balance of payment.

At the monetary level, it is a matter of fact that the stabilization monetary policy that has been regularly implemented since the mid-ninetieths, has arrived finally to a dead end. Lebanon is presently witnessing the co-existence of at least 5 prices for the Lebanese pound varying from the official price of 1500 L.L per US dollar and the free-market price that exceeds more than 20 times the official one. With this excessive devaluation, the Lebanese pound lost more than 95% of its pre 2019 value, and consequently paved the way behind an aggressive wave of high inflation rates, increasing by more than 400% on average between 2018 and the first ten months of 2021 for the total CPI and 550% for Food and beverage CPI\textsuperscript{22}.

At the Social level this multidimensional crisis have severely affected the living conditions of the resident population (including the Syrian and Palestinian refugees): poverty rates and especially extreme poverty rates have more than doubled during the last two years, reaching successively 70% to 80% for the former and 25% for the latter, based on the findings of many UN organizations including World Bank, ILO, Escwa, WFP ...; preliminary estimates indicate also unprecedented increases in unemployment rates up to 30% (against 11% in 2018 as per ILO and CAS survey 2018), knowing that the huge waves of recent migration

\textsuperscript{20} World Bank, Lebanon Economic Monitor. Lebanon Sinking (To the Top 3), Spring 2021, p. xi.

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid

\textsuperscript{22} As per the CPI of the “Consultation and Research Institute”
have to a great extent tempered the severity of unemployment. Most importantly, the purchasing power of wages – 80% to 90% of which were usually paid in Lebanese pound - dropped by at least 75% since 2018, taking into account that more than 55% of total labor force are wage earners. Furthermore, the major pillars of the social protection schemes have been drastically weakened, and, the Government – often described in these evolving economic and financial conditions as "kicking the can down the road" - becomes unable to ensure basic public services to the population through adequate coping strategies. It should be noted that all these indicators have been subject to further deterioration after the recent de-subsidizing of fuel during the last quarter of 2021, in addition to wheat and drugs. Based on the new pricing system, the cost of 20 liters of gasoline becomes almost equal to 60% of the legal minimum monthly wage, making it increasingly unaffordable for employees to go to work or for children to attend school.

Lebanon has suffered historically from a lack of political will to develop reforms and built social policies. The very low level of investments in public infrastructure since the early ninetieth has drastically limited the capacity of the State to deliver and respond to crises\textsuperscript{23}. Key public investments undertaken did not follow socio-economic priorities, but have rather tended to serve sectarian interests and affiliation\textsuperscript{24}. The polarization of the State by confessional leaders and oligopolistic actors has aggravated the rentiers' characteristic of the whole political and economic system. The heavy and multidimensional ties and connections between politicians and the private sector explains to a great extent why Lebanon ranks 149\textsuperscript{th} out of 180 economies in Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index\textsuperscript{25}.

It should be recognized that the major components of a National Social Protection Strategy and welfare system are lacking in Lebanon. This is the case of pension scheme for workers in the private sector, unemployment insurance, old-age or disability pensions, child benefits, bearing in mind that Lebanon is a country where the phenomenon of informality is predominant at many regards (residence, labor, civil status etc...). In 2018, more than one third of the population was not protected by any kind of social protection measure, and more than 40% was not affiliated to social insurance, and 62.6% were lacking coverage by either contributory, non-contributory, or humanitarian schemes\textsuperscript{26}. One of the major obstacles preventing the development of social protection in Lebanon resides in the nature of the taxation system which remains very regressive. In fact, Lebanon was ranked 117\textsuperscript{th} of 158 governments worldwide with respect to the progressive taxation pillars\textsuperscript{27}. The country lacks an inheritance tax and a wealth tax, limiting the tax revenue collected through progressive schemes to only 11%, taking into consideration that tax system is based on archaic system where every income source is taxed separately, thus decreasing progressivity.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{23} UN in Lebanon, Social Protection in Lebanon, Nov. 2020, p. 5.
  \item \textsuperscript{24} Nisreen Salti and Jad Chabaan, The Role of Sectarianism in the Allocation of Public Expenditure, International Journal of Middle East Studies, Nov. 2010.
  \item \textsuperscript{25} Transparency International, Corruption Perceptions Index.
  \item \textsuperscript{26} ILO Vulnerability and Social Protection Gaps Assessment – Lebanon, p.6
  \item \textsuperscript{27} Dana Abed et al., Inequality in Lebanon: questioning labor, social spending, and taxation, p.3
\end{itemize}
As a result of the above analysis of the current Lebanese context, obviously inequalities are increasing and the already poor population are becoming poorer. In addition, new segments of the population (who were previously at the “edge” of poverty, i.e. vulnerable to external shocks) are becoming poor. The most recent figures show that poverty rate has increased from 28% to at least 55% of the total population. Refugees and migrant workers are the most affected population, in addition to the marginalized Lebanese households. Moreover, in this context, new vulnerable groups are emerging and new vulnerable areas are appearing. The current study will take into account these dynamics.

5. AFD ACTIVITIES IN LEBANON

This section presents briefly the main activities and sectors of intervention of the AFD in Lebanon.

The strategy

With the help of the documents shared by the AFD team, the main axes of intervention of the agency in Lebanon between 2021/2025 revolve around the following five major topics:

1. Improving access to quality education and vocational training while finding synergies with employment opportunities and the developments on the labor markets
2. Improving access to quality healthcare services including mental health services
3. Develop access to potable water and water mechanisms
4. Reinforcing resilience and accompanying economic redressal through inclusive and decentralized development
5. Supporting good governance reforms

The feasibility study that we are conducting will fall under these types of intervention as the focus is shed on the context in urban poor neighborhood, the types of profiles of marginalization present in such neighborhoods and the immediate needs of these populations. Thus, access to quality public services, as well as access to educational opportunities in line with needs on the labor markets and potentials of economic growth in view of an inclusive development are at the core of the work that we will be carrying out in phases 2 and 3. The cultural sector is also an important focus, although it surfaces within the different interventions as part of creating a participatory approach with the beneficiaries.

Additionally, AFD has worked urban planning and urban infrastructure which correlates to the Urban neighborhoods approach. Also, it seems that there are cross-cutting topics such as inclusiveness, reduction of all types of inequalities namely the gender ones and the ones related to the migrant status, as well as the sustainability of projects.

The gender as the core component

Gender is the main umbrella under which this study falls. In fact, the upcoming call for projects will focus on: (1) Gender as the main driver of all the activities/outputs/outcomes of the selected projects that falls under the specific theory of change leading to gender equality; and (2) Gender as the analytical lens in
which the approach to gender is cross-sectional and mainstreamed in the different activities without necessarily making links between all the activities from a gender perspective.

In that we understand the centrality of gender in the next phases and the deliverables will seek to make that clear and straightforward.

The security analysis

The security aspect within the suggested neighborhoods will be looked into in the next two phases and more specifically in phase two before selecting the 6 neighborhoods that will present the case studies. Although the whole security situation in the country is quite tensed and on edge, certain neighborhoods might need a thorough look into the security specificities when relevant.

6. THE “DO NO HARM” ANALYSIS

The ‘Do No Harm’ (DNH) principle was developed in response to a growing recognition of the potential negative effects of aid. DNH is relevant both to humanitarian aid operators and development actors and so is fully in phase with the current rapprochement between the two sectors. Their shared concern to avoid negative effects could foster shared reflection that transcends their differences. Interest in DNH issues has effectively spread from the humanitarian sector to the development sector, and even beyond, raising hopes of future cross-cutting reflection, notably between the North and the South. (DNH) is the principle that requires humanitarian actors to endeavor not to cause further damage and suffering as a result of their actions.

The potential negative effects of aid emerged as a subject of discussion during emergency situations including the genocide in Rwanda (1994) and following the major natural disasters of 2000 to 2010 (the tsunami in South East Asia and the earthquake in Haiti). This awareness led to an increased interest in preventing the negative effects of various types of intervention. In the 2000s, DNH became central to thinking on intervention in fragile states. The OECD developed a framework for interventions in fragile states that comprises 10 principles of which the second is: “Do no harm” 28

Because of this historical context, and since the DNH principle emerged only recently, there is no well-established definition of DNH. Still, as an agreed upon understanding between stakeholders involved in humanitarian and/or development, we can find the following:

- "Do no harm" is to avoid exposing people to additional risks through our action.
- "Do no harm" means taking a step back from an intervention to look at the broader context and mitigate potential negative effects on the social fabric, the economy and the environment.

The DNH approach will be included in this study and taken into account mainly in phase 2 and phase 3 of the project: included in the technical tools and interview guides, part of the mapping exercises with existing NGOs and initiatives, included in the lessons learned analysis.

7. IDENTIFICATION OF URBAN POOR NEIGHBORHOODS

This section presents the detailed methodology that will be implemented to conduct the phase 2 and phase 3 of the study. It should be noted that the proposed methodology in the terms of reference and the technical proposal were subject to amendments based on the meetings with AFD.

First, the study will not select urban poor neighborhoods (4 to 6) to be part of an in-depth fieldwork study and needs assessment, and then part of the call of proposal that will be launched by the AFD. The latter will cover the four cities (Tripoli, Greater Beirut, Saida and Tyr) without any specific locations. In other terms, the targeted territories presented in the call for proposal will remain at the level of the city and will not select a-priori namely 4 to 6 neighborhoods. Hence, the present study will select indicative neighborhoods to be considered as case studies to be included in the call for proposal as examples. They should allow the NGOs to identify the various types of poor neighborhoods and their different needs.

The second phase of the study will select around 10 neighborhoods. How to choose these poor urban neighborhoods?

Several factors should be taken into account during the selection process:

- The four cities should be represented
- A variety of urban vulnerability profiles should be covered in order to provide meaningful case studies. Homogeneity should be avoided. The study should stress on differences and heterogeneity between the locations.
- Gender is at the center of the selection process and the profile setting
- The selection process should be robust and credible

In order to reach the above targets, a set of indicators will be developed and applied (first task of phase 2). In this regard, the study team face a large number of constraints regarding availability of data:

- data using the geographical level as a reference is rare
- limited data disaggregated at a smaller level than the district or the governorate
- limited data covering urban areas
- recent data
- accuracy of data (in terms of methodology, credibility of the source, consistency)
- accessibility

Only the UN-Habitat\(^29\) source of data seems to overcome the above constraints. It is recent and adopted a systematic and consistent methodology; it covers many urban neighborhoods relevant for this study; it includes a significant number of indicators that cover many aspects (education, health, demography, livelihoods, dwellings, urban space, etc.). This source of information will be adopted as the main reference for the selection process. However, it will be complemented by additional sources of information (e.g. in-depth interviews with key informants at the city level).

The detailed methodology of the selection process of poor urban neighborhoods is described below:

\(^{29}\) https://lebanonportal.unhabitat.org/indicator-database/
Task 1: Consolidation of the UN-Habitat data into a matrix:
   i) identification of the neighborhoods that are covered by UN-Habitat within the 4 cities (AFD study)
   ii) listing of all available indicators
   iii) making sure the indicators are gender-sensitive and cover the different issues highlighted in the literature review

Task 2: Fill the matrix with the indicators and identify discriminant indicators (i.e. indicators that might help in identifying different urban vulnerability profiles)

Task 3: Grouping of the discriminant indicators and identifying the neighborhoods under each profile, keeping at hand the gender lens in refining the indicators and the profiles

Task 4: Identify stakeholders and key informant at the city level

Task 5: Conduct in-depth interview with key informant to validate or amend the outcome of previous tasks, the interview guides will be gender sensitive.

Task 6: Compare the final list of neighborhoods with the existing lists in the literature review and amend accordingly

Task 7: Ensure that the current dynamic/context is taken into account and amend the list accordingly

Task 8: Propose the final list, and discuss with the AFD the choices.

Once the list of around 10 indicative neighborhoods is validated, the study team will launch the fieldwork and the quick needs assessment.

The above methodology will help in identifying a list of 10 neighborhoods distributed by specific “profiles” of urban poverty in the four cities. Each neighborhood will be considered as a representative case study of one profile. The characteristics, needs, target beneficiaries, types of interventions, the gendered dimensions and other information will be collected and analyzed by profile (to the extent possible). Obviously, characteristics of poverty have a significant common component that is transversal to all profiles. However, some specificities may appear per profile, allowing to draw different types of interventions in the call of proposal – in this phase of the work, gender will be at core of defining the specificities.
REFERENCES

Poverty
2- Central Administration of Statistics, national socio-economic and demographic surveys (www.cas.gov.lb)
3- Unsatisfied Basic Needs – UNDP 2004
4- Rapid Social Assessment, CRI-CDR-WB, 2006
5- Poverty in Tripoli, ESCWA

Urban Poverty
11- UN-Habitat Lebanon.
12- https://www.brookings.edu/blog/future-development/2020/02/21/to-move-the-needle-on-ending-extreme-poverty-focus-on-rural-areas/
14- https://www.iied.org/introduction-urban-poverty
15- Conference Report, Urban inequalities and poverty, Lebanon, IFI, AUB. 2016

Urban Poverty from a Gender Perspective

3- UNHCR, WFP and UNICEF. 2020 Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon.
10- Chant, S. 2013. Cities through a “gender lens”: a golden “urban age” for women in the global South?
11- Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs. 2016. Poverty, Inequality and Social Protection in Lebanon. AUB.

Do no harm