

Copenhagen Business School

Master of Science in International Business and Politics

Master Thesis

**How does a temporary Organization manage
to outlive its Mandate?**

- A Case Study on UNRWA's Legitimacy in Lebanon

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Abstract

Background: Decades before the outbreak of the Syrian Refugee Crisis, the Middle East saw almost a million Palestinians displaced, both internally and to neighboring countries, in 1948. To cater to their needs until their return, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) was established in 1950. Sixty-six years later, UNRWA is still in operation, despite the increasing number of refugees due to decades of conflict most recently in Syria and a mandate that does not secure its financial stability. It has come to assume a pseudo-governmental role to its beneficiaries, who have demonstrated against its ever-shrinking services in Lebanon in 2016.

Objective: This thesis aims to shed a light on the case of UNRWA in Lebanon, the only country in the region that does not extend any benefits to the refugees it hosts. To this end and in this challenging context, the research asks how UNRWA's legitimacy is constructed and maintained in Lebanon following the onset of the Syrian Refugee Crisis.

Methods: Beetham's Theory of Legitimacy is deemed most suitable to answer the research question. The socio-scientific concept, through the three dimensions (Legality, Normative Justifiability, and Performative Endorsement), is operationalized using primary sources, e.g. official UNRWA reports and documents, press releases, and articles from media, triangulating them using four elite interviews conducted in two UNRWA-supported camps in Beirut for the aim of the case study.

Results: First, this paper finds that UNRWA's mandate leads to its inevitable financial instability, and that its existence acts to deter the Lebanese State from taking on the responsibility of the refugee population and to deal with the political factions in the camps. Second, the paper finds that UNRWA plays a fundamental role in Lebanon for the Palestinian refugees, in terms of relief and employment, but much more crucially in safeguarding their right of return, which they consider sacred. Third, the paper finds that the Lebanese State, Palestinian Refugees, the donors, and the media act to endorse and thus legitimize the organization.

Conclusion: Using all three dimensions of the Beethamite framework, UNRWA in Lebanon is linked to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict narrative, its existence owing to both the refugee's well-being and right of return. Its critical position has enforced on it a duality of a sort, acting as both a humanitarian agency and a de facto long-term governor for the affairs of refugees.

How does a Temporary Organization manage to outlive its Mandate?

- A Case Study of UNRWA's Legitimacy in Lebanon

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List of Abbreviations

CBO	Community Based Organization
CSO	Camp Services Officer
DAPR	Department of Palestinian Refugee Affairs
DPAR	Department of Political Affairs and Refugees
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICCP	International Coordinating Committee of NGOs on the Question of Palestine
LPDC	Lebanese Palestinian Dialogue Committee
NISCVT	National Institution of Social Care and Vocational training (Beit Atfal As-Somoud)
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
UNSCOL	United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon
WHO	World Health Organization

1.Introduction

The conflict in Syria has resulted in thousands of refugees leaving their country in search of safety and in the hope of finding a better future for themselves and their families. It has been ongoing for more than five years with consequences especially for the neighboring countries, which are the first stop for refugees who have succeeded in getting out. Of the estimated 11 millions who have fled their homes, 6,6 millions have been internally displaced, and 4,8 millions have succeeded in leaving Syria (MPC 2016). Prior to the Syrian conflict the region was already the exile home for Palestinians who had fled their homes before and after the creation of the state of Israel in 1948-1949. Since 1950, one UN organ, the United Nations Reliefs and Works Agency (UNRWA), has been the major organization to secure aid for this specific refugee group until they can return to their homes or the political question that resulted in their displacement will be solved (UNRWA 2016a).

In June 2015, more than four years after the start of the internal conflict in Syria, waves of refugees had made the dangerous journey from their war-torn countries to Europe. Hundreds were to find themselves on a Danish highway in Jutland in an attempt to reach Sweden. Police was stationed to deal with the situation and to secure the refugees on this piece of infrastructure, which is only intended for vehicles. A non-flight zone was imposed by the police over the area targeting press helicopters in order to prevent frightening the many refugees (Politiken 2015). It is not that the many stories of refugees in Southern Europe, capsizing vessels with refugees drowning in the Mediterranean had not already reached Denmark. However, seeing refugees walking on Danish highways resulted in an increased public debate and common Danes being charged with and convicted for human trafficking in their attempts to act as good samaritans, bringing the refugee crisis in Europe even closer to the ordinary Dane.

During this resurgent debate, Danish political parties i.e. Danish People's Party (Dansk Folkeparti, DF) stated that refugees ought to be helped in the 'near areas' (Danish: nærområderne) instead of in Denmark or Europe. However, DF acknowledged that Lebanon with its current refugee population most likely was stretched to its capacity (Information 2015). The Social-Democratic Party (Danish: Socialdemokratiet) also uttered that more resource allocation was needed (ibid.) Following a European Union meeting September 23, 2015, the European leaders pledged to allocate EUR 1 billion to UN agencies working to help in the Syrian Refugee Crisis (BBC 2015). This constituted a shift in the focus of the EU and was welcomed by the two biggest parties in Danish politics. However, as a member of the Social Democrats said, this amount was too small to have a significant impact in the region (Den Offentlige 2015).

The spectrum of opinions exchanged in Denmark, from the ones that called for help in 'near areas' to those that called for more resource allocation to help deal with the crisis, echoes reactions to an older ongoing refugee crisis, one that has been deemed "the longest lasting case of forced migration in modern history" (Takkenberg, 2010, p. 259) Indeed, conflict, war, and waves of refugees in Lebanon or the Middle East are nothing new. That the international community is still learning to deal with them, even when they occur in the same location and involve the same actors, as is the case of the Palestinian refugee crisis and the more recent Syrian one, underscores the urgency of more in-depth research on the topic, especially when considering pouring millions of dollars of aid into the region.

1.1 Research Question

The Syrian crisis is relatively new in comparison to the Palestinian refugee crisis. Throughout the years, UNRWA has remained the main international actor that is responsible for supporting this refugee group in Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, and the occupied territories of Gaza and the West Bank. In the beginning of 2016, UNRWA in Lebanon changed its healthcare policy due to a budget deficit, which sparked demonstrations and Palestinian concern that lasted for months. Yet, issues concerning Palestinian refugees have gotten less attention than the topic du jour, that of the Syrian refugees, who have been seen in ever increasing numbers in Beirut and elsewhere

in the country, where Syrians work illegally and require the assistance of the international community and the NGOs working in the region. On this relativization of crises, UNRWA Commissioner-General Pierre Krähenbühl said in an address to the advisory board, “It is interesting how often I am asked why the world should continue to care about Palestine refugees. It is a situation I am told that has dropped of the international agenda, is overshadowed by the numerous other crises in the Middle-East. And I am also told there is a sense of fatigue around this issue.” (Krähenbühl, cited in UNRWA 2016b)

Through such demonstrations, chronic criticism, and an outspoken lack of support of the International Community, UNRWA has continued its operations for almost seven decades. It is this longevity and tenacity of UNRWA that has inspired this thesis with the following research question:

***In light of the Syrian refugee crisis’s impact on UNRWA, how is
its legitimacy constructed and reproduced in the Lebanese
context anno 2016?***

To the end of answering this research question, a case study of UNRWA in Lebanon has been undertaken and the main question broken down into a list of sub-questions guiding the thesis.

1. How does UNRWA operate in Lebanon?
2. What is the legal framework under which UNRWA operates in Lebanon today, allowing it to accommodate the needs of its beneficiaries?
3. What is UNRWA’s mission and how does it execute it?
4. How do UNRWA’s stakeholders’ actions (de)legitimize it?

UNRWA in Lebanon is an organization of an odd size. It is an international UN agency yet, at the same time, it relies primarily on voluntary donations and funding that it has to secure

by itself. However, contrary to most international organizations and international non-governmental organizations it caters only to one group of beneficiaries, namely the Palestine Refugees. Following extensive research, some scholars have argued that for these beneficiaries UNRWA can take the shape of a pseudo-government. This argument was quite eloquently illustrated by the following historic quote from a former UNRWA employee in Jordan, “When an UNRWA official knocked at someone’s door, it was like the government had arrived. The role of UNRWA was basic – it substituted for a government” (Former UNRWA employee in Jordan, cited in Farah, R. (1999) p. 397). However, the status of refugees in Jordan has changed over the years and most refugees there enjoy a Jordanian passport and full citizenship rights. The same benefits are however not enjoyed by Palestinian refugees in Lebanon who still find themselves without citizenship rights and access to many positions in the labor market. This has its implications on the role of UNRWA in Lebanon. While UNRWA does not hold coercive power like that of sovereign states in a formal way, for many of the Palestine Refugees residing in the camps, the organization is ascribed with the status of a sovereign. An example from the literature could be the ambiguous role of UNRWA Camp Services Officers (CSO), one of whom was interviewed for the purpose of this research. These “camp-based staff members who historically assumed a powerful position vis-a-vis the camp community. Their authority included in the past, for example, the ability to cut rations for an individual who did not obey UNRWA regulations.” (Hanafi et al. 2014: p 165). The aforementioned changed over time and UNRWA is now adopting transparency and efficient tactics as demanded by the United Nations. The notion of power as such should not be understood then in a formal way, “but through the effects of power that different governmentalities generate.” (Hanafi et. al 2014, p. 163-165). However, transparency and efficient tactics are just one part of the puzzle in this interesting setup that the organization finds itself situated in.

1.2 Structure of the Thesis

The thesis has its point of departure in a brief background of the Palestinian refugee problem before a literature review of the academic writings about UNRWA (Chapter 2), which shows the gap in the literature concerning UNRWA’s organizational legitimacy. Chapter 3 then

moves into the theoretical framework and Beetham's legitimacy concept, which is developed and utilized in order to answer the research question and subquestions. The answers are steered by a Beethamite view of legitimacy, which accounts for an entity's legality, performance, and endorsements. Chapter 4 addresses the methodology of the thesis and accounts for and justifies the choice of data collection for the end of this qualitative research, both primary sources, such as reports, studies, and articles, and secondary sources used for the aim of triangulation, such as interviews conducted in refugee camps in Beirut, as well as methodological problems encountered when conducting the research. Before moving into the analysis, the case study will be presented in Chapter 5 with contextual information regarding UNRWA's background and operations in Lebanon in greater detail than in this introduction. Chapter 6 is the analysis, which will be conducted following the three dimensions of legitimacy (legality, normative justifiability, and performative endorsement) advanced by Beetham. Employing a Beethamite view is adequate in light of both the quasi-governmental shape of UNRWA and its operation as an agency with a humanitarian mission. The Beethamite theory of legitimacy applied on an organization such as UNRWA gives a comprehensive account of how the organization's legitimacy is constructed and reproduced in the context of where it operates. Hence, this chosen theory offers a helicopter view of the organization and its environment, with a focus on its legal basis, performance, and support, or lack thereof, by other entities in its ecosystem. A final section will be dedicated to the discussion of the synthesized findings and reflections.

1.3 Setting the Historical Stage for UNRWA

In 1948 with the vote in the newly established United Nations to partition the former British mandate of Palestine into a Jewish State and a Palestinian one, a war broke out between the two communities. War and conflict had been raging in the area prior to the second World War with the waves of Jewish immigrants arriving to the area and buying land from landowners and laying of Palestinian peasant working in these. This war, which is called the war of Independence for Israelis and Al-Nakba (The Catastrophe) for Palestinians and Arabs, devastated the Palestinian community as approximately 720,000 Palestinians were forced to flee their homes and became trapped behind enemy lines. The reasons to the Palestinian flight were highly

disputed for more than 50 years but a consensus among scholars have emerged and most now agree that it was caused by a combination of factors (Gelvin 2005, pp. 21-213). First and foremost, the Palestinians were fleeing a war zone, just as we are seeing in today's Syria. Expulsions took place and Palestinians were also terrorized¹ into leaving their homes by the Zionist community². They fled to present day Gaza and the West Bank (which was occupied by Egypt and Jordan respectively) and to Egypt, Jordan, and Lebanon. (Ibid.)

The international community realized the necessity to allocate resources to refugees in those areas. Acknowledging their continuous need of aid and relief, the United Nation's contribution was the creation of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), which received its mandate in December of 1949 and began to conduct its operation in 1950 with relief works. The organization was meant to be functioning until the refugees could once again return to their homes and thus set up camps in the region to house the refugee population (UNGAR 1949, art. 7). In 2016 there are 12 camps in Lebanon, 10 camps in Jordan, 9 official camps in Syria, 19 camps in the West Bank and 8 camps in Gaza. (UNRWA 2016c)

More than 66 years later after the creation of UNRWA, the refugees and their descendants have yet to return, their perpetual refugee status having become the status quo, and UNRWA maintains its supporting role across Palestinian refugee camps in 3 countries and the Occupied Territories (Gaza and the West Bank including East Jerusalem.) That it managed to do so for almost seven decades, despite a mandate that does not ensure financial stability, is cause of wonder in itself. UNRWA's status invites more scrutiny in light of the new waves of refugees—Syrians and also Syrian Palestinians—who are pouring into 'near areas' countries such as Lebanon.

¹ One act of terrorism occurred when the Zionist Community slaughtered 240 children, women and men in the Palestinian village of Dayr Yassin and stuffed the bodies into the well of the village (Gelvin 2005, p. 213)

² The Zionist Movement was a nationalistic movement which was shaped in Europe in the last part of the 19th century and strived after creating a homeland for the many Jews, which were marginalised in Europe with regards to for instance jobs. The movement was behind the many waves of thousands of immigrants, who emigrated to the mandate of Palestine, which was administered by the United Kingdom. (Gelvin 2005, pp. 206-211)

2. Literature Review

To undertake a study of UNRWA and its legitimacy, it is crucial to provide relevant literary remarks on what writings on UNRWA have primarily concentrated on. This section will offer an overview of what major academic works have been written about UNRWA in the previous six decades since its establishment arguing that the legitimacy of UNRWA is a topic that not many scholars have concentrated on—taking it for granted with no prevalent alternative. A literature review of the concept of legitimacy is excluded since the literature on legitimacy is abundant and exists across a wide range of subjects e.g. organization theory, human rights, international law, management, and so on and so forth. Legitimacy as a concept will be discussed in the theoretical framework where Beetham's concept is introduced.

It goes without saying that the literature on the Palestinian plight is abundant, which is also the case of the scholarly works on legitimacy. However, academically not much has been written about UNRWA and how it continues to survive. Given that UNRWA has been operating in arguably one of the most complex political regions in the world, it is puzzling why this subsidiary organ of the United Nations has not attracted more academic attention in this regard. A significant portion of the existing literature on UNRWA focuses on assessing the health services, educational, and vocational training delivered by the UN agency to its Palestinian beneficiaries. This substantial subfield of the literature addresses specific programs and case studies for medical and pedagogical sciences but renders no or only a limited amount of relevancy to the lines of this thesis. For this reason, no further elaboration on such studies will be mentioned in this review.

A handful of books have dedicatedly and meticulously dealt with UNRWA, its history, mandate, and in the context of the Palestinian Plight (Bowker 2003, Bocco 2009, Al-Husseini 2010a and 2010b). One of the most referenced books with regards to the political history is 'Refugees Into the Third Generation: UN Aid to Palestinians' (Schiff, B.N., 1995). The author highlights the political history and political economy of the UN organ as well as the different

confrontations and opposition that UNRWA has faced, especially when focus shifted from the return of the Palestinian refugees to an integration of the beneficiaries in the host countries. The shift in UNRWA's approach changed, according to Schiff, when Israel was reluctant to look at the repatriation of refugees into Israel. In addition, Schiff also touches upon the insecurity of UNRWA's funding as the numbers of refugees increase and budgets and donor contributions decrease. Here, more than twenty years later, this scenario is even more apparent after a financial crisis and a further increase in the numbers of refugees after Syrian Palestinians have fled 'their' war torn country of residence.

Another noteworthy contribution to the literature is that of Milton Viorst; 'Reaching for the Olive Branch: UNRWA and Peace in the Middle East'. Written in 1989, this short book also offers an historical account of the institution of UNRWA and how it was initially meant to be a temporary player in response to the Palestinian plight. It also stresses how the institution will remain in existence until there is a solution between Israel on the one hand and the host countries on the other. The work also looks at the functioning of UNRWA in the neighboring Syria, Jordan and Lebanon and attempts to take a look into the future to address what UNRWA could do in order to move from conflict to peace. (Viorst, M., 1989). In 2010, when UNRWA turned 60, the "Journal of Palestine Studies" dedicated an entire issue to UNRWA. The tension between the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and Palestinian Authorities (PA) is an ongoing issue as well as UNRWA's role in the nation-building process (Al-Husseini, J. 2010a). It explains how the role and mandate of UNRWA has developed over time not necessarily because of shared goals between the organization and the Palestinian actors but because of the advantages the Palestinian leadership saw in cooperating with the UN agency to serve their own political ends. However, as Al-Husseini points out, pressures from donors exist to phase out UNRWA "despite the lack of progress in Israeli-Palestinian talks, repeated cutbacks in the agency's services, and perhaps more importantly, a growing distrust in the ability of the Palestinian leadership to represent the refugees' political interests". (ibid., p. 61). He also emphasizes the growing politicization of the organization and how the PLO gradually embraced the development goals of UNRWA, which was associated with the Palestinian state-building process (ibid., p. 51).

The most recent and one of the most significant contribution to the literature on UNRWA and the Palestinian refugees has its point of departure in a conference hosted by an institute for Public Policy and International Affairs at the American University of Beirut in 2010 in which UNRWA officials, scholars, researchers, governmental representatives of host and donor states, representatives of grass root civil society organizations, representatives of political parties as well as Palestinian refugees participated (Suleiman, H. 2010). Four years later, an elaborate six-part book with the same name as the conference, UNRWA and Palestinian Refugees: From Relief and Works to Human Development, was published (Hanafi et. al. 2014). In addition to discussing the financial challenges UNRWA is up against due to lack of funding and changing internal management, the book also looks at the agency's service provision role. The new concept of protection of Palestine Refugees within UNRWA's framework is the object of analysis in the second part before the most novel and perhaps interesting section of the book deep dives into how the Palestinian camps work and how they are governed. Another significant contribution of the book is the subject of civic participation and community engagement. This part emphasizes and stresses the importance for UNRWA to involve refugees in their strategies and argues that it is a way to develop trust between the refugees and the organization, which it can be argued is a legitimizing tactic that addresses a specific stakeholder: the beneficiaries. The concluding part speculates on the role of UNRWA should a political solution with regards to the refugees be reached and puts forth the idea that UNRWA should act on behalf of the refugees in such a scenario. However, there are few mentions of unregistered Palestinian refugees living in informal settlements and left on their own to set up durable solution working together with local stakeholders and non-governmental organizations.

The elaborate work, by Hanafi et al. delivers pertinent information on UNRWA's history, camp dynamics, and the configuration and functioning of camps. There are few mentions of unregistered Palestinian refugees living in informal settlements and left on their own to set up durable solution working together with local stakeholders and non-governmental organizations. The importance of Viorst book (Viorst, M., 1989) to this study is, it is argued, how it deems the relationship between the organizational survival of UNRWA as not merely dependent on the

continuation of the conflict and how the agency could witness yet another shift in mission should there ever be peace. While the other works addresses UNRWA's past and present mission exclusively, this one also speculates about the agency's future mission. As the thesis's theoretical framework will explain, an organization's mission is at the core of its legitimacy normative justifiability.

In conclusion the literature review shows that UNRWA has been covered in detail from its history, management, mandate and the different services it provides to the Palestine refugees. All scholarly works are important in their own right but a critique could be that the existing literature either takes the legitimacy of the organization for granted or does not address it in a country specific context. In light of the aforementioned literature and the challenges that UNRWA has faced with regards to their donors and financial setbacks, critical scholarly work remains to be conducted on how UNRWA's legitimacy is constructed and reproduced and how the organization after more than 66 years is still alive, rendering services to the Palestine refugees. Indeed, the aforementioned materials have elements that provide some insights as to the legitimacy of UNRWA, yet no studies have formally looked at the organization with a legitimacy lens.

3. Theoretical Framework

What is legitimacy? What does it mean to be legitimate and legitimate in regards to whom? These two questions need thorough attention when looking at UNRWA in Lebanon. In order to do so, it is necessary to outline what constitutes legitimacy for the author of this thesis. In the Oxford English Dictionary legitimacy is defined as the 'conformity to the law, to rules, or to some recognized principle' but also the 'conformity to sound reasoning; logic; justifiability' (OED 2016). However, a more elaborate account for what this thesis holds as legitimacy and how it can be assessed is provided in order to operationalize the term in the context of the setting of this research. It is equally important to provide a background to the lens

through which the author is looking when exploring UNRWA. To this end, the subsequent section will explore the philosophy of science.

3.1 Philosophy of Science

The aim of this first section is to present how this thesis is situated with regards to the philosophy of science—how knowledge is developed and the nature of this knowledge. Giving some attention to the research philosophy is important since it will have an effect on how the analysis is conducted in the remainder of the thesis. The section is located prior to a discussion of the theory applied to the case study of UNRWA to show the relationship between the research philosophy and Beetham's socio-scientific concept of legitimacy. It is the least practical of the methodological section in the thesis, yet, at the same time, the most important because it forms the foundation for the methodological choices that are introduced in chapter 4: Methodology, which contains the more practical tools used in the research of the thesis.

3.1.1 What Constitutes Reality and Knowledge. A Pointless Debate?

In most academic works, researchers spend a significant portion of time and space delineating what knowledge is to them and what constitutes acceptable knowledge in any given line of research. This is a question of epistemological nature and different strands can be found across the continuum. Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill give attention to those of Positivism, Realism, Interpretivism among others (Saunders et al., 2007, pp. 100-125)

For a researcher who identifies him- or herself with the positivist tradition, it is important that the scientific enquiry is undertaken value-free of the object of the study and is often linked to the position of a natural scientist (ibid., p. 130). A researcher taking this point of view similar to that of the positivist 'assumes a scientific approach to the development of data' (ibid:p.105). However, where the direct realist would argue that what we see is what we get (through our senses), the critical realist claims that these senses often deceive the researcher and what we see is 'images of the things in the real world, not the things directly' (ibid.) The critical realist's claim is that the knowledge we have stems from social conditioning. Lastly, the interpretivist

take on epistemology is that the world is too complex and as such applying definite laws of theory will result in the loss of valuable insights if the real world is “reduced entirely to a series of law-like generalisations” (ibid., p. 106)

A similar scholarly discussion exists with regards to ontology, which deals with the nature of reality. Here the debate revolves around objectivism and subjectivism. The first strand would hold that social objects exist in the world external to the social actors in the world. Within subjectivism, the phenomena is perceived as being “created from the perceptions and consequent actions of social actors” in a continual process with constant revision of the social phenomena (ibid.: p. 108). Remenyi et al. argues that it is pivotal to study “the details of the situation to understand the reality or perhaps a reality working behind them” (Remenyi et al. 1998, p. 35 cited in Saunders et al. 2007, p. 108). This line of thinking is often linked to that of social constructionism.

Hence from the above debates, it can be argued that Objectivists would claim that legitimacy is something that an organization has that is too simplistic for the subjectivist. Legitimacy for the latter would be a social phenomenon that is created and recreated with the views and actions of the social actors in play around the social phenomenon.

3.1.2 A Pragmatic Reality and Knowledge

The research philosophy of this thesis is somewhat more pragmatic. It holds that the introduced strands of philosophy of science can provide relevant and valuable insights to the legitimacy of UNRWA; but this research is guided by a deep interest in the workings of the UN agency and holds that the philosophy of science constitutes a continuum where mixed methods can be applied for the sake of the argument. According to Tashakkori and Teddle (1998) this pragmatic view of research avoid a pointless debates about concepts such as truth and reality arguing “At some points the knower and the known must be interactive, while at others, one may easily stand apart from what one is studying” (Tashakkori and Teddle 1998, 30, cited in Saunders et al. 2007, p. 110).

When reading through the following part of the socio-scientific concept of legitimacy it also stands clear that Beetham does not adhere or address his research philosophy but develops a theory which can shed light on an organization's legitimacy combining elements, which it could be argued, could not be combined if the researcher was situated in a specific ontological or epistemological camp. By adopting this approach, this thesis will avoid a discussion about whether or not legitimacy exists in its own right. Given the research question, the importance of legitimacy is not debateable, however, how legitimacy is socially constructed for an international organization needs to be addressed (Section 3.2) and operationalized in Chapter 4: Methodology.

3.2 Legitimizing Beetham

Sovereignty, power, and legitimacy have been recurring and for many scholars contested concepts in international politics and international relations with the emergence of international or regional regimes such as the the United Nation and the European Union. The main concepts and ideas from Beetham's work will be presented in the following section. It will lay down the theoretical framework that will guide the remainder of the thesis. The essential building blocks to his social-scientific concept of legitimacy have not changed in regards to his first edition, which was published in 1991 in the wake of European revolutions and regime shifts, thus rendering the analysis primarily nation-state centered. Within the social sciences 'The Legitimation of Power' has become regarded as an important contribution to political systems. After its publication many articles and research papers have used and contributed to Beetham's findings in a world that has changed significantly. In the second edition of 'The Legitimation of Power', David Beetham expands the scope of his three dimensional model to include the concept of international society, intergovernmental, and nongovernmental organizations 'beyond the state' (Beetham, 2014). Beetham's goal with his theory is to provide an understanding of political legitimacy and to develop a way to analyze this legitimacy. For the complete account of his socio-scientific analysis, concepts, and argument (see Beetham 1991 and 2013).

3.2.1 Power and Legitimacy

In his introductory chapter of the book, Beetham argues how different groups of professions conceive and view political power as legitimate; social scientists, legal experts, and moral or political philosophers all view legitimacy from their side of the table. He argues that “most social scientists in the twentieth century have followed Max Weber in defining legitimacy as the belief in legitimacy on the part of the relevant social agents; and power relations as legitimate where those involved in them, subordinate as well as dominant believe them to be so.” (Beetham 2013, p. 27)

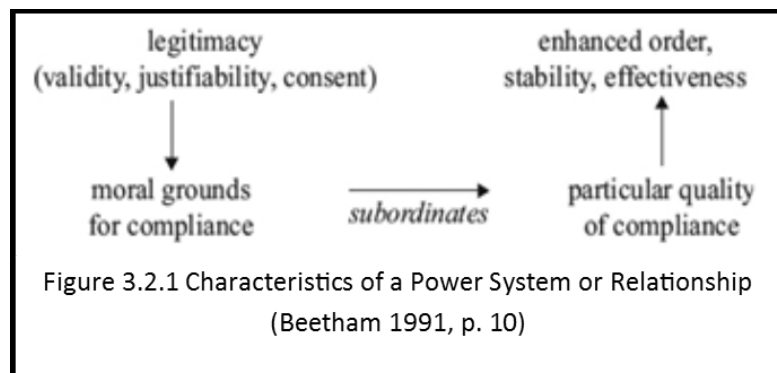
Beetham critiques Weber for confounding legality with belief in legitimacy. Whether the power is exercised or not exercised in accordance with the law has nothing to do with what people believe. Weber, according to Beetham, overlooks that legitimacy can also entail that people, through their actions, accept the way that power is exercised, even if they express discontent. (Beetham 1991, p. 23). However, for Beetham legitimacy is not a single quantity that systems of power possess. Political legitimacy is a range of “distinct criteria, or multiple dimensions, operating at different levels, each of which provides moral grounds for compliance or cooperation on the part of those subordinate to a given power relation.” (Beetham 1991, p. 20)

Before turning to the typology of his socially-constructed multidimensional legitimacy some attention should be given to the concept of power and what it means for Beetham while acknowledging that there is an inherent difference when viewing power from the perspective of the nation-state or from the international society. Even though this thesis’ object of analysis is an international organization, it is fruitful to address how Beetham views power on the individual level. Power is individuals’ abilities “to produce intended effects upon the world around them, to realise their purposes within it, whatever these purposes happen to be” (Morris in Beetham 2014, p. 64). However, as Beetham makes clear in his chapter defining power: persuading somebody or inducing somebody to change his/her behaviour is not an example of exercising power as it is not limiting the individual’s freedom, because the individual had the possibility to say no. However,

if an individual B changes his behaviour due to individual A's threat of physical coercion or the deprivation of a needed service or physical resource or if A manipulates B due to the latter's ignorance of psychological vulnerability, then individual A is limiting B's freedom and, according to Beetham, A holds power over B. That somebody holds power over another often "implies a continuous relationship in which a substantial sanction is always present." (Beetham 2014: p. 64)

Beetham explains characteristics to a power system wherein, he argues, the social arrangements result in the relative power differences between people; the power relationship includes two positions termed by Beetham as dominance and subordination. For Beetham the 'rules of power' are the rules "governing exclusion from and

access to key resources, activities and positions of command." (ibid.) It is exactly these rules that provide the first dimension of legitimacy. For Beetham "society's rules of power are typically capable of generating the evidence, and of structuring the interests of the subordinate in a manner conducive to their own legitimation." (ibid. p. 66)



After having delineated what power is and how it relates to and is part of the political legitimacy, attention will now be given to the multidimensional nature of the latter.

3.2.2 Social Scientific Concept of Legitimacy

As already addressed, political legitimacy for Beetham is more than just meets the eye if one were to consider the concept from just a legal, moral, or social science perspective. This is precisely what Beetham tries to encapsulate in his framework for the analysis of political legitimacy, be that in a power system or a relationship of power, which this thesis will continue

to argue exists between UNRWA and its different stakeholders. The three criteria to establish or dismiss power as legitimate are

- i) Conformity to established rules
 - ii) Justifiability of rules by reference to beliefs shared by both dominant and subordinate, and
 - iii) Evidence of consent by the subordinate and dominant to the particular power relation.
- (Beetham 1991, pp. 15-16).

Legitimacy as such thus comprises the sum of the moral and normative aspect of the aforementioned power relationships. For each of these three dimensions there is a form of non-legitimate power, which is quite self-explanatory and will be reflected upon when delving into the analysis of the political organization of UNRWA in subsequent sections. However, Beetham frames them as follows:

Criteria of Legitimacy	Form of Non-legitimate Power
i conformity to rules (legal validity)	illegitimacy (breach of rules)
ii justifiability of rules in terms of shared beliefs	legitimacy deficit (discrepancy between rules and supporting beliefs, absence of shared beliefs)
iii legitimation through expressed consent	delegitimation (withdrawal of consent)

Figure 3.2.2 The three Dimension of Legitimacy
(Beetham 1991, p. 12)

In the second edition of his book, *The Legitimation of Power*, published in 2013, Beetham expands on his previous argument and elaborates on it, stating that legitimacy exists ‘beyond the state’, using the example of inter-governmental organizations and international non-governmental organizations, which he terms ‘civil society organizations’. Those authority systems, according to the author, possess limited powers of enforcement and as such stipulate a different type of analysis of their legitimacy and identification of the audiences of their legitimacy claims. Beetham, however, advances the three-dimensional model as an appropriate tool for legitimacy analysis of such organizations, highlighting how its usage could actually

reveal the differences between how legitimacy is built and maintained at the state level and international level. (Beetham 201, chapter 10)

UNRWA, as a UN subsidiary organ that operates on the ground directly with beneficiaries in a number of countries and an agency that has a humanitarian mission and accepts voluntary donations, is a legitimate candidate for study under Beetham's proposed model. Instead of dismissing its special status as both a quasi-state and international agency, the study will dwell on this duality and seek to understand how it is used by the organization itself to deal with different legitimacy claims from different audiences and stakeholders for legitimizing purposes.

For the purpose of studying UNRWA and capturing its duality as both a quasi-state that deals directly with Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and an international agency that is a subsidiary organ of the UN, Beetham's model will be used in its three dimensions, integrating elements that he underlined in the study of both state and international institutions' legitimacy, as it is explained in the section to come.

3.2.2.1 Legality

Legality is a prerequisite to legitimacy. However, it also constitutes an evidence of it—and as such cannot be dismissed as tangential to legitimacy analysis. Whether it is the laws of its establishment (e.g. treaty) or the laws in which it operates in a country, organizations, even those that are international, have legal requirements that dictate their operations from registration to regulation. Those legal requirements by the host country often stipulate transparent procedures of accounting and reporting, which inadvertently helps the organization demonstrate to concerned stakeholders that their operations are being handled appropriately and in an accountable manner. (Beetham 2013, pp. 297-299)

3.2.2.2 Normative Justifiability

Normative Justifiability, Beetham argues, is the core of legitimacy. It encapsulates legitimacy perception of an organization by its various audiences who assess it based on its

sources of authority and due performance in carrying out its tasks. In its work on the ground, servicing Palestinian refugees, UNRWA displays characteristics of an NGO. Thus, it also shares NGOs' sources of authority, which are "partly democratically based and partly technocratic." While the technocratic part of authority is straightforward and mainly concerns an entity's staff's expertise and experience in their field, the democratic part in the Beethamite framework refers to the capacity of an organization to act as a representative "of the social groups whose interests are marginalized, of points of view which would otherwise be ignored in the policy arena." This role is indeed realized by UNRWA, which despite not playing an advocacy role for Palestinian refugees, represents their plight for having full human rights. Indeed, UNRWA does list Palestinian refugees enjoyment of human rights to "fullest extent" as one of its four objectives, as will be expanded on in the analysis section. The second aspect of normative justifiability is 'due performance', which translates to a "recognizable and socially justifiable mission" that is carried out effectively (Beetham 2013, p. 300).

3.2.2.3 Performative Endorsement (Acts of Recognition or Endorsement)

Legitimacy of an organization does not exclusively derive from its own actions or stances. Legitimacy is also made by the actions, which effectively amount to endorsement of the organization, of other "relevant agents", be they officials, public figures, or ordinary members, towards the organization in question. Performative endorsement, in the Beethamite model, is conceptualized as acts of reinforcement that cannot be overlooked. (Beetham 2013, pp. 301-303)

4. Methodology

This chapter will describe the methodology of the research and lay out the theoretical foundation behind the chosen methods and how they help in the investigation and exploration of UNRWA's legitimacy with a point of departure in the theoretical framework. The methodological chapter is divided into four different sections: it opens with the research approach that is most rational given the choice of topic, then it moves to the research strategy adopted and data collection methods used to answer the research questions and subquestions, and finally it surveys the limitations and challenges encountered in the field and off.

4.1 Research Approach

This thesis study has a starting point in Beetham's theory of legitimacy, according to which the legitimacy of entities, from states to NGOs, draws from lawfulness, normative justifiability (or presence of shared beliefs), and expressed consent (manifested in endorsement.) It follows then that UNRWA, a UN subsidiary and an organization that is present in the Palestinian Refugee camps and in host countries, draws its legitimacy from those three sources. To test this hypothesis entails a deductive research approach. This approach stands in contrast to the inductive approach where new theory is built when trying to grasp and come to an understanding of a phenomenon following the collection of the empirical data. (Saunders et al. 2007). This thesis thus makes use of a deductive research approach to test the existing theory of Legitimacy and its applicability to the phenomenon of study in answering the research questions. (Ibid.)

UNRWA in Lebanon has been especially under pressure following the onset of the Syrian Refugee Crisis, in terms of dealing with the migration of many Syrian Palestinian refugees to Lebanon³ as well as the financial consequences of another refugee crisis in the region on the financing of UNRWA, which has manifested in backlashes in camps across Lebanon regarding UNRWA's changes of hospitalization coverage policy (Appendix E.) Those protests of 2016, how the organization navigated the crisis, and the underlying dynamics, both legitimizing and delegitimizing, that were uncovered, make UNRWA in Lebanon fertile ground for legitimacy studies, on the level of the microsom that are the camps and also on the regional and international levels.

4.2 Research Strategy

The evidence of the crisis that UNRWA endured early on in 2016 is found in media coverage (i.e. journalistic works), organizational reports, and in beneficiaries impressions.

³ "As of December 2015, approximately half of the more than 42,000 Palestine refugees from Syria present in Lebanon were living in one of the 12 recognized Palestine refugee camps in Lebanon." (UNHCR, 2016)

Devising a multi-method qualitative research design helps uncover such evidence and test the theory of Beetham. To this end, a single case study was designed, drawing from sources such as official reports, press releases, and other documents, as well as media articles and scholarly works, and on-site semi-structured interviews to ensure triangulation. A case study strategy is suitable for a structured and substantive exploration of an existing theory such as Beetham's legitimacy theory in a specific context. Moreover, investigating the 'how' that the research question asks and understanding the process in which UNRWA's legitimacy unfolds in a specific context entail a case study approach (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2007, p. 139). The choice of a holistic single case study to understand how UNRWA's legitimacy is constructed and reproduced is justified in the particularity of the Lebanese context chosen. Both the place, Lebanon, and the time, following the onset of the Syrian refugee crisis, render this single case study of particular importance. The thesis is situated in what Abbott (2003) would term as direct interpretation, which is an analysis by an individual's reflection and synthesis (Abbott 2003, pp. 13-40). The narration is built around Beetham's theory and theoretical dimensions, one of which this research operationalizes with Hybel's stakeholder theory (ref. 6.3). Narration can be critiqued for lacking use of theory (Ibid.) As will be elaborated in subsequent sections, with lack of governmental help on the ground, UNRWA in Lebanon is almost solely responsible for the well-being of Palestinian refugees. This is not the case in other countries in which UNRWA operates where host states share the responsibility of servicing the refugees. Furthermore, following the Syrian Refugee Crisis, the burden UNRWA carries has become even bigger. Investigating how the legitimacy of an organization in such an extreme setting can be reproduced is hence valuable to our knowledge of not only legitimacy but also humanitarian missions.

A case study is defined as "a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence." (Robson, cited Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2007, 139) The case study will allow the researcher to gain a thorough understanding of the object or phenomenon studied, and has been chosen for this research paper to gain insights about UNRWA as an organization and the context in which this international organization operates.

Robert Yin sets up the following definition of the case study:

1. “A case study is an empirical inquiry that
 - Investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when
 - The boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident (...)
2. The case study inquiry
 - Copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result
 - Relies on multiple sources of evidence, which data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result
 - Benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis.”

(Yin 2003, pp. 13-14)

In this thesis, it is of interest to generate knowledge about the relationship between UNRWA and the surrounding environment in which it operates. As with any other research approach there are many takes to what a single case study involves. This case study qualifies as a unique case and has been chosen because UNRWA, as it is argued, has always been taken for granted without questioning the basis on which it places its legitimacy. The purpose of choosing UNRWA in Lebanon is not to generalize about UNRWA in all of the 5 fields in which it operates (Syria, Gaza and the West Bank, Jordan), nor is it to generalize about the relief aid industry in its entirety. One of the main criticisms towards the application of single case studies is that it is difficult to generalize on the basis of it and as such the use of this approach has to have a strong justification (Saunders et al. 2007, p. 140). Thus, a case study of the legitimacy of a relief agency is crucial to nuance the debate and not take legitimacy for granted even though it has been articulated in a resolution passed by the United Nations Security Council. Hundreds of agencies operate across the world and starting a discussion about how legitimacy for one of them is shaped might render insights on how other agencies work and are consolidated. Going into

depth with one of many and shedding some light on the situation that UNRWA in Lebanon finds itself in might help us better understand the situation of other organization, even though their historical context might differ from that of UNRWA. The single case study can be labeled holistic in contrast to embedded as it addresses UNRWA as a whole and does not go down in logical sub-units (Saunders et al. 2007, p. 140). Lastly, the strategy of applying the case study approach allows the researcher to potentially challenge the theory and might also prove as a source of new research questions (Saunders et al. 2007, *ibid.*)

4.3 Data Collection Methods

This thesis makes use of extensive and broad array of qualitative data and sources in order to answer the research question. This section will account for the range of different materials and how these were obtained, be that interviews or primary and secondary literature. It also goes into a discussion of common pitfalls to avoid when using the various approaches.

4.3.1 Main Sources

Research of UNRWA's legitimacy using Beetham's framework dictates inspecting texts and documents—legal, academic, and journalistic—to assess legality, normative justifiability, and endorsement. In addition to the insights and expert knowledge obtained from interviews, textual sources formed a full picture of how UNRWA's legitimacy is constructed in the Lebanese post-onset of Syrian Refugee Crisis context. To better understand legality, legal texts pertaining to the UNRWA mandate and operations in Lebanon were analyzed. Similarly, the normative justifiability dimension was constructed using UNRWA's mission statement, press statements, official reports, such as budgets, and the wealth of academic studies covering UNRWA's services and projects in Lebanon. Finally, performative endorsement, which was operationalized using the four relevant stakeholders—state, public, financial community, and media—proposed by legitimacy theorist Hybels (1995), relied on journalistic documents, such as articles and analysis of media portals, such Al-Quad Newspaper, to assess media endorsement, financial reports on donors published by UNRWA to assess financial endorsement, and academic literature and press releases to assess official and public endorsement. Since Palestinian issues

are not extensively covered in the English language papers in Lebanon, a translation was made of an Arabic article which was published in the Lebanese newspaper Ad-Diyar. Hence both primary sources and secondary sources were used in the thesis.

4.3.2 Interviews and Observations

To triangulate the sources identified and to understand the topic in its context, visits to the Palestinian camps in Lebanon were inevitable. Those visits, in addition to automatically enabling observations, allowed for a number of interviews to take place on site, in the ecosystem where UNRWA exists and operates. The interviews that transpired were done with select representatives of NGOs with an established presence in the camps, as well as with the director of the UNRWA Shatila camp. As such, the interviews were elite interviews. Unlike in survey interviewing, the balance of knowledge and expertise in elite interviewing is in favor of the interviewee (Burnham et al. 2008, p. 231). Our four interviewees, given their professional status and years of working in the camps, have shown an expert command of UNRWA's history and presence that was invaluable for this research. It follows that the interviews themselves were semi-structured and not standardized, allowing for a different interview approach depending on the interviewees to allow them to fully articulate their thoughts on the topic discussed.

The interviews took place over a two-day visit to two Palestinian Refugee Camps in Beirut, Mar Elias and Shatila, on October 25 and 26, 2016. One of the interviews was with the UNRWA Shatila Camp Services Officer; the three others were with heads of established local NGOs who operate in the camps. All interviewees were Palestinian refugees themselves. All interviewees, except for the UNRWA Camp Services Officer, allowed the interviews to be tape recorded. Although tape recorders "may inhibit respondent from being as frank as they would be in its absence" (ibid.: p 239), the tape recorded interviewees gave lengthy and detailed answers, transcribed verbatim in the appendix, that were both nuanced and critical. On the contrary, the UNRWA's Camp Services Officer, who opted for note taking to record the interview, gave answers that were more succinct and often ended in referrals to material that is available online. She admitted to not wanting to give wrong information and asked to not be misinterpreted. This

reluctancy stems from her own admission that her boss would be more suitable for the interview. Several attempts to reach him failed. Similarly, out of fear of overstepping a male senior, another woman director of an NGO unit in the Mar Elias camp declined to be interviewed and referred us to the founder of the institution, whom was interviewed for this research.

The first interview took place with Kassem Sabbah, the co-founder and executive director of Mousawat (transliteration of the term for ‘Equality’ in Arabic), a “rights-based organization that aims to promote equality and equitable opportunity mainly for persons with disabilities and refugees in Lebanon” (Mousawat 2016) that was established in 2008 to take over the projects initiated and directed by Norwegian People’s Aid since 1983. Mousawat runs rehabilitation programs and centers in Palestinian Refugee Camps across Lebanon. The interview took place in the organization’s headquarters, which is located right across from UNRWA offices, in the Mar Elias Camp (ibid.)

The second interview took place with Ferial Keiwan, UNRWA Shatila Refugee Camp Services Officer, in her office in Shatila (See picture). It was documented with notes and lasted around 20 minutes. Both the interviewee and the location are of note. The interviewee is the first woman to occupy the most senior post in an UNRWA camp in Lebanon; as for the location, it is the site of a massacre in September 1982, when the Israeli military, which was occupying West Beirut at the time, allowed the Lebanese Christian Phalange militia to enter Palestinian refugee camps Sabra and Shatila. The three-day rampage resulted in the killing and dismembering of at least 800 civilians, mostly women, children, and elderly men (Anziska, 2012).

The third interview was with Sobhi Afifi, director of جمعية أحلام لاجئ Dreams of a Refugee Association. Established in 2010 and officially registered in the Lebanese Ministry of Interior in 2011, the non-governmental organization aims to raise an educated and ambitious new generation by providing reinforcement classes for students in the palestinian camps (Daleel Madani 2016). The interview took place in the Shatila center of the organization.

The fourth interview was with Qassem al-Aina, Executive Director of The National Institution of Social Care and Vocational Training (NISCVT), also known as Beit Atfal Assumoud (registered under the NISCVT name, due to the Lebanese government restriction on using 'Assumoud', arabic for The Resistance, in the NGO's title). Established following the massacre of Tal E-Zaatar refugee camp in 1976, a year after the onset of the Lebanese Civil War, The NISCVT (hence forth Somoud) is a humanitarian non-governmental organization that cares for children who had lost their parents in the massacre. NISCVT has signed a partnership with UNRWA in November 2015 to develop and deliver mental health and psychosocial support sessions oriented at the community within the framework of the EU-funded project 'SPRING - Improving the Living Conditions of Palestine Refugees in Lebanon' (UNRWA 2015a). The interview took place in the headquarters of the organization in Sabra.

In light of the interviews being semi-structured, each interview was built around 5 core questions, which offered the researcher the possibility to ask follow-up questions if things of interest developed during the interviews. The limitation of 5 questions were:

1. Could you please introduce your organization, yourself, and what kind of operations you have here in the camp and in Lebanon in General?
2. What is your view of UNRWA?
3. What do you think of UNRWA's operations in Lebanon?
4. Do you have any collaboration or coordination with UNRWA?
5. How do you attract donations?
6. How do you assess your own results
7. How do you measure your own results?

If the question was answered prior to posing them, the question was not asked. In addition to the interviews that took place in the camps, a guided tour of Shatila was offered and organized by Mousawat. This tour allowed a better understanding of the topic of the research and seeing UNRWA in Lebanon, its offices and works, in the ecosystem where it exists and operates.

The observations made during this tour, and another unguided tour of the Mar Elias camp, were invaluable for building a 'picture' of the topic that is rich with nuances and details. For instance, the tours allowed to see where UNRWA's offices are physically located in both camps, allowing for a configurational understanding of the place it occupies, and how UNRWA signals its presence and contribution to the camps. On two occasions the interviews were stopped by the Mousawat representatives responsible for the tour of the camps due to time constraints. In both instances, the 7 questions had been answered.

4.4 Research Limitations and Challenges

Following the reflections on philosophy of science, it is important to discuss the role of an interviewer in constructing 'the reality'. The interviewer or the researcher is influenced by personal biases and perceptions about the topic. It is important to be aware of this when taking choices as to what kind of questions to ask during an interview or how to minimize one's own biases but at the same time acknowledging that eradicating them altogether is not possible because, as previously mentioned, reality is something that is constructed by all social actors. When initiating contact with the four different non-governmental organizations, the interviewer introduced himself and the topic of research. Just by mentioning UNRWA and legitimacy as the main topic and basis for the interview, there is a possibility that this affected the interviewees and their answers, or overall tone. This was illustrated in one of the interviews. The interviewee had, prior to the interview, obtained key figures and numbers about UNRWA operations in order to deliver an argument against the organization. However, it should be noted that those interviews were used to triangulate already articulated arguments and facts that were identified in the main sources.

In addition, a legal expert on Palestinian refugees in Lebanon did not proceed with scheduling an interview, despite writing to confirm willingness to be interviewed. Two international officials from UNRWA, despite initial confirmation, never answered calls for interviews. Given the very politicized topic at hand it proved harder than expected to gain insights from UNRWA itself, which meant the thesis had to rely and analyze on primarily press

statements and published material. However, given the transparency and very detailed accounts on UNRWA's homepage, it is safe to assume that interviews with international staff employees would not have generated new knowledge. This is evidenced in the interview with the local UNRWA staffer who kept referring the researcher to material that is 'available online'.

Of note is the low context Arab culture that means answers are always detailed, invoking all sorts of tangents, which the researcher was weary of. Despite structuring the interview questions in such a way as to allow the inevitable flow of tangential information while keeping the interview on track, the semi-structured interviews resulted in excessive contextual and peripheral information and often required asking the questions in different ways to get a relevant answer. For instance, asking about the NGOs establishment, answers would drift to a discussion on the creation of the State of Israel. Furthermore, the interviews, except for the one with Ferial Keiwan, were all recorded using tape and video. However, the audio files from the tape recorder were corrupted and hence unusable. This meant that transcripts of the interviews had to be done using audio from the video recordings, which covered almost all of the interviews with brief cuts that are signaled where they occurred.

5. Case and Context

The following section will give an account of the UN subsidiary agency UNRWA and what this title entails. It will start with a general account of UNRWA and how it came about. As it is the case with any international organization, the UN-provided mandate to the agency needs addressing. However, since this constitutes a part of the Legality dimension, the mandate will be addressed in the analysis section 6.1. Having already tackled the historical background to the Palestinian Refugee issue, the thesis will now focus on UNRWA's background leading to its present day operations. This account is two-fold, a general level describing the whole of UNRWA and a particular level focusing on the organization's operations and context in Lebanon.

5.1 UNRWA Background

After the 1948 war—Independence War (Israeli) /Al-Nakba (Arabic)—the UN decided to establish the United Nations Relief Works Agency (UNRWA). The organization started its operations in May 1950 with emergency relief to the Palestine refugees, which until December 1949 had been carried out by established international relief organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) (Bocco 1999, p. 231). Since then UNRWA has become the only international organization in the world whose aim is to deal with a *specific* refugee problem in *one* geographical region, covering the area of of Syria, Jordan, Gaza, the West Bank, and Lebanon (henceforth the five fields) (ibid.) UNRWA's mandate and operations have evolved overtime. At different points in time its mandate was extended to cover other groups than the Palestine Refugees when crisis struck the region.

The mandate of UNRWA in the initial phase was tailored around the 720,000 Palestine refugees who were forced to leave the Palestinian territory (Gelvin 2005, p. 113). In 2015, the numbers of UNRWA registered Palestine refugees stood at 5,589,588. The bulk of this number is situated in Jordan, with over 2 million. A little less than 500,000 Palestinian refugees are in Lebanon⁴ (UNRWA 2016d). The reason for this increase is that the Palestine refugee status is passed on from generation to generation. (Information gathered during Camp Visit and Tour, October 26, 2016) These are the people who have been registered by the UNRWA and as such are eligible to receive the UN agency's services on the basis of their or their families' historical background(ibid.).

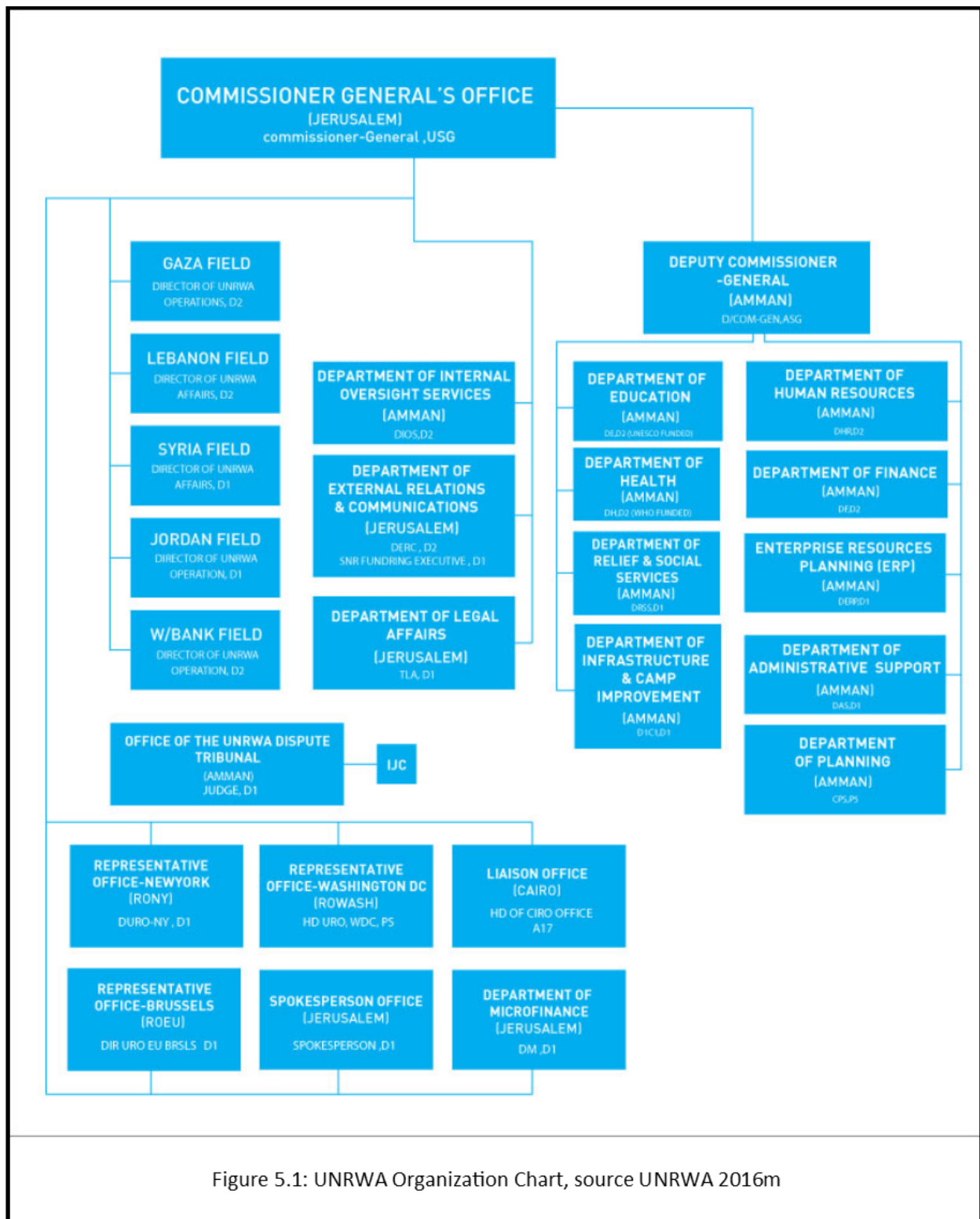
Throughout the years, UNRWA has witnessed organizational development, becoming a provider of humanitarian services and a facilitator of human development. The services provided by UNRWA, include primary education and vocational training, relief and social services, infrastructure and camp improvement, primary health care, microfinance, and emergency

⁴ The current number of Palestine Refugees in Lebanon have some degree of uncertainty, as UNRWA is in a process of registering and adjusting their activities in light of the refugee crisis stemming from Syria.

response, also in times of armed conflict (UNRWA 2015b). As the then Commissioner-General of UNRWA described the evolution of the UN subsidiary organ over the years, it had transitioned “from relief-driven operations to education, health and community-based services” (Grandi cited in Suleiman 2010, p. 2). More than 65 years after the resolution that founded the organization, UNRWA “provides essential services for the wellbeing, human development and protection of Palestine refugees, pending a just solution⁵ . UNRWA holds a unique role amongst all UN agencies as it is the only one that renders services and assistance to its beneficiaries directly (UNRWA 2015b, p. 4).

To give an impression of the organization, an organizational chart illustrates both the administrative entities for the services delivered, located in Amman, where the Deputy Commissioner-General carries out his daily work. The Commissioner-General is situated in Jerusalem along with a small number of administrative bodies covering areas such as law, audit, external relations, and microfinance. Lastly representative offices are located in New York, Brussels, Washington, and a liaison office in Cairo. This huge machine is run by 30,000 employees, of which more than 28,000 are Palestinian refugees themselves (ibid.: p. 5).

⁵ A just solution entails a international political solution between the Palestinian Authorities and the Israeli State.



The majority of the staff is employed within the health and educational programs as doctors, nurses, and teachers. A small portion of the UNRWA staff is international staff (UNRWA 2016a).

The structural and institutional conditions for the organization in the 5 different fields (Gaza and West Bank, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan) vary greatly and thus the thesis will now address the context in which UNRWA finds itself in Lebanon. Where Palestine refugees enjoy certain rights in Jordan and they are able to travel on their issued Jordanian passport and work in Jordan, these rights are not present or very restricted in Lebanon for the same group of people (Camp Visit 2016). The context of UNRWA in Lebanon will be addressed in the subsequent section.

5.2 UNRWA in Lebanon

Lebanon's recent history is filled with dramatic and violent events. The small country which has 18 officially-recognized sects, endured a civil war that lasted from 1976 until 1990, an Israeli invasion in 1982, and lastly in July 2006 'the summer of war', which left national infrastructure and southern Lebanese villages in debris. This short list surveys a few of the many significant events that have shaped the modern history of this small Mediterranean country. Lebanon, which has approximately 4 millions Lebanese citizens, is governed by a

weak sectarian system, in which the country's key positions are divided among sectarian lines (which have a direct impact on the political landscape (Hanafi & Tiltnes, 2008) The many sects make up this multi-cultural society and by legislation sects have been assigned different offices within politics and security. The president has to be Christian Maronite, the prime minister Sunni Muslim, the speaker of parliament Shia Muslim, and the vice prime minister and vice speaker of parliament Greek Orthodox. The many problems that Lebanon faces are caused by rivalry



Entrance to the Mar Elias Refugee Camp—the flag of the UN is flying over the UNRWA camp services office. (Camp Visit 2016)

between the confessions, as well as regional and international politics and the question of the Palestinian refugees, which has inserted itself in Lebanese politics and caused a major divide during the Lebanese Civil War⁶.

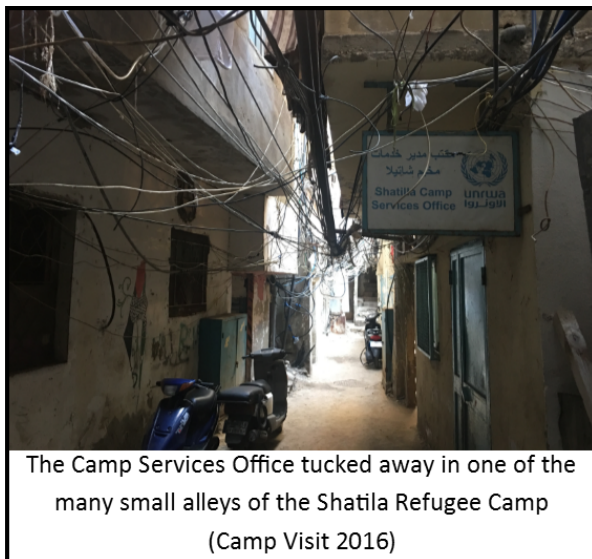
It does not become less complex when attention is brought to the dynamics of the camps, where UNRWA is rendering its services. The 12 palestinian refugee camps vary in size, population, and location. The smallest camp, Mar Elias, is populated by 662 registered Palestine refugees (UNRWA 2016f) and the biggest both in terms of size and population, the Ein El-Hilweh camp in the city of Saida 30 kilometers south of Beirut, has a population of more than 50,000 registered refugees (UNRWA 2016g).

In Lebanon, UNRWA finds itself juggling many functions. UNRWA has to consult with the host government in order to reach its goals, while on a different level it deals with a range of actors in the camps, which constitute a kind of state apparatus within the Lebanese state. The power structures in the camps in Lebanon have changed many times since their establishment. However, the two popular committees, even though considered weak, are now considered the most important local governing body in the camps for the Palestinians. The members of these committees are not elected, even though the name might lead one to think so, but the members represent the power struggle between the different factions or groups in the camps, which constitute the second leading authority in the shape of Hamas or Fatah (Hanafi 2009). The power structure in the camps does not end here. In addition to the one or two popular committees present in each camp, there are also a security committee, the Wujaha (notables), Palestine Scholars' League (a group of Imams⁷ closely affiliated with Hamas), the popular unions and organizations of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, community-based organizations, NGOs, and UNRWA's own Camp Services Officers, who are present in every camp. The camp residents approach these offices if they have issues of concern and to update their records. The Camp Services Officer pass concerns and petitions on to the UNRWA local administration

⁶ Information gathered during researcher certification training as an UN military Observer, UNTSO, Fall 2015.

⁷ An religious figure in the local community and head of mosque.

(UNRWA 2016d). The importance and strength of these different actors vary from camp to camp and from time to time depending on the dominant leaders. If a new dominant actor was to emerge this would *ceteris paribus* change the power balance and new structures and measures would be put in place (Hanafi et al. 2013, p. 164). As Hanafi puts it, “instead of one sovereign, camps in Lebanon and the Occupied Palestinian Territories are ruled by a tapestry of multiple, partial sovereignties.” There are sovereign bodies like the Lebanese Government, PLO and “a patchwork of actors who contribute to the governance of the camps” (ibid.). This succinct paragraph only aims at informing the reader about the complexities of the political landscape in which UNRWA operates as it would be beyond the scope of this thesis to move away from its focus and dive into the specifics of these as they are in constant change dependent on the power struggles.



UNRWA’s presence only adds to the above complexity with its quasi-state attributes or as other scholars have phrased it UNRWA’s ‘phantom sovereignty’ (Misselwitz and Hanafi, 2009, Hanafi et al. 2013) which will be expanded on in the analysis section corresponding to Beetham’s concept of normative justifiability.

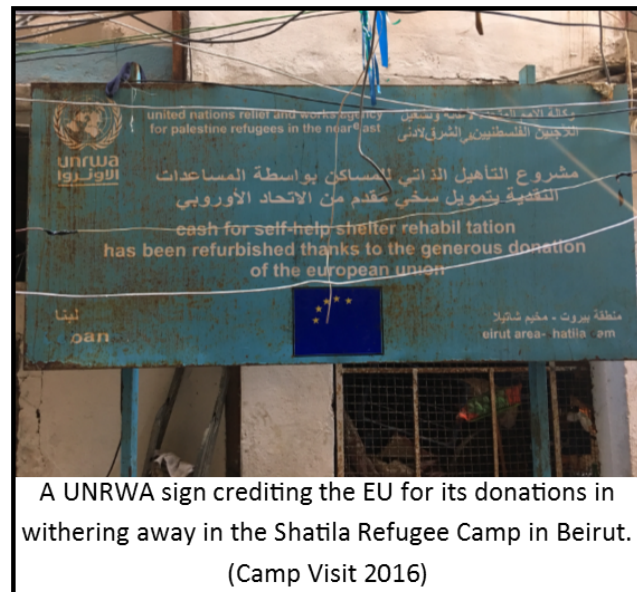
5.2.1 Syrian Refugees

The pressure on UNRWA in Lebanon has grown with the increased influx of refugees from Syria. According to UNRWA figures 450,000 of the 560,000 registered Palestine refugees in Syria are still trapped inside the country with more than two thirds being internally displaced. The first press statement issued by UNRWA in Lebanon mentioning this matter came in the beginning of 2013, where the then United Nations Special Coordinator to Lebanon (UNSCOL)

and then then Director of UNRWA in Lebanon visited Ein El Hilweh camp. The UNSCOL said that he had “the difficult conditions in Ein El Hilweh. The plight of refugees arriving from Syria is truly distressing,” he continued “UNRWA has been helping, within available resources.” At this point in time 4,000 Palestine refugees from Syria were sheltering in the camp in addition to the 53,000 registered refugees (UNRWA 2013). By 2016 UNRWA has recorded more than 42,000 Palestine refugees from Syria that have fled to Lebanon, half of whom were living in one of its 12 recognized refugee camps (UNHCR, 2016). UNRWA is using this in its media campaign to attract more funds for the organization stating “due to the deterioration of conditions inside Syria and the protracted displacement of Palestine refugees to Lebanon and Jordan, the critical lifeline provided by UNRWA is required more than ever. In 2016, UNRWA needs US\$ 414 million to meet the minimum humanitarian needs of Palestine refugees affected by the conflict in the region.” (UNRWA 2016h). The influx of Syrian refugees is also an increasing concern of the community-based organizations (CBOs) and NGOs that do not discriminate against refugees if they are not registered with UNRWA(Appendix A and Appendix D).

5.2.2 2016 Turmoil

In the end of 2015 and in the first half of 2016, UNRWA was the object of critique from Palestine refugees in Lebanon. This is not a new thing as the organizations has seen Palestinians protest continuously in front of their offices whenever there was a concern in the local community. One such episode unfolded in the beginning of 2016 as UNRWA announced a restructuring of its health care policy.



One article from a well-established Lebanese publication ad-Diyar concerning the beginning of the debacle describes a sit-in organized in front of the UNRWA offices in Saida.

On behalf of the protesters the secretary of the Palestinian popular committees in the area Dr. Abed Abu Salah delivered a lengthy speech, in which he among other things said:

“The gradual reductions of UNRWA’s services since many years, under the pretext of fiscal deficit and donor countries falling short of their financial commitments, prove the submission of the international community to the wishes of the United States of America and Israel to end UNRWA’s services as a step end the Palestinian refugees’ right of return”

(Al- Diyar 2016)⁸

Some of the many particular concerns and demands voiced in his speech are for UNRWA to bear the cost of hospitalization as a whole, to cover all medical conditions without exception, to cancel fixation of percentage of coverage of hospitalization with affiliated hospitals, to cancel the maximum number of days of hospitalization, to increase the coverage of cost of hospitalization so that it is not limited to a maximum of \$5,000 US dollars of the invoice.) (ibid.)

UNRWA on its part downplayed the impact of the health policy changes. The organization’s spokesperson said that the budget overall remained at \$10.000.000 but the funding was being restructured. This restructuring included a reduction in the secondary health care funding. However, according to the official the budget for tertiary health care for in-patients had increased, which covers advanced medical cases such as neurosurgery, cardiac surgery and cancer management. (al-Jazeera 2016) "We raised coverage of tertiary healthcare from 50 percent to 60 by reducing coverage of secondary healthcare, in order to cover life-threatening conditions that are expensive to treat," the official continued "There were no budget cuts; we just readjusted the services through the budget to provide better coverage for those with very expensive-to-treat conditions, who need

⁸ Appendix E - see 9.E for a translation of the speech and the article in ad Diyar Magazine

operations that could potentially be life-saving." (Darkazally cited in Aljazeera 2016). Demonstrations, however, continued throughout the beginning and spring of 2016 with spectacular stories in the different media outlets, the most significant of which were in the early days of 2016 when a young Palestinian man set himself on fire in front of one of the agency's clinics in a refugee camp in the vicinity of Tyre, one of Lebanon's main urban centres (Daily Star 2016). This constituted a peak in local media coverage, as is explained in 6.3.4 of analysis. On a weekly basis, one could read about new minor or larger demonstrations and UNRWA offices being forced to close down in the Palestinian camps. In June of 2016, the demonstration was no longer mentioned in the media which might be an indication that UNRWA had managed to regain its legitimacy. This was linked to UNRWA's policy of delay, a mechanism uncovered by this research and mentioned in analysis section 6.3.2.

5.3 Summary

This section has briefly accounted for the complex environment that UNRWA has been a part of since the establishment of the camps. UNRWA renders services and deals with tasks that would normally be the responsibility of a welfare state and it is argued that the organization has a quasi-state and quasi-NGO appearance for its beneficiaries in the 12 different camps. Concerns from the beneficiaries are addressed to the organization and discontent among the Palestine refugees leads to reaction from the popular committees and the common Palestinian in the camps. This section illustrates that UNRWA's role in Lebanon, which hosts only a small portion of the total number of Palestine refugees in the region, presents an interesting phenomenon that is worthy of further scrutiny. The thesis now turns to the analytical part in its attempt to provide answer to the posed research question.

6. Analysis: Three Dimensions to UNRWA's Legitimacy

The framework of three dimensions advanced by Beetham to account for an entity's legitimacy was chosen to guide this research in answering the question of how UNRWA's legitimacy is constructed and maintained in specific setting. Thus, the current section is divided according to this framework with the aim of advancing a compelling case that lays out the legal framework according to which UNRWA operates in Lebanon, its mission and the execution thereof, and the actions by outside agents that endorse the organization. By using insightful texts from official, legal, scholarly, and journalistic sources and bolstering them with observations and on-site interviews, the analysis approaches the research question in a pragmatic way, drawing upon all relevant topics available to illuminate the legality, normative justifiability, and performative endorsement of UNRWA.

6.1 Legality

The historical context for the establishment of UNRWA was uncovered in the introduction and Case and Context (chapters 1 and 5). In order to understand the legality of UNRWA, the thesis will look at aspects of its legal framework of existence and operations that have shaped the organization as it is known today. An examination of the legal framework set by the International Community will be followed by the Lebanese Government's rules and regulations that are in place with regards to the Palestinian refugee issues. In conclusion, some reflections are made as to how the legality of UNRWA, considered a prerequisite of legitimacy in the Beethemian framework, influences the two subsequent dimensions of Normative Justifiability and Performative Endorsement.

6.1.1 International Community Level

The section revolves around the relationship of UNRWA to United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and thus creates a historical account beginning with the founding article in

1949. The UNGA mandate of UNRWA is continuously renewed and the current mandate runs until June 30, 2017 (UNRWA 2016e).

On December 8, 1949, the UNGA convened and voted on resolution no. 302. Until UNGA resolution 302 (IV) was adopted, the assistance to Palestine refugees had relied upon the League of Red Cross Societies, American Friends Service Committee, and the International Committee of the Red Cross, and other international organizations (UNRWA 2016i). These non-governmental organizations had announced that they would not be able to continue their aid after the fall of 1949 (Takkenberg 2009: p. 254). The need for the establishment of an organization was justified with the end to ‘prevent conditions of starvation and distress’ among the Palestinians and to “further conditions of peace and stability” (UNGA 1949, 302 art. 5). Resolution 302 deals with many issues relating to the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations; in its seventh paragraph, it authorises the UN to create the organization United Nations Relief Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. The establishing paragraph 7 consists of two different goals. First, it was to collaborate with the local governments in order to carry out programmes for direct relief and works and, second, it was “to consult with the *interested* Near Eastern Governments concerning measures to be taken by them preparatory to the time when international assistance for relief and works projects is no longer available” and “to carry out in collaboration with local governments the direct relief and works program as recommended by the Economic Survey Mission.” (ibid., art. 7)

The resolution established that the UNSG-appointed Director of UNRWA, with the assistance of an Advisory Commission, would be the chief executive officer of the organization and as such would have a number of tasks and responsibilities, for instance to establish financial regulations for the organization, to apportion available funds between direct relief and works projects, and to submit an annual report to the UNGA covering budgetary and critical matters to the organization. The title of the Director for UNRWA has later changed to Commissioner-General.

France, Turkey and the United States, who had comprised the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine⁹, and the United Kingdom sponsored the draft resolution and UNRWA was established with a vote with 48 for and 0 against, while 6 abstained from the vote. Israel and all of the Arab governments voted for, and South Africa along with 5 Communities countries abstained. (Takkenberg 2009, p. 255).

6.1.1.1 The Budget Paradox

Resolution 302 also stipulates that the budget of UNRWA is to be covered by voluntary donations by members and non-members of the General Assembly. Those voluntary donations would cover supplies and funds for each period. (art. 13). This last point had and continues to have a tremendous impact on UNRWA and its operations since on one hand the international community gave it the responsibility to help an entire refugee population and on the other hand allocated no significant or sustainable funds to the organization in the UN annual budget to lift this responsibility: as such the organization has continuously and inevitably been facing budgetary crises. In the end of 2015 the Commissioner-General addressed the UNGA as stated that the initial budget deficit for 2016 had been USD 135 million, but due to staff efforts was reduced to USD 81 million.

The UN secretariat funds a part of the UNRWA core programme. This funding finances close to all of the international staff positions in the five different fields. (UNESCO and WHO fund 10 positions on average in health and education programs) (UNRWA 2016i). With regards to the 2016 core programme budget for 2016, the expenditure for the international staff was at USD 32,028,000 (UNRWA CP Budget 2015, p. 88). The basic salaries (non-international staff positions) was set at 397,077,000. In total the budget totalled USD 831,759,00. Divided on the different fields, Lebanon accounts for the third largest post (USD 102,376,000). The West Bank is ranked first with USD 275,676,000 and Jordan second with 160.077 (ibid., p. 87).

⁹ ICCP - A separate UN agency erected 1948. Resolution 194(III) established it and the purpose was to arrive to a final settlement of the question of Palestine. Further it was to promote a 'durable solution' for the refugees and assist governments and authorities in reaching a final settlement - preferably a combined package of repatriation and compensation or alternatively resettlement and compensation - left up to the preference of each refugee (Badil 2000).

For UNRWA, this means that the organization year after year is struggling to attract international donors to finance its operations. UNRWA explains why the organization is not part of UN-assessed contribution system in the following manner “When UNRWA was established as a temporary agency the United Nations and member states thought it would be in the interest of both UNRWA and the refugees if the Agency was able to collect voluntary contributions of any amount from member states.” More than sixty years later, the organization finds itself struggling to gather the sufficient donors in order to carry out its mission” (UNRWA 2016i).

The financial crisis of UNRWA was lastly mentioned in a letter from the Commissioner-General (September 14, 2016) which was conveyed into a special report (September 19, 2016) from the President of the UNGA where he, on behalf of the UNSG and UNRWA informed the UNGA about a shortfall of \$74 million dollar in the UNRWA funding. In the letter, it said “unless the shortfall is bridged, UNRWA will be unable to continue delivery of essential services to the Palestine refugees through the end of the year.” The President went on to say “I join the Secretary-General in expressing serious concerns about the fragile state of the Agency's financing, and the major humanitarian, political and security risks that would result from a suspension of its vital work on behalf of some 5.3 million Palestine refugees, including those in 59 refugee camps.” (UNGA SR 2016)

6.1.1.2 The Evolving Mandate

Throughout its life-span UNRWA's mandate has evolved to accommodate shifts and changes in the state of the Palestine refugee population. Bartholomeusz derives a definition of the term from the 2005 World Summit Outcome. A mandate for him is “a request or a direction, for action by the United Nations Secretariat or other implementing entities that derives from a resolution of the General Assembly or one of the other relevant organs” (Bartholomeusz 2010: p. 453). The founding resolution has already been described in 6.1.1, but several resolutions have added to the tasks of UNRWA and shaped the organization into what it is today, which was described in chapter 5. In 1967, 300,000 people (120.000 Palestine Refugees) lost their homes in

the aftermath of the 1967 war. UNGA Resolution 2252 asked of UNRWA “to continue to provide humanitarian assistance ... on an emergency basis, and as a temporary measure, to persons in the area who is currently displaced and in serious need of continued assistance” and over the years UNGA has repeated the mandate for those displaced in 1967. This resolution also covered those displaced during the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon and in that year resolution 37/120(J) added (explicitly) protection to the responsibilities of UNRWA. The resolution reads that UNRWA should “undertake effective measures to guarantee the safety and security and the legal and human rights of the Palestinian refugees in the occupied territories.” (UNRWA 2016k).

It needs mentioning that it is up to UNRWA executive officer (the Commissioner-General) to determine what actions fulfill the mandate in good faith and in accordance with established procedures. The Advisory Commission can consult the executive officer. The United Nations General Assembly could consider matters and its decision would be final and the individual member states has no role in determining the extent of the organization’s mandate (Batholomeusz 2010, p. 456). The last section shows that it is up to UNRWA and the Commissioner-General to operationalize the mandate derived from the request and directions. One of these operationalizations is significant in regards to who can be registered as UNRWA refugee and thus be eligible for the many services provided by the organization. This will be the focus of the next section.

6.1.1.3 The Definition Gap: Who is a Palestine Refugee?

What is in a definition? It is important to note that it is not the General Assembly who has defined what constitutes Palestine Refugee. This working definition of Palestine Refugees who are entitled to UNRWA services and benefits is determined by the Commissioner-General of the Organization (UNRWA 2006) consulted by staff and Advisory Committee. This means that not all Palestinians in Lebanon can be registered with the Agency and have to seek to UNHCR if they are in need of assistance. This also includes Syrians that have fled from the war in Syria. The working definition has changed over time but on text the agency relies on the following: “persons whose normal place of residence was Palestine during the period 1 June 1946 to 15

May 1948, and who lost both home and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 conflict.”(CERI 2009) As such the agency services UNRWA-registered refugees if they are residing in the area of operations and they are in need of assistance (ibid.). This means that UNRWA’s Palestine Refugee Definition is not consistent with for instance the 1951 Convention (Suleiman, 2006). Hence when reading through UNRWA materials, there is a significant difference if the term used is Palestine Refugees or Palestinian Refugees. The descendants of Palestine Refugees are also entitled to be registered with the organization (CERI 2009), which is the reason why the population of Palestine refugees has grown to over 5 million today. It should be noted, that UNRWA has also been encouraged by the UNGA to provide assistance on a humanitarian basis to persons in the area displaced after the 1967 war and the following incidents (Suleiman, 2006).

6.1.2 Lebanese State Level

The thesis now turns towards the legality of the organization by looking at regulations of the Lebanese State. It will account for the regulations that affect UNRWA’s role, argue that the Lebanese State has continued to marginalize the refugee population within its borders, and ask why this is the case articulating a recurrent theme in the Palestinian political question namely that on naturalization vs. resettlement.

Lebanon at the time of the creation of UNRWA was a country in its infancy, having gained its independence in 1943. Before the establishment of UNRWA, Lebanese President Bshara Al-Khuri created by presidential decree the Central Committee for Refugee Affairs in 1948 (Suleiman, 2006). It was tasked with regulation of the Palestinian refugees’ presence in terms of statistics and accommodation, even relief and health care. At the time, it was believed that the refugee issue would be temporary (ibid.)

Despite the aforementioned 1951 call of the General Assembly to host governments to assist UNRWA, it took Lebanese policymakers about 8 years to realize that the issue was not temporary and to address it (ibid), when in 1959 the Department of Affairs of Palestinian

Refugees (DAPR) was established within the Lebanese Ministry of Interior, as “the first piece of national legislation dealing with the legal institutional framework for the Palestinians in the country.” (ibid., p. 12) DAPR possessed many administrative and family unification tasks but in relation to UNRWA it was tasked to contact the organization “to ensure relief, shelter, education, and health and social services for the refugees.” (ibid.) Suleiman interprets the semantics as a political measure to distance the Lebanese State from the responsibility for Palestinian Refugees. By ‘ensuring’ to provide social services, the Lebanese State never actually commits to provide them itself, but merely to see that UNRWA does. This stems from the Lebanese State’s “assumption that the International community represented by UN should carry this burden” (ibid.) Wadi’a Said goes further asserting that the DAPR, beyond the bureaucratic function, served to accurately profile refugees and to assess the security risk that they present (Said 2001, p. 130).

After decree No. 4082 in November 2010, the Department of Affairs of Palestinian Refugees (DAPR) became the Department of Political Affairs and Refugees (DPAR). While retaining the same tasks and functionalities, the department, as the name change signals, ceased to regulate status of Palestinian refugees separately and has effectively been “administratively downgraded” and “became a department affiliated to another directorate, with few prerogatives remaining in the hands of the Director” (Suleiman 2006, p. 13) Palestinian refugees perceived the move as downgrade of their legal status (ibid.)

In 2005, The Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee (LPDC), initially called the Lebanese Working Group on Palestinian Refugees, was formed an inter-ministerial government body. It serves to coordinate policies and make policy recommendations across Lebanese ministries regarding implementation of policies targeting Palestinian Refugees. It deals with outstanding Palestinian refugee issues that are of socio-economic, legal, and security nature in collaboration with UNRWA. However, the bulk of its work is primarily related to Palestinian arms regulation outside and inside the camps (LPDC 2016).

Legally speaking, Palestinian refugees enjoy restricted rights. Despite the Lebanese law seeing changes in 2005 and 2010 that allowed Palestinian refugees to some formal employment in the private sector, they are still prohibited from “36 liberal or syndicated professions (including in medicine, farming and fishery, and public transportation).” (UNHCR 2016, p.5). Even in terms of education, Palestinian refugees are denied access to Lebanese public schools. With the private schools in Lebanon being inaffordable, they are left with only 69 UNRWA schools. Moreover, they are prevented from real property acquisition, transfer, or even inheritance and from access to Lebanese public health services (ibid.)

6.1.3 Summary

In conclusion, the legitimacy/legal validity of UNRWA revolves around international treaties and law. UNRWA enjoys legal validity with its foundations in a UNGA resolutions. To attack or question its legality is to attack or question the legality of the United Nations. Its legality is not without reproach, however. The institutional set-up poses a problem for the way it accrues funds for its operations, it also allows it to pass on refugee status across generations, which, as discussed in 6.3, begets harsh criticism from conservatives and Israeli-lobby who accused it of ‘perpetuating’ the refugee issue. This section found that UNRWA is not operating out of a fixed UNGA established definition nor one that is according to the 1951 Convention. This possibility, however historically and financially constrained, it can be argued is an ability to exclude people from being able to receive the UNRWA services and benefits. This feeds into the power relationship that UNRWA has to the Palestinian Refugees—by a working definition the agency has the power to exclude or include people able for UNRWA registration. On the level of Lebanon, UNRWA is the main agency to deal with and with whom governmental institutions cooperate when engaging in projects. The official and legal involvement of UNRWA as the Lebanese State’s choice partner in any cooperation that targets Palestinian refugee affairs bolsters the critical role the organization plays in Lebanon as a middleman between its beneficiaries and the host country. When analysing the legality of UNRWA according to Beetham, as far as rules are concerned, UNRWA enjoys a high degree of legal validity with solid position in both International and Lebanese Law as the main caretaker of Palestinian refugees in

Lebanon. The implications of UNRWA's legal framework on its legitimacy, however, reach beyond legality. The budget paradox, which has translated to a chronic financial deficit for the organization and has thus resulted in constant shrinking of services and restructuring thereof, resulting in harsh criticism that manifested in protests in early 2016 is one direct implication. Another implication stemming from the legal framework is UNRWA's ability to pass down the refugee status to future generations, which has meant for its beneficiaries and the native populations of its host countries, such as Lebanon, the equation of the organization with the future guarantee for the refugees' right of return, wherever they were born, whether in Palestine pre-1948 or in the camps.

6.2 Normative Justifiability

Normative Justifiability, as Beetham argues, is the core of legitimacy, accounting for an organization's audiences' assessment of it based on its sources of authority and due performance in carrying out its tasks. In this section of the analysis, UNRWA will be considered from the angle of democratic and technocratic norms to which it is held, in addition to the angle of its mission and performance. It is worth noting that legitimacy criteria, according to Beetham, are built from a historical perspective, i.e. that legitimating principles are judged as more or less emancipatory than others (Beetham, 1991, p. 112). The implication on UNRWA's legitimacy is that audiences will view its performance relatively, as an advancement or regression from its previous set of actions.

6.2.1 Rightful Authorisation

A primary aspect of normative justifiability is the rightful authorization of an organization. This aspect can be broken down to two characteristics, namely that of democratic and technocratic authorisation. Democratic refers to the capacity of an organization to act as a representative "of the social groups whose interests are marginalized, of points of view which would otherwise be ignored in the policy arena." (Beetham 2013, p. 299) Thus, it is important to look at those subtle activities that UNRWA undertakes that support the Palestinian community and UNRWA can justify taking under its rather strict mandate that prevents the organization

from addressing any political questions especially the right of return and naturalization of the Palestine refugee group. It is on this edge that UNRWA is balancing—trying to improve the situation of its direct beneficiaries without stepping on the toes of other actors who keep the organization under continuous scrutiny. The dilemmas and space for negotiation that UNRWA is faced with is closely attached to the other aspect of rightful authorisation, the technocratic part, and as such this section will deal with the two simultaneously. While Beetham argues that the technocratic part is more straightforward on paper, as it mainly concerns an entity's staff's expertise and experience in their field, combining it with the aforementioned democratic aspect makes it just as complex for UNRWA as small changes in organizational policies and negotiations is bound to affect its perception among all of the stakeholders including that of the beneficiaries, the Palestine refugees.

UNRWA does list Palestinian refugees' enjoyment of human rights to the 'fullest extent' as one of its four objectives, which despite not officially playing an advocacy role, render the organization with some advocacy power in the coordinating arena with the other players. In 2008-2012, the UNRWA director spent a great portion of his time negotiating with the Lebanese Government about the reconstruction of the Nahr el-Bared Camp (NBC)¹⁰ along with rights of the Palestinians to work and to own property. Advocating for work and property rights were uncharted territory for UNRWA in Lebanon and for the country director, but the agency was successful in empowering its beneficiaries rights (Hanafi 2014, p. 163). An appeal was established to gather funding for the reconstruction of the camp—a process which 10 years later is still ongoing and still appearing on UNRWA's non-regular budget (UNRWA 2015c). UNRWA has, throughout the reconstruction process, adopted a new camp improvement

¹⁰ A background story to the situation of the camp: From May and until September 2007, the camp witnessed the most violent episode in Lebanon since the outbreak of the civil war. It started when the Internal Security Forces made an operation against a house in Tripoli, which was housing a group of Fatah Islam members, suspected of conducting an armed robbery in the city. The violent clash in Tripoli sparked a reaction in the refugee camp 16 kilometres away. Members of the group attacked a checkpoint killing 27 Lebanese soldiers in their sleep, which resulted in instant shelling of the camp. (CNN 2007). By the beginning of August all the civilians had fled or been evacuated from the camp and the fighting between the faction and the ISF continued until the beginning of September where ISF declared victory of the group and had taken full control of the camp (Guardian 2007). The result for the camp was devastating: 27,000 refugees had abandoned their homes, the camp was almost completely destroyed by the fightings, and an UNRWA compound housing the agency's health centre, schools, and relief office was also left in rubbles. (UNRWA2016l).

approach in which the organization for the first time accepted working in a full partnership with Nahr el-Bared Reconstruction Commission for Civil Action and Studies (NBRC), which is a technocratic grassroot organization. This approach was opposed by the Lebanese Government who refused to work with anyone but UNRWA, fearing to spark tension between the factions (Hanafi, UNRWA 2014 pp. 170-171). Initially, LPDC refused NBRC in the official planning. However, when UNRWA threatened to leave the process, because NBRC voiced its dissatisfaction and a threat of non-cooperation, LPDC agreed to have one NBRC delegate present in a meeting and this developed into a technical delegation from NBRC representing the interest of the camp dwellers. (ibid. p. 172.) The act of UNRWA in this project allowed for the Palestinians to be heard and their feedback to be taken into consideration, even though the security affiliated issues, raised by the military, laid out the premises for design and the reestablishment of the camp. This episode made UNRWA aware that “participation constituted part of the civil rights of the refugees”(ibid.) and through its ultimatum to the Lebanese Government it was successful in improving the role of Palestinian civil society and allowing them to participate in shaping the urban environment and other parts of the agency’s programmes in its approach to protection. In addition, it goes to show that UNRWA is able to do more than just consulting with the host government and can be successful in pushing the official authorities in new directions.

Another point in this anecdote, which is raised by Hanafi, is that past actions of the UNRWA director affected the expectations in the community. Hanafi argues that “most refugees have effectively assigned UNRWA, a key role, holding it responsible for problems in the camps that go well beyond the realm of its mandate” (Hanafi 2014: p. 163). In a range of interviews recently conducted Hanafi argues that the actions of a former country director (2008-2012), the director mentioned earlier in this section, one person stated that the UNRWA was not as forceful when engaging with the Lebanese authorities comparing the new director with his predecessor. This goes to illustrate one of the points from Beetham that aspects of legitimacy is also constrained by historical evolution. In this case the new director had not lived up to the expectations of a Palestinian interlocutor—expectations that were molded by the previous

actions. This also goes to show what the thesis argued earlier, that the agency always has to be very careful when they balance around different stakeholders.

Moving to a more recent development, the restructuring of the health policy in 2016, and viewing the article in appendix E, the statements are directed to Matthias Schmale, the previous Director of UNRWA in Lebanon. The article says: “ The Director General has updated us with shocking decisions whose impact on the spirit of the refugees had the worst effect on the reality of the lives of Palestinian refugees, and you (Director of UNRWA, edit) had come with your humanitarian mission to the reality of life of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and their struggles, and we were hopeful for your assignment to this position, but with the start of your assignment to this position the fiscal deficit crisis was directly announced and you made unjust decisions under the pretext of the crisis. We are not surprised today by the adopted policy that manifested in the operation to round UNRWA’s health department’s budget and you are the ones who realize the amount of pain and damage which befalls Palestinian refugees”. Schmale has since been moved to Syria and a temporary replacement acts as the functioning Director. Mousawat Director Kassem Sabbah went as far as saying that Schmale was not welcomed in the camps (Appendix A). The functioning Director is an Arabic speaker, a move that was noted and welcomed by the interviewees. The underlying dynamics of note, at this point, is the high, often misplaced, expectations of UNRWA and the ease of criticizing it that comes with no risk. As Sabbah puts it: “It is easy to throw [frustration] to UNRWA. UNRWA will not come and shoot you. If you criticize PLO people or PLO organization they will shoot you or cut your salary or do something, but if you speak about UNRWA nothing will happen.” (ibid.)

What is expected of UNRWA, as it was introduced in legality, is to provide protection, as its operations were extended. The UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee defines protection as “all activities aimed at obtaining full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the relevant bodies of law (human rights law, international humanitarian law, refugee law)” (IASC 1999). For UNRWA, the introduction of this aspect in its mandate has made it formulate what it does to defend and increase the rights of its beneficiaries.

The agency seeks to “deliver its services in a manner that promotes and respect the rights of the beneficiaries”, also it works “to promote the respect” for their beneficiaries rights through monitoring, intervening, and reporting. Lastly, it is to advocate in public statements as well as private interventions with a broad range of interlocutors to promote the protection of refugee rights. (UNRWA 2016i). It is beyond the scope of this thesis to assess in detail to what extent UNRWA is succeeding in this as it would constitute an academic work in itself. However, on the ground, UNRWA has developed its focus on protection in the last 10 years. Protection concepts and practices in all aspects of the organization have been mainstreamed. When looking at UNRWA’s Medium Term Strategies (2010-2015 and 2016-2021) the importance that UNRWA ascribes to protection is clear as ‘human rights as a core human development’ is emphasized. Additionally, when the General Assembly convenes to discuss the operations of the agency two phrases have been recurring throughout the last decade: “Valuable work (is) done by the Agency in providing protection to the Palestinian people, in particular Palestine Refugees” but at the same time UNRWA is encouraged “to make further progress” (UNGA 2016). In the speech that the Commissioner-General gave to the fourth commission of the General Assembly about the operations and development of 2015, he said that over and over again he is asked why the world should concern itself with the Palestinian refugees with so many other pressing issues at hand. He gave an elaborate answer to this question¹¹ and turned to the different countries in which UNRWA deals. Regarding Lebanon he stated that “very high rates of poverty and unemployment are the leading challenge for UNRWA, and a source of extreme hardship for the Palestine refugees. While many factors influence the set of unique difficulties, one main cause is exclusion of Palestine refugees from much of Lebanon’s formal employment sector and their lack of access

¹¹ Quote from Commissioner-General Krauenbuhl address to the General Assembly (November 3, 2016) In my view the world should do so: **Because** the conditions facing the 5.3 million Palestine refugees are now in many ways worse than at any time since 1948, something that I believe we should work together to reverse. **Because** the absence of a political horizon is draining them of resolve and creativity. **Because** fifty years of occupation in Palestine and ten years of blockade in Gaza, happening in full view of the international community, are etched painfully into the soul and identity of the refugee community. But maybe more importantly even: **Because** a young generation of Palestine refugees is growing up and losing faith in the value of politics, compromise and international diplomacy. And **because**, once the dust has settled from the crises in the region - and settle it ultimately will - the scars of Gaza, Hebron, East Jerusalem and Nablus, as well as the pain and suffering of Ein El-Helweh, Nahr El-Bared, Yarmouk and others, and the abuse and despair of Palestine refugees, will continue to stare the world in the face, and with greater intensity.

to most public services. In coordination with UNSCOL¹², UNRWA advocates directly for refugee labor rights and maintains a productive and strong relationship with the Government of Lebanon” (UNRWA 2016e). In addition to the responsibilities of the Commissioner-General of UNRWA to report to the General Assembly and the Advisory Board, he is also active across the world trying to secure funding and advocate for the Palestine Refugees. At the International Peace Institute, he gave a presentation of the current state of affairs in the region. The UNRWA official was introduced as the Head of an Agency which is a ‘strong voice’ in the debate in regards to Palestine Refugees. During the questions and answers session which followed, he referred to UNRWA as the barometer, because Palestinians could look at the state of UNRWA to see how the world considered them. He highlighted that UNRWA is the only UN agency working with a single refugee group and as such when budget cuts are needed it is not possible for UNRWA to divide the cuts over several groups of beneficiaries like other global agencies or organizations. If cuts are introduced the Palestinians know that they are the target of a reduction—because the international community does not prioritize them in the light of other crises. He also advocated for not forgetting this refugee group stating “right now if we are honest there is an overriding attention in the International Community to Syrian Refugees” and while acknowledging that this group deserved all that it could get of aid and help, he maintained that “the risk is a little bit that the Palestine refugee issue (will) fall off the table and that is a risk that the world should not be taking because of the instability that, that may generate—the additional instability in the Middle East.” (IPIST 2016: 38:58)

This one example, among others, illustrates how UNRWA on an international level advocates for the rights and the needs of this refugee population, participating in conferences and raising awareness about the dire needs of the Palestine refugees. This thesis argues that even though UNRWA is not mandated to deal with political issues, and often can be heard saying “as UNRWA is not involved in the political question”, an organization such as UNRWA is constantly operating in a gray zone, where it has to be cautious about what issues and to whom these issues are addressed.

¹² UNSCOL - United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon

It is also important to see how the organization deals with critique and feedback from the community and the beneficiaries. The idea for this thesis developed in light of the numerous demonstrations that UNRWA faced in the beginning of 2016. Prior to undertaking the thesis, the author was in touch with two international staff employees who agreed to provide input and answer questions on how the organization dealt with the protests. However, after several attempts and unreturned e-mails, the thesis has since relied primarily on what could be obtained from open sources. During a tour in one of Lebanon's camps, the author got a presentation from the Shatila Camp Services Officer and was allowed to ask questions. However, it was clear that the interviewee agreed out of courtesy, since, as she made clear, prior authorization was needed from the main office in Beirut. However brief her input, it proved valuable in light of the lack of willingness from the two internationals. It could also be argued that this goes to show once again how careful and cautious UNRWA employees are when it comes to their employer. As the Shatila Camp Services Officer, Ferial Keiwan, stated, UNRWA is the only forum for Palestinians to voice their concerns and dissatisfaction with their situation because voicing their concern in front of the Lebanese State, the popular committees or the political factions is linked with a severe risks. (Appendix B)

Returning to the reaction of UNRWA to the critique and protests, which marked the first five months of 2016, UNRWA did not ignore this critique of the new health policy that had been introduced to accommodate the budget deficit and had, as previously mentioned, introduced a cost-sharing element in UNRWA hospitalization services. Even though the original health restructuring had been implemented to accommodate earlier requests from the beneficiaries concerning "important benefits, including greater sustainability and increased support for tertiary care, which has been a long-standing request from Palestine refugees living in Lebanon"(ibid.), UNRWA announced that it had made improvements to the introduced hospitalization policy. It readjusted the percentage of UNRWA coverage. This meant that Palestine Refugees with regards to secondary care would be changed to 90 percent on government and private hospitals and 100 percent for the hospitals, that are run by the Palestine Red Crescent ([UNRWA 2016n](#)). Another

measure was the establishment of a complementary hospitalization fund. With the establishment of this fund, UNRWA showed that it had listened to its concerned beneficiaries, among which there had been a fear that the poorest members in the community would not be able to pay the costs of the new policy (the cost-sharing element) and would therefore be put at even more risk to suffer due to the first version of the new health policy. (UNRWA 2016o). Matthias Schmale, the recently replaced UNRWA Lebanon Director, was quoted in one press release saying that the change of mind with regard to the health policy programme came as a result of intense discussions with hospitalization experts which were guided by the strong concerns voiced by refugees about the cost-sharing element introduced at the beginning of this year, and UNRWA was “grateful for the support and advice Palestinian, Lebanese and UN leaders have given over these past few months” and in his elaboration he said that UNRWA would “start a second phase of consultation with experts to explore ways to best implement further improvements in our health and hospitalization support work” (UNRWA PRESS 2016n). However, as Suleiman points out UNRWA employees, offices, and facilities are often targeted when the agency attempts to introduce changes that are not well-liked among the beneficiaries. (Suleiman 2005). Reading the press statement from February 27 there is an indication that this was also the case in the beginning of the 2016. An excerpt from the statement read “UNRWA calls for the respect of the integrity of its staff, installations and offices, as threats and closures affect the much needed provision of services to refugees. “ (UNRWA PRESS 2016o) This goes to show that UNRWA takes action sometimes under pressure. In many other instances, the organization has been accused of delaying changes and adopting a policy of delay as will be discussed in 6.3.

In addition to boasting decades of experience on the field that means being able to factor in critiques and operate despite a chronic budget deficit, UNRWA has seen a technocratic transformation of sorts when its Organization Development process (OD) has decentralized its management, “reviewed its approach to resource mobilization in response to the Agency’s funding constraints, comprehensively overhauled its approach to programme management, and established sound strategic planning processes” (Takkenberg, 2010, p. 258). In addition to expertise, UNRWA’s employees are also neutral—an essential quality to be have working in the

highly politicized Palestinian refugee camps. As Keiwan insisted in her interview “We are neutral to both committees running the camp. We maintain good relations with everybody. Our staff is neutral. And we have disciplinary measures to deal with anyone who breaches this neutrality. All newcomers to UNRWA undergo an ethical training and a neutrality workshop. As a woman, my neutrality makes me feel safe in the camp. Neutrality is a must to UNRWA.”

6.2.2 Due Performance

The framework devised by Beetham to analyze an organization’s legitimacy looks at the performance through the mission and how it is carried out. This important aspect of an organization’s normative justifiability looks at the recognizability and social justifiability of the mission and the effectiveness of its execution. To start with, the mission of UNRWA is articulated in the following manner:

“UNRWA is committed to fostering the human development of Palestine Refugees by helping them to: acquire knowledge and skills, lead long and healthy lives, achieve decent standards of living, enjoy human rights to the fullest possible extent.”
(UNRWA 2016e)

The recognizability of this mission is tied to the recognizability of the plight of the Palestinian refugees, the target group with which UNRWA is explicitly concerned. Decades since the 1948 and 1967 events that resulted in the refugeness of a considerable number of people from historic Palestine have both given ample time for the topic to become known and to lose the appeal of recency and emergency. At its very onset from 1948 until 1950, the topic of Palestine refugees gained recognizability of the international community, which itself created UNRWA, one of the earlier agencies of the 1945 established United Nations. All Arab states and Israel voted for the creation of UNRWA, effectively and officially recognizing Palestine refugees. However, it is the contested issue of the first-generation refugees’ descendants that has plagued the organization. In conservative circles and for the Israeli lobby in the United States and Canada, second- and third-generation Palestinian refugees are not recognized, but rather seen

as a product of UNRWA's policy that allows for the refugee status 'inheritance'. These conservative opinions, even if championed by only the far-right currents, should not be disregarded as they had succeeded in suspending Canada donations to UNRWA starting 2010 until Justin Trudeau's liberal government resumed them in 2016. As far as Lebanon is concerned, the refugee status of Palestinians is recognized. Given Lebanon's lack of infrastructural and service support to the Palestinian refugees and their camps, it could be argued that this recognizability does not come out of purely humanitarian views. The political consideration for the Lebanese state is anti-neutralization of refugees and their segregation from Lebanese communities. In November 2016, the Lebanese started and soon stopped plans to build a 'security wall' around the Ain al-Hilweh Palestinian refugee camp outside of the southern Lebanese city of Saida (Buchanan 2016). From this perspective, the refugee status of the Palestinians and the mission of UNRWA are actively recognized in Lebanon.

This formal recognizability is manifested in the Lebanese public's attitude. The social justifiability of UNRWA's mission is not hard to establish in Lebanon. From scholars in universities and journalists to taxi drivers, the 'Palestinian cause' and the Palestinian refugees', first-generation and descendants, right of return are inarguable beliefs. This is first evidenced in the 'enemy state' status reserved to Israel and the ongoing conflict between the two countries that share a border but no cultural relations. In the author's work with the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization, set up in 1948, across the heavily-secured blue line separating Israel and Lebanon border, the Arab-Israeli divide could not be more apparent. It follows then that UNRWA's mission to help Palestinian Refugees is considered as inherently good by Lebanon in this larger picture of animosity towards the state of Israel, held to be responsible for their plight.

UNRWA does not shy away from communicating its achievements and the effectiveness with which it carries its mission. Whether it is the extensive reports and figures on its website, whose primary aim is to attract donors, or the visual markings of the projects it has overseen or implemented in the camps, all evidence in both the digital and field contexts point to an active organization. For instance, despite the financial restrictions and a mandate that requires it

provides only elementary and preparatory education, UNRWA “exceptionally operates five secondary schools in Lebanon, given the difficulties young Palestinians encounter in accessing secondary schooling. It also runs a program for university education funded by some UNRWA donors in the international community.” (Suleiman, 2006). In addition, UNRWA in Lebanon is the “main agency that legally provides Palestinian refugees with skilled employment” (ibid.) According to Hanafi & T, 37% of employed Palestinian university graduates and 22% of the employed with a semi-professional education receive salaries from UNRWA. (Hanafi & Takkenberg, 2008)

With the arrival of approximately half of 42,000 Palestinian Syrian Refugees (PSRs) to UNRWA recognized camps across Lebanon, the agency’s mission was put to test. With an already inadequate health services—the UNRWA Health Program not providing complete care and not fully funding costly treatment such as open-heart surgery or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) (Suleiman, 2006)—the agency had to accommodate for a larger number of people, despite constant shortage of funds, leading it to make a “refined adjusted hospitalization policy according to which the percentage of the Agency's coverage for secondary care will be adjusted to 90 percent for government hospitals, 90 percent for private hospitals and 100 percent for Palestine Red Crescent hospital.” (UNRWA 2016o). This ‘refined adjustment’ of an already inadequate policy has resulted in protests in 2016, which, according to a speculation by Mousawat Director Kassem Sabbah, lead to UNRWA to move its director to Syria due to this poor relations with Palestinians and to appoint an Arabic-speaking new that is more involved with the communities in the camps. If this alleged change in leadership signals anything, it would be the agency’s willingness to enhance community communication and engage with the Palestinian refugee communities in Lebanon in a critical time that is marked by increased numbers of refugees and the chronic lack of funding.

6.2.3 Summary

Even in its most seemingly incompetent stances and bureaucratic woes, UNRWA seems to match, if not exceed, the norms set by the Lebanese Government. In fact, while Lebanon has suffered from a garbage crisis over the past two years, thanks to UNRWA, Palestinian camps have been spared from it. According to Sabbah “All Lebanon has suffered because of the rubbish problem. The camps did not suffer. So this is a good thing that UNRWA is doing - it is managing this problem.” (Appendix A). Furthermore, UNRWA works for the rights of the Palestinian refugees despite the lethargy of the Lebanese State. What UNRWA lacks in terms of efficiency, it makes up in its mission, which is recognizable and has social justifiability in Lebanon. It also makes up by its willingness to adapt and adjust, despite a rather stiff budget. The fact that it is seen as the space to protest and the agency to keep a critical eye on says a lot about the tenacity of its legitimacy. According to Sabbah, “Palestinians are an Arabic population and they need to have their spring (he laughs). So in Lebanon towards whom? Make spring. It is our honor, You cannot make a spring against the PLO it is not precedent. Not make it against the Lebanese Government. It does not give a shit about the refugees. So we have UNRWA.”

6.3 Performative Endorsement

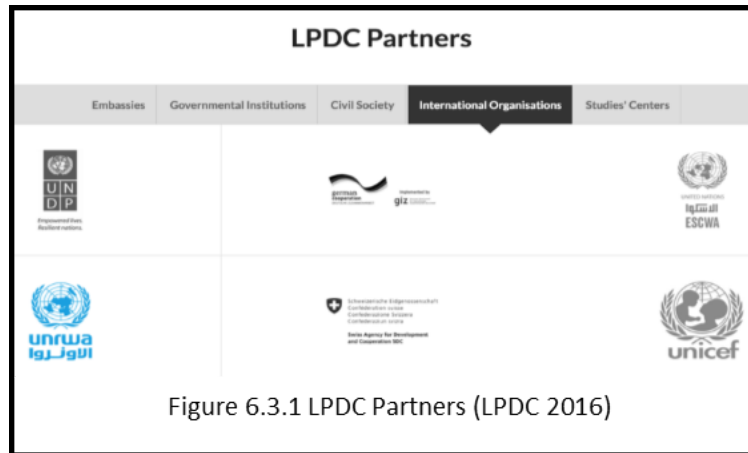
In Performative Endorsement, the analysis delves into the dynamics of legitimacy stemming from the environment in which the organization operates and looks at acts of consent performed by outside sources. According to Legitimacy theorist Hybels (1995), the relevant stakeholders that influence the flow of resources crucial to an organization’s growth and survival “either through direct control or by the communication of good will” are the state, the public, the financial community, and the media. (p. 244) The paper will look at the performative acts of these four critical organisational stakeholders towards UNRWA. For the purpose of this research, analysis of state endorsement will be adapted to the context in which UNRWA operates in Lebanon and hence include, in addition to the Lebanese State, other official endorsement of the Palestinian Authorities and political factions. Public endorsement will look at beneficiaries and financial endorsement at donors, whereas media will look at local and international media.

6.3.1 Official Endorsement

Leading from the UNRWA mandate (see 6.1 Legality), the Lebanese State is an inevitable partner of the organization, given its status as a host state with whom UNRWA has to consult. Actions taken by the Lebanese state can further bolster the legitimacy of UNRWA. However, given the complex setting in the UNRWA camps, the Lebanese state does not enjoy exclusivity on endowing the organization with official endorsement. Given the context in which the organization operates in Lebanon, the popular committees and Palestinian government representation in Lebanon are another source of this 'official' endorsement. What does it mean that the Lebanese State or the popular committees endorse UNRWA? This thesis argues that a mere engagement with the organization is an automatic endorsement. An analogy can be made with the Lebanon-Israeli dispute. The state of Lebanon has never acknowledged Israel. Even though the name Israel is referred to in political statement or media articles, it does not refer to the state of Israel but the enemy of Israel, leaving it out from official maps and replacing it with 'Occupied Palestine'. A tourist with a visa from Israel will not be granted a visa to enter Lebanon (IATA 2016). Even UN military observers when crossing the border have to mind their words when engaging with the Lebanese Armed Forces and mentioning that they were in Israel is likely to cause them an even more thorough search at the crossing (of the demarcated line between the two territories), when returning from official business in Jerusalem. They are better off by stating that they were in Palestine. On a similar note importing goods produced in Israel with Hebrew markings is illegal in Lebanon according to Lebanese Law (NOW Media 2011) and it has happened that such markings, be they on receipts, water bottles, or packaging, have resulted in a fire, where the items in question have been destroyed in addition to angering the Lebanese Armed Forces when UN peacekeepers were crossing back to Lebanon. Allowing people to talk about the state of Israel or importing goods produced in Israel along this line would be seen as a kind of endorsement in an Arabic country which anno 2016 sees itself at war. In this light and in the context of a conflict region, the state of Lebanon's active cooperation with UNRWA becomes even more prominent. Lebanon views and treats UNRWA as an ally in a 70 year old conflict.

The Lebanese State and Palestinian political representatives endorse UNRWA in more ways than passive acknowledgement. The extent of their endorsement is manifested in substantial formal communications. Most noticeably, the aforementioned Department of Affairs for Palestinian Refugees

and the Lebanese Palestinian Dialogue Committee, discussed in the legality section, have been established with the aim of coordinating and consulting with the UN agency. LPDC even considers UNRWA as an official partner along with other UN agencies and governments (LPDC, 2016).



The anecdotal evidence of official endorsement of UNRWA by the Lebanese state presented in this section is taken from the period that starts with the Syrian refugee crisis spillover to Lebanon in 2011 until the present. This section seeks to highlight the different ways UNRWA is endorsed by the state of Lebanon, in addition to explaining the dynamics that bind it to the Palestinian factions or popular committees. The main source of information has been obtained from press statements issued by UNRWA about its affairs in Lebanon. Evidence points that the Lebanese State and UNRWA have a cooperative relationship. In 2012, a letter of understanding was signed between Lebanon's ministry of social affairs and UNRWA aiming for further cooperation. At this event both the President of LPDC and the Ambassador and Chargé d'Affaires from the Embassy of Palestine to Lebanon participated (UNRWA 2012). At the event the Palestine Ambassador to Lebanon came with the following statement "we iterate the need for cooperation with the Lebanese Government through the LPDC and in full coordination with UNRWA." (ibid.) The Lebanese state need for a 'full' cooperation with UNRWA stems from Lebanon's official distance it has set in regards to taking responsibility of

Palestinian refugees. Unlike Syria and Jordan, the Lebanese state has not extended any significant services (healthcare, education, employment, etc.) to the refugee populations, making reliance on UNRWA a matter of necessity and convenience. Even more, the Lebanese State preserves the distance it has from the Palestinian factions and avoids compromising its neutrality by choosing UNRWA as its exclusive partner for camp affairs.

In addition, the Lebanese State, as a founding member state of the UN, holds high regard to its agencies, housing the headquarters of United Nations Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (ESCWA) and offices of several other UN agencies, such as UNICEF, UNHCR, and UNESCO. It follows then that relations between Lebanon and UNRWA happen at the highest level. When the Commissioner-General Pierre Krähenbühl of UNRWA visited Lebanon in 2015, he met with the Prime Minister of Lebanon, the Speaker of the Lebanese Parliament and a number of senior political and diplomatic officials. In addition he also met with the Ambassador of Palestine to Lebanon (UNRWA 2015d), which signals the level of official endorsement between the three entities. Among donor states looking to help Palestinian refugees, UNRWA occupies a similar role of the reliant partner. When a Japanese aid organization signed a memorandum of understanding with the Lebanese Government in 2011 securing Lebanon's support for a USD 2,000,000 infrastructure rehabilitation project in Lebanon's largest refugee camp, UNRWA was mentioned as the executive agency (UNRWA 2011a).

UNRWA in Lebanon enjoys the official endorsement of donor states and its host state; with their backing, it executes projects and invites political representatives from the popular committees and the political factions to their inaugurations, as well as inviting them to sport events held under its patronage, thus assuming an official role itself that cements its centrality in the camps. While maintaining neutrality as its Shatilla Camp Service Officer stressed, the fact that UNRWA benefits from official endorsement renders it a powerful entity and the inevitable link between the two opposing popular committees and several factions.

6.3.2 Public Endorsement

The majority of UNRWA's beneficiaries were born into a reality where the presence of the organization is a constant. Given that UNRWA itself has guaranteed the inheritance of refugee status to its beneficiaries, both first-generation and their descendants, the organization has thus ensured that they preserve their sacred 'right of return' to their ancestral homeland, which they consider to have lost in the 'Nakba' (Arabic for catastrophe) or the creation of the State of Israel in (May) 1948 and in the 1967 Six-Day War. In 2011, when asked by one of the most visited online publications in the Palestinian Territories, Ma'an, about UNRWA's alleged role in perpetuating the Palestinian refugee problem by granting refugee status through generations, UNRWA spokesman Chris Gunness affirmed that "Palestine refugees are entitled to a just and lasting solution to their plight. In the absence of—and pending the realisation of—such a solution, it stands to reason that their status as refugees will remain." (UNRWA 2011b). On a primary, fundamental level, UNRWA is the Palestinian refugee's accomplice in their dream to go back to their homeland, a desire expressed through art and posters that litter the camp and heavily documented in the media. An interview with a Palestinian refugee from Shatila yielded this telling quote that reveals that as recently as 2016 this dream has yet to be forfeited: "Our problems will stop when we return. Why cannot we return to our homeland? My village is empty. It has been destroyed. Until now nobody lives there. Why must we live in this bad situation?" (Hardigan, 2016)

A visit to a Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon is sufficient to reveal how interwoven UNRWA is in the societal fabric of the camps and the daily lives of its beneficiaries. The UNRWA offices greet the beneficiaries at the very entrance of the Mar Elias camp, while in Shatila it is centrally located. In both camps, the organization's presence is felt with its many projects carrying an UNRWA sign. The UN blue is perhaps not as prominent as the colors of the Palestinian flag, but it stands out among the politically-charged signs and flags of Hamas and the PLO that saturate the Palestinian refugee camps in Beirut. This matter-of-factness of UNRWA as

part of the reality of the Palestinian refugees is the backdrop against which their relationship unfolds.

To a considerable chunk¹³ of Palestinian refugees, UNRWA is also their employer. The implication is a divide between those who are employed by UNRWA and those who have no such relationship. This divide was verbalized in the interviews with critical mention of UNRWA's employees' "blind loyalty" to the organization by Mousawat director, Kassem Sabbah, "It is rare to find a Palestinian who is not employed by UNRWA, speak good about UNRWA." (Appendix A). This stands in contrast with the prideful statement of the UNRWA Shatila camp services officer, Ferial Keiwan, towards her employer, "UNRWA is the most important institution to happen to Palestinians since 1948, despite all the challenges." (Appendix B). The divide between employees and nonemployees is akin to that between government or public sector employees of a country and its people. Criticism of the organization is completely suspended by employees and replaced with praise, gratefulness, and articulate understanding of its constraints, as mentioned by Mousawat director and evidenced in the Camp Services Officer's answers. This divide was also mentioned by the director of Ahlam Laj' Sobhi Afifi who spoke on the 2016 protests against changes in health care policy stating that "UNRWA are smart. They work with a divide and conquer policy with the factions and associations and with the policy of delay.", "They adopted in this crisis with the Palestinian people the policy of delay and the principle of yes we will solve it, yes, now the decision will be canceled, we will change it. In the end, we didn't get anything. We didn't get our right.", and "This is UNRWA's policy, promises, promises, promises, things will change, things will change, until people stop asking." Keiwan herself admitted to using this policy of delay, stating that "We usually let things be resolved on their own." (Appendix C)

The emerging frustration of the non-employees is itself an evidence of their perception of UNRWA as a government-like entity that is inescapable in their daily lives and hence a target of

¹³ According to Hanafi & T, 2008, 37% of employed Palestinian university graduates and 22% of the employed with a semi-professional education receive salaries from UNRWA. (Hanafi & Takkenberg, 2008) Additionally, according to, Suleiman, UNRWA is "the main agency that legally provides Palestinian refugees with skilled employment" (Suleiman, 2006)

their criticism. Both Sabbah and Keiwan made the case of UNRWA as occupying a government-like role in the minds of Lebanon's Palestinian refugees, albeit from different angles. Sabbah explained the 2016 protests against UNRWA were the Palestinian refugees' way of having their own 'Arab spring', reinforcing the image of UNRWA as the de facto governor of the camp that is responsible for the refugees' well-being. Ferial, on the other hand, explained criticism differently, asserting that refugees "shout through us, not at us" and that UNRWA is the only forum for Palestinians to voice their concerns and dissatisfaction with their situation. Both interpretations point to the organization as the public's criticism target of choice, which reveals the perception of it as not merely an aid organization that provides services but as a legitimate entity that is central to life in refugee camps. Criticism, even protests, become legalising actions: When refugees ask for reforms, they knock on UNRWA's door. Moreover, refugees in the camps have turned to UNRWA "when crises strike", such as "the civil war in Lebanon between 1975 and 1990 [and] the 2007 events resulting in the destruction of Nahr al-Bared in Lebanon." (Takkenberg, 2010, p. 257).

With the many restrictions on work and lack of job opportunities for Palestinian refugees, many of them either end up working at UNRWA and some of them form their own NGOs and collaborate with the agency. Certain legitimizing actions are evidenced in the collaborations that bind the various NGOs founded by Palestinian refugees in the camps to UNRWA. All three of the NGOs interviewed have a direct collaboration with the UN agency, despite their critical opinions of it. One example of collaboration is partnership, such as the previously mentioned NISCVT-UNRWA one signed in November 2015 (UNRWA 2015a). Another form is cooperation. Such is the case of Ahlam Laje' (Dreams of a Refugee) Association, which provides reinforcement classes to those given by UNRWA in the schools it operates in the camps. By building bridges with UNRWA, those NGOs are proving the beneficial effects of the community engagement policy that the agency has adopted in recent years.

In addition to their engagement, another legitimizing action that effectively translates as an endorsement of the UN agency is their critical stance of it. Once again, it is not despite but

because of such critique that the organization is perceived as legitimately central to the camps and to the refugees plight. In the words of the Sabbah, UNRWA is an ‘angel of death’ that they have to deal with every day, “I believe that UNRWA is like the Angel of Death. You cannot run from him, you have to deal with them. It is a daily angel of death, you have to deal with them sometimes even if you hate dealing with them” (Appendix A). This sentiment was echoed in Afifi stating “UNRWA ignores people. Its decisions are working. [...] You talk about a specific problem in a small camp, they will solve it for you. They sell you a stance. But they don’t listen to regular people. [...] The Palestinian people is growing in the camps, and UNRWA, instead of preserving what it offers, it is decreasing what it offers. And despite that we are satisfied. Not satisfied, we are forced to be satisfied. There are positives. The school, despite the internal problems, I can’t put my child in a private school. The positive is that there is a school. Because I can’t afford to go to a hospital and by 100% of the fees, the positive is that I get 40%. Because I don’t have municipality workers and pay municipality fees in the camps, I am satisfied with the ten garbage collectors in the camp.” (Appendix C). At a more fundamental level than that of the pseudo-government, UNRWA is seen by the Palestinian refugees as the only guarantee for the their cause, hence reinforcing its dual role as an organization with a humanitarian mission. This is best illustrated in Afifi’s statement that “UNRWA represents our right to Palestine, that we were forcibly migrated out of Palestine, and it was created for our refugeness. The word refugee, UNRWA means refugee. You remove UNRWA and then you have naturalization.” (Appendix C).

6.3.3 Financial Endorsement

As it was established in Legality, UNRWA, due to its institutional setup, relies primarily on its own abilities to mobilize funding for its budget and non-budget activities. This section will take a look at the donations from the last five years to detect a pattern in donors and to what extent the donations have kept up with the increased need for funding. Looking at UNRWA press releases and the boilerplates on these it is clear in what direction it is going. “Financial support to UNRWA has not kept pace with an increased demand for services caused by growing numbers of registered refugees, expanding need, and deepening poverty”. UNRWA’s core

activities, which in 2012 relied 97% on voluntary donations, started its year with a budgeted cash deficit at USD 75 million. (UNRWA 2012, boilerplate). The General Fund of UNRWA pays for a great number of the agency's long-term operations and the rate of the growth in the operating costs (6 %) has outpaced the growth (2%) in voluntary contributions, which make up the General Fund. (UNRWA 2016l, p. 7). It goes without saying that without sufficient funds UNRWA finds itself in a precarious situation, one that affects its legitimacy as it has impact on other aspects of the concept of performative endorsement and feeds into the lack of normative justifiability among the Palestine Refugees and the Community Based Organizations, where the latter could seek to further discredit the organization in order to gain direct access to the millions of US dollars that international donors each year send to Lebanon.

For its own part Lebanon's donation to UNRWA was USD 253,304 which was dedicated to the programme budget and it ranked 35. China ranked 36 with a meager donation of USD 200,000 (UNRWA 2015c) which provide some valuable insight as Lebanon is significantly smaller than China, when looking at both size of population and economy. One can only speculate about the reason for China's reluctance towards UNRWA but as this chapter will show, especially the Arab states are not big contributors based on the historical context in the region and thus the organization UNRWA.

Before turning to the Middle East, the donor charts published by the organization on an annual basis will illustrate what and where a significant portion of the donations from UNRWA originates from. The majority of funding to UNRWA comes from the USA, the European Commission's and European states. The USA and the European Commission (through membership donations) account for 41 percent of the overall funding the Agency received or in absolute numbers. Comparing the top 15 donors the same countries have been consistently figuring on the charts during the last 5 years. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has, disregarding the Donor Chart for 2012, stayed in the top five and Canada is the only country in the history of the agency to withdraw its funding completely. This happened in 2010 (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, 2016). It follows then that the other top donors, who have made a financial commitment to

UNRWA have never withdrawn their support throughout the decades of the UN agency's operations.

A revealing development in the financial endorsement front is Canada's recent November 2016 decision to resume funding for UNRWA. "The federal Liberals are providing \$25 million to a UN relief agency for Palestinian refugees that was cut off by the previous Conservative government for alleged ties to Hamas." (Canadian Press 2016), which the Israeli-lobby attacked with conservative foreign affairs critic Peter Kent stating "We have abundant evidence that UNRWA is part of the problem." (ibid.) The problem to which he refers is the conservative view that UNRWA perpetuates the Palestinian refugee status, allowing it to be inherited, and its alleged ties to Hamas that have been debunked time and again by the organization. This view spills over to conservatives in the United States, where in 2012 Republican Illinois Senator Mark Kirk proposed a bill amendment "to distinguish between Palestinians displaced by the creation of Israel in 1948 and those refugees who are their descendants" (Goldberg, 2012) effectively claiming that UNRWA's estimate of 5 million refugees is "160 times too high" (ibid.) Another recent example is the conservative Fox News coverage of a documentary, "The UNRWA Road to Terror: Palestinian Classroom Incitement", under its 'terrorism' section, titling its coverage "Lawmakers call for defunding UN schools after film shows Palestinian kids praising ISIS" (Evansky, 2016). This report gives the impression that UNRWA schools are petri dishes for ISIS, despite the report's own admission in the very last paragraph that the U.S. State Department spokesman debunked the allegations made by the filmmaker (ibid).

While the pro-Israeli lobby in the United States and Canada contributes to those conservative view, the state of Israel itself is ambivalent towards UNRWA. In fact, Israel's financial contribution to UNRWA's budget is said to be miniscule, usually not more than tens of thousands of dollars per year (UNRWA 2003). Israel views UNRWA as a stumbling block in the way of solving the Palestinian conflict given how it allows for the refugee status to be officially inherited. At the same time, in the absence of UNRWA, Israel would have to bear the financial responsibility for providing services for all the Palestinian refugees on the territories it occupies.

According to Ido Zelkovitz, a lecturer on Palestinian History at Haifa University's Ezri Center, Israel, despite accusing UNRWA of perpetuating the refugee problem, "found it convenient to use UNRWA financially and educationally. UNRWA schools have saved the Civil Administration [Israel's administrative branch in the West Bank] huge funds that should have been allocated to the Palestinian education system." (Miller, 2015).

The Arab reservation to contribute a significant portion of UNRWA's budget to help Palestinian refugees, who are themselves Arabs, partly stems from Israel's unwillingness to contribute to UNRWA (UNRWA 2003, p. 171). Another factor that feeds into this reluctance is the long-held political argument by Arab governments that places the responsibility for the establishment of the state of Israel and hence displacement of Palestinians and the creation of the refugee problem on the international community (ibid). Moreover, most Arab states, except those of the Gulf, have relatively small economies. When it comes to the Arab host countries Jordan and Syria, they both extend many public services to the Palestinian refugees, and thus carry a significant portion of the burden. As for gulf states, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates remain significant donors to UNRWA (ibid); "In 1999, these Gulf states accounted for 2.2 percent of UNRWA's regular budget financing, and 25.2 percent of project funding—proportions well in excess of their share of the global economy." (UNRWA finance, 2003).

As for 2015, the Arab contribution to UNRWA totalled USD 240,6 millions coming from Arab states, institutions, and NGOs. When looking on the list of 2015 donors, the big contributions from non-state arabic donors come from organizations such as the Islamic Development Bank, UAE Red Crescent, and the League of Arab Nations. According to UNRWA's newsrooms, "in 2016 alone, Saudi Arabia has contributed more than US\$ 150 million to UNRWA, making the Kingdom the second largest donor after the United States." (UNRWA, 2016m).

When looking at the division of donors 90% are categorized as states (the contribution of the European Commission is included in this number.) A smaller part comes from International

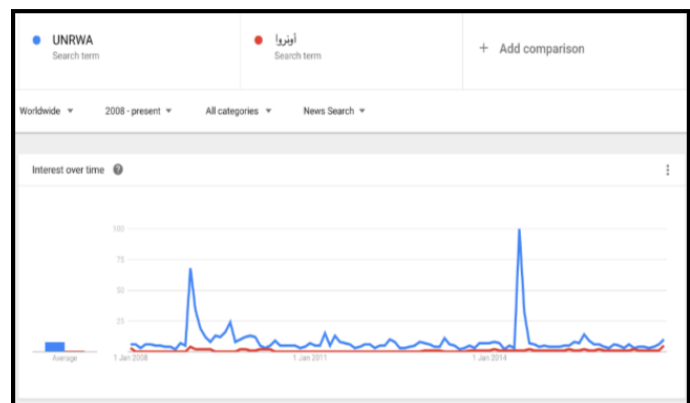
NGOs, foundations, and organizations. UN Agency also contributes to the funding and finally a small part can be ascribed to private contributions. (UNRWA 2015c)

6.3.4 Media Endorsement

The question of the media's endorsement of UNRWA entails scrutiny of the nature of their relationship. What role does media play for UNRWA and what position does UNRWA occupy in the media landscape today?

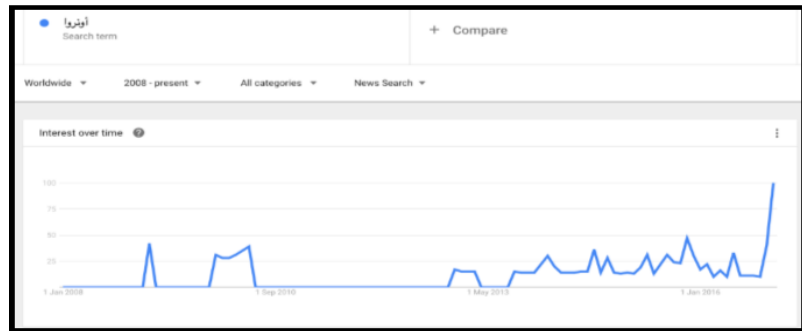
The press releases of UNRWA and a survey of its coverage on Google News offer an insight into the dynamics of this relationship. While most press releases posted on UNRWA's website end up being covered in the press, it is the emphasis on certain topics that is of note. Mainly, international media picks up stories on donations, framing them into 'humanitarian aid' and change in donors' governments policy, such as the widely covered recent case of Canada, which after years of withholding donations under its conservative leadership has resumed donations following the formation of a liberal government (Jerusalem Post 2016). Another category of stories that receives relatively heightened global coverage are those that fall under 'violence'. Since Google Trends started tracking searches for news items in 2008,

'UNRWA' in the news was most popular in July 2014 and had another peak in interest in January 2009. Both spikes reflect episodes of unrest. The January 2009 spike corresponds to the three week armed conflict in Gaza, which resulted in the shelling of UNRWA's headquarters with phosphorus munitions by the Israeli



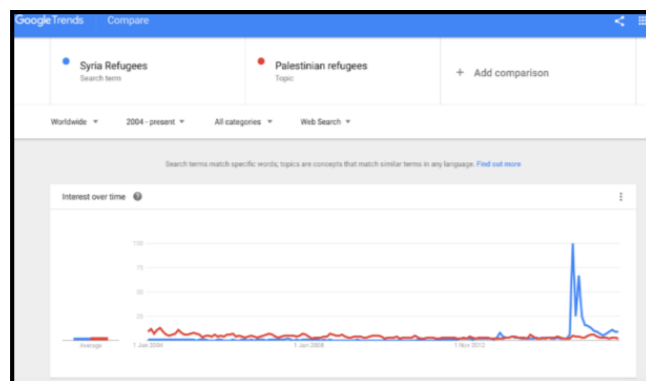
Defense Forces (Independent 2009), deemed illegal by the Human Rights Watch (Human Rights Watch 2009). The more pronounced second spike corresponds to another armed conflict in Gaza, which lasted for seven weeks, and resulted in the shelling of an UNRWA school sheltering civilians by the Israeli Defense Forces (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, 2014).

To zoom in on the trend in interest on UNRWA news in the region, the equivalent term أونروا used in Arabic press was first compared to UNRWA and then looked at separately. In comparison to UNRWA's non-arabic searches,



which are assumed to cover international media that used the latin alphabet acronym of the organization, UNRWA's searches in Arabic did not see astronomic increases with each of the two aforementioned Gaza conflicts. It could be assumed that the international community is triggered by violent manifestations of conflict, such as war, whereas media of the native communities are more concerned with daily affairs, be they political or social. This is evident in a number of Palestinian publications, who dedicate an entire section to coverage of UNRWA news. Such coverage seems to have picked up at the start of 2016, which coincides with the period of the protests.

While Palestinian publications do cover UNRWA, lending it their endorsement, international media gives little attention to the organization—as evidence in the Google Trends comparative figure—beyond covering attacks on and from its schools in the Gaza Strip. The implication is the forgotten plight of the Palestinian refugees, which seems to have taken a backseat in comparison to the struggle of Syrian refugees especially since summer of 2015.



Media's endorsement is critical to not only UNRWA but also the well-being of Palestinian refugees. For the less attention, the less donations, and the less donations, the less services.

6.3.5 Summary

This section sought to not merely highlight but also interpret and interlink the actions of consent, as Beetham would term them, that come from outside the organization and help reinforce its legitimacy. While UNRWA's local endorsement is more pronounced than that it elicits internationally, it is important to look at the reasons behind this. The matter of proximity to the plight of Palestinian refugees, for instance, is one such reason. Local media, unlike international media, is well-versed with the harsh reality of the Palestinian refugees, beyond the tarnishing of interpretations with a political agenda. Similarly, the public, the beneficiaries themselves, have come to deal with UNRWA for most if not all of their lives, meaning that the proximity of the organization has rendered it a fixture in their reality. Their complex relationship to it, some as employees and others as harsh critics, parallels that of the relationship of the Lebanese with their own struggling governments. The Lebanese State itself has its own reasons for its unwavering official endorsement—that stops short from being financial and remains mostly diplomatic—of the UN agency, with whom it keeps a cordial relationship. Lebanese governments for political and practical reasons avoid sharing the burden of the Palestinian refugees and stand fiercely against their naturalization. It follows then that they consider UNRWA a strategic ally whose presence and operations they endorse.

7. Thesis Conclusion

7.1 Discussion

This research resolved, since its inception, to look at the legitimacy of UNRWA in a specific context, Lebanon following the onset of the Syrian Refugee crisis. The choices of

legitimacy, UNRWA, and the setting were not coincidental; The setting follows the choice of the organization and the choice of organization follows the choice of the topic. Legitimacy has become a buzzword, often used to discredit political actions and entities. Issues of legitimacy plague the humanitarian aid sector too. In today's world where humanitarian aid organizations are not only multiplying but also reaching a wider audience thanks to social media platforms and emotionally-punchy messages on outbreaking refugee and other humanitarian crises, addressing their legitimacy claims is valid. Who are we donating to? Are our donations reaching the distressed? If we donate or relate to the cause should we not be privy to asking questions on the middle man's performance? With its decades of operations on a refugee crisis that has somewhat been relegated to a footnote in light of the more recent Syrian Refugee crisis, UNRWA was identified as an organization worthy of the academic intrigue, mainly because of its seemingly particular position between its UN agency status and long-term supporting role in refugee camps that have transcended their primary aim of being 'transitory' having been many a person's lifetime dwelling, from birth to death. This longevity invites curiosity: how does an organization maintain its legitimacy after so many decades in the face of a changing mandate and a changing world? This intrigue lent itself to academic investigation that confirmed that the researcher's curiosity was not misplaced. UNRWA, as it transpired, has a duality, operating not merely as a UN agency but also as a phantom sovereign in the camps, and an active presence, on the fields and in international forums, dealing with both forgetful donors and demanding beneficiaries. Its relationship with the latter unfolds most visibly in a passive host country such as Lebanon, where refugees are segregated and denied basic rights. Due to the crisis in neighboring host country Syria, many refugees, referred to as double or twice refugees, found their way to UNRWA camps in Lebanon, leading to the inevitable question of how can the organization survive under such harsh and hostile conditions. Both the place and time are challenging and hence were assumed to be capable of revealing legitimacy constraints and dynamics. The iterative process guiding this work proved that the choice of setting for the study of legitimacy of UNRWA was a good one. The researcher's arabic language skills and his experience working with UN agencies and living in the Middle East further validated that choice. The visits to the Palestinian camps,

the interview conducted, and the surveyed literature and information in Arabic, had a far richer yield owing to this familiarity with the region, its language, and culture.

Following the initial formulation of the research question on how UNRWA maintains its legitimacy in such a context, survey of literature on legitimacy resulted in identification of an appropriate framework. David Beetham's conceptualization of legitimacy made the research rethink its question. An organization does not have control of legitimacy, and thus one considering its legitimacy a broader mindset is needed. This led to reformulation of the question from how UNRWA maintains legitimacy to how UNRWA's legitimacy is constructed and maintained, effectively removing the erroneous assumption that legitimacy is dependant only on the actions of the organization. Beetham's framework was deemed appropriate for this reason, which allows for a 'helicopter view' in answering the research question. Furthermore, Beetham had expanded the scope of his three-dimensions theory of legitimacy, which he had tailored around state actors, to include NGOs and international institutions in its scope. The fact revealed during the iterative process that UNRWA acts as both a phantom sovereign, or 'quasi-state', and a humanitarian organization, made the framework even more appealing and befitting the research question. Beetham's model invokes inspection of legality, normative justifiability, and acts of consent (which in the case of international institutions and NGOs, he terms performative endorsement). Theoretically speaking to be considered legitimate, an entity does not need neither legality nor endorsement, and only a social justification in terms of the role it plays in the society in which it operates. However, legality, as Beetham argues, is a precursor for legitimacy. Falling on a strong legal framework, which usually would be tailored with societal needs in mind, an entity can find acceptance. Similarly, acts of consent or endorsement by the entity's stakeholders can reinforce its legitimacy. This conceptualization of legitimacy covers substantial ground, from an entity's legal and social inception legally to its operations (alignment of mission and its performance with the target's needs) and finally acceptance as manifested by actions of others in the entity's ecosystem. Choosing Beetham would answer the research question of how UNRWA's legitimacy is constructed in a specific time and place, which were purposely chosen as detailed earlier in this section. Although the three dimensions promised to cover all the

necessary ground for understanding legitimacy dynamics in context, background information was presented in a section prior to analysis. This was also done owing to the research's case study design.

The methods chosen were meant to operationalize the dimensions in such a way as to get the most relevant insights. Using publically available organizational documents from UNRWA, such as press releases, donors' lists and information, legal documents, performance reports, proved to be a primary source that allowed the research to see how the organization understands the world it operates in and its audiences, whether beneficiaries, donors, or media. In addition, articles from media and external reports conducted on UNRWA's operations in Lebanon proved to be invaluable. In addition to those primary sources, interviews and the researcher's own observations while living and working in Lebanon with a UN agency and more specifically during visits to refugee camps in the Beirut area were effective for the aim of triangulating information already identified in the literature and to supplement the analysis with illustrative examples and information. Each of the three dimensions required inspection of a certain type of documents. For instance, while Legality drew from legal documents, both published by UNRWA and academics, Normative Justifiability was inspected using performance and operation reports and studies, and Performative Endorsement looked at press releases to understand the official endorsement of the Lebanese State of UNRWA, studies and anecdotal information from interviews for public endorsement, donors' lists and information for financial endorsement, and finally Google Analytics and a survey of articles on UNRWA by both international and regional media.

7.2 Findings

Integrating all three dimensions helps shape a narrative about UNRWA in Lebanon in the recent years marked by extraordinary events, which unfolded simultaneously with the agency's chronic deficit in budget. UNRWA's legal framework and its presence in both Syria and Lebanon meant that the refugee camps it administers in Lebanon would inevitably absorb the Syrian Palestinian refugees who fled war-torn Syria. This strain on UNRWA's operation in

Lebanon resulted in financial restructuring in terms of services, which elicited protests early in 2016 that the organization navigated through. If this episode is the tip of the iceberg of the organization's legitimacy, the framework revealed the dynamics that make up the bulk and helped answer the research question and sub-questions. The following is a compilation of the most significant findings of the case of how UNRWA's legitimacy is constructed and reproduced in the Lebanese context anno 2016, in light of the Syrian Refugee Crisis.

The legal mandates that dictates UNRWA's works was identified to be the reason for the organization's Achilles' heel, shying away from guaranteeing that it be funded properly. This deficit has several implications. While UNRWA has power over Palestinian refugees even outside the camps it administers, it fails to provide for them given the shortage of funding, which reflects badly on the organization's performance. Additionally, unlike in other host countries such as Jordan and Syria, the Lebanese State throws all of the weight and responsibility on UNRWA in Lebanon, making it the de facto sole responsible organization for their basic needs. The Lebanese State, however, maintains cordial ties with the organization, which it treats as its preferred executor for plans regarding Palestinian Refugees, allowing it to remain at a neutral distance from the Palestinian political factions. In this critical position, UNRWA has made several documented choices of working for the Palestinian refugees and preserving their dignity, as its mission sets as a goal. Whether in statements or negotiations, UNRWA has fought the fight. UNRWA also offers employment for a substantial number of skilled Palestinian refugees and coordinates with many NGOs, most of which are set up by Palestinian refugees, in the refugee camps ecosystem. Those employees act as vocal defenders of the organization who champion its cause and understand its role and limitations. Moreover, UNRWA has developed expertise and has entrenched itself in the camp, as manifested by its presence and the projects it carries out. Despite the global media's negligence of the Palestinian refugee plight, especially in light of the more recent Syrian refugee crisis, and despite the conservative American and Israeli media's focus on discrediting the work of the organization by discrediting the refugee status of Palestinians born in the camps and UNRWA's permission of the refugee status to be 'inherited', the organization commands local media's attention, with some local newspapers even dedicating

a whole section to cover UNRWA-related issues and happenings. This media negligence, in addition to the several decades that have rendered the organization effectively not 'transitory' as it was initially intended, have meant that the issue is also secondary to donor states. The chronic deficit in funding that UNRWA suffers from and the shortages in serving the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, who, in the absence of any help from the Lebanese State, rely exclusively on the organization, do not render the organization without any meaning to its beneficiaries. The organization remains in their corner, representing their cause to the Lebanese state and in international forums. Moreover, the meaning the organization has for Palestine refugees is not only financial, for it remains their main legitimizing agent. By delegitimizing UNRWA the Palestinian refugees risk losing the legal and legitimate arguments to their most fundamental claim that of their right of return to their homeland. As one of the interviewees mentioned, if this highly unlikely scenario were to happen, UNRWA would play the role of transitory government, relying on its experience in organizing services for the Palestinians. Ultimately, UNRWA is linked as part of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict narrative and it is a critical entity in the balance of the equation. Its position has enforced on it a duality of a sort, acting as both a humanitarian agency and a long-term governor for the affairs of refugees.

7.3 Future Studies

This thesis sought to answer the question of how legitimacy of UNRWA in the Lebanese post-Syrian Refugee Crisis context is constructed. The researcher's professional familiarity with the UN system and his Arabic skills allowed him to approach the topic in a proactive way. However, the adopted design did not allow for full ethnographic exploration of the topic, which could yield an insightful account of the attitudes of the community towards UNRWA. This limitation and suggestion for future study comes from the observations made during the interviews during which interviewees expressed an array of attitude towards the organization. For instance, the interviews conducted with the directors of Mousawat and Ahlam Laje' showed a great eager to discredit UNRWA, hence, a way to carry out a deeper research of the attitude of the community is to do participant observation of the actions and activities to see how they interact with this 'Angel of Death' as characterized by one CBO Director. The comprehensive

approach that was adopted in this study could also benefit from being elaborated in future research, as every dimension could justify a thorough and in-depth study in itself. Moreover, an entirely different framework can be conceived and constructed organically to the complex setting and nature of UNRWA. A multi-case comparative approach that would look at UNRWA's operations in other host states would also yield revealing information and allow to further clarify the dynamics that construct legitimacy. Even more conceptually, research is needed to examine the legitimacy of the humanitarian aid organizations as a whole to a passive and disenchanted public. Similarly, the legitimacy of the UN as whole, which is a question that often surfaces in informal discussions and heated debates, deserves scholarly scrutiny. Finally, it is important to reiterate the often verbalized sentiment, popular among Palestinian refugees, that UNRWA means their guarantee of their right of return, coupled with their weariness of the agency and the United Nations and international community behind it. For this sentiment encapsulates the essence of UNRWA's legitimacy to its beneficiaries.

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Pictures

Camp Visit 2016, 'Camp tour and visit, October 25 and 26, 2016' - pictures were taken during the visit, including front page of entrance to Mar Elias Refugee Camp and Camp Services Office

9. Appendices

A) Interview: Mousawat Director, Mar Elias Camp

Transcript of semi-structured interview with Mousawat Director Mr. Sabbah

*Mousawat Offices and clinic in Mar Elias Camp
October 26, 2016*

Jannik Hansen, Thesis



Q: Could you please explain what Mousawat does?

A: We have six centres. We work in different aspects of disability, rehabilitation, provision of technical aids, mobility devices, corrective devices, hoursness, rights, mobilization, empowerment of physical disability, and now we are moving slowly towards working with Syrian wounded people in Lebanon and we have future plans to start working inside Syria with partner local organization because we have this long experience dealing with people after wars on psychological levels and physical levels so waiting for expertise will be needed especially later

Q: And who made the initiative to start Mousawat?

A: Actually Norwegian People's aid me , myself, I was programme manager in the (civil) program manager now we are have been operating since 8 eighth years

Q: Were you behind the idea Mousawat separately?

A: Yes

Q: Why did you do this?

To open the scope for- to take funds from, more than the Norwegians to open to be free in decisions and because we started having differences concerning their strategies. They were going more political rights issues. We are service directed so we started working differences in strategies. We define ourselves as service provider organization.

Q: OK and no other organizations other the same services in the Palestinian camps?

A: There are others, but we are the biggest and they work mainly under our supervision. We have sister organizations but we are the bigger brother.

Q: Ok - so it is sponsored by Norwegian People's Aid?

A: No we have different sponsors, one of them is Norwegian People's Aid.

Q: How do you find these sponsors?

A: Hunt - we hunt sponsors. And we market ourselves in a good way. Although many are not directed toward disability - yet. More are going to Syrian refugees and like this and the Palestinians are stepping lower in the ladder of priorities for many, but eeh y3ni we have, we are (addressing many) and fund raising and we do good works so...
We are sexy and attractive

Q: Do you feel or think that your strategy to get more funding, I mean this is why you are expanding to the Syrian refugees. Is this part of a larger strategy to keep the donors funding Mousawat?

A: No. It is purely humanitarian. It would be much better and easier for us in the head office to stay with smaller projects, small funds, to keep like (that) you know and we have secure funding for years, you know it is not like that.

Q: But you want to transfer these funds?

A: Exactly because we have the knowledge.

Q: You said that you had some sister organizations. Do you also have like coordination with for instance UNRWA, or UNHCR, or..?

A: Yes we are the strategic partner of UNRWA and its ability sector. They define us like this. So we have close cooperation with UNRWA concerning disability sector and (inclusive reputation) and education department. So we have shoulder-to-shoulder work with UNRWA.

Q: Can you elaborate on the strategic partnership with UNRWA and when it started? (04:20)

A: Actually myself I have been working with UNRWA since 30 years. Since I was in Norwegian People's Aid cooperating with UNRWA in both in the educational sector and in the social services sector which disabilities lies under that. So I have been having close work with UNRWA since 30 years, you know. And the relationship I can define it, it is enemy brothers.

Q: What do you mean by enemy brothers?

A: It is , in arabic it is alahxwa al'ada (enemy siblings, edit) you know. I believe that UNRWA is like the Angel of Death. You cannot run from him, you have to deal with them. It is a daily angel of death, you have to deal with them sometimes even if you hate dealing with them.

Q: Why would you hate dealing with them? (05:27)

A: Because of bureaucracy because of strict / sometimes they don't listen. They have agendas, policies, and you know. They have priorities different than ours. UNRWA is two levels. The third floor level we call it you know the policy makers, the stakeholders up there will receive the made policies according to international agendas, the donors' agendas, political agendas and the ground field level who are sometimes has shaped themselves as worshippers of UNRWA or slaves of UNRWA. And those are sometimes trying to ease the relations with UNRWA - they are the good players we call them between us and UNRWA.

Sometimes for the second level, the slaves of UNRWA, we consider it as a humiliation. If I want sometimes to humiliate someone - I tell them that you are an UNRWA employee. Because they are Palestinians but they have to abide and defend even if they are not convinced, and we are convinced that they are not convinced, but they convince us that they are convinced. So it is a very difficult issue to speak about UNRWA. From me because I am a strategic partner but it is an ambivalent cooperation, we can not work without each other and if we look they benefit from us like we benefit from them - so it's... we never took money from UNRWA at all.

Q: How do you benefit from them?

A: Like coordination, sometimes we reduce our costs because they have got money - like now they got money from UNICEF to give services for people with disabilities among Palestinians so we are at ease in that way. We do not need to be aggressive in fundraising now because they have money so they are covering part of the money that we were supposed to get it (cover). Sometimes we fight severely with UNRWA, some people in UNRWA I do not talk with them at all and I refuse to meet them - especially blondes (giggles).

Q: You mean foreigners?

A: Yeah foreigners. So I do not meet them. If they ask me for a meeting I do not meet them.

Q: Did you have like a major fight?

A: Yeah

Q: Can you elaborate on this?

.....

Q: When you joke about UNRWA what are the jokes about mainly, and what's the logic that you are trying to point out?

A: I cannot remember exact things, but I can find a joke about UNRWA every day. Especially about the employees who serve UNRWA as slaves.

Q: Do they have the expertise those employees? Are they good (....) at their jobs?

.....

Q: Is it the system or the people that are more corrupt?

A: The system has windows for corruption and people have ability for corruption. It is a perfect forum. One of the jokes upon UNRWA is the big number of people from Europe - expatriates. Where local people are cheaper with the same (capacities 10:38) might be better, there is a joke that during the Nahr Al-Bared Camp war, the biggest beneficiary was the hotel because they were paying like USD 25,000 a month a day, I do not know exactly.

Q: What do you know of UNRWA's mission?

A: It is easy to speak about mission because it is mentioned (in the name of the Organization) in UN refugee working (relief works?). Its main work is to make the Palestinians work, this is the main issue. That's what and offering education and some housing. Every Palestinian knows, my knowledge about UNRWA is that it is the expression of guilt that the International Community holds towards Palestinians, that is why it was made in 1949 and not in 1948 during the Palestinian problem and it is still the same. This is UNRWA as I told you.

Q: Did they fulfil their mission? Do you feel. You said they are here to provide work for Palestinians and this is your vision of their mission. Do you think that they are doing it, are they realizing it?

A: Nobody can realize it, the needs of any population in the Middle East. Even the Lebanese Government cannot fulfil the needs of the Lebanese people, because of the expanding needs - many many political issues but concerning UNRWA now it is holding, you are holding the glass not to break, but it is not improving the quality of the glass or the water in the glass. The camps now. It is the same area and piece of land since 1948, so we are going up. Here in the camp (Mar Elias) there is a six story house without any foundation and this is the case in Shatila and....., so with a small earthquake I think that we will have....

Q: So how will you compare UNRWA's performance to the Lebanese government's performance towards the Lebanese?

A: It is a difficult question, but in Arabic we say hanna ya hanaan / the same..... UNRWA has a political mission and I believe that nobody knows the real political mission of UNRWA even the high commissioner of UNRWA doesn't know. It is in the course of finding a solution for this pain in the ass, the Palestinian refugees are a pain in every ass in the world - even our president (Mahmoud Abbas/Abu Mazen, president of the Palestinian Authority). We are a pain in his ass. He wants to get rid of us. It is not clear what to do, but UNRWA for sure has a role somewhere to solve the refugees problem and I am sure that nobody wants the refugees to go back to Palestine - it is for sure. Nobody in the international arena or community want the Palestinian refugees to come back, it is only bullshit if somebody says that or for marketing issues. But the problem is that it can not find a solution, not even in the United Nations or the Security Council. They cannot find or force a solution so it is taking them 50 years to think, try, manipulate things, make wars, pressure the Lebanese government, pressure the Syrian Government, pressure the Jordanian government to take them in. You know it is a mystery. I think we need the Da Vinci Code to uncode this mystery.

Q: How has the crisis in Syria affected the lives in the camps.

A: Oh my God we have 40,000 extra refugees at the camps. 40,000. Suddenly they came into the camps

Q: So that is an addition of how many percent?

A: Twenty percent, because we estimate that the real number of Palestinian refugees is like 200,000 not more

Q: In the camps?

A: Na, no even outside the camps

Even outside

I think that the whole Palestinians in Lebanon are 200,000, 240,000 to 280,000, we have hundreds in Europe, Canada, Australia. It is not the number listed with UNRWA

And now with all the Syrian problem, it is popping up - the nationalization and I don't know - what does it mean. For the Lebanese Government it is much more easy to accept now nationalization the Palestinians....

You can not speak about UNRWA without speaking about politics - this is the real

Q: Has the crisis affected you as an organization?

A: Yes sure, yes sure, because the interest of donors have shifted to Syrians, and we have to fight for the Palestinians. Although the Palestinians conditions didn't improve.

Q: You said you had to fight more with the donors, how do you make your claim for the donors that you are also worthy of funding, despite this huge crisis that is the Syrian...?

A: We use UNRWA's crisis problem, because UNRWA has a financial crisis now and they were talking about closing some education... I don't know.

Q: Because of the Syrian refugee crisis?

A: No, no, no they were talking about we have a crisis, financial crisis. Canada has stopped financing, USAID has stopped financing, Australia has stopped financing.

So this is one, because basically UNRWA does not have a disability program. It has a very small disability program so we have been the main service provider for people with disabilities for Palestinians - which is like 10%. So we are main player and UNRWA admits that Mousawat is the main player. They are not interested in disability. So this is one, and second they need assessment that we do all the time - deterioration of problems, increase of number of children with disability because of housing conditions, health problems, it's a technical issue (non transcriptable) all donors - Although they are cutting losses - problems Syria is the main - Syria. And in the middle between us and the main donor. Lots of corrupted international NGOs. Lots of corrupted international NGOs. There is a famous caricature in our aid: it starts big and small with a small drops to the other ????? and it is the same now with And it is the same now in the forum of the NGOs - employee status. you can go to the pubs of Hamra and Monot at night full of NGO representatives.

Q: I have a question with regards to the first half of this year with the restructuration of the health policy, services and last year the school start was halted for a good while due to lack of funding and there were demonstrations in (the camps) Rashadiyeh and Al-Buss down in Tyre , a guy allegedly set himself on fire, because he was demonstrating (against the UNRWA's new policies). Why did this go on now, because UNRWA has been struggling with funding for so many years, so what is your opinion about that? And how did it end? Did UNRWA. Have UNRWA found a solution or why have they stopped demonstrating now?

A: I can analyse. the Palestinians are an Arabic population and they need to have their spring (Laughs). So in Lebanon towards whom? Make spring, It is our honor, You can not make a spring against the PLO it is not precedent. Not make it against the Lebanese Government. It does not give a shit about the refugees, so we have UNRWA. That is where we...they go and we have a strong youth movement in the camps. Many NGOs and many has worked in liaising with the youth towards their rights, so sometimes you have such practices.

We have lots of workshops, trainings on women rights and youth rights which is actually it is exaggerated, But it is the international agendas for lots of NGOs. So they keep doing that all the time, but..... Again.

So sometimes you can find such actions which are minor, it does not any big chances. If you have seen the last AUB study the socio economic survey

UNRWA is still big - the main big service provider. All Lebanon has suffered because of the rubbish problem. The camps did not suffer. So this is a good thing that UNRWA is doing - it is managing this problem. We don't have a problem, we should not have a problem. We should coordinate with UNRWA, have common spaces with UNRWA, speak normal with UNRWA. All of us are educated at UNRWA schools and I think successfully. Many. So this is the issue and those small incidents do not affect. I know that the Palestinian people, lots of them, speak badly about UNRWA. It is rare to find a Palestinian who is not employed by UNRWA, speak good about UNRWA.

Q: What is the percentage?

A: I think /most Palestinians.....those who are not employed by UNRWA speak badly about UNRWA

Q: But how many are employed by UNRWA?

A: I think 4,000. I think, I do not know. I guess it is 4,000 teachers, workers,workers. That are things I do not know. But I think Palestinians have this frustration, they have to throw their frustration towards someone and it is easy to throw it to UNRWA. UNRWA will not come and shoot you. If you criticize PLO people or PLO organization they will shoot you or cut your salary or do something, but if you speak about UNRWA nothing will happen.

Q: How do UNRWA deal with complaints from your perspective?

A:I think they do respond in a good way. They try to do / in many cases I know that they try to do . But it depends on who is dealing with what and its ability sector / the thing that we touched

upon. They do, They try to do the best. They coordinate, they ask, they phone. But in other sectors, it depends on the person. If he wants to work or not. I don't know about accountability systems, I don't know. How critical it is, about ... Systems you know. But big organizations should have good size, bad size, corruption here, misconduct here

B) Interview: UNRWA CSO, Shatila

Transcript of semi-structured interview with UNRWA Camp Services Officer Ms. Keiwan,

UNRWA Camp offices in Shatila Camp

October 26, 2016

Interviewee was reluctant to be taped, but consented to have our conversation documented with interviewer's written notes.

While parts of the conversation happened in the interviewee's native Arabic, notes were written down in English.

Q: Thank you for having us at your office. This interview is part of a graduate thesis study on UNRWA's presence in Lebanon. But we will begin with questions on the camp itself: how long ago was it established and what is its current status?

A: Shatila [refugee camp] was established in 1949 by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). It was created to house a few hundred families who fled their homes in Palestine. Today, the population of the camp is approximately 25,000. The majority of those are Palestinians, including Palestinians who came from Syria in the past few years. The events in Syria raised the number of Syrians in the camp from very few to 8,000. There are also 1,000 Lebanese. The camp is very dense and is demographically complex.

Q: Could you tell us about UNRWA's role in the camp?

Keiwan: UNRWA runs services in the camp. We do not administer it. We have a health center that offers basic treatment and medication. Cases that require hospitalization are referred to the

Palestinian Red Crescent or certain Lebanese governmental hospitals. We also have a school and we do a lot of sanitation and environmental works. We maintain and clean the sewage system. We take care of the garbage and offer pest control and insecticide services on request. We cover certain water costs paid to the Lebanese government. Water is run by the camp's two popular committees [based on political coalitions]. However, we have done a water purification project in 2013, but the handover, or transition, to committees has been hard. They are supposed to step in and take over, otherwise the project cannot be sustainable. We have a relief and service office that offers Safety and Security Networking (SSN) for impoverished people. Of course, there are criteria to be enrolled and due to lack of funds we have been unable to enroll new comers.

Q: Are the services you offer exclusive to Palestinian refugees?

Keiwan: We take care of everything regardless of beneficiaries. But we have no [financial] support to deal with the Syrian refugees.

A: Could you tell us more about your relationship with the two popular committees, which represent the different political factions that exist in the camp?

Keiwan: We are neutral to both committees running the camp. We maintain good relations with everybody. Our staff is neutral. And we have disciplinary measures to deal with anyone who breaches this neutrality. All newcomers to UNRWA undergo an ethical training and a neutrality workshop. As a woman, my neutrality makes me feel safe in the camp. Neutrality is a must to UNRWA. We hand memos to representatives from both committees.

Q: What happened during the crisis earlier in 2016 and how did you deal with it?

A: We were forced to close offices in the camp, due to pressure from committees. We [UNRWA's camp unit] are at the frontline. We usually let things be resolved on their own. The crisis was resolved at the Headquarters, on that level, through meetings. We don't make policies, we only monitor, we don't even implement. After the crisis, they knew what UNRWA means, that we are a main service providers. And you don't know the value of something until you're going to lose it. The crisis started with protest about education but then became about the health

care policy. Because of shortage of funds, UNRWA adopted a policy used by UNHCR, which is co-sharing of costs between UNRWA and patients at minimal costing hospitals, instead of having a ceiling for coverage.

Palestinian refugees are very impoverished, 65% of them are extremely poor according to a study conducted by the American University of Beirut. UNRWA's role is to dignify those people. The government in Lebanon is happily supporting its own people. Palestinians cannot work in Lebanon, they have no healthcare coverage. That's where UNRWA comes in.

Q: Could you tell us more about your own experiences, as a Palestinian refugee in Lebanon and an UNRWA employee?

A: I started work as a field officer at the Headquarters. Now I am the first woman to occupy this post [camp director]. Working with UNRWA has a human dimension. You are listening to and taking care of people's needs. UNRWA is the most important institution to happen to Palestinians since 1948, despite all the challenges. There is no government inside the camps to absorb people's anger. The Palestinians are subjected to a very bad situation. Like a cat cornered in a cage for long hours. People in the camps are denied human rights. So, I don't take things personally, even if I'm being cursed. I remind myself that things that are said are not directed to me but through me. I calm [those who come to the office with complaints,edit.] down. And then I explain things to them. We are not perfect. We are overloaded. But we are giving the utmost of our capacity.

Q: How do you assess your performance?

A: We have customized e-performance evaluations for the staff. And we have a very complicated evaluation for the services.

C) Interview: Ahlam Laje' Director, Shatila

Transcript of semi-structured interview with the director of Ahlam Laje' Mr. Afafi

Ahlam Laje' Offices in Shatila Camp

October 26, 2016

**Due to a corrupted sound file - only part of the
interview has been available for
transcription.**

.....

A: They provide protection and education in school, not drug pills. Drugs have arrived to UNRWA schools. Last year there was a case of young girls, a girl who is 12, taking drug pills at UNRWA schools. There was a girl who was exposed to rape because she had taken a pill. UNRWA closed the case as a victim of society. This way we have launched a big campaign against drugs in schools and to arrest drug dealers who are everywhere in the camps and for UNRWA to start drug protection programs in schools and awareness programs for children and youth. This is, in a simple way, what our association does.

Q: How many Syrian students do you have? And how many Palestinians?

A: In the reinforcement program, we have 412 students between the age of 6 and 14, and they are all Palestinians, because they're all UNRWA students. And in nursery, we have 320 students, 60% are Palestinians and 40% are Syrians and Syrian Palestinians.

Q: How is your cooperation with UNRWA?



A: As an association our relationship with UNRWA is very excellent. But I want to give you my personal opinion, UNRWA's relationship with the Palestinian people is very bad. As an association, I cooperate with UNRWA on education--and with their schools I follow up on the status of students and children and their progress day by day and month by month. The students at our nursery end up going to UNRWA schools. There are exchanged visits. With UNRWA children, we are good. With UNRWA administration, we are also good. But there are no services being provided. The Palestinian community overall is in state of regression. Don't talk to me about our relationship as an association, talk to me about our relationships as a people. As Palestinian people, UNRWA currently whose mission is to relief Palestinian refugees and find them work, In terms of relief, it does not relieve anyone, it canceled everything, it canceled sample aids, it made a bank card. Now a person goes to the bank and takes something small, maybe 20 dollars a month. Employment, it does not employ anyone. Unemployment has reached 70% in the camps, that is why the Palestinian is turning to drugs. Education, they used to give financial aid, they stopped giving them. So students who finish Baccalaureate, cannot go to university because they cannot secure the necessary amount to go to university. Regarding secondary schools, there is only one UNRWA secondary school in Beirut. It is located in a wrong location, a location with a wrong environment, in Bir Hassan. To get there, especially girls, you have to endure harassment from drug dealers, from porn CDs dealers, from, from, from. So now you have parents who are taking their children out of school, especially girls. I will show you a group of girls in the nursery, we bring them here to embrace them so that they do not go elsewhere.

Their parents stopped sending them to school because of the problems there, whether drugs or the road that leads to that school, or those details. So many female students, students who are good in school, their parents stopped from school. They tell you, my girl is still respectable, she still prays at dawn. I would rather let her stay home and win her than let her go to school and lose her. Educationally, this is what is happening to UNRWA. Medically, every month a girl is dying at the door of the hospital because UNRWA is not able to send her money transfer. A girl from Naher El Bared camp, her name was Israa, died because they could not transfer her money. Every month the same case is happening. Not only with children, with all groups of society,

UNRWA used to cover 100%, then 50%, then 30%, then 20%. It started saying priority is for the Palestinian Red Crescent Hospital, which is not even a hospital, lacking the basics. The second priority is the Lebanese governmental hospitals, which are slightly better, but only cover a specific amount, 30 or 40 percent. And the Palestinian does not even have enough money to finish the month's expenses for eating and drinking. He does not have the means to pay that 40 50 or 60 percent. That is why UNRWA from all aspects is getting out of the role that is asked of it. I don't know if this is something political or something calculated against the Palestinian people. UNRWA is the only witness of the Palestinian nakba and that we have the right to go back to Palestine. And UNRWA exists to relief and employ Palestinians until their return, until the implementation of UN resolution 149. It came out of a decision from the UN Security Council to relief us until we return to Palestine. To cancel its role is to cancel the right of return.

Q: What does UNRWA think about your association and its works (5 50)?

A: UNRWA is afraid of media and of the masses and anyone who can influence the masses. That is why it takes into consideration any such influencer. Our association more than being an organization was a popular initiative that came from a group of young men. It developed and we made it an organization to officially register it and not to have problems with the Lebanese state. But on a first level, we are a popular initiative that came about to help with a specific problem. A popular initiative means we have popular support. A popular initiative is always more honest than organizations and the fractions. This is why it gains the acceptance of many groups of society. UNRWA is afraid of such initiatives. In all clarity, if I get a complaint about UNRWA and I put two sentences on Facebook, UNRWA's director within ten minutes calls and says we will solve the problem but don't put it online and don't feed it and etc. So UNRWA is afraid from people's reactions, from any rumors about it. Of course they are afraid of losing their positions. Sadly they are Palestinians. Sadly the one who is fighting you a Palestinian employee who is executing wrongful politics, he is trying to shut the mouths when you speak in his society.

Q: People have been vocal about their complaints of UNRWA in the past couple of years. How have they been dealing with this?

A: UNRWA are smart. They work with a divide and conquer policy with the factions and associations and with the policy of delay. Okay, the big protests erupted in the first week. They started absorbing people's anger, taking each group alone to talk to them. The PLO group alone, the other coalitions alone, promising things, the associations alone. Each group they told what they wanted to hear. The people in the streets, only us remained there. Because of their smarts, they have experts more so than fractions do. They adopted in this crisis with the Palestinian people the policy of delay and the principle of yes we will solve it, yes, now the decision will be canceled, we will change it. In the end, we didn't get anything. We didn't get our right. (FADY note: this is what the UNRWA Shatila women said: they delay until the crisis resolves itself).

Q: Are people accepting of things now

A Not accepting but they lost hope. This UNRWA's policy, promises, promises, promises, things will change, things will change, until people stop asking. They are bored. If you ask someone to go protest against UNRWA for something, they would say why would I protest, nothing will change. Our rights are going away but what can we do?

Q: What is UNRWA's role according to you?

A UNRWA represents our right to Palestine, that we were forcibly migrated out of Palestine, and it was created for our refugeness. The word refugee, UNRWA means refugee. You remove UNRWA and then you have naturalization.

Q: And in the camps, what is its role?

A In the camps, one of its positives is still having a school. The Palestinian people, myself I am not able to put my brother and sister in private schools and (Lebanese) public schools are not very different than UNRWA and now they are welcoming Syrian refugees because they get funds for them. They're not welcoming Palestinians. So I need UNRWA. Even in its current state. And I need the (UNRWA) school. And I need the 40 or 30% it covers (from my medical bills). Okay, it should cover all of those services, but with the minimum it is covering, I must say that I am satisfied in what is available. If I'm object, nothing will change. So, I have to be

satisfied with what is available. When the Shatila camp was established, there were 10,000 people. And so every 1,000 they had one garbage collector. Today there is 25,000 inhabitants and there is still only 10 garbage collectors. The construction has expanded and we still have 10 people. They even decreased to 8 now. The Palestinian people is growing in the camps, and UNRWA, instead of preserving what it offers it is decreasing what it offers. And despite that we are satisfied. Not satisfied, we are forced to be satisfied. There are positives. The school, despite the internal problems, I can't put my child in a private school. The positive is that there is a school. Because I can't afford to go to a hospital and by 100% of the fees, the positive is that I get 40%. Because I don't have municipality workers and pay municipality fees in the camps, I am satisfied with the ten garbage collectors in the camp. Do you understand how?

Q: Yes. How does UNRWA communicate with you, as an association and as residents of the camp? If they have a change in policy, how do they communicate it?

A: For our association, they publish circulations in their monthly magazine and send copies of any decisions to organizations. If it's something more important, they call for a meeting at the UNRWA offices to talk about it. With the people how do they communicate? They don't communicate directly. They rely on organizations and the factions to deliver their reports.

Q: So people don't have direct access to the details?

A: They don't know what's happening inside.

Q: Let's say there was a change in the 30-40% coverage of hospital fees policy, how do you get the news as a regular person?

A: As a regular person. It took us around 4 months to incite people (to Protest, edit.) to tell them what the problem is. People don't know. A circulation (press release) about a change of the sort, people do not know about until they get sick or have something happen to them. That is why in the beginning of our campaign when we working on the issue of UNRWA, when it decreased the coverage, we worked for 3-4 months on posters to make people understand that something has happened, that their right is being taken away.

Q: When you started this movement and you reached out to people, did UNRWA try to counter with reaching out with their side of the story to people?

A: No. Nothing. UNRWA ignores people. Its decisions are working. It ignores people. Someone speaks out, one of the activists, they try, they say we will solve this small problem that you talked about. You talk about a specific problem in a small camp, they will solve it for you. They sell you a stance. But they don't listen to regular people.

Q: And they communicate through the committees?

A: The committees and the associations. UNRWA works with them. But regular people, on the contrary, they are very mean to them. If I go to UNRWA offices they respect me because they are afraid of my reaction if they wrong me. But any person who goes to the clinic, for instance, the doctors treat him in a condescending way (literary 'act like tigers'), unfortunately Palestinian doctors treat him in a condescending way, the nurse wants to treat him in a condescending way. It feels like they are in a place and we are in another. We are one people. You had the chance to get employment and maybe that person is better than you but never had the chance (to be employed). The Palestinian UNRWA employees treat Palestinians in a very condescending way. The foreigners (UNRWA employees) we don't see. The Palestinian UNRWA employee is dealing with people in a condescending way, whether in schools, or in the offices, or in the clinic.

(break)

Q (not on tape) regarding the change of UNRWA country director

A: There is a new approach in work, there are meetings with him. The one before him, Matthias Schmale, nobody knew him. This time they put someone Arab, even Palestinian I believe. They removed the old director of UNRWA in Lebanon and they put someone new. It looks like they are trying to change their way of dealing with people. He went to the camps, he met with the people, he met with regular people, he met with organizations, he met with factions, personally, camp by camp. Even more, every once in a while UNRWA is sending us for activities to

collaborate on. They e-mailed me an invitation for a meeting tomorrow at a school to discuss something about education and something about some other field. They are now trying to do this collaboration and cooperation between people and UNRWA. Maybe this is the new director's approach or policy. Currently, something is happen, it hasn't happened 100% but it is an indication of the direction of the new period.

Q: Do you think UNRWA's policy depends on its leadership?

A: I don't know, the policy is not from the leader, it is a general policy. It looks like there is an international decision to decrease (services) but I don't know why he is coming with some easements. Maybe as they say it is 'laughs on beards' (Arab proverb for good talk and no action), he is new and he is trying to gain public acceptance because Matthias Schmale before him was hated in the camps and not allowed to enter.

Q: Why?

A: He is the one who issued the decision to decrease medical (services), the last series of decisions was taken by Matthias Schmale. There was a big wave of anger against him in the camps and he was denied entry, even to the Sebnin UNRWA Factory, we denied him entry, we went there and stood at the door. You cannot come in. This is Palestinian people property. You're decreasing services, go stay in the leadership. Under this pressure, he was removed and they gave us someone Palestinian. Perhaps they thought let Palestinians handle Palestinians, maybe it's more suitable. This Palestinian seems smart, he's trying to gain people's acceptance. He is present with us, even he is only listening and not executing. But he is being present with us.

Q: How do you get donations for your association

A: Because we are a youthful initiative, we don't have big funders, we still rely on parents' subscriptions, we have 700 people between before and afternoon classes, and everyone is contributing even if only \$10 per month. This allows us to cover running costs because we are all volunteers. I am employed at Mousawat before noon, I am the director of a project. And

afternoon, I am here a teacher in one of the classes and the executive director of this organization. In our free time, everyone of those youth, we have 43 young men and women volunteering at the organization, they're giving their free time, and in exchange, some of them are getting a symbolic fee for their work, especially nursery teachers they get a symbolic payment at the end of the month. So we do not rely on a funding source. We say, if we get funding, we enhance things, if we don't get it we are still here and we try to do something.

Q:How many Palestinian refugees are here in Lebanon?

A In Lebanon? 250,000. UNRWA's statistics is 275,000 maybe. People register with UNRWA but half their family is in Denmark. But they come here and they have the refugee ID.

D) Interview: Somoud Director, Sabra

Transcript of semi-structured interview with Somoud Director

*Somoud Offices in Palestinian Gathering Sabra, Beirut
October 26, 2016*

Due to a corrupted sound file - only part of the interview has been available for transcription.



..... and they are refusing to accept the right of return according to resolution 1904 (UN resolution establishing in fflsjflsjflsjfldsfjlsjflfjdl, edit.) and Israel, as you know, is the only country which was established according to a UN resolution and they are, since 1947 they are refusing to give us the right to return to our homeland – to our villages. On that – our work also is not to offer services to the Palestinians, we are working for the dignity of our people. The Palestinian problem is not a humanitarian problem, it is a political problem. As I said Lebanon is not the responsible, Syria is not the responsible, Jordan is not the responsible. The responsible is Israel and who is supporting, and who is not forcing the Israelis

to accept the right of return. This is... believe me, what I believe. I do not believe by two states (The idea that there will be a two state solution in the area, which was once the Palestinian mandate, edit.). Two states is not going to solve the problem. Our problem is the refugees. We are more than seven million refugees – Palestinians. If this problem is not solved in a fair way, I do not think there will be peace, even now. The war is in Syria, in Iraq, in Yemen, in Libya, in Oman – we know that there is some connection between Saudi Arabia, Bahrain with Israelis, United Arab Emirates, that is okay. It is not secret. It is in the newspaper. But those countries, they cannot make a peace. The peace will be between the Palestinians and Israel. If the Israelis are really a democratic state they should accept to live together as two people. As we were living before 1948. We were living together Christian, Muslim, and Jews. We practiced this life. And now Netanyahu is saying that he wants to establish a Jewish State. What does that mean? That means all Arabs our brothers Christians and Muslims, they should be outside? To where? So of course if they are a real democratic state they could accept the democracy, they can practice it. They are just.. in Europe they say they are democratic state. Go and see Israel – how there the Palestinians, the Arabs are discriminated. Even (if, edit.)) they are citizens. So this for me I believe I want democratic state for all the people that are living (within, edit.) it. Because if you are Swedish.... If you are Danish, why you should leave your country and go to another country to occupy my place. Why? Those Jews who came from Russia, from Germany, from France, from America. They are citizens in their countries, why they came? Why they (were, edit.) leaving their homeland, they were citizens of their homeland and they have their rights and they are coming to Palestine and occupy and making massacres against the children and the civilians Palestinians. Let's think about the future. I believe that.. well.. Israel will not continue forever. It will not stay. It will not. Because to every top there is an end. Even now they are... enough... they have enough power. One thing they cannot take from our mind, they occupied our land, but they will not occupy our minds. We were always.. Generation after generation – they will remain Palestinians, they will remain. And we know that this is our homeland. One day we will be back again.

Q: Until that day comes

A: Well, we will, look. The Palestinians have a special disease called patience. We are patient enough.

A: We are patient enough. 68.. You can imagine - 68 years – it is the longest period for any people to be a refugee. And I am saying it is ok. I am sure I am not able to go myself to my homeland to my village, which is close. It is just to the border half an hour (it is just half an hour from the border, edit.). I go to the South and I can see the trees of my village. If I am not going, but my children, if not my children, then their children, their their children. One day will go there.

Q: So about Somoud, What does Somoud do?'

A: Well Somoud, it means, you know, steadfastness, you know. This is the Palestinian and Arabic word of our institution: Somoud. Beit Atfal As-Somoud – It is the children's steadfastness home (word by word translation, edit.). We began by children who lost both parents in Tall az-Za'tar. This is a camp which was destroyed in 1976 by the Lebanese Phalangists (The Phalangists was a Christian militia during the civil war and the militia is now a political party in the Lebanese Parliament and society, edit.) like Samir Geageas (A leader of an armed wing within the militia and now the leader of another Christian party named the Lebanese Forces (Al'uwat al-libnaniya) and the Kata'eb (Arabic name for the Phalangist Militia), and the others. They killed our people, they killed the Lebanese as well as the Palestinian. They killed the Palestinian Christians before they killed the Palestinian Muslims. They destroyed Jisr el-Basha, it was a Palestinian Christian camp and they killed them, even (if, edit.) they showed them the ID and it is written that they were Christians, but they killed them because they were Palestinians. In Tel Za'tar we lost 4,500 Palestinians and Lebanese in that camp. It was a big massacre and due to that massacre we established our institution and we named it Beit Atfal As-Somoud, it was for the children, who lost both parents. They were Palestinians, Lebanese, Syrians killed. They were Muslims, they were Christians, together. And 12th August 1976 is the date of the establishment.

And you know, 280 children without their parents. Due to the Israeli invasion in June 1982, we were forced to leave our home. It was home for the children in Bi'r el-Hassan (explanation???). Because we were sure at the time if the Israelis reached us, they would kill us. Because they do not differentiate between a child a the man and women. And this is what happened, you know, in the massacre of Sabra and Shatila (A refugee area in Beirut, where Shatila is the UNRWA managed camp and Sabra the adjacent neighbourhood, edit.) What happened in Sabra and Shatila september 17? They entered Sabra and the camp and they killed the children, the elderly, and the women and they made a new massacre Sabra and Shatila Massacre. So due to the massacre of Sabra and Shatila we have another project between injured families. Happiness project. Which means an orphanage child should remain with his family, with relatives and we support them financially and morally and education. So no we are, we have 12 centres. Ten centres inside the camps because we have twelve camps. We do not have centre in Mar Elias(Smallest refugee camp in Lebanon, situated close to the UNICEF palace in Beirut), we do not have centre i Ad-Dbayeh (Northern Suburb of Beirut), but we have ... we are sponsorshipped there. We have ten centres, it is culture and social centres and we are operated in services to our people with the support of different NGOs in this world. For example sponsorship program. We sponsor orphanage since four or five years. We don't distort, we give priority to children, whose family they do not have a regular income, which means that their father, he is mentally ill or is physically handicapped, so why? Because now we don't, because most of the religious NGOs, they give priority to orphanage so for us we look to the family. We look to the families, we do not look if he is Muslim, I do not care if he is Muslim or he is Christian. We do not care. There is no discrimination made at Beit Atfal as-Somoud concerning nationality or religion. We do not.. Those who are low in income, they have the same rights. The only thing we look is the income of the family. For that we are working with the poorest of the poorest of the Palestinians. And we have of course kindergartens. We offer children between 3 and 6 the place to come to play, to sing, to dance, and to learn, you know in a healthy atmosphere because in their houses I do not think that they can receive or at a normal school (schools managed by UNRWA, edit.) such activities. We have a project for the elderly Palestinians, who also they do not have relatives and they are alone. We are trying with our social workers to go and visit them and make any

meetings with them. They need the support. And in health we have, I think, we have dental clinics for the children in our centre, where we give treatment and education for the children between 3 and 6. We are focusing in this because we found that 90% of the Palestinian children in the camps, they have teeth problems concerns and this is because the water is not clean and they buy bad sweets, you know, because it is very cheap. So we have our clinics, which offers the treatment and the check-ups for different kindergartens in each camp. And we have mental health project and I can say it: Without the support of the Norwegians and the Finnish there is no mental health services for the Palestinians in Lebanon. The only NGO which offers mental health depending on using professionals – psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, speech therapists, psychomotor???? all of them no exception – BIP - We bring Lebanese to work with them – Professionals, they are Christians. They are coming from Kefraya, Jebeil, Juni and they are working with us. And we just want to send the message to other Palestinians that we are against this kind of discrimination. We have an productive health (course/class edit) also, we don't say sex education we say productive health because we are a conservative community, and they can not understand what is the meaning of sex education and I am sure that some of the young they get their information - the wrong information from the internet – so we are focusing on the youth and those new couples marriage. And we have our specialists doctors as well we have a peer education for the youth to give them education. I can say easily the productive health and mental health it was a challenge for us, because in the beginning the people were not ready to send people to the psychiatrists because of their mentality. Now after ten years we have in each center a long list of children who need the treatment who need appointment with the psychiatrist. In education we have, as I said, kindergartens and we have our own curriculum. All our staff in kindergarten they are well trained and they are, they have been with us in service training- we cooperated with AUB (American University of Beirut) as well for the training. We have vocational training. Because vocational training we can educate those Palestinians who are unable to go to university and they are not skilled. I think they will have three choices only. The first choice to think how to go to Sweden, Denmark or Germany in an illegal way. It is illegal. Or those Palestinians who went to your country, they went illegally immigration. Even those who went before 2 months because it was open Germany, and the France and. So if they are not they

will go outside and they are without work, where they go? They will go to the second choice with the drugs. If they don't join the drug dealers in the camps then they can be attracted by the fanatical groups because they need the money to live. Who have the money now in the camps? Of course religious groups, extreme fanatical groups easily, if they are a illiterate people they are not skilled as easy. The last 2-3 days two from Ein Al-Helweh (An UNRWA refugee camp in Saida in the South of Lebanon) were killed in Iraq – they were killed because they were fighting with Daesh (Another name for Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant / ISIL). So we do not say that we are fighting against them but our vocational training is the gift that those young get skilled work and jobs and to have independence and this is the way we have got to decrease fanaticism in the camps.

What kinds of vocational training have you got?

Well we began with constructionists skills, all kinds of constructionists skills or with computer, the graphic design, barbering (barber shop, edit.) all this. Those shops do not need a work permit, and I remember the last course seventy percent of those who attend the training they are working. ...cellular maintenance. So we look to the market, what are the needs of the market? It is not just the same, it can be changed. If it is six months that work can be changed. And we have an agreement with three institutions. One in Beirut, one in the North, one in the South, where we give those who have a certificate and they want vocational training we give them scholarships. So we are now giving females, Palestinians females as well as males to study nursing. Because as you know Lebanon needs 24,000 nurses and in the hospitals now there are only 7,000 and Palestinians are allowed to work there as nurses because the hospitals need this. Maybe the Palestinians are not able to work as engineers or as doctors or as teachers but for them to work as a nurse is ok even they can go outside. In America they need nurses, Canada they need nurses, and of course we focus on culture because you know culture is so important, we have a music we have dancing in all our centres. We teach them the traditional dancing because if we do not teach them no one is going to teach them in schools. In schools all of those activities are not existing in the programs and we have I think a big band in Rashadiyeh (UNRWA camp in South Lebanon in the vicinity of the Coastal Town of Tyre, edit.). We are (cooperating, troprioting???) with

Norwegians – with Norwegian Academy have been coming since (for,edit.) 14 years. OK? And we are proud of this exchange culture club.

You mentioned like three avenues for youth to develop and grow. Immigration...?

Immigration, drugs, fanaticism –

What about the Palestinian people, who I see working in the economy here? Working in all many jobs in the country what do you think the challenges are here, what do you think the issues are in sort of improving their standing?

You know Palestinians are not allowed to work in Sukleen (the National Garbage Collection Company, edit.) To collect the rubbish. They are not allowed, they are not accepted in the company. So when I say that they have 3 options, I mean it, you know. Because even the Lebanese they do not find works, even the Lebanese even – there is no vacancy for the Lebanese. Why for the Palestinians? And the law is against them. Ya3ni only constructionists skills is allowed because, you know, they do not need a permit, you know. I know some doctors they are working as assistants of the staff nurses, I know some engineers they are assistants, not engineers. They are not registered in the company originally. Because the ministry of Labor they go, they investigate. The Palestinians are not allowed. So this is why I think that the few options are very clear for me. Either they go, you know, and now it became difficult last two months, I think, from Lebanon the illegal immigration is not like before. The drugs is existing and all kinds of drugs existing, and then fanaticism. Ok? They can sit in the streets and take arguileh (The Arabic hookah / waterpipe, edit.) or they...They need the money. Well of course there are parties, Palestinian parties, who are employing some, but it is not enough. Just last week I was visiting Baalbak camp (Area East of Beirut on the border to Syria) and many Palestinians in the villages there should have been to university, they were sitting taking arguileh, so why. We apply for work, but no one is accepting us. What we can do?

How have your projects been affected by the influx of Syrian refugees?

Well as you know now, all international NGOs and governments they give priority to the Syrian. Well which I can understand as a Palestinian refugee. I understand the misery of the Syrian refugees, because they need the support. But for us, I can tell you, in Burj AlBarajneh (UNRWA camp in the Southern Suburb of Beirut, edit.) we have 120 Syrian children work in the street.....

of course the priority is for the Palestinian children, you know, because they are the majority. but ... and just before I was looking to .. how many in all our kindergartens. We have..for example there is Syrian, there is .. in Shatila for example we 86 children, 54 Palestinian, 7 Palestinian from Syria, 21 Syrian Syrian, 4 Lebanese... 4 Lebanese, you know. We have a Jordanian. OK!

Q:Does this affect your funding?

A:Ya? Yes there is a lack of funding

Q:There is a lack of funding

A: Yes – we have income problem. You know, we are not just offering the services, also we are creating jobs. Because 90% of our staff they are Palestinians, and both of them, they are women (There are both male and female staff employed by Somoud, edit.). You know the embroidery. The embroidery, behind that we have this income generating problem. Because for those families, whom we support, we know that, they need more money, so we said ok to them, to the women. You can work in your house you can get income by working and keeping our heritage. Embroidery is not just a beautiful handmade (craftsmanship, edit.). It is part of our enheritance. So, so I think, We do not have so many, we have only 100 women, who working in that project and it is not easy to sell. We depend on our NGO partners outside who can buy and sell, but in Lebanon the market is closed and the priority is for the people to eat not to have a cushion, you know, a bag...

Q: How do you like generate new donors. How do you seek new funds? Is it the same alliance partners you have? How do you try to achieve new funding?

..... Audio ends

E) Translation of Ad-Diyar 2016 + Original Article

Article Source: Ad-Diyar

Publication date: January 15, 2016

-START-

In pictures: UNRWA needs to retract its decisions

Political forces, popular committees, and the civil society organized a sit-in by the office of UNRWA's director in Saida to protest against UNRWA health services cutbacks.

Participants raised banners demanding the UNRWA administration to reverse its decisions that are unfair to the Palestinian people; they shouted slogans against Director General Matthias Schmale. One of the most prominent slogans that they voiced was: "It is my right to be treated", "It is my right to have full health care", and "Let the banner for the Palestinian's right to full health care prevail until the return [to Palestine]."

The secretary of the Palestinian popular committees in the Saida area, Dr. Abed Abu Salah, delivered a speech on behalf of the protesters in which he said:

"While Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and those who are deprived of all civil, social, and human rights; and they suffer from many crises that threaten their lives, as there is no guarantee for the future of our generations; and with the proliferation of unemployment, poverty, and deprivation that threaten the lives of our children and generations, we announce our adherence to UNRWA until the return to Palestine and the execution/ratification (in arabic 'tatbiq') of international resolutions, particularly resolution 194.

At a time when refugees are facing the worst conditions that they are going through, while being in need for support that allows them to live with dignity, we see that UNRWA is dealing with the issue of refugee rights in a light manner, without regard to the injustice and the bitterness of life that refugees are facing. The Director General has updated us with shocking decisions whose impact on the spirit of the refugees had the worst effect on the reality of the lives of Palestinian refugees, and you had come with your humanitarian mission to the reality of life of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and their struggles, and we were hopeful for your assignment to this

position, but with the start of your assignment to this position the fiscal deficit crisis was directly announced and you made unjust decisions under the pretext of the crisis. We are not surprised today by the adopted policy that manifested in the operation to round UNRWA's health department's budget and you are the ones who realize the amount of pain and damage which befalls Palestinian refugees; and when UNRWA was supposed to look at things factoring in its obligation to secure relief and employment services for the refugees, the approach that you have adopted regarding UNRWA's health care assistance and the assistance of the Lebanese Ministry of Health is an approach that is not supported by any realistic truth, we and you are aware of the truth that the Lebanese Ministry of Health does not offer any health care assistance to Palestinian refugees.

It is as you do not know the extent to which your policy of health care adjustments impacts patients and the pain that they endure as they will become beggars to secure the price of medicine and that of the commute [to the hospital] and the difference in cost of hospitalization, that is why we did not and we will not accept that our patients be the victims of unfair and painful policies and we will never accept that they beg.

The gradual reductions of UNRWA's services since many years, under the pretext of fiscal deficit and donor countries falling short of their financial commitments, prove the submission of the international community to the wishes of the United States of America and Israel to end UNRWA's services as a step end the Palestinian refugees' right of return.

The unfair decisions issued by the Director-General of UNRWA in Lebanon, Mr. Matthias Schmale, especially those regarding hospitalization, education, the displaced, and halting of recruitment at UNRWA, mean UNRWA is evading of services to which it was entrusted, adding new burdens to our many and varied sufferings.

In the face of this difficult situation resulting from the conspiracy and coercion of the international community, especially the UN Security Council and the Human Rights Commission and other international institutions, which deprive the Palestinian people of its national, humanitarian, relief, and employment rights, we cannot but stress the following points:

- Firmly holding on to and never wasting any right of our national, humanitarian, civil, social, relief, and employment rights.

- Inviting the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon , and the international community to assume their responsibilities and duties to provide financial aid to cover the work of UNRWA and to provide the mandated services to the fullest.
- Demanding that the Director General of Lebanon to rescind the unjust decisions he had issued, especially those regarding hospitalization, education, and relief of the Palestinians displaced from Syria to Lebanon.
- Calling for the Palestinian people and civil society institutions to organize in the broadest movements and protests against the UNRWA services cuts.
- Emphasising on the need to unite all efforts to confront UNRWA in a peaceful and civilized way, away from the closure of UNRWA schools and clinics and not compromising in any way UNRWA's property and staff.

In this context, we warn some (irrespective of their titles) not to take any movements that stray from the stance of consensus of the forces, national and islamic factions, and the popular committees, for such movements would split our ranks and weaken our stance, which would serve the goals that seek to end UNRWA.

The demand of our Palestinian refugee people is UNRWA's commitment to demand from the international community and donor states to secure all the necessities of life [for the Palestinian refugees] and to increase the general budget of UNRWA in Lebanon, especially that of the health care department and in accordance to coverage of hospitalization costs.

Therefore we demand that UNRWA:

1. Bears the cost of hospitalization as a whole.
2. Covers all medical conditions without exception.
3. Cancels fixation of percentage of coverage of hospitalization with affiliated hospitals.
4. Cancel the maximum number of days of hospitalization.
5. Increase the coverage of cost of hospitalization so that it is not limited to a maximum of \$5,000 US dollars of the invoice.

In conclusion, we hold you and UNRWA's administration responsible for such unfair decisions and call on Matthias Schmale his administration to immediately reverse these decisions that are

unfair to the Palestinian people; and our people will continue to mobilize all of its energies with all national and Islamic forces and factions and the popular mass movement until UNRWA reverses its decisions that call for the killing of Palestinian human and his death on the doors of hospitals, decisions which we will not allow and that our people will reject categorically.

The protesters handed a note by the national and Islamic forces and the popular committees and the Palestinian popular movement in the Saida area to the director of UNRWA in the Saida area, Dr. Ibrahim al-Khatib; it contained the following message:

Mr. Matthias Schmale, the Director-General of UNRWA in Lebanon

We, on behalf of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon who are deprived of all civil, social, and human rights and who suffer from crises that threaten our lives--and we are suffering and struggling for survival, with no guarantee for the future of our generations, with the widespread unemployment, poverty, and deprivation that threaten the lives of our children and generations, we are fully aware that our adherence to the agency United Nations Relief and Works Agency, maintaining it has become a necessary demand to secure UNRWA mandated services necessary to ease the burden on the shoulders of refugees.

At a time when refugees are facing the worst conditions that they have been through and they are in need of support to live with dignity, we see that UNRWA is dealing with the rights of refugees lightly, without notice of the injustice and the bitterness of life that refugees are facing. Your Excellency has made shocking decisions that had the worst impact on the spirit of the refugees and the reality of the lives of Palestinian refugees.

Director-General, the policy that you're adopting by taking your unjust decisions constituted a treacherous and powerful stab in the back of every refugee, and you are the person who comes from an International Red Cross background, which carries a humanitarian and impartial character--and you are working in difficult circumstances and you had come with your humanitarian message to the reality of the lives of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and their sufferings, and we were hoping for the best with your assumption of your position, however, with the start of your term, the fiscal deficit crisis was immediately announced and you took

unjust decisions under the pretext of the crisis, the most dangerous of which was halting recruitment of refugees.

Today, we are not surprised by the adopted policy that had manifested in rounding of the budget of UNRWA's health department, and you who realize the amount of pain and damage that befalls Palestinian refugees, and when UNRWA should have perceived things from the angle of its obligations to secure relief and employment services to refugees, it is from this standpoint that we mark our observations on the hospitalization policy amendments.

The approach that you took regarding UNRWA's health care benefits and those made by the Lebanese Ministry of Health, this approach is not based on any realistic truth, we and you are aware of the fact that the Lebanese Ministry of Health does not offer any assistance in the field of health for Palestinian refugees.

The Lebanese Ministry of Health assumes 85% of the cost of the entire hospital bill, considers all medical cases without exception, deals with all hospitals, and provides medicine for all cases, especially those that are incurable and rare and blood diseases.

While UNRWA deals with Palestinian refugees in Lebanon as follows:

- It has categories for hospitals, and each hospital has a special price
- The estimated percentage of hospitalization coverage at third-rate hospitals is 60% for twelve days at a maximum coverage of \$5,000, which does not follow the percentage of coverage you set.
- Special criteria for medical cases, and that does not include all medical conditions, without going into details.
- Beneficiaries of the second-rate are the most affected by these amendments because they represent 80% of the refugees, and they are the poorest and most vulnerable and in need.

Mr. Director-General!

You do not know the extent of the impact of the policy of hospitalization adjustments on patients and the pain that they suffer, as they become beggars to secure the price of medicine, taxi fees to get to the hospital, and the cost of hospitalization, especially in second-rate hospitals, that is why

we did not and we will not accept that our patients be the victim of unfair and merciless policies, we will never accept that they beg.

We, as a result of these unjust policies, have become more fearful about the future of UNRWA and the continuation of its role in securing relief and employment for refugees, in preparation for its termination; we now feel the danger that threatens the future of cause of the refugees.

Our Palestinian people's demand is the commitment of UNRWA to demand from the international community to secure all the necessities of life [for Palestinian refugees] and to increase the general budget of UNRWA in Lebanon, especially that of the health care department, in proportion to cost of hospitalization.

- 1- UNRWA to bear 85% of the cost of hospitalization on the entire bill.
- 2- UNRWA to consider all the medical conditions, with no exception
- 3- Removing the percentages of hospitalization coverage with affiliated hospitals.
- 4- Canceling the maximum number of days of hospitalization.
- 5- Increasing the maximum coverage of cost of hospitalization so that it is not limited to a maximum of \$ 5,000 US dollars.

On behalf of the Palestinian popular committees, the popular movement, and the Islamic and national forces in the Saida area, we reaffirm our adherence to our demands concerning a rightful hospitalization policy, and our categorical refusal to these unjust policies, and we ask you to reverse your unfair decisions.

Please accept our greetings and respect,

PLO factions

Islamic forces

Factions of the Palestinian National Alliance forces

Popular Committees in Saida area

Popular movement

-END OF TRANSLATION-

-ORIGINAL TEXT

بالصور: "على الأثروا التراجع عن القرارات"

15 كانون الثاني 2016 الساعة 14:34

نظمت القوى السياسية واللجان الشعبية والحراك المدني اعتصاماً أمام مكتب مدير الأونروا في صيدا، وذلك احتجاجاً على تقليصات الأونروا الصحية. رفع المشاركون شعارات تطالب إدارة الأونروا التراجع عن قراراتها الجائرة بحق الشعب الفلسطيني، وأطلقوا هتافات ضد المدير العام ماتياس شمالي. ومن أبرز الشعارات التي أطلقوها: "من حق أن اتعالج"، "من حق أن أحظى برعاية صحية كاملة"، "لنتنصر راية الحق الفلسطيني في الاستشفاء الكامل حتى العودة".

وألقى كلمة المعتصمين أمين سر اللجان الشعبية الفلسطينية في منطقة صيدا الدكتور عبد أبو صلاح، ومما جاء في كلمته: في الوقت الذي يعاني اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في لبنان والمحرومين من كافة حقوقهم المدنية والاجتماعية والإنسانية ويكابدون الكثير من الأزمات التي تهدد حياتهم، حيث لا ضمان لمستقبل أجيالنا ومع انتشار البطالة والفقر والحرمان الذين يهدد حياة أبنائنا وأجيالنا، نعلن تمسكنا بوكالة غوث وتشغيل اللاجئين حتى العودة إلى فلسطين وتطبيق القرارات الدولية ولاسيما قرار 194.

وفي الوقت الذي يواجه فيه اللاجئين أسوأ ظروف يمرون بها وهم بحاجة إلى دعم يمكنهم من العيش بكرامة، نرى أن الأثروا تتعاطى مع ملف حقوق اللاجئين باستخفاف دون الالتفاتة إلى الظلم ومرارة العيش الذين يواجهونها. فقد طالعنا سيادة المدير العام بقرارات صادمة كان لوقعتها في نفوس اللاجئين أسوء الأثر على واقع حياة اللاجئين الفلسطينيين.

وهنا لا بد من توجيه كلمة للسيد ماتياس شمالي المدير العام للأثروا.. إن السياسة التي تنتهجونها من خلال إصداركم لقرارات ظالمة شكلت طعنة غادرة وقوية في ظهر كل لاجئ، وكنتم قد أطيتم برسالتكم الإنسانية على واقع وحياة اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في لبنان ومعاناته، وكنا نأمل خيراً باستلامك لهذا المنصب، إلا أنه مع بداية تقلدك هذا المنصب تم الاعلان مباشرة عن أزمة العجز المالي وأصدرتم القرارات الظالمة تحت ذريعة الأزمة الزمة. لا نستغرب اليوم السياسة المتبعة والتي تمثلت بعملية تدوير موازنة قسم الصحة بالأثروا وانتم الذين تدركون حجم الالم والضرر الذي يقع على اللاجئين الفلسطينيين، وفي الوقت الذي كان يجب على الأثروا النظر من زاوية واجباتها في تأمين خدمات الاغاثة والتشغيل للاجئين، ان المقاربة التي تفضلتم بها عن تقديمات الأثروا في المجال الصحي وبين تقديمات وزارة الصحة اللبنانية لا تستند هذه المقاربة الى اية حقيقة واقعية، نحن وأنتم ندرك حقيقة ان وزارة الصحة اللبنانية لا تقدم اية مساعدة في المجال الصحي للاجئين الفلسطينيين.

او كانكم لا تعلمون مدى انعكاس سياسة التعديلات الاستشفائية على المرضى والالم الذي يعانيه حيث انهم سيصبحون متسولين من اجل تأمين ثمن الدواء واجرة الطريق وفرق كلفة الاستشفاء، لذلك لم ولن نرضى أن يكون مرضانا ضحية سياسات ظالمة وقاهرة ولن نقبل أبداً لهم التسول.

إن تقليصات خدمات الأثروا المتدرج منذ سنوات عديدة، وتحت ذريعة العجز المالي وعدم إيفاء الدول المانحة لمستحققاتها المالية، فإن ذلك يؤكد خضوع المجتمع الدولي لرغبات أمريكا وإسرائيل لإنهاء خدمات الأثروا كخطوة لتصفية حق عودة اللاجئين الفلسطينيين.

إن القرارات الجائرة التي أصدرها المدير العام للأثروا في لبنان السيد ماتياس شمالي وخصوصاً لجهة الاستشفاء والتعليم والنازحين ووقف التوظيف في الأثروا، تعني تملص الأثروا من خدماتها المنوطة بها، وتشكل أعباءً جديدة تضاف إلى معاناتنا المتعددة والمتنوعة.

وفي مواجهة هذا الطرف العصيب الناتج عن تأمر وتجبر المجتمع الدولي وخصوصاً هيئة الأمم المتحدة ومجلس الأمن الدولي ولجنة حقوق الإنسان والمؤسسات الدولية الأخرى، التي تحرم الشعب الفلسطيني من حقوقه الوطنية والإنسانية والإغاثية والتشغيلية، فإنه لا يسعنا إلا أن نؤكد على النقاط التالية:

- التمسك الثابت وعدم التقرب بأي حق من حقوقنا الوطنية والإنسانية والمدنية والاجتماعية والإغاثية والتشغيلية.

- دعوة الأمين العام للأمم المتحدة السيد بان كي مون والمجتمع الدولي إلى تحمل مسؤولياتهم وواجباتهم بتوفير المعونات المالية لتغطية عمل وكالة

الأثروا وتقديم الخدمات المنوطة بها على أكمل وجه.

- مطالبة المدير العام في لبنان بالتراجع عن القرارات الجائرة التي أصدرها وخصوصاً ما يتعلق بالاستشفاء والتعليم واغاثة النازحين الفلسطينيين من سوريا إلى لبنان.

- دعوة أبناء شعبنا الفلسطيني ومؤسسات المجتمع المدني للمشاركة في تنظيم أوسع التحركات والاحتجاجات الراضية لتقليصات خدمات الأتروا.

- التأكيد على ضرورة توحيد كافة الجهود بمواجهة الأتروا بشكل سلمي وحضاري وبعيداً عن اغلاق المدارس وعيادات الأتروا وعدم المساس بأي شكل من الأشكال بممتلكات أو بموظفي الأتروا.

وبهذا السياق فإننا نحذر من لجوء البعض (وبغض النظر عن المسميات) لتحركاتهم الخارجة عن موقف الإجماع للقوى والفصائل الوطنية والإسلامية واللجان الشعبية لأنها تشق صفوفنا وتضعف موقفنا وهذا يصب في خدمة الأهداف الساعية لإنهاء وكالة الأتروا.

ان مطالب ابناء شعبنا الفلسطيني اللاجئ تتمثل بالتزام الأتروا بمطالبة المجتمع الدولي والدول المانحة تامين كل مقومات الحياة وزيادة الموازنة العامة للأتروا في لبنان وخصوصا موازنة قسم الصحة وبما يتناسب وتغطية نفقات تكلفة الاستشفاء:

وعليه نطالب الأتروا:

1. أن تتحمل الأتروا كلفة الاستشفاء بشكل كامل.

2. ان تتعاطى الأتروا مع كافة الحالات المرضية دون استثناء.

3. الغاء تحديد النسب المؤوية للاستشفاء بالمستشفيات المتعاقد معها.

4. الغاء الحد الأقصى لعدد ايام الاستشفاء.

5. زيادة كلفة الاستشفاء بحيث لا تتحصر التكلفة كحد أقصى \$5,000 دولار اميركي من قيمة الفاتورة.

في الختام نحملكم مع ادارة الأتروا مسؤولية هكذا قرارات ظالمة وندعو مائياس شمالي وادارته لتراجع الفوري عن هذه القرارات المجحفة بحق ابناء الشعب الفلسطيني وسيستمر شعبنا بحشد كافة طاقاته مع كافة القوى والفصائل الوطنية والإسلامية والحراك الشعبي والجهادي حتى نترجع الأتروا عن قراراتها التي تدعو الى قتل الانسان الفلسطيني وموته على ابواب المستشفيات و التي لن نسمح بها وسيرفضها شعبنا رفضاً قاطعاً.

وسلم المعتصمون مذكرة مقدمة من القوى الوطنية والإسلامية واللجان الشعبية الفلسطينية والحراك الشعبي في منطقة صيدا لمدير الأونروا في منطقة صيدا الدكتور إبراهيم الخطيب، ومما جاء فيها:

السيد مائياس شمالي المدير العام للأتروا في لبنان

اننا وبإسم اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في لبنان المحرومين من كافة حقوقهم المدنية والاجتماعية والانسانية ويعانون الكثير من الازمات التي تهدد حياتنا ونحن نعاني ونكاد ونكافح من أجل البقاء، حيث لا ضمانة لمستقبل أجيالنا ومع إنتشار البطالة والفقر والحرمان الذين يهددون حياة أبنائنا وأجيالنا، ونحن ندرک تماماً أن تمسكنا بوكالة غوث وتشغيل اللاجئين أصبح الحفاظ عليها مطلباً ضرورياً من أجل تأمين الخدمات المنوطة بالأتروا اللازمة لتخفيف الاعباء عن كاهل اللاجئين.

وفي الوقت الذي يواجه فيه اللاجئين اسوأ ظروف يمرون بها وهم بحاجة الى دعم يمكنهم من العيش بكرامة، نرى ان الأتروا تتعاطى مع ملف حقوق اللاجئين باستخفاف دون الالتفاتة الى الظلم ومرارة العيش الذين يواجهونهم . فقد طالعنا سيادتكم بقرارات صادمة كان لوقعها في نفوس اللاجئين اسواء الاثر على واقع حياة اللاجئين الفلسطينيين.

السيد المدير العام.. ان السياسة التي تنتهجونها من خلال اصداركم قراراتكم الظالمة شكلت طعنة غادرة وقوية في ظهر كل لاجئ، وانتم حضرتم الذين انتم من مدرسة الصليب الاحمر الدولي التي تحمل الصفة الانسانية والحيادية وتعملون في ظروف صعبة وكنتم قد اطلبتم برسالتكم الانسانية على واقع وحياة الشعب اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في لبنان ومعاناته، وكنا نأمل خيراً بإستلامك لهذا المنصب، الا انه مع بداية تقلدك هذا المنصب تم الاعلان مباشرة عن ازمة العجز المالي وأصدرتم القرارات الظالمة تحت ذريعة الازمة الازمة وكان أخطرها وقف التوظيف للاجئين..

لا نستغرب اليوم السياسة المتبعة والتي تمثلت بعملية تدوير موازنة قسم الصحة بالأتروا وانتم الذين تتركون حجم الالم والضرر الذي يقع على اللاجئين الفلسطينيين، وفي الوقت الذي كان يجب على الأتروا النظر من زاوية واجباتها في تامين خدمات الاغاثة والتشغيل للاجئين، من هذا المنطلق نضع ملاحظتنا على سياسة التعديلات الاستشفائية.

ان المقاربة التي تفضلتم بها عن تقديمات الانروا في المجال الصحي وبين تقديمات وزارة الصحة اللبنانية لا تستند هذه المقاربة الى اية حقيقة واقعية، نحن وأنتم ندرك حقيقة ان وزارة الصحة اللبنانية لا تقدم اية مساعدة في المجال الصحي للاجئين الفلسطينيين.

إن وزارة الصحة اللبنانية تتحمل ما نسبته 85% على كامل كلفة الفاتورة الاستشفائية وتتعاطى مع كافة الحالات المرضية دون استثناء، كذلك تتعاقد مع كافة المستشفيات وتقدم الدواء لكل الحالات المرضية وخصوصاً أصحاب الامراض المستعصية والنادرة وأمراض الدم.

بينما الانروا تتعامل مع اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في لبنان كالتالي:

- لديها تصنيفات تتعلق بالمستشفيات ولكل مستشفى تسعيرة خاصة.

- إن النسبة التقديرية لتسعيرة الاستشفاء بمستشفيات المستوى الثالث تبلغ 60% لإثني عشر يوماً بكلفة \$5000 كحد أقصى وهي لا تتناسب مع النسبة المؤية التي حددتموها.

- المعايير الخاصة بالحالات المرضية لا تتضمن كافة الحالات المرضية ودون الخوض بالتفصيليات .

- ان المستفيدين من المستوى الثاني هم الاكثر تضررا من هذه التعديلات كونهم يمثلون ما نسبته 80% من اللاجئين وهم الاكثر فقرا وحاجة وتضرراً. حضرة المدير العام

انكم لا تعلمون مدى انعكاس سياسة التعديلات الاستشفائية على المرضى والالم الذي يعانونه حيث انهم سيصبحون متسولين من اجل تأمين ثمن الدواء واجرة الطريق وفرق كلفة الاستشفاء خصوصاً في المستوى الثاني من المستشفيات ،لذلك لم ولن نرضى أن يكون مرضانا ضحية سياسات ظالمة وقاهرة ولن نقبل أبداً لهم التسول .

إننا ونتيجة هذه السياسات الظالمة اصبحنا اكثر خوفاً على مستقبل الانروا واستمرار دورها في تأمين إغاثة وتشغيل اللاجئين تمهيدا لإنهائها وبتنا نستشعر الخطر الذي يهدد مستقبل قضية اللاجئين .

ان مطالب ابناء شعبنا الفلسطيني اللاجئين تتمثل بالتزام الانروا بمطالبة المجتمع الدولي تأمين كل مقومات الحياة وزيادة الموازنة العامة للانروا في لبنان وخصوصاً موازنة قسم الصحة وبما يتناسب وتغطية نفقات تكلفة الاستشفاء:

1- ان تتحمل الانروا ما نسبته 85% من كلفة الاستشفاء على كامل الفاتورة.

2-ان تتعاطى الانروا مع كافة الحالات المرضية دون استثناء.

3-إلغاء تحديد النسب المؤية للاستشفاء بالمستشفيات المتعاقد معها.

4-إلغاء الحد الأقصى لعدد ايام الاستشفاء.

5-زيادة كلفة الاستشفاء بحيث لا تتحصر التكلفة كحد أقصى \$5,000 دولار اميركي من قيمة الفاتورة.

باسم اللجان الشعبية الفلسطينية الحراك الشعبي والقوى الاسلامية والوطنية في منطقة صيدا نؤكد على تمسكنا بمطالبنا المحقة بخصوص سياسة الاستشفاء ، ورفضنا المطلق لهذه السياسات الظالمة ونطالبكم بالعودة عن قراراتكم المجحفة.

وتفضلوا بقبول التحية والاحترام

فصائل منظمة التحرير الفلسطينية

القوى الاسلامية

فصائل قوى التحالف الوطني الفلسطيني

اللجان الشعبية في منطقة صيدا

الحراك الشعبي