

Åge A. Tiltnes (ed.)



Palestinian Refugees in Syria: Human Capital, Economic Resources and Living Conditions



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Preface

“Palestinian Refugees in Syria” presents one of the most comprehensive analyses ever made of the living conditions of this population in the Syrian Arab Republic. The population surveyed consists of refugees who both live within refugee camps and in a number of limited and mostly urban communities outside the camps. The report is based on a household sample survey carried out during the months of August and September of 2001 and implemented jointly by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Natural Resources (PCBS) in Damascus and Fafo in Oslo.

The project was made possible by a generous grant from the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, support from the Syrian Government through the General Authority of Palestine Arab Refugees (GAPAR), and the cooperation of the refugees themselves. In addition to the employees of the PCBS, the survey’s more than 40 interviewers and data entry staff were primarily recruited from among the qualified youth and employees of the “popular groups” in the camps.

This survey complements other similar studies of Palestinian refugees that Fafo has carried out in Jordan and Lebanon and as a result allows comparative analysis of the living conditions of Palestinian refugees across the Arab “host countries”. Statistics show that Palestinian refugees residing in Syria are doing fairly well on most measures of living conditions thanks to the efforts of UNRWA and the integration of refugees into Syrian society, including the refugees’ access to national education and health services, their admittance to the labour market on a par with Syrian nationals, etc. Although it does contain some data of a comparative nature, this report mainly portrays the state of current affairs of Palestinian refugees residing in the Syrian Arab Republic. Those readers particularly interested in comparative aspects of the demography, housing standards, employment, poverty, literacy, child health etc. of Palestinian refugees, are referred to Fafo’s report “Finding Means” (2003).

We would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to all those who participated in the undertaking, and in particular those in Syria who helped us carry out the survey and write this report. We are most grateful to GAPAR’s director Mr. Ali Mostafa for all the hours he sat with us, including discussing questionnaire design and examining the findings. Here we should not forget Mrs. Souad Shenan, public relations officer at GAPAR, who patiently interpreted our conversations and was in charge of translating the English report into Arabic. Many other employees at GAPAR provided us assistance over the years, including participating in the field-

work, showing us the refugee camps and explaining carefully to us the organization of the camp communities.

Once again, we felt privileged to cooperate with our partner, the PCBS, and we thank its director Dr. Mustafa Abyad for his support. We are grateful to Mr. Yousef Al-Madi for his excellent local coordination and management of all stages of the project, from inception and design to data analysis and reporting. We know he received strong backing from dedicated colleagues during design and fieldwork, with data analysis, and the preparation of the Tabulation Report as well as the Arabic version of this report. While there was a number of people involved who deserve our gratitude, special thanks are due to Mrs. Muna Shaheen.

The Norwegian Embassy in Damascus has been sympathetic to Fafo's work in Syria for a long time. We were always well received and benefited enormously from the insights of its staff and their help with practical issues. We would like to extend our deepest appreciation to Ambassador Vagleik Eide and his successor Ambassador Svein Sevje as well as First Secretary Håkon Gulbrandsen and later Aslak Vardund and Frida Nome for their collaboration and assistance.

We would also like to extend special thanks to UNRWA's Field Office in Syria. Director Angela J Williams and Deputy Director Lex Takkenberg received us with great hospitality and with the assistance from colleagues provided us with valuable information about the Palestinian refugees and UNRWA's operations.

Thanks are also due to Mr. Åge A. Tiltnes for his overall responsibility for the project execution and for editing "Palestinian Refugees in Syria". Likewise, we would like to express our gratitude for the efforts of all the authors of this report: Willy Egset, Gro Hasselknippe, Laurie Blome Jacobsen, Yousef Al-Madi, Jon Pedersen, Åge A. Tiltnes and Guri Tyldum.

Karen Duff did an excellent job editing the language of the report. Since her input, however, a number of additions and revisions have been made with the possible result that language errors have slipped back in.

Lastly, but not the least, we would like to thank all the Palestinian families that willingly opened their doors to the field interviewers and spent their valuable time with them. Without their friendly cooperation the survey would not have been possible. We hope the report does their contributions justice and that we have painted a picture of Palestinian refugee living conditions that they would recognise.

It is our wish that this report shall prove useful to GAPAR and the Syrian government, UNRWA, local institutions, the donor community and all that provide services and otherwise support and assist Palestinian refugees in Syria with the aim of improving their living conditions and well being.

Oslo, February 2005

Jon Hanssen-Bauer Managing Director, Fafo

1 Introduction

Åge A. Tiltnes

In stark contrast to the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Jordan and Lebanon, relatively little has been written, in Arabic or English, about the lives and living conditions of Palestinian refugees in Syria. This report sets out to rectify the situation characterised by modest information about the Palestinian refugee community in Syria, and portrays their living conditions making use of a multiplicity of objective (and a few subjective) statistical indicators pertaining to areas such as health, education, housing, employment and income. Key demographic features of the Palestinian refugee population are also presented, and certain aspects of their social networks are described.

The data on which this report is based, were collected by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Natural Resources (PCBS), Damascus, in collaboration with Fafo Institute for Applied International Studies, Oslo, during the months of August and September 2001. More than 4,900 households were successfully interviewed at 65 different locations. Our survey, however, covers only those Palestinian refugees living in refugee camps and gatherings, with a total population of 156,000 in the camps and 17,000 in the gatherings.¹ Three-quarters of the Palestinian camp and gathering refugees live in the capital, Damascus. The remaining 25 percent reside in the Aleppo, Homs, Hama, Dar'a and Latakia governorates, or *mohafazat* as this administrative level in Syria is called locally.

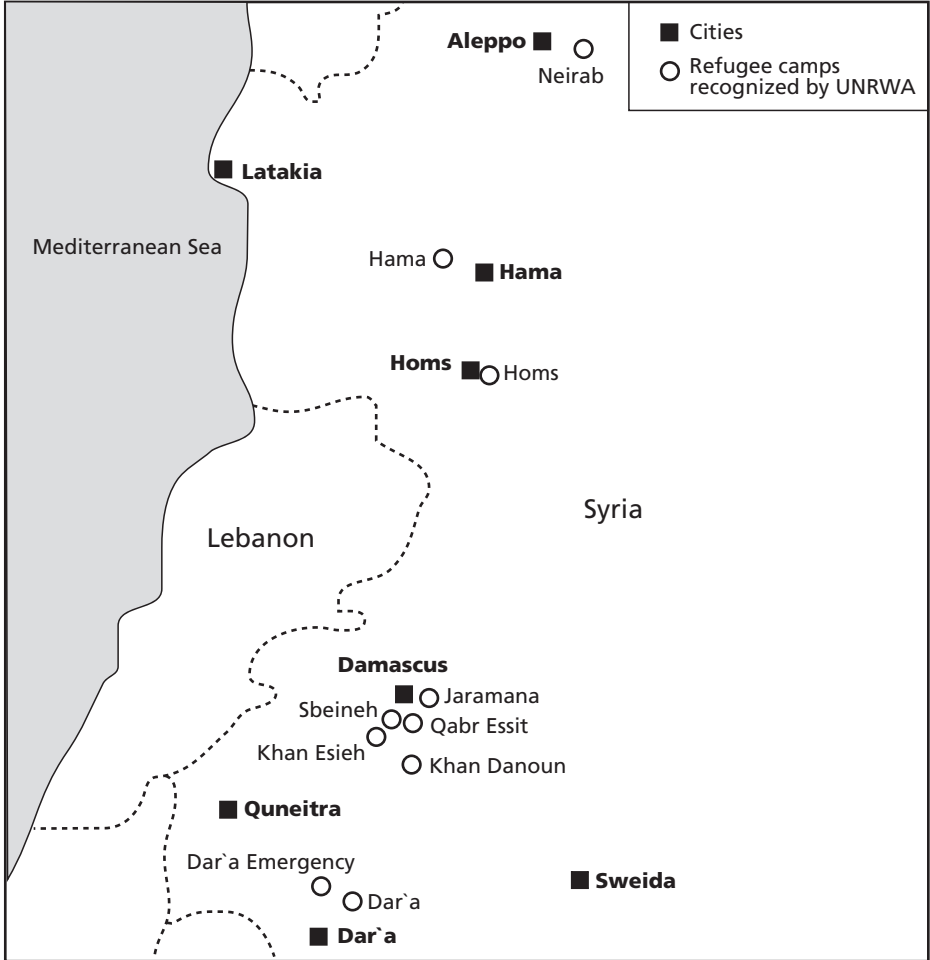
There are 13 Palestinian refugee camps in Syria, seven of them in Damascus, two in Aleppo, and one camp in each of the other four mohafazat mentioned. Ten of the camps are recognized by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), the body set up by the United Nations to cater for the Palestinian refugees in the aftermath of the 1948 mass-flight from present-day Israel, referred to by Palestinians with the Arabic term *nakba* (catastrophe). Nevertheless, UNRWA also serves the so-called “un-official” camps, although at lower levels. The largest location labelled “camp” is Yarmouk, situated within the borders of the capital. While not recognized by UNRWA, the Agency runs a high number of basic schools there, and health centres. As this study will show, the living conditions of Palestinians residing in Yarmouk is systematically better than the living conditions of Palestinians residing elsewhere. This is related to the fact that Yarmouk is one of the

¹ A “gathering” is a locality or neighbourhood with no less than 25 *Palestinian* households.

largest commercial centres in the country. Furthermore, thanks to a well functioning public transportation system its residents benefit from easy access to educational facilities and the labour market of greater Damascus. Damascus is also the political hub for Palestinian refugees in Syria, with a plethora of “popular committees” and social non-governmental organisations providing work and secure income.

When we refer to refugee camps in this report, we shall include both “official” and “un-official” camps. We sometimes present comparisons between camp and non-camp populations, but we frequently treat Yarmouk separately and hence report on three groups of locations: Yarmouk, other camps, and non-camp areas or gatherings.

Figure 1.1 Map of Syria with the 10 refugee camps recognized by UNRWA.



Source: <http://www.un.org/unrwa/refugees/syria.html>

At the end of 2002, there were about 406,000 Palestinian refugees registered with UNRWA in Syria. Per same date, there were almost 427,000 Palestinian refugees registered at the General Authority for Palestinian Arab Refugees (GAPAR).² This would comprise just above two percent of the total Syrian population.

The Palestinian refugees have been better integrated in Syrian society than have been the case in Jordan, and especially Lebanon; there lack of social rights and legislation barring them from public jobs and an extensive list of occupations and professions spanning all industries have produced excessive poverty and desolation causing many to leave family behind in search for a better life elsewhere (Aasheim 2000, Al-Natour 1997, Said 2001, Shiblak 2003, Sørvig 2001, Ugland 2002). As some authors have observed, although Palestinian refugees do not carry Syrian passports, and hence have not been granted full Syrian citizenship, they are generally treated like Syrian Arab citizens (Brand 1988, Yorke 1988, Davis 1997, Al-Mawed 1999). For example, they are entitled to the same educational and medical services as Syrian nationals and have full access to employment in the public sector.³

Equal rights have contributed to a situation where the living conditions of Palestinian refugees basically are on a par with those of Syrian citizens. Since the vast majority of refugees reside in urban centres, their socio-economic and other characteristics are extensively shared with other urban populations. The poorest and most underprivileged Palestinian refugees are predominantly found in rural settings, where they tend to share the living conditions with Syrian nationals living in similar surroundings (comparable access to education institutions, health facilities, and job opportunities) rather than Palestinian refugees residing in towns and cities. The circumstances of refugees in the camps just south of Damascus serve as a good example. Here the proportion of poor is higher, poverty is deeper, public employment is lower, unemployment is above average, physical infrastructure is inadequate, and school enrolment is at a low level.

The report describes positive developments and identifies a few challenges pertaining to various aspects of people's living conditions.

Chapter 2 establishes the main demographic features of the surveyed Palestinian population in Syria, the vast majority of which hail from the Northern part of present-day Israel (above all the provinces of Safad, Tiberias and Haifa in Mandatory Palestine). The chapter basically shows a population sharing most characteristics with those of Syrian (urban) nationals. These are a steadily increasing marriage age,

² Information given by Ali Mostafa, Director General, GAPAR.

³ Law No. 260 of 10 July 1956 "[...] stated clearly and openly that the Palestinians in Syria are equal to Syrians in everything related to employment, residence, trade, military service, education and health without jeopardizing their national identity and citizenship" (Al-Mawed 1999:60).

standing at 21 years for women and 26 years for men; declining fertility with a total fertility rate of 3.3; reduced child mortality (cut by one third in 20 years); and a general increase in life expectancy, currently standing at 74 years for women and 70 years for men. The surveyed population has relatively fewer middle-aged men than middle-aged women, almost certainly due to labour out-migration. More than half the households have close relatives living outside of Syria, primarily in a Gulf country, Jordan, Lebanon, or Europe.

Chapter 3 examines the living areas of the surveyed Palestinian refugees. It looks at housing conditions and physical infrastructure, including education and health services. In so doing, and while concluding that the overall picture is better than in Lebanon, it identifies certain localities that are underserved. These include rural refugee camps such as Neirab outside Aleppo in the North, and Jaramana, Khan Danoun, Sabena, Sit Zeinab and Ramadan outside the capital in the region we have called Rural Damascus. The situation is quite different in Yarmouk camp, which is better off across the entire range of housing and neighbourhood indicators. In addition to objective aspects of housing and infrastructure, the chapter provides an insight into people's subjective assessment of their own situation. While some nine out of 10 households report to be generally satisfied with their dwelling and neighbourhood, substantial grievance is reported on a number of areas. In relation to the dwelling itself, people are most discontented with water supply and quality, and factors related to crowding. With regard to the place of residence, shortage of jobs and cultural facilities are mentioned most often.

Chapter 4 takes a look at the education of Palestinian refugees. It finds, not surprisingly, that there have been very positive developments over time. For example, while among persons aged 60-69, 27 percent has completed elementary schooling or more, some 90 percent of people aged 15-29 have accomplished the same. Moreover, whereas about 60 percent of people aged 60-69 are illiterate, some 10 percent of people in the 15-29 age group are. Although illiteracy amongst Palestinian refugees in Syria is not as frequent as in other host countries, the fact that one in 10 young adults cannot read and write properly tells us that the educational system of UNRWA has not succeeded fully and has an immense challenge in improving its performance. Since illiteracy among the young, as that of the older generations, is more widespread in poor households, and illiteracy renders the young fewer opportunities on the modern job market, it makes it more difficult to break out of economic hardship. As could be expected, child and youth illiteracy is also more common in households with illiterate or poorly educated parents and household heads, meaning that weak reading and writing skills are reproduced over generations. Furthermore, illiteracy has a significantly higher occurrence in rural settings, noticeably in Rural Damascus, where the score on all education indicators is systematically worse.

The health status of the Palestinian refugee population of Syria is depicted in chapter 5. The survey shows that 12 percent of all refugees suffer from a chronic illness of some sort, about half of them being so impaired they need assistance to leave their homes. There is no variation in the incidence of chronic illness by place of residence, but as is normally the case, chronic health failure, as well as other indicators of health outcomes covered by the LIPRIS study, is influenced by age and socio-economic status (education and income).

After portraying the general health conditions of the surveyed population, the chapter looks at the use of health services, which for the large majority are within easy reach from their living quarters. It finds that, following acute illness, nearly everyone sees a doctor. The most popular place to go is to a private clinic (47 percent), followed by an UNRWA health centre (23 percent) and a government hospital (10 percent). Because Palestinian refugees have access to highly subsidised, and often free, services from UNRWA and the Syrian government, their outlays on consultation and treatment are generally low. Still, expenditure on health services can constitute a considerable economic burden for many households, especially the poorer ones, which on the average pay the same as the wealthier households.

Finally, chapter 5 reveals that there is a substantial degree of satisfaction with the service providers. After medical consultation and treatment, about eight in 10 are highly or fairly satisfied while less than one in 10 say they are unsatisfied, a better evaluation than given by Palestinian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon. UNRWA receives a somewhat poorer rating than other service providers in Syria, and the chapter suggests why this might be the case.

Chapter 6 describes the Palestinian refugee household according to family size and type, marriage characteristics, and settlement and visitation patterns. It presents data on the interaction between households in the form of giving and receiving help, and more. Examples of key findings are that Palestinian refugees in the camps and gatherings of Syria predominantly live in nuclear family households (more than 80 percent), that almost all households have some family within walking or driving distance (95 percent), and often have large local family networks. Relatives commonly exchange help with one another. Three in 10 report to have exchanged non-financial help during the two weeks prior to the survey, and four in 10 report to have exchanged financial help. Assistance, especially financial, flows from the young to the old, and from the wealthy to the less well off. The chapter also reveals that attitudes towards women's autonomy in choosing a marriage partner are fairly liberal in the sense that people think the woman should choose her partner (as opposed to the family choosing for her) and that cousin marriage is preferred by a minority.

The central conclusion from our data on employment (chapter 7) is that the labour force of the Palestinian camps and gatherings in Syria share the main characteristics of the national labour force. The industry distribution of employed

Palestinians is the same as the national Syrian one, with the exception of the agriculture and service sectors where Syrians have a greater concentration than Palestinians. Similar to Syrian citizens, 30 percent of working Palestinians receive their salaries from the public sector, where, in contrast to the situation in other economic sectors, non-wage benefits are common. Both male (75 percent) and female (21 percent) workforce participation is higher among Palestinian refugees in Syria than in any other host country, regardless of refugee status. The labour force participation rate is particularly high in Rural Damascus, which may be explained by poorer access to transfer and non-wage income here. The unemployment rate for Palestinian refugees is comparable to national figures. Wage levels are by and large low, causing many people to work long hours. What's more, and often despite extensive working weeks, a significant proportion of the labour force is underemployed in the sense that many employed wish for (but do not necessarily and vigorously seek) additional work.

Chapter 8 examines income sources and levels, and profiles the poor. Next to chapter 2's demographics, it contains the most technical sections of the report. Yet, the findings, lines of reasoning and conclusions are easily comprehensible. The chapter finds that wage income is reported by three-quarters of the households and that 63 percent have it as their largest income source. The second most significant income source is self-employment, reported by one-third of the households and as the most important source by one-fifth. Transfer income (e.g. from relatives, special hardship support from UNRWA, pensions), while reported by almost one-half of the households, is rated as the most important source by no more than 13 percent. On the other hand, for the poorest households transfer income is critical and contributes to 48 percent of total income among the ten percent of households with the lowest income.

The poverty rate is lower among Palestinian refugees in Syria as compared with that of Palestinian refugees residing in Jordan and Lebanon. Furthermore, poverty is not as deep, that is to say it takes less (income) to move out of poverty. Nevertheless, there is no denying that poverty is a significant problem, as 23 percent of households and 27 percent of the population fall below a poverty line of 1 USD per capita per day. Poverty is higher in Rural Damascus than elsewhere; female-headed households are more deprived; poverty is most common in the prime child rearing phase of the household cycle; it is deepest among the elderly; health failure is prevalent among the poor; and high dependency ratios are associated with high levels of poverty.

While four years have passed since the statistics on which this report is primarily based were collected, it is our firm conviction that most findings and conclusions are valid still. Nevertheless, it *has* come to our attention that some localities have seen positive developments with regard to water and sewage infrastructure, hence improving the objective as well as subjectively experienced living conditions there. Likewise, public wages have hiked, with private-sector salaries undoubtedly following

suit. Thus, the absolute level of incomes reported in chapter 8 is somewhat outdated. However, there is no reason to believe that the *relative* income distribution between various groups of refugees has been altered significantly, and that the observations regarding poverty and the relative importance of various income sources do not hold even now.

The report makes extensive use of tables and graphs - it is after all based on statistics. Where we have used graphs, the exact figures can be found in a separate Tabulation Annex.

2 The Population

Jon Pedersen

2.1 The Sample

The Palestinians in Syria either live in camps or outside of camps. Of those that live outside, one may distinguish between those that live in “gatherings” – clusters of households – and those that live isolated from others. The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Natural Resources (PCBS) keeps track of the location and size of the gatherings. In the “Living Conditions of Palestinian Refugees in Syria” (LIPRIS) survey only those living in camps, including their fringes, or gatherings of 25 Palestinian refugee households or more have been included. The survey covered 65 different locations in total.

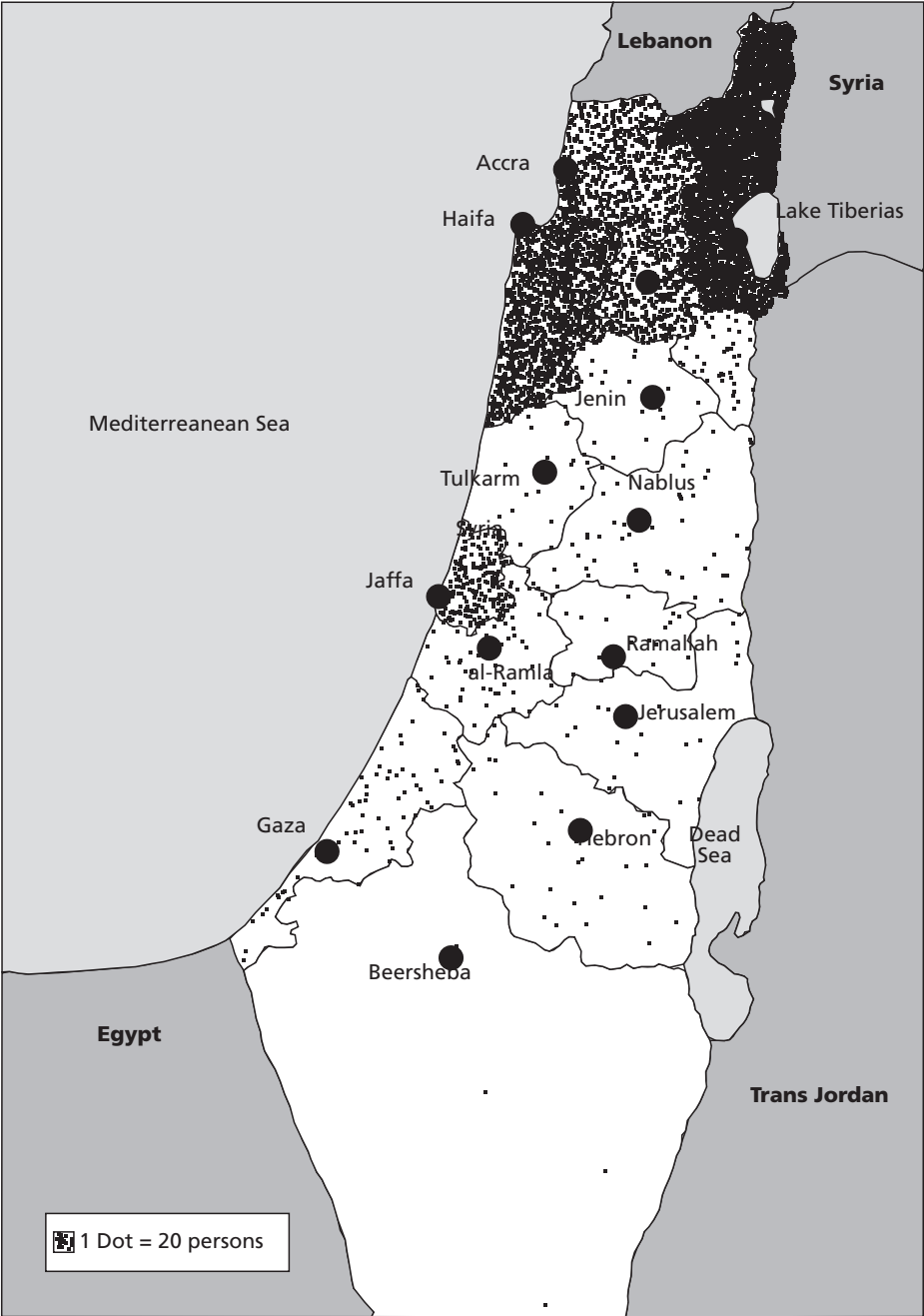
However, some people living in camps and gatherings are neither Palestinians nor refugees. We have therefore restricted the population under study to consist of the population living in households with at least one Palestinian refugee. A person is considered a Palestinian refugee for the purposes of the survey if the person reports that he or she is either a refugee from 1948, displaced from 1967 or both, or if the person reports that he or she is registered at UNRWA (either in Syria or in some other field) or if the person reports that he or she is registered at the General Administration for Palestine Arab Refugees (GAPAR) – the Syrian government office responsible for Palestinian refugees.

Additional information about the sample can be found in Annex 1.

Table 2.1 The LIPRIS sample.

	Sampled, but not included in reporting		Included in reporting		Complete sample		Sample
	Percent	Persons	Percent	Persons	Percent	Persons	
Refugee from 1948			84.9		84		22,811
Displaced from 1967			1.7	3,015	2	3,015	459
Refugee 1948, then displaced			9.7	16,778	10	16,778	2,581
From Gaza Strip or West Bank	15.0	213	0.8	1,430	1	1,643	261
None of the above	85.0	1,206	2.8	4,812	3	6,019	918
Total	100	1,419	100		100		27,030

Figure 2.1 Origin of Palestinian refugees currently residing in Syria.



2.2 Origin in Mandatory Palestine

The majority of the Palestinian refugees in Syria originate from the northern part of present-day Israel for the obvious reason that those areas are the closest to Syria. Some also originates from the Jaffa area, most likely because of the large concentration of population in that area during the time of the British Mandate. Figure 2.1 shows their origin in terms of the administrative divisions of the Mandate.

2.3 Age and Sex Structure

The age and sex structure of the refugees is typical of a population that has had a history of high fertility, but that is now in the process of reducing its fertility. Thus, in general terms the population is broad based, but at the ages below 19 the square form of a population with low fertility is starting to appear.

The dependency ratio, i.e. the ratio of the population aged below 15, and 65 and above to the population aged 15 to 64 is 0.68. This compares to 0.84 in the Palestinian refugee camps in Jordan (reflecting the higher fertility in those camps).

The sex ratio, i.e. the ratio of males to females, in the population shows a preponderance of males. The ratio is 1.02, a ratio mainly caused by a male surplus at early age (Figure 2.3, overleaf), especially in the 5-9 year group. It is not clear why

Figure 2.2 Age and sex structure of the Palestinian refugees in Syria. Ever married persons are indicated with grey shading.

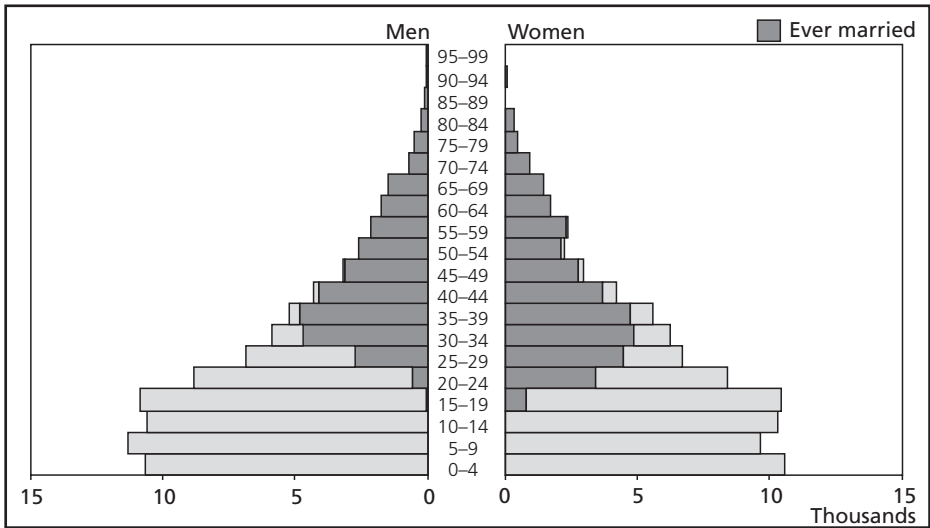
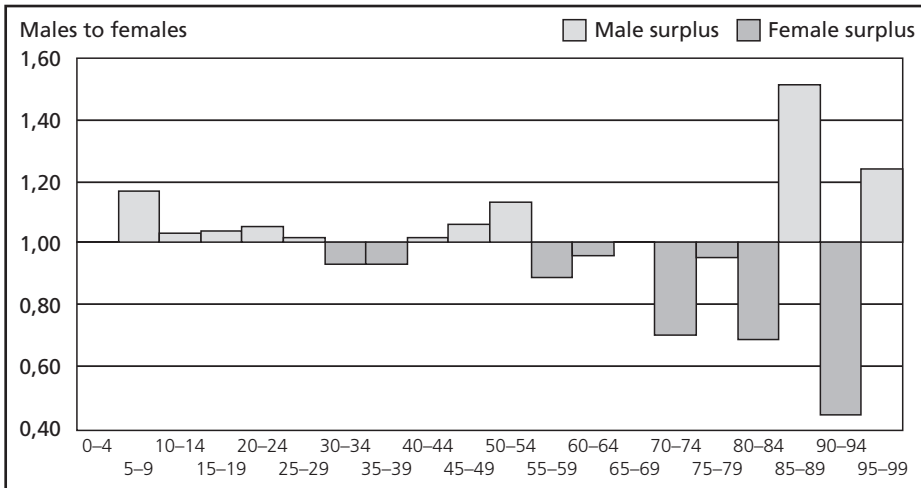


Figure 2.3 Sex ratios by age.



this is so, but it has been seen in other surveys of Palestinians. The female surplus later involves smaller age groups and cannot counterbalance the early surplus of men. The sex ratios also show a relative lack of males at ages 30 to 39, most probably an effect of migration out of Syria.

2.4 Marriage

Age at first marriage has been steadily increasing both for men and women (Figure 2.4). While women born in the 1920s were between 15 to 16 years when they married, and men around 21, women born in the 1970s were around 21 years of age when they married. In contrast, men were 26. Thus, while age at first marriage has increased, the age difference between men and women has remained constant.

Another measure of the age at first marriage is the so-called “singulate mean” (Hajnal 1953) that estimates the mean age at marriage from the proportions married at a given time. This measure yields a marriage age for men of 29.1 years, and one for women of 25.4 years.

A feature of marriage among Palestinians in Syria that they share with both native Syrians and Palestinians living elsewhere is the comparatively high frequency of marriage between kin (so-called consanguineous marriage). In principle marriage

between father's brother's daughter and father's brother's son is the preferred type, but this form makes out slightly less than half of all marriages between cousins. Moreover, marriage within the patrilineal clan, the *hamulah*, is also common (Table 2.2).

Figure 2.4 Median age at first marriage by year of birth. Yearly estimates and loess smooth.

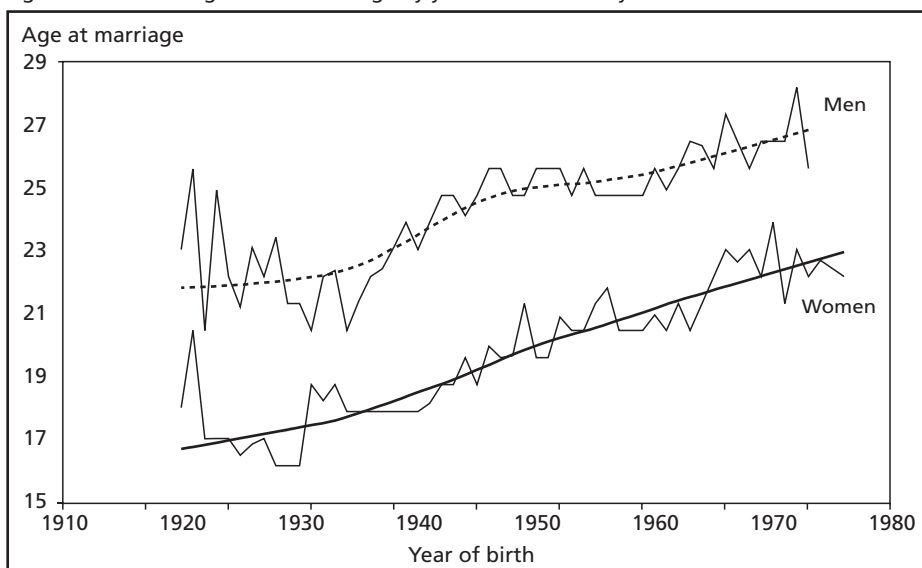


Table 2.2 Frequency of cousin marriage.

	Percent
Mother's brother's son (Ibn khal)	2.0
Father's brother's son (Ibn amm)	6.8
Mother's brother's son and Father's sister's son	1.9
Mother's sister's son (Ibn khala)	3.6
Father's sister's son (Ibn amma)	2.8
Mother's sister's son and Father's brother's son	1.2
Same hamulah, father's side	8.4
Same hamulah, mother's side	3.9
No relation	69.5
Total	100.0
n	4,195
Total cousin marriage	18.3
Proportion of father's brother's daughter and father's brother's son of all cousin marriages	43.7

2.5 Fertility

Fertility among Palestinian refugees in Syria is dropping. The average total fertility rate (TFR) for 1996–2000 was 3.5. This average hides, however, a general decline throughout the five-year period and before, as indicated in Figure 2.5. Thus, in 2000 the TFR was at 3.3.

The fertility rates observed for Palestinians are lower than the national Syrian ones, which according to the Syrian Internal Migration Survey carried out by the Central Bureau of Statistics, the University of Damascus and Fafo in 1999 was 4.7 for the period 1995 – 1999 and 3.8 for 1999. The urban Syrian rates are nevertheless very similar to the Palestinian ones. In 1999, the urban Syrian rate was 3.2 in

Figure 2.5 Development of total fertility rate 1985–2000.

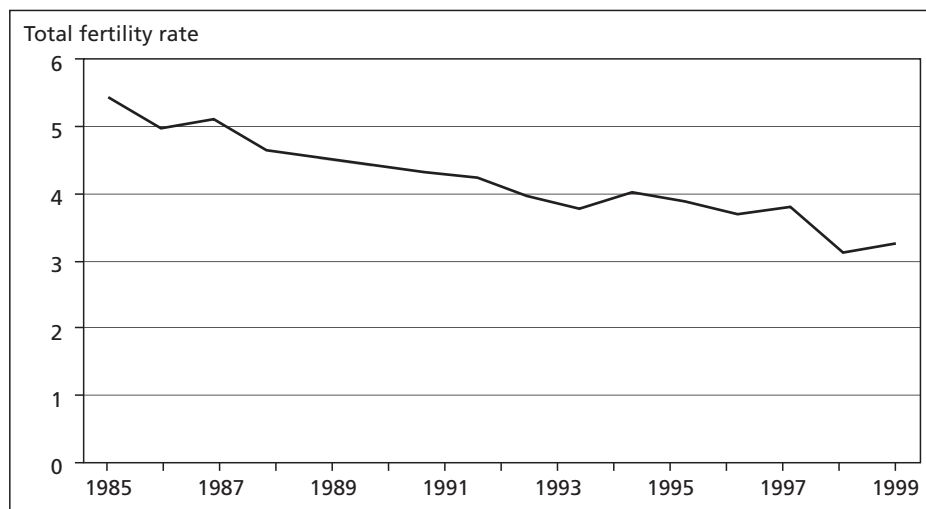


Table 2.3 Total fertility rates 1995–2000 by selected characteristics.

Characteristic	Total Fertility Rate
In labour force	2.5
Outside labour force	3.9
Not completed elementary education	3.5
Elementary education	3.8
Intermediate education	3.7
Secondary education	3.4
More than secondary	3.1
Residence in camps and outskirts of camps	3.5
Residence outside camps	3.9
All	3.5

Mohafaza centres and 3.8 in other urban areas, while in the five years preceding the survey the corresponding rates were 3.8 and 4.7¹. Since the camps and other locations of residence of Palestinians in Syria are generally urban in character, one may conclude that Palestinians in Syria follow similar developments in childbearing as the Syrians. If there is a difference, it would be that Palestinian fertility is lower than the Syrian, as it is perhaps more relevant to compare with other urban areas than the Mohafaza centres.

That refugees and the host population should follow similar developments with regard to fertility is not surprising. This is also the case in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Jordan and Lebanon.

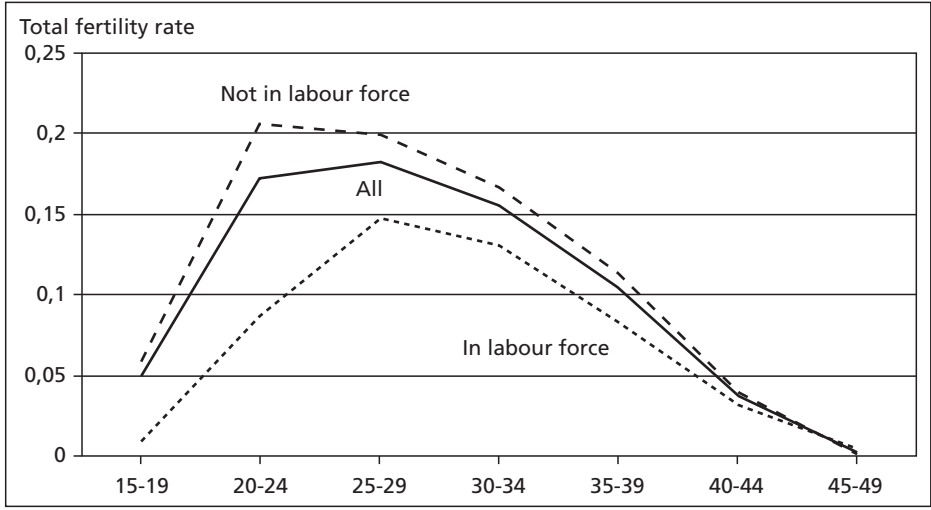
As expected, fertility shows a quite clear association with women’s labour force participation (Table 2.3). However, and in line with what has been found for the West Bank and Gaza Strip (Randall 2001), fertility shows a comparatively weak association with the level of education.

Camp residence is not associated with higher fertility, in fact rather the opposite. This is in contrast to Jordan where both the Jordan Living Conditions Survey and the Jordan Camp Survey found higher fertility in the camps than outside. The Syrian pattern is, however, similar to that of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Age-specific fertility rates show how childbearing is distributed throughout the reproductive life of a woman. These are shown in Figure 2.6.

The contrast between the women who are in the labour force and those outside is striking. The women outside the labour force start childbearing earlier than those

Figure 2.6 Age-specific fertility rates by labour force participation 1995–2000.



¹ Rates for Syria have been calculated directly from the Syria Internal Migration Survey dataset.

within, although comparatively speaking the age-specific fertility rate for age 15-19 is not very high. They then peak at about 0.2 children per year at age 20-24 and keeps the level into the next age group. The women within the labour force peak later and at a lower level.

One should note, however, that the picture to some extent is artificial, because many women drop out of the labour force when they marry. The “In labour force”-curve partly shows the effect of delayed marriage.

2.6 Maternal Mortality

Maternal mortality is usually measured by maternal mortality ratio, which is the number of deaths per 100,000 childbirths. It ranges from close to zero in countries such as Norway where in some years maternal deaths are not observed, to up to around 2,000 in countries such as Afghanistan. Values in the Middle East range from seven (Israel) to 1,385 (Yemen), while most values are in the range 50 to 300 (Stanton et al. 1996).

Maternal mortality is difficult to estimate. This is partly because the person immediately affected cannot report about it, and partly because, even when deaths during pregnancy or delivery are comparatively frequent, they are fortunately not very common. In the absence of complete registration of deaths by cause, a large sample and indirect methods of estimation are therefore needed.

One way to estimate the maternal mortality ratio is the so-called “sisterhood method”. In this approach, persons aged 15 years and above are asked if any of their

Table 2.4 Sisterhood estimates of maternal mortality.

Age group of respondents	Number of respondents	Sisters aged 15 and above	Sister units of risk exposure	Maternal deaths	Lifetime risk of maternal death	Maternal mortality ratio (pr 100,000)	Proportion dead from maternal causes
15-19	1,064	3,618	387	-	-	-	-
20-24	1,144	3,891	802	7.4	0.00923	262	0.141
25-29	1,100	3,892	1,335	1.3	0.00099	28	0.020
30-34	1,073	3,832	1,927	1.9	0.00096	27	0.021
35-39	1,010	3,834	2,546	4.4	0.00171	48	0.054
40-44	786	2,893	2,320	10.0	0.00432	123	0.113
45-49	580	2,056	1,850	4.6	0.00246	70	0.057
50-54	459	1,465	1,403	9.9	0.00705	200	0.097
55-59	257	481	474	1.0	0.00204	58	0.033
Total 15-49	.	.	11,167	29.5	0.00264	75	.

sisters have died during pregnancy, child-birth or during the first 40 days following child birth (Graham, Brass and Snow 1989). In LIPRIS, all women aged 15 years and above as well as the randomly selected individual when that person was not a woman, were asked these questions.

According to the sisterhood method the maternal mortality ratio among Palestinians in Syria is 75 deaths per 100,000 births. One should note the rather high variability of the estimates for each age group of respondents. This suggests that the variability of the final estimate may be substantial. The estimated ratio corresponds to 3.4 maternal deaths per year.

Several authors have suggested that sisterhood estimates of maternal mortality underestimates the true incidence of mortality from this cause (Stanton et al. 1996). An alternative is the use of “process indicators”. Such indicators are based on observed relationships between the indicator of interest and various indicators that may be more easily measured. They are increasingly used in estimation of maternal mortality.

Stanton et al. (1996) have suggested a procedure for estimating maternal mortality that is based on prediction of the proportion of maternal deaths through a regression of the General Fertility Rate (GFR), the proportion of trained assistance at birth and the country’s status as a developing country. In the case of Palestinian refugees in Syria, with a GFR of 118 and a proportion of properly assisted births at 98.5 percent, the proportion of dead from maternal causes predicted by the Stanton method is 0.065. Assuming a life expectancy of 73 years for women (and the West Coal Demeney life table) this yields a maternal mortality ratio of 74 per 100,000 births, i.e. practically the same as the indirect estimate. The process approach estimates the maternal mortality ratio for 1999, while the indirect estimate has a time location at roughly 1992.

2.7 Neo-natal, Infant and Child Mortality

The survey found an infant mortality of 21 deaths during the first year of life per 1,000 births for girls, and one of 25 for boys for the period 1996-2000. The corresponding under five-year mortality rate (${}_5Q_0$) was 22 and 31 per 1,000 (Table 2.5). The level is similar to national Syrian levels. For example, the 1999 Syrian Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) found an infant mortality level of 24 per 1,000 (Peiris 2001).

The infant and child mortality in the camps and gatherings have been estimated using direct methods, i.e. using the so-called synthetic cohort method directly from birth history (Curtis 1995).

There has been a significant improvement in the survival of children during the past twenty years among the refugees in Syria. For both boys and girls, the under five mortality (U5MR) currently is two thirds of what it was twenty years ago, while the reduction for infant and neonatal mortality have been less pronounced (Table 2.5).

In general, girls have had lower mortality than boys for all the periods for which estimates may be had from the survey. Thus, the surplus mortality of girls that has existed in the Middle East (Tabutin 1994) has long since disappeared in Syria.

Interestingly, there is only a weak association between child survival and the education of the mother (Table 2.6). The exception is the children of mothers without elementary schooling who have higher mortality than other children. It is possible that these children do not get into contact with the health care system as easily as the others, but it may also be an effect of the age of the mother.

Another factor that influences child survival is consanguineous marriage of the parents of the child. As shown in Table 2.2, about 31 percent of the marriages are consanguineous in one form or another. Consanguineous marriage affects the survival chances of the offspring because deleterious autosomal recessive genes receive an increased chance of expression due to the genetic similarity between the parents.

In general, the survey results (Table 2.7) show a clear association between infant and child mortality on type of marriage, although the results for boys showing very high mortality rates for marriages within the patrilineal clan (*hamulah*) is puzzling.

Table 2.5 Neonatal, infant and under-five mortality (1981–2000). Deaths per 1,000 live births.

Year	Female			Male		
	Neonatal Mortality	${}_1Q_0$	${}_5Q_0$ (U5MR)	Neonatal Mortality	${}_1Q_0$	${}_5Q_0$ (U5MR)
1981 – 1985	19	29	34	25	35	44
1986 – 1990	18	26	33	32	43	47
1991 – 1995	25	29	34	23	30	35
1996 - 2000	17	22	22	21	25	31

Table 2.6 Neonatal, infant and under five mortality by education of mother (1996–2000, deaths per 1,000 live births).

	Neonatal Mortality	${}_1Q_0$	${}_5Q_0$ (U5MR)
Not completed elementary	30	34	41
Elementary	13	21	24
Intermediate	21	25	28
Secondary	15	18	18
More than secondary	21	21	23

A proportional hazards (“Cox”) regression was carried out in order to separate out the effects of the various factors that influence early age mortality. In this type of multivariate analysis the conditional probability of death (the hazard) is explained by a number of independent variables. The effects of the variables are expressed as a ratio of the hazard given the value of a particular variable to a baseline hazard. Thus

Table 2.7 Neonatal, infant and under-five mortality by type of marriage of parents (1991-2000, deaths per 1,000 live births).

	Female			Male		
	Neonatal Mortality	${}_1Q_0$	${}_5Q_0$ (U5MR)	Neonatal Mortality	${}_1Q_0$	${}_5Q_0$ (U5MR)
Cousin	21	28	34	9	19	27
Within hamulah	25	28	28	33	46	62
No relation	19	23	25	22	25	28

Table 2.8 Proportional hazards regression of survival of children.

Variable	Hazards ratio	p
Twin	2.05	0.000
Girl	0.89	0.002
Woman's age at birth	0.83	0.000
Age at birth squared	1.36	0.000
Education of mother (Reference: No or incomplete elementary)		
Elementary	0.87	0.010
Intermediate	0.85	0.000
Secondary	0.89	0.009
More than secondary	0.96	0.240
Mother's type of marriage (reference: non-consanguineous)		
Double cousin	1.33	0.260
Cousin	1.45	0.002
Within hamulah	1.30	0.047
Income (Reference: Lowest income)		
Income group 2	0.97	0.700
Income group 3	1.01	0.870
Income group 4	0.97	0.310
Income group 5	0.99	0.750
Frailty (for women)		0.000
n	16,193	
Likelihood ratio	1,283	
df	650	
p	0	

a hazards ratio of more than one increases the hazard of dying, while a ratio below one decreases the hazard. Results are presented in Table 2.8.

As you would have thought, the regression shows that there is a strong negative effect on child survival of being born as one of a pair of twins and that the positive effect of being a girl remains when controlling for other factors. The effect of no education also remains, even when factors such as income and mother's age are controlled for. Furthermore, there is a significant negative effect of consanguineous marriage, which is in fact clearer than in the cross-tabulation. Household income shows no significant effect. This perhaps somewhat surprising result has also been seen elsewhere among Palestinians (see Pedersen 2000) and probably stems from the fact that even poor Palestinians are supplied with basic mother and childcare as well as water and sanitation infrastructure through the work of UNRWA, national governments and NGOs.

2.8 Life Expectancy

Life expectancy is the average number of years a person may expect to live. It may be calculated at birth or at other ages. Here the focus will be on life expectancy at birth. The immediate information that is required for computing the life expectancy is the life table, as this provides the survival curve, i.e. the probabilities for surviving from birth to various ages. The life expectancy may be computed as the area under survival curve.

One cannot estimate a life table directly from the LIPRIS data. But there are two sets of data that may be used to create a life table. First, there are the infant and child mortality estimates that can be derived from the birth histories. Second there are the adult mortality estimates that can be derived from information on orphanhood, i.e. the survivorship of parents. Several methods exist and assumptions must be made in order to arrive at mortality estimates from reports on paternal or maternal orphanhood. Here we have used the so called Brass conditional method (UN 1983: 101-106) and have assumed that the overall mortality pattern follows the Coale-Demeny "West" model life table.

However, these two sources do not provide the complete life table. The infant and child mortality estimates provides insight into the first part of the life table, and the orphanhood data give the conditional probabilities of surviving to age 40, 45, 50 ... 85, etc. from age 25 in the case of women and similarly from age 32.5 or 37.5 for men. The estimates will also have different time references, because the parents have been exposed to mortality for different periods. To arrive at a life table and thereby the life expectancy one has to find a model life table that fits the observed mortality

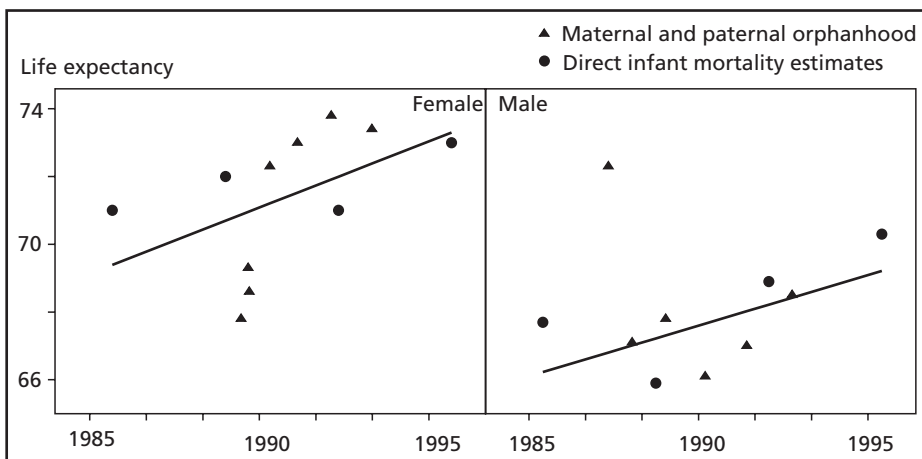
estimates, and then assume that the mortality pattern in the model life table also holds true in the real population. Such model life tables can be divided into families of tables by different patterns of mortality (how mortality varies across life). Within each family there are different levels of mortality (life expectancy).

If the mortality pattern of the population fits exactly the model life table pattern and mortality has not changed and the data are without sampling or measurement error, then the best matching model life table would be the same for all the individual mortality estimates. Obviously, these assumptions do not hold and one therefore has to reconcile the different matches to the model life tables.

There are two ways in which one may combine the information from the infant and child mortality estimates and the adult mortality estimates. One may assume that one model life table pattern and level is the real one, and that the different estimates only represent sampling and non-sampling errors. In such a case one may arrive at a single estimate simply by averaging the different values. Alternatively one may assume that while the overall pattern is valid, the level may differ between the ages. For example, introduction of improved childcare would change the infant and child mortality levels, but will have led to no concomitant change in adult mortality. In such a case one might want to combine two or more different life tables in order to construct a merged one.

The mortality estimates that can be arrived at from the data show some scatter with a few outliers but are not wildly inconsistent (see Figure 2.7). There appears to be no clear-cut difference between the estimates derived from infant mortality data and those derived from adult mortality. The time location of the estimates suggests a general increase in life expectancy. Therefore one may estimate life expectancy

Figure 2.7 Life expectancies at birth for men and women derived from maternal and paternal orphanhood and direct infant mortality estimates. A robust regression line is also depicted.



by fitting a regression line to the estimates, rather than simply averaging. A robust MM-regression (Insightful Corporation 2001: 334ff) was used. The method minimises the maximum possible bias of the coefficient estimates and are preferable to ordinary least squares regression because of the outliers.

The regression then gives a life expectancy for women and men of 73.0 and 69.0 years at mid-year 1997 and 74.1 and 69.8 years at mid-year 2001 (with a yearly increase of 0.26 years for women and 0.199 years for men). One should note that these estimates are at or beyond the range of the time references of the estimates, and one should be wary of extrapolating the trend far into the future since this will give impossible results. The approximate mid-point of the time references is 1992 and the estimated life expectancies at birth for mid-year 1992 is 71.7 years for women and 68.0 years for men.

2.9 Migration

At the time of the survey, 98 percent of the population aged five years or more resided in the same location as they had been living five years ago. By contrast, Palestinian refugees in Jordan move more frequently. There, eight percent of camp refugees aged five year and more did not live in their present location five years before the Jordan Living Conditions Survey was carried out in 1996 (Pedersen 1998: 373).

This does not mean that Palestinians in Syria do not move. As many as 54 percent of the households have close relatives (i.e. parents, siblings or children) living outside Syria (Table 2.9). Relatively few households have relatives living in the West Bank or Gaza Strip or Israel. On the other hand, many households have links to the Gulf countries, Jordan, Europe and Lebanon.

Table 2.9 Percent of households with relatives abroad by location of relatives.

Location of relative	Percent of households
West Bank and Gaza Strip	4
Israel	3
Jordan	18
Lebanon	12
Egypt	1
Gulf countries	21
Iran and Iraq	1
United States and Canada	5
Europe	15
Any location	54

When considering the characteristics of the relatives residing outside of Syria, there are few differences between male and female relatives as regards location when it comes to the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and Israel (Table 2.10). This is because most of the relatives reported resident there also originates in those places, so there has been no gender-selective migration. The situation is different elsewhere. The Gulf countries and Europe have seen more migration of men, while Lebanon and Jordan have received more Palestinian women than Palestinian men from Syria.

The pattern of reasons for being abroad is indicative of similar differences between men and women as those seen above. Overall, around 30 percent of (both male and female) relatives are outside Syria either because their present residence is their place of origin or because of work (Table 2.11). However, 54 percent of

Table 2.10 Residence of close relatives abroad as reported by the households. Percent of all relatives reported abroad.

Residence	Male	Female	Total
West Bank/Gaza Strip	5	5	5
Israel	3	3	3
Jordan	10	31	21
Lebanon	15	20	18
Egypt	0	1	1
Gulf countries	25	20	22
Iran and Iraq	1	1	1
US/Canada	5	3	4
Europe	22	9	15
Other	13	7	10
Total	100	100	100
n	4,203	4,437	8,640

Table 2.11 Reason for relatives being abroad - reported by households. Percent of all relatives reported abroad.

	Male	Female	Total
Work	52	3	27
Seeking work	2	0	1
Study	4	0	2
Married	2	54	28
Followed family	3	12	8
Place of origin	34	29	32
Other	2	1	1
Total	100	100	100
n	4,204	4,437	8,641

female relatives are abroad because of marriage, while only two percent of male are. The percentages are reversed when it comes to work, with 52 percent of the male relatives being abroad for this reason, and only two percent of female.

It should be noted that the percentages of relatives should be taken with some caution, as some relatives will have been reported by more than one household. For example, an emigrant with many brothers still in Syria may have been reported several times. As long as there is no association between the size of a group of relatives and the characteristics of relatives abroad, this does not affect the percentages. The fact that relatives may be reported more than once, does, however, bias the estimated number of relatives abroad upwards by an unknown amount, and for that reason absolute numbers are not reported.

3 Housing and Infrastructure

Laurie Blome Jacobsen

Conditions inside and in the immediate area of the dwelling can have a large impact on the well being of families. Probably most important is the availability of proper sanitation facilities and good access to safe drinking water – conditions that have been proven to have considerable repercussions on the health status of individuals in the household, especially small children. The physical comfort, stability and density of the dwelling and access to amenities, which can make everyday chores more or less demanding, can also have differing effect upon different members of the household. Working members may spend little daytime in the dwelling itself so their poor conditions have minimal effect. School-aged children especially need to have space and quiet to complete school lessons, and very young children particularly need healthy environmental conditions. Women working in the home and as caretakers suffer much larger burdens with the lack of modern infrastructure amenities.

This chapter first looks at the characteristics of the dwelling itself: the type of dwelling; construction materials; infrastructure; density; energy use; and tenure. We then move outside the dwelling to the areas leading to the dwelling, and then to the neighbourhood at large. In the latter case, we examine both the kinds of services available within walking distance and the household's satisfaction with a range of aspects of their housing and neighbourhood.

3.1 The Dwelling

Dwelling Types

Overall, three out of five households live in apartments and about two in five live in *dar* housing (Figure 3.1). A *dar* is defined as an independent, one-storey building. Very few Palestinians in Syrian refugee camp areas live in squatter-type dwellings (less than 0.5 percent). Most of these cases are refugees living in barracks in Neirab refugee camp outside Aleppo. These barracks are old army barracks in which many families live together. The barracks are reported to be in a very deplorable condition, but there are plans for voluntary relocation of some 300 families to new shelters in Ein el Tal camp on the opposite side of the city (see textbox below). GAPAR and UNRWA have taken measures to improve the situation.

A predominance of apartment housing is found particularly in Yarmouk refugee camp, where some 90 percent live in apartments, compared to 36 percent of households in other refugee camps and 56 percent of those in gathering areas. In other camps, apartments are uncommon. Dars are somewhat more common in gatherings and displacements, but on the outskirts of refugee camps, they predominate.

The type of housing a family lives in is related to a number of factors: lifecycle of the household; size of the household; and household resources. Among the youngest heads of households (less than 30 years) and oldest heads of households, apartment housing is least common. This is clearly a reflection of dwelling types following the household lifecycle. As couples marry but before they have children, they move from their respective family homes to their own apartment. Among young married couples without children, 68 percent live in apartments. Fewer nuclear families with children live in apartments and, in particular, few extended family households (50 percent). Here, family lifecycle and space needs are interrelated. The main differ-

Figure 3.1 Type of dwelling by type of area (n=4,887).

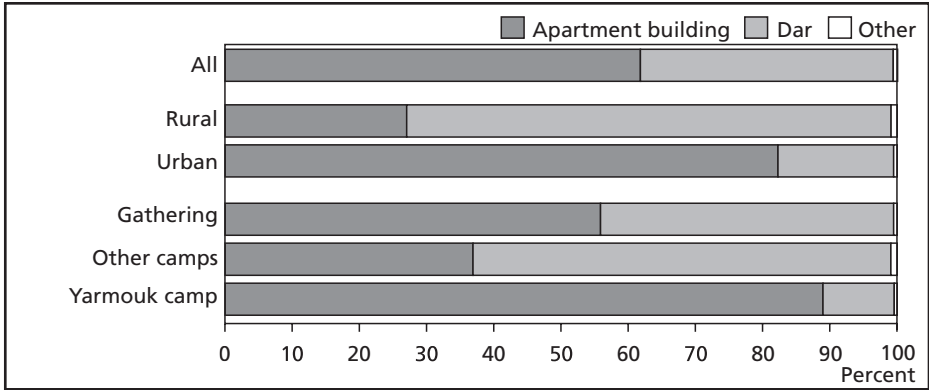


Table 3.1 Mean estimated monthly market rate in Syrian Pounds.

		Mean	n
Urban rural status	Urban	3,658	3,050
	Rural	2,575	1,837
Type of living area	Yarmouk camp	2,944	1,622
	Other camps	2,635	2,682
	Gathering	3,086	573
Region	Urban Damascus	3,922	1,774
	Rural Damascus	2,673	958
	North	2,507	684
	West	2,908	982
	South	2,203	489

ence, however, according to household size is that very large households (with 10 or more persons) seldom live in apartments compared with smaller households. While the family lifecycle and its corresponding household size plays a role in the type of dwelling families live in, the ability of the household to actually obtain what they need or want depends on both the supply of housing and household resources. The fact that there is little overall difference in average house size in terms of the number of rooms (three for both apartments and dars) lends weight to the importance of other factors, like household income, which contribute to the type of dwelling households can afford.

People are more likely to chose to live in an apartment as household income increases, in addition to other indicators of households resources, such as employment of the household head and, especially, the level of education of the head: Some 75 percent of household heads with a secondary or higher education live in apartments, compared to 48 percent of households with heads that have no formal education. Further, the market rates for apartments are considered to be higher than dars, which indicates that apartments are more highly valued. This result is surprising since most owners of dars also own the land upon which the house was build, which is not always the case with apartments. Household respondents were asked what monthly rent they would expect to pay if they rented out their living quarters. On average, market monthly rates of apartments are reported to be about 40 percent higher than dars.

Market rates also vary according to geographic location, with dwellings in Yarmouk camp and other urban areas viewed as most valuable compared to rural areas (Table 3.1).

Dwelling Ownership

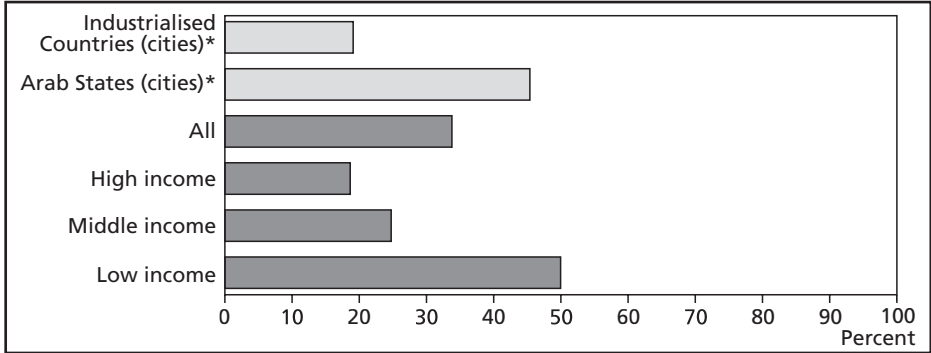
Nearly all households (92 percent) report that they own their dwelling. Dwelling ownership is very evenly distributed among the various social and economic characteristics of households: Little variation in this tenure status exists by type of location or even household resources, but regional differences do exist. Fewer refugees own their dwellings in urban areas, especially in Damascus. Renting is most common in Yarmouk camp, where eight percent rent from a private landlord/lessor. This is about the same as in gatherings but considerably higher than in other camps (three percent).

About one-half of dwelling owners built their own dwelling, and one-quarter each bought or inherited the dwelling. Building is more common in rural areas, while purchasing is more common in urban areas and among those with higher household income (31 percent). Those on a lower income often build or inherit their home. Finally, there is a large difference in how the household obtained the dwell-

ing they own between Yarmouk camp and other refugee camps. Among the eight percent that are either granted or rent their dwelling, there are more distinguishable patterns among different households. For those renting, average rents are some 75 percent higher for apartments than dars. Rental costs are also higher on average in Yarmouk camp than other camps by about 500 Syrian Pounds per month, and generally higher again in Damascus than in any other region. Renters appear to be those who rent by necessity, not choice. It is more common among young and lone households. Not surprisingly, the mean rent paid increases with household income and, when we consider rent as a proportion of income, it is apparent that the less well off bear a heavier financial burden than other who rent (Figure 3.2). This is true also when we consider other regions. The cost of housing relative to income is usually highest in the poorest regions and amongst the poorest groups of households. The Arab states as a group have the highest house rent-to-income ratio of all regions, as shown in Figure 3.2. This is indicative not only of relatively poorer regions, but also where there are high household formation rates (many new households created) and a poor supply of rental dwellings. Among camp and gathering refugees in Syria, on average, low-income households pay some 50 percent of their monthly income on rent as compared to 25 percent among middle income and 18 percent of high-income households.

Most of those renting and those who are granted their dwelling, obtain their residences from private persons or institutions (80 percent of renters and 73 percent of grantees). About 20 percent of renters rent from the government, and UNRWA provides some 13 percent of granted dwellings. Average rental cost is highest among those who rent from private persons, most of whom are non-relatives.

Figure 3.2 Dwelling rent-to-income ratio by household income (n=220), and compared to other states.



* Source: Urban Indicators, 1998. Habitat for Humanity.

Only three percent of households report that they have been granted their dwelling. This proportion is somewhat larger among households in the lowest income quintile (four percent), but occurs among all income groups. UNRWA does not grant dwellings. However, UNRWA has supported reconstruction (including partial rebuilding) of about 100 dwellings a year over the past 10 years, i.e. about 1,000 dwellings. Some respondents may have answered “granted” if their dwelling was (fully or partly) rebuilt by UNRWA (and costs were covered by UNRWA). Such reconstruction has been donor-based. GAPAR has also granted land in Yarmouk camp, and some respondents may have thought that this was granted by UNRWA as well. Also, UNRWA had a tent replacement program (in the official camps only) during 1955-65, whereby tents were substituted with concrete/brick/block houses. Hence, some people may say they were “given” or “granted” houses by UNRWA.

3.2 Dwelling Size and Crowding

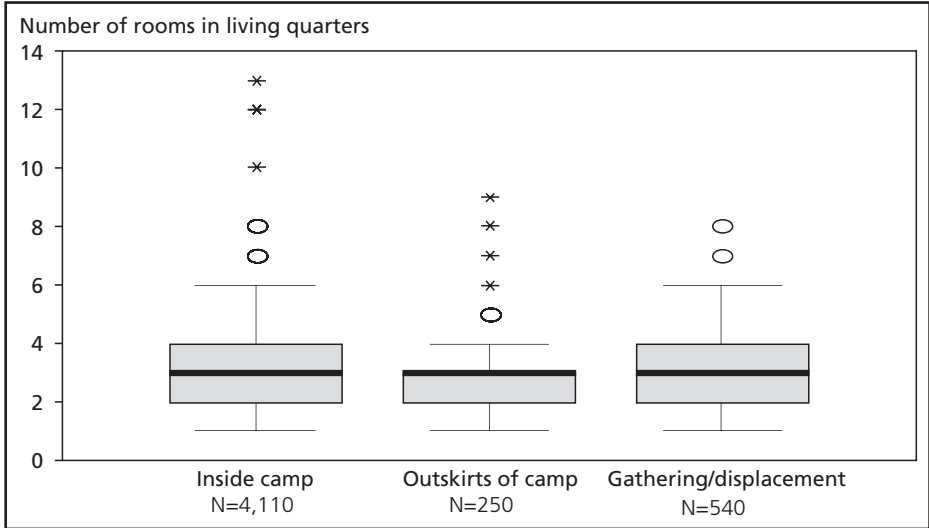
The LIPRIS survey collected data on the number of rooms in the dwelling (not including kitchens, bathrooms or hallways) and the number of rooms for sleeping (Table 3.2). Typical refugee camp dwellings measure some 70 to 80 square meters. There is not a large variation in the size of dwellings in terms of the number of rooms by type, with each having three rooms on average. Average dwelling size in terms of the number of rooms increases with both household income and the number of persons in the household. Thus, low-income households have an average of two rooms, middle-income groups have three rooms, and high-income households have an average of four rooms.

Aside from these household characteristics, the central tendency, or generally the most common types of dwelling size, as well as the spread, or variation, of types of dwelling sizes is not wide (Figure 3.3). The box in the box plot is the inter-quartile

Table 3.2 Number of rooms and rooms used for sleeping in the dwelling. Percent of households (n=4,901).

Total number of rooms	Percent of all households	Total number of sleeping rooms	Percent of all households
1	11	1	22
2	25	2	46
3	21	3	16
4	23	4	4
5 or more	9	5 or more	1

Figure 3.3 Box plot of dwelling sizes (number of rooms) by type of area.



range, containing 50 percent of the values. The whiskers are the lines extending to the highest and lowest values (excluding outlying values). The line across the box shows the median number of rooms. Remote or extreme values are marked by the small circles and star shapes.

The central tendency and spread of housing sizes in the camps is nearly identical to that in gatherings and displacements. Most housing ranges from two to four rooms, with the main range of housing extending from one to six rooms. On the outskirts of camps, however, the range is smaller and the tendency is towards smaller dwellings.

Crowding

Having three or more persons per room in a dwelling is a common indicator of high household density, or crowding in the dwelling. Looking at the proportion of crowded households, we find that the overall level of crowding in Palestinian refugee camp areas is considerably lower in Syria than in refugee camps elsewhere in the region (Figure 3.4).

Within Syria, however, there are quite large regional variations. On the one hand, in the Dar’a governorate, crowding is a large problem, with 36 percent of households being crowded. This is as high as can be found in the Gaza Strip refugee camps. Crowding is also relatively more common in Aleppo. On the other hand, in Homs and Hama, only some 15 percent of households are crowded. Specific camps or gathering areas are considerably more crowded than average. For example, 52 percent of households are crowded in Jaramana, 33 percent in Neirab and Khan Danoon and

35 percent in Sit Zeinab. Regional variations, in addition to other household and dwelling characteristics associated with relatively higher crowding, are presented in Figure 3.5. Here, the bars represent the variation from the average overall level of crowding (21.8 percent) for each group. Yarmouk camp is unique among refugee camps in that it has a lower than average level of crowding of 12 percent, compared to 31 percent of other camps and 25 percent of gatherings. Crowding is 2.5 times as high for rural households as for urban ones. In line with what was found among camp refugees in other locations in the region, very large households (10 or more persons) are closely associated with crowding. Other household characteristics, such as income and the stage in the family's lifecycle are associated with more or less crowding. Some 26 percent of low-income households are crowded, compared to 17 percent of high-income households. A larger difference, however, is found by the type of dwelling. Apartments are not only considered to have a higher market value

Figure 3.4 Percent of Palestinian refugee camp households with 3 or more persons per room.

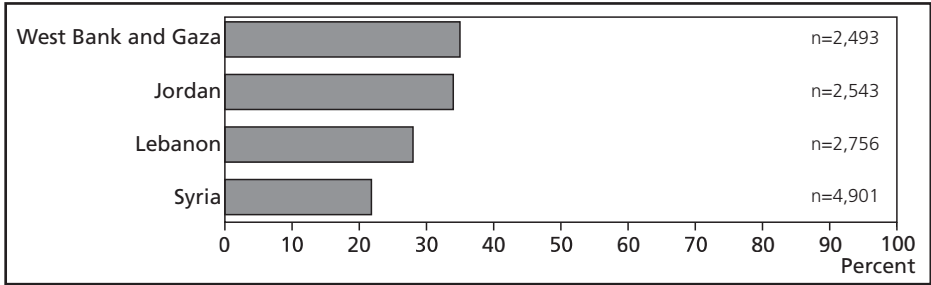
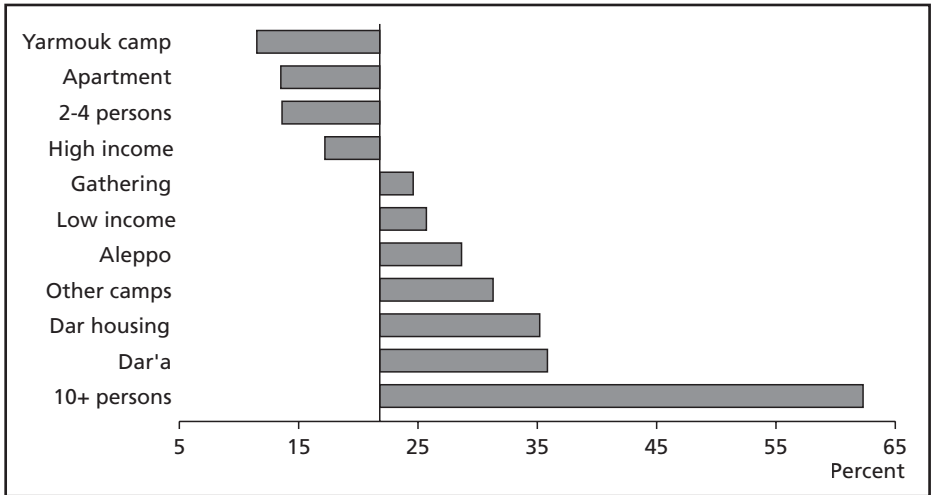


Figure 3.5 Percent of households with 3 or more persons per room. Bars represent difference from an overall average of 21.8 percent (n=4,901).



and are more often found among the better-off households, they are also typically less crowded than dars.

Despite these differences between the types of households, one should not overlook the wide differences that exist within camps. For example, certain areas of Homs camp are very compact, with small plots of land. The barrack area of Neirab camp outside Aleppo is a second example of where there are wide variations in housing within camps.

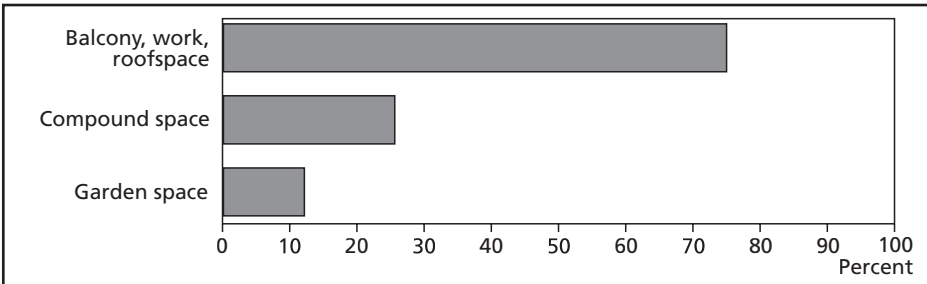
Having some extra areas outside of the main dwelling unit can help reduce the discomfort of very dense households. Such extra areas include an activity compound in apartment buildings, verandas or balconies (not enclosed), building roof areas, workshops and work sheds, and garden areas in the immediate vicinity of the dwelling. Of course, some exterior spaces, like gardens, will be more common in less populated, country areas. Overall, 82 percent of households have some sort of extra space (Figure 3.6). Having extra space is not associated with more or less crowded households, but having compound space is more frequently found among crowded households (44 percent) and low-income households (30 percent) than among the average household (25 percent). Other kinds of extra space are related to the type of dwelling, region, household size and family income. Among those with any extra space, nearly all (92 percent) have a balcony, work space or roof space. The next most common space is a compound and, finally, garden space is least common.

Garden space is, not surprisingly, most often found in rural areas (22 percent as against seven percent in urban areas). However, extra space connected to the house such as a balcony, work or roof space is equally common in apartments and dars, and in both rural and urban areas. This type of space increases considerably with household size and somewhat with household income.

Infrastructure Amenities and Sanitation

Nearly all (more than 95 percent) households have room heating, connection to electricity, connection to a sewer system or septic tank, and toilet facilities inside the

Figure 3.6 Percent of households with extra space in and near dwelling (n=4,001).



residence. Some 80-85 percent have a private bath, garbage collection, and piped water. The drinking water supply is generally more stable than the supply of water for other purposes (85 percent *versus* 79 percent). For those without piped drinking water and/or other piped water, the main source of supply is through vendor providers who supply water using tanker trucks.

There are rather wide differences, however, by urban/rural and regional location as well as, although less so, by income groups. Rural camps and gatherings have very poor access to piped drinking and regular water, at around 50 percent of households

Neirab rehabilitation project

Neirab, just outside the city of Aleppo, is the largest UNRWA-recognized (official) camp for Palestinian refugees in Syria, housing some 17,000 refugees, and has the worst housing situation among all camps in Syria. Many families still live in unhealthy and unsafe army barracks from World War II. The shelters are very hot during summer and freezing cold during winter. Water seeps through leaks and holes in the roofs, and the shelters become infested with rodents and insects. Cramped space and lack of privacy contribute to poor physical and psychosocial health. UNRWA and the Syrian government have agreed on an improvement plan, which involves moving some 300 families to the (unofficial) Ein el Tal camp to reduce the overall population density in Neirab. Ein el Tal is situated about 20 kilometres from Neirab camp. It is almost three times the size of Neirab and has a much smaller population of 4,000. The resulting "free space" in Neirab will be redistributed partly to house those still living in the most crowded conditions, and partly for public use, such as commercial and recreational areas.

The new residential area will need infrastructure facilities as utility networks, roads and pathways. The master plan for Ein el Tal includes landscaping of communal areas, and development of communal facilities. As this camp at present neither have a sewerage disposal network nor proper roads, the new development will benefit the entire camp population. UNRWA's services in Ein el Tal will be expanded, but no additional construction or staffing would be required for the schools or health centres in the foreseeable future.

A new public secondary school will be built close to the UNRWA elementary and preparatory schools.

The project will take place in two main phases, extending over 5-7 years, depending on the flow of funding. The first phase will consist of developing the utility networks, communal services and housing for 300 low-income families in Ein el Tal. Redevelopment of housing and communal service areas in Neirab will take place during the second phase.

UNRWA has actively engaged the residents of Neirab camp in the planning and development of the project, and has kept Ein el Tal residents informed. As it is expected that demand will exceed availability of new housing units, strict criteria will be developed to prioritise applications. Particular attention will be given to families who qualify for special hardship assistance and who live in the barracks.

The Syrian government has supported the project both with land in Ein el Tal, through extension of the municipal sewerage network to the entrance of Ein el Tal camp, and by upgrading the pumping station for the water supply.

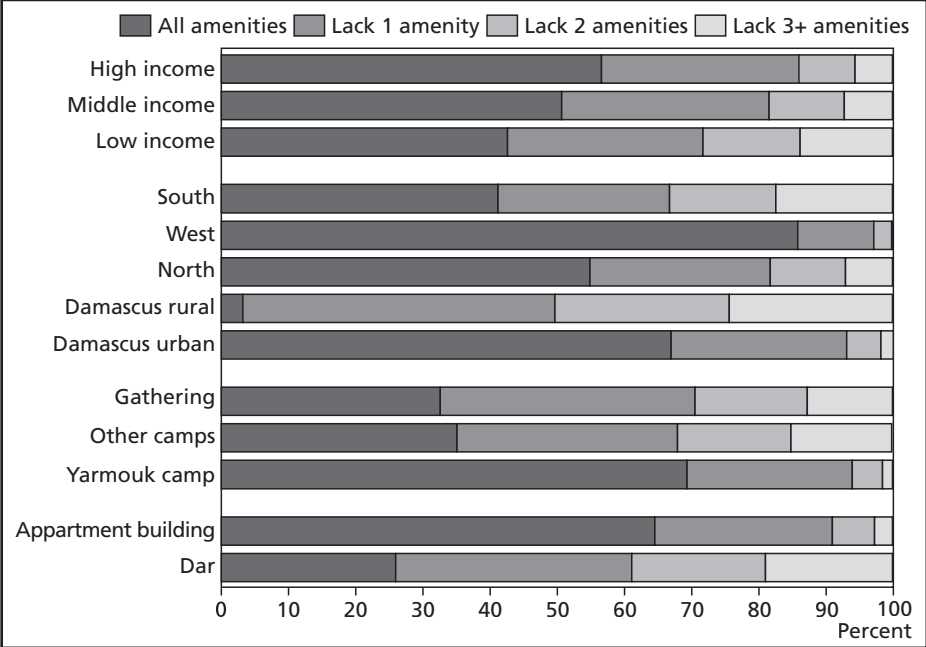
The Government of Switzerland has financed the planning of the project, and UNRWA is actively seeking funds for the implementation phase. The United States has donated funds for building the first 40 housing units.

Source: UNRWA 2000, 2001b

compared to nearly 100 percent in urban areas. The stability of regular water supplies is also poor, but better for rural drinking water supplies. Finally, garbage collection is much less common in rural areas (72 percent as against 93 percent in urban areas). By looking at these amenities by regions it can be seen, however, that the poor rural infrastructure is primarily due to very poor infrastructure in the rural areas around Damascus. Here, only 36 percent receive piped water regularly and 25 percent receive piped drinking water, for example. Elsewhere, such as the northern region, which is 96 percent rural, the water supply and its stability is similar to that in urban areas.

Another way to examine infrastructure amenities is to see what proportion of all available amenities that households have (Figure 3.7).¹ Yarmouk camp households have much better infrastructure than other camps, with some 70 percent having all amenities compared to about 35 percent of other camps. Again, we see that rural Damascus has ill-equipped infrastructure amenities compared to all other regions. Finally, apartments are better equipped than dars, and families with more income have more household amenities.

Figure 3.7 Percent of households with all, and lacking infrastructure amenities (n=4,901).



¹ The list of amenities includes seven items: kitchen in the dwelling; bath or shower in the dwelling; toilet in the dwelling; garbage collection; connection to sewerage; drinking water piped into the residence; and a stable drinking water supply.

The main problems in gatherings and displacement areas are garbage collection and the lack of a stable water supply, as roughly 70 percent of dwellings are equipped with these two amenities compared to 80 percent in camps. On the outskirts of camps, these two problems also exist, but are much more prevalent. In addition, only one-half of these households are equipped with piped drinking and other water (49 and 47 percent respectively) as in camps. The remaining 50 percent that are without piped water rely entirely upon tanker truck delivered water from a vendor. In particular, the lack of garbage collection poses an environmental hazard in gathering/displacement areas and on the outskirts of camps (Table 3.3). The main option for those with no garbage collection is to use open containers (Table 3.4) and, more frequently in these two areas, garbage is simply dumped or burned.

Poor infrastructure also appears to be clustered in certain camps or gathering areas, such as Jaramana, Khan Danoon, Sbeina and Sit Zeinab which are all in rural locations where we often see lack of piped water and piped drinking water, and a lack of stability in the water source. This is due to local wells being dry rather than to the local network and infrastructure as such.

Table 3.3 Percent of households with infrastructure amenities (n=4,901).

Independent kitchen	92.5
Private bath/shower	81.7
Toilet inside living quarters	96.4
Sewage network/septic tank	97.3
Garbage collected	85.0
Regular water piped into residence	82.8
Stable regular water supply	79.5
Connected to electricity	99.6
Drinking water piped into residence	79.6
Stable drinking water supply	86.1
Room heating	99.6

Table 3.4 Method of garbage disposal; percent of households (n=4,900).

	Inside camp	Outskirts of camp	Gathering/displacement
Collected	87	70	76
Open container	12	25	14
Closed container	0	0	0
Burned	0	1	2
Dumped	1	4	7
Composted	0	0	0
Other ways	0	0	0
n	4,110	250	540

Dwelling Materials and Indoor Environment

The durability and insulation qualities of different types of building materials can have a large impact on the general comfort level of inhabitants as well as to the very safety of the dwelling. Certain materials provide health risks (such as asbestos) while others are not durable over time or in certain conditions. The LIPRIS survey collected information about the main material used in both the walls and the roof of a dwelling. Cement block is the primary wall material used in over 95 percent of the dwellings. Cut-stone is somewhat employed in Aleppo (12 percent of dwellings' main wall material), but nowhere else. Other than this, there is almost no variation in wall materials used. Cement or concrete, or cement block are the main roof materials, with the

Improving provision of water supply and sewage disposal in Khan Eshieh and Khan Danoun camps

UNRWA and the Syrian Government, through the General Authority for Palestine Arab Refugees (GAPAR) are in the process of improving the water and sewerage systems in the Khan Danoun and Khan Eshieh refugee camps south of Damascus.

Before the upgrading, water was supplied to both camps from water supply networks operated by GAPAR. However, homes built after 1970 have not been connected to the system, and in Khan Eshieh 1/3 of dwellings have no access to piped water. Due to both lack of piped water and general water shortage, people have dug water wells and installed booster pumps along the network, which frequently causes contamination of the water (not always safe for human consumption) and poses as a major health hazard (periodic tests made by UNRWA showed that the water was not always safe for human consumption). As the wells dry up, especially during the summer months, residents have to purchase water from mobile tankers.

Internal sewerage system was already installed in the original camp area of Khan Danoun, while only half of the expansion camp area got connected to the main sewer line laid by GAPAR. In the other half percolation pits are used for sewage disposal, while some wastewater is discharged into the streets and pathways. In Khan Eshieh, there is no sewerage system at all, and most of the wastewater is discharged into the nearby river.

UNRWA and GAPAR have decided to establish a new water distribution system in both camps. New water wells will be drilled, all households will be connected to the water network, and meters will be installed to curb unnecessary consumption. The solution to the sewerage problems is to lay additional pipes in Khan Danoun to connect all the homes in the expansion area. In Khan Eshieh camp, a new sewerage system will be constructed and connected to all shelters. The system will include a shallow sewer for pathways and alleys, and a conventional sewerage system for the sub-main and main streets. The sewerage system of this camp will be linked to that of the neighbouring Syrian villages.

The upgrading of water and sewerage networks will have a significant environmental impact in the camp and surrounding villages. It will also significantly improve public health for the residents of the camps and eliminate potential health risks for those living nearby.

The governments of Switzerland and Canada have funded the planning and design phase of the project, while UNRWA and the Syrian government are negotiating with the European Union for the financing of the implementation phase.

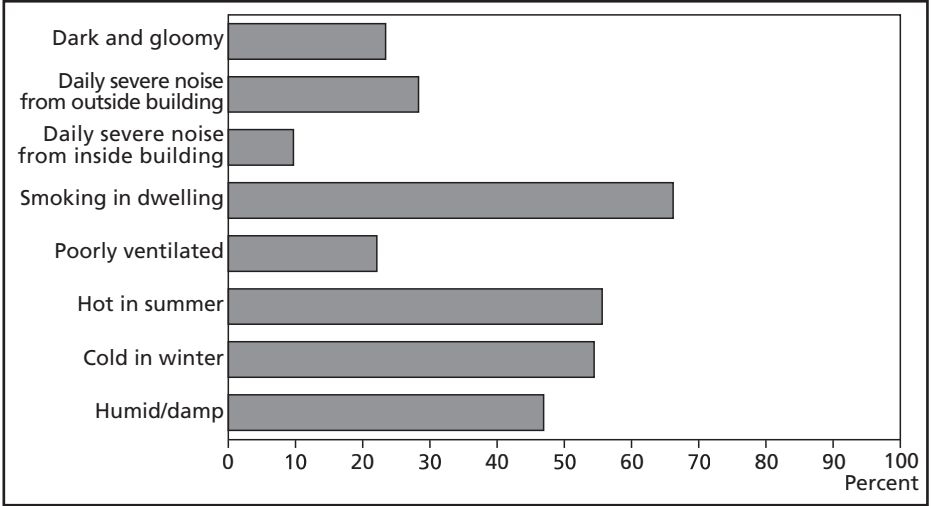
Source: UNRWA 2001a

former being used in some 85 percent of dwellings and whilst cement blocks are only used in about 10 percent of dwellings. While cement and cement block are durable enough materials, they are not insulated and therefore often do not help to maintain comfortable temperatures, and tend to contribute to dampness.

There are few dwellings with unsafe roofing materials (such as asbestos, zinc, wood), and these make up less than three percent of all dwellings. There are two main differences across the various locations in respect of the proportion of dwellings with unsafe roof material: between urban and rural areas; and between Yarmouk camp, on the one hand, and other camps and gatherings, on the other. Dwellings with poor roof materials are clustered in certain locations, mainly Jaramana, Neirab, Ramadan and Mezzeh. In rural areas, a total of some six percent of households have unsafe roofing material, compared to one percent of urban households. There are less than one-half percent of households living in such dwellings in Yarmouk camp, as opposed to five percent in other camps and in gathering areas.

It is not surprising, given the widespread use of concrete and concrete block in construction, that dwellings are often difficult to heat in the winter or keep cool in the summer (Figure 3.8). Roughly one-half of households complain of these problems. Nearly as common are dwellings that are uncomfortably damp (47 percent of households). Ventilation is a problem, but not to the same extent as in refugee camps elsewhere where 22 percent complain of poor ventilation. Noise from inside the building is not a widespread irritation, but noise from outside is quite common (30 percent). Here we consider ‘disturbing’ noise to be that occurring daily and of such a degree that it is difficult to carry on a normal conversation within the dwelling.

Figure 3.8 Discomfort and disturbances in the indoor environment. Percent of households (n=4,901).



The most widespread indoor environment problem is an entirely preventable one – smoking within the dwelling. Nearly 70 percent of households report that someone or multiple persons regularly smoke within the dwelling. This has an obvious impact on health, especially among children who are regularly exposed to second-hand smoke. Moreover, we generally find that this occurs more frequently in crowded households and households with children, than others.

Certain regions tend to have certain kinds of environmental disturbances within the dwelling. Again, there is a difference between Yarmouk camp and other refugee camps, and between camps and gatherings. About 10 percent fewer people complain of temperature and humidity problems within dwellings in Yarmouk as compared to other refugee camps, but about one-half as many in gatherings complain of poor ventilation and that the dwellings are “dark and gloomy” compared to Yarmouk and the other camps. The latter problem is due to the great density of housing in the camps, and an indicator of camp crowding *outside* the camp dwelling itself. The indoor environment of apartments is better on all accounts, with the exception of smoking inside, than dars. For example, only 38 percent of apartment dwellers complain of humidity discomfort compared to 61 percent of those in dars.

Household Fuels

Table 3.5 shows the distribution of households across different fuel types used for cooking, heating rooms and heating water. Nearly all households use gas as the most important fuel for cooking (98 percent), regardless of the household’s characteristics or location. Although gas is quite convenient for cooking, it is relatively expensive compared to other types of fuels, and therefore many use other fuels to heat rooms. Diesel is the preferred fuel for room heating (88 percent) although some also use gas (eight percent). In contrast to the other uses of energy, different fuels are used

Table 3.5 Fuel used for cooking, heating, and heating water; percent of households (n=4,869).

	Most important source		Any source*		
	Cooking	Heating	Cooking	Heating	Heating water
Gas	98.7	7.7	99.5	11.5	24.2
Kerosene	0.6	0.7	2.5	1.1	5.6
Diesel	0.7	67.9	0.2	89.1	48.1
Electricity	0.0	3.1	8.5	10.3	43.0
Wood or charcoal	0.0	0.6	0.1	0.9	0.5
Other	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1
Total	100.0	100.0	111.0	112.9	121.8

* Adds up to more than 100 percent because some households use more than one source.

for heating water. While electricity is used most (42 percent), both diesel and gas are also commonly used for heating water (28 and 24 percent respectively). In this regard, fuel usage varies quite considerably by region and the type of dwelling. In both urban and rural areas, diesel is the most commonly used fuel for heating rooms, but gas and electricity are used more often in urban areas, and used more often in Yarmouk camp than in other refugee camps. Also, electricity is the main fuel used for heating water in urban areas and in Yarmouk camp. This is about twice the proportion than in rural areas and in camps outside of Yarmouk. Apartment dwellers use diesel and gas for water heating far less often than those living in dars. For example, 53 percent of apartment residents use electricity for water heating compared to 24 percent of those living in dars.

3.3 The Neighbourhood

In this section, we examine certain features of neighbourhoods in Palestinian refugee camp and gathering areas in Syria. Such aspects as whether or not there are education facilities for families with children, health clinics and hospitals, and other basic public services available within easy walking distance are of central importance. Other conditions in the immediate vicinity of people's homes such as road access and outdoor environmental conditions also influence the general well-being and satisfaction of inhabitants.

Neighbourhood Services

Since only some seven percent of households own a car or truck, having public services within walking distance is important. Table 3.6 shows the percentage of households that have easy access (within 5-10 minutes walk) to certain neighbourhood services. Beginning with educational facilities, nearly all households report having access to kindergartens, and elementary and preparatory schools. However, access to secondary schools is limited (about 60 percent of refugees have a secondary boys or girls school in their neighbourhood). This is largely because UNRWA's education provision is only through the preparatory cycle. Primary health facilities are well supplied, with some 97 percent having a physician, dentist, pharmacy and a basic health centre within walking distance. There is, however, a lack of secondary health facilities. Only 65 percent of households have a hospital nearby and most lack cultural facilities, with few having access to a cultural centre or public library.

Table 3.6 Percent of households within 5-10 minute walk to public service (n=4,900).

Kindergarten	95	Dentist	97
Elementary school	96	Pharmacy	98
Preparatory school	96	Police station	79
Secondary girls school	69	Bank	45
Secondary boys school	62	Post office	76
Grocery	98	Place of worship	97
Hospital	65	Cultural center	51
Health clinic, center	96	Library	36
Physician	98		

Figure 3.9 Education services within walking distance, percent of households (n=4,887).

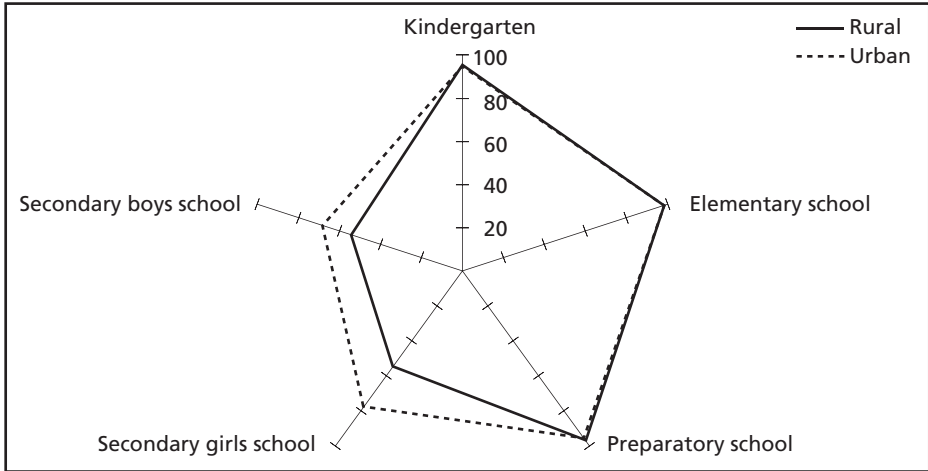
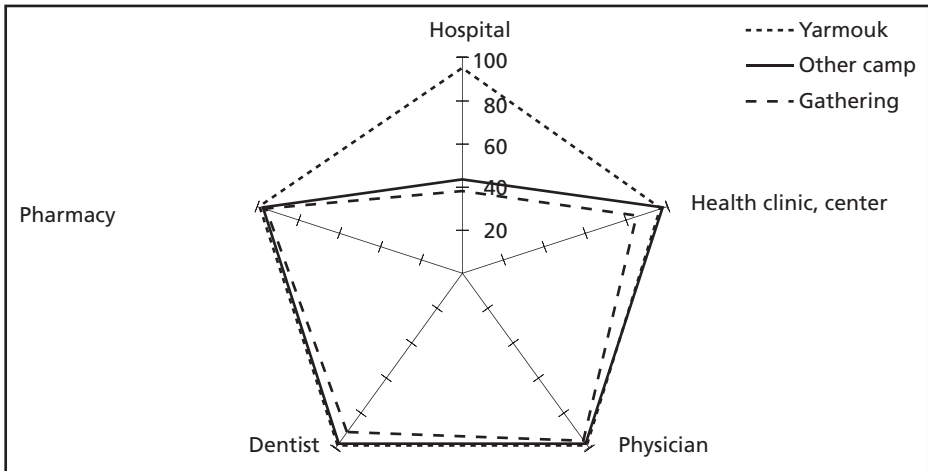


Figure 3.10 Health services within walking distance, percent of households (n=4,887).



The households' location in different kinds of neighbourhoods, for example within refugee camp borders, does make a difference in the scope of services available. There are generally more services within camps than in gatherings.

Not surprisingly, there is less access to services in rural areas and, as we have seen previously, while Yarmouk refugee camp has conditions which are typical of urban areas with better standards, housing conditions in other refugee camps are more typical of rural areas. In terms of different kinds of services, the main problems include a lack of secondary education facilities in rural areas (Figure 3.9), and a lack of hospitals in rural areas and in gatherings and camps outside of Yarmouk (Figure 3.10). Overall, in urban areas, there is much better access to other services like banks, and cultural centres and libraries. Only 11 percent of rural households have a bank nearby. Finally, Yarmouk camp is better served by banks (84 percent), and cultural centres (63 percent) and libraries (60 percent) than other camps. In other camps only 14 percent of households have access to a bank, while 42 percent have a cultural centre and 18 percent have a library nearby.

Paved Roads and Street Lighting

Having a paved road leading to the dwelling and street lighting is a feature which is more common in urban areas – some 90 percent of urban areas report it compared to 30-35 percent of rural areas. Location is the main difference between households in terms of these amenities. However, once again Yarmouk camp stands out. Refugee households in Yarmouk camp have paved roads and street lighting leading to individual dwellings far more often than all other urban areas and any other camp (over 95 percent compared to some 40 percent in other camps). As is true for other aspects of housing, apartments are better served in this respect also.

Neighbourhood Environmental Conditions

There is a general perception of a lack of cleanliness. About one-half of households say that the area in which they live is “not so clean” and another 13 percent say it is dirty or very dirty. This does not vary much by the type of dwelling or by household characteristics and, surprisingly, there are few differences between Yarmouk and other camps, even though Yarmouk residents report different kinds of outdoor environmental problems less often (Figure 3.11, Table 3.7, overleaf).

In addition to this general description, the LIPRIS questioned household respondents about specific kinds of environmental nuisances that the household is usually exposed to from within the dwelling or in its immediate vicinity (Table 3.7). The most prevalent outdoor environmental nuisance is dust (80 percent), followed by smell and exhaust fumes from cars (47 percent). One in four households

complain of smells from sewerage or wastewater, and one in five report they are usually exposed to garbage smells. Few are regularly exposed to industry pollution (only eight percent).

Following the general trend of better housing conditions within camp borders as compared to elsewhere, and better conditions in apartments than dars, both camp residents and those in apartments are bothered by environmental pollution less often. In particular, families living on the outskirts of camps much report being exposed to smells from garbage and sewerage, and animal smells more often. For example, one in three reported regular garbage smells compared to less than one in five camp households. The situation is also worse for gathering/displacement residents in this regard than in camps, but not as poor as on the outskirts of camps. Dar residents are particularly exposed to garbage smells (38 percent) compared to apartments (16 percent).

Urban and rural areas, not surprisingly, experience different outdoor environment problems. In urban areas, car pollution is more of a problem and, in rural areas, animal, garbage and sewerage smells are common complaints. Camps other than Yarmouk are also more often exposed to the types of pollution also reported by rural areas.

Figure 3.11 Percent of households describing area around the house as unclean by type of living area (n=4,899).

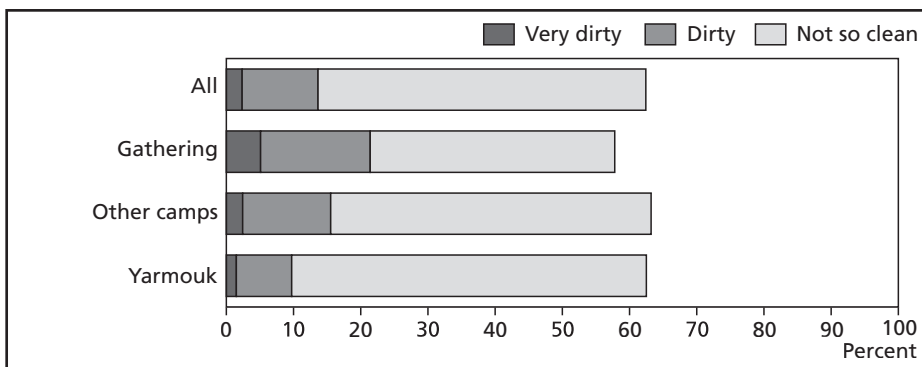


Table 3.7 Percent of household exposed to outdoor pollution (n=4,901).

	Varmouk	Other camp	Gathering	Urban	Rural	All
Dust, smell, exhaust from cars	52	42	44	48	45	47
Dust, smell. smoke from industry	5	12	8	52	55	9
Dust, smells from animals	4	8	23	4	12	8
General dust	87	93	93	87	95	90
Smell from garbage	13	22	26	13	27	18
Smell from sewerage or waste water	13	56	26	13	45	25
Dust and smell from other sources	7	7	14	7	9	8

Satisfaction with Housing and Neighbourhood

The LIPRIS questioned households about how satisfied they were with three main types of conditions related to dwellings and neighbourhoods: (1) housing and environmental conditions; (2) neighbours and proximity to relatives; and (3) neighbourhood services. The respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction as being very satisfied, rather satisfied, acceptable, rather unsatisfied, or very unsatisfied.

Beginning with conditions related specifically to the dwelling itself, the largest degree of dissatisfaction regarding the dwelling and its environment is in respect of water supply, water quality, noise and space (between 30 and 45 percent are dissatisfied).

Figure 3.12 Percent of households dissatisfied with housing conditions and environment (n=4,900).

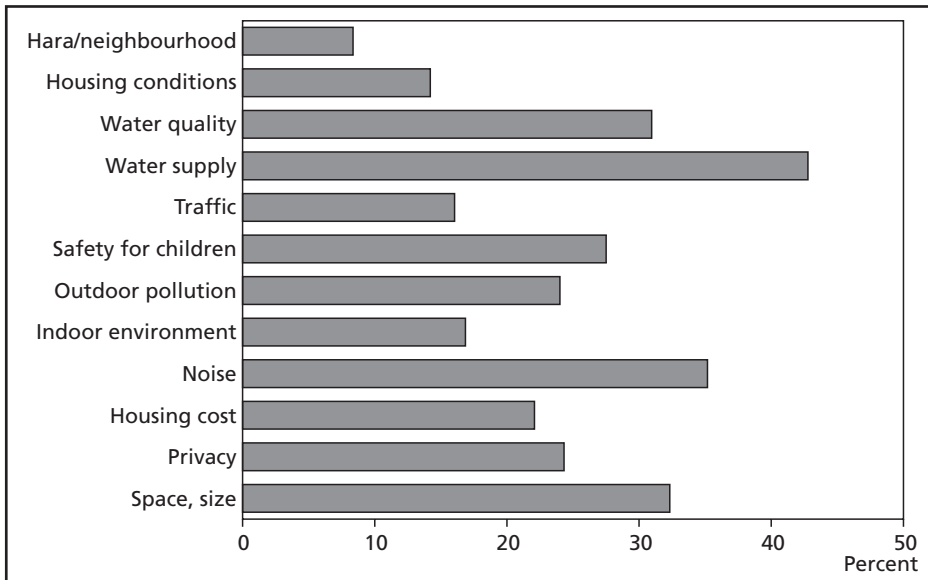
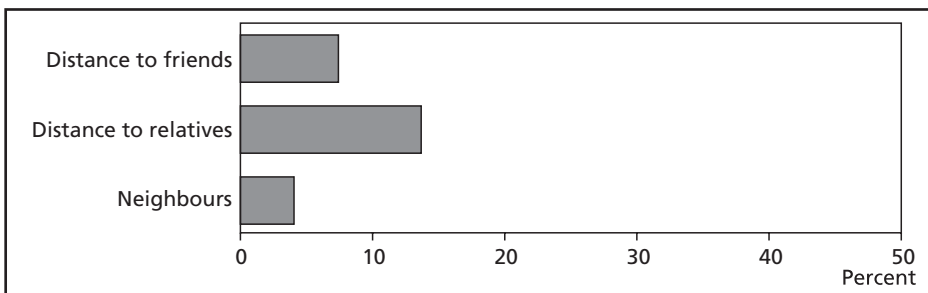


Figure 3.13 Percent of households dissatisfied with neighbours, proximity to family and friends (n=4,900).

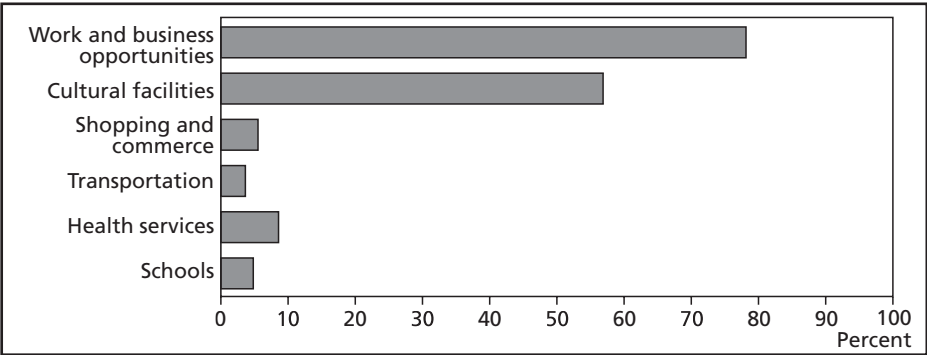


In addition to being a top complaint among a fairly large group of households overall, water supply and quality is judged to be particularly poor among households living on the outskirts of camps, being reported unsatisfactory nearly twice as often as elsewhere. While some 45 percent are not satisfied with their water supply overall, 72 percent of households on the outskirts of camps are dissatisfied (compared to 42 percent in camps and 29 percent in gatherings). The same is true for water quality, with 70 percent on the outskirts of camps being not satisfied, compared to 30 percent in camps and 20 percent in gatherings. Rural residents also nearly 1.5 times more often report they are unsatisfied with water supply and quality than urban areas. Yarmouk residents are more often unsatisfied with water supply than other camps and gatherings.

About one in three households report the level of noise to be a source of dissatisfaction. This is more of an issue within camp borders than other areas, but there are not large differences. Lack of satisfaction with the size of the dwelling or space in general is also reported by some one in three households. Here, the type of dwelling makes some difference, with households living in dars more often being dissatisfied with space than those in apartments (39 percent compared to 28 percent respectively) and, correspondingly, the level of noise is deemed to be unsatisfactory more often in rural areas than urban areas, which is surprising as one would expect the opposite. In general, those living in dars more often express dissatisfaction with most of the items we listed under housing and environment conditions, including housing cost.

Despite these problems, a surprisingly small proportion of households report that they are dissatisfied with housing conditions in general, or the area in which they live (14 and eight percent). However, twice as often, those on the outskirts of camps are dissatisfied with housing conditions, 21 percent compared with 10 percent of those

Figure 3.14 Percent of households dissatisfied with public and community services in neighbourhood (n=4,900).



in camps. In addition, those in Yarmouk camp and urban areas in general are more often satisfied with their neighbourhood and general housing conditions.

Most households are satisfied with their neighbours and friends, with only some four to eight percent not being satisfied. There is somewhat more dissatisfaction with distance to relatives (14 percent).

Turning to what kind of report households give of community and public services in their area, the main negative feedback relates to work and commercial opportunities available in the neighbourhood (Figure 3.14). Nearly four in five persons find work and commercial opportunities to be unsatisfactory, or very unsatisfactory. The second type of service that households are discontented with is the cultural facilities available in their area. Some 60 percent report they are dissatisfied with such facilities in their neighbourhood. People are quite happy with the health and educational services provided, although slightly less so with health: nine percent find health services unsatisfactory and five percent find schools unsatisfactory. Finally, nearly all households view transportation as satisfactory.

The level of dissatisfaction with some public and community services does vary somewhat by the type of area. Gathering and displacement area households are somewhat more dissatisfied with health services and schools (13 and 15 percent respectively). Those living on the outskirts of camps are more dissatisfied with cultural facilities and work opportunities than others (63 and 87 percent respectively).

Urban areas typically offer better cultural and work opportunities, and this is the case also among refugees in Syria. In general, however, the camp seems to offer a certain degree of services, regardless of urban or rural location, more than provided in gathering locations. For example, 78 percent of households in camps have a post office nearby, compared to 53 percent of gathering households. About half of camp households have a cultural center nearby compared to 38 percent of gathering households. Nearly half of camp households have a bank, compared to only 19 percent of gathering households. In fact, those in gatherings most often complain of all service levels compared to camps or to rural areas in general.

4 Education

Gro Hasselknippe and Åge A. Tiltnes

The purpose of this chapter is to look at the educational achievements of the Palestinian refugee population. First, the overall level of education found in the adult population is presented. Next, we examine the situation among children of school age and answer questions such as how many are currently enrolled, and how many are not? How many children do not complete the basic cycle? What are the reasons for leaving school? The chapter then explores people's attitudes towards education and parents' expectations of their children's educational careers. Finally, we describe the importance of short vocational training and the types of training that women and men in the refugee camps engage in. Let us, at the outset, give a brief overview of the educational system available to the Palestinian refugees in Syria, and describe the geographic accessibility of educational services.

4.1 The Educational System and Access to Schools

The educational system

Palestinian refugees can attend UNRWA or Syrian governmental schools. At the time of the survey, the national education system consisted of six years of compulsory elementary education and three years of preparatory education (the basic cycle). By a governmental decision towards the end of 2001, preparatory school was made compulsory from the scholastic year 2002/2003. After basic schooling, children can pursue their education by entering three years of public secondary school, or train for a vocation at a vocational training centre or through an apprenticeship system. Higher education is pursued at intermediate institutes offering two and three-year vocational courses, and at universities. Only exceptionally good students are accepted at the universities when they graduate from the intermediate institutes. Palestinian students (with permanent residence in Syria) have full access to all educational facilities on a par with Syrians and free of charge.

UNRWA offers education at the basic school level to all Palestinian refugees, applying the same curricula and basically using the same textbooks as the government schools (although UNRWA adds what is called enrichment material). UNRWA operates 61 elementary schools with 43,764 pupils and 50 preparatory schools with 20,199 pupils in 63 buildings. About 70 percent of the schools are found in the capital (UNRWA 2002). The LIPRIS found that, in the scholastic year 2000/2001, 95 percent of all surveyed children who were enrolled in the basic cycle attended UNRWA schools, while four percent went to government and one percent was enrolled in private schools.¹

UNRWA does not have the financial resources to provide first-rate learning environments for all refugee children. The fact that 93 percent of the schools operate on double shifts (compared to some 10 percent of government schools), that classes often have more than 50 students and average occupancy rate is 47, and that nine school buildings are inadequately equipped, are symptoms of this situation. In addition, UNRWA has recently encountered difficulties in recruiting qualified teachers, which adds to the (slowly) deteriorating learning environment. The latter situation is a direct effect of the austerity measures that UNRWA introduced in 1993 and, as a consequence, the reduced salaries offered to teachers who joined the Agency after that time.² Despite these challenges, UNRWA schools are perceived to be very good. Evidence that the UN agency is performing rather well is the fact that it has a pass rate in the state preparatory cycle exams that has been hovering around 94–95 percent since the mid-1990s, while public schools report a pass rate of about 60 percent (UNRWA 2002:2).³

In addition to education at the basic level, UNRWA offers vocational education and training to 845 students each year at its Damascus Training Centre. Thirteen courses are at the post-preparatory level (automotive and metal trades, electrical and building trade) and eight semi-professional courses are at the post-secondary level (paramedical, engineering, commercial and computer courses) (UNRWA 2002:84–86).

Most children have basic schools within easy reach

The vast majority of Palestinian children have a kindergarten, an elementary school and a preparatory school in their neighbourhood, or within a radius of 5–10 minute

¹ According to the Syrian Ministry of Education, the figures for all Palestinian refugees in Syria – thus including the population residing outside the areas covered by our survey – were 81.4 percent attending UNRWA schools, 17.4 percent going to government and 1.2 percent going to private schools. Information from M. Badran, Chief Field Education Programme, UNRWA, Syria in interview 3 July 2002.

² The austerity measures have also had the unfortunate consequence that UNRWA in 1997 stopped providing scholarships to outstanding students for studies at local (i.e. Syrian) universities.

³ Also interview with Mr. M. Ammouri, Deputy Chief, Field Education Programme, UNRWA, Syria, in Damascus, 13 January 2002; and with Dr. A AbdelRahim, educationalist and researcher, Damascus, 13 January 2002.

walk from their home. However, fewer refugee children have a secondary school near their dwelling (Table 4.1). In fact, secondary schools in relation to most refugee camps are located outside the camps at distances ranging from 2–10 kilometres away.⁴ Access to educational facilities varies somewhat with geographic location of the dwelling, and type of residential area. Table 4.2 presents the proportion of children under the age of 18 who lack such facilities nearby. Overall, there is only a minor differentiation between the various categories of living areas when it comes to kindergartens, elementary schools and preparatory schools. However, it is evident that children residing in rural areas, especially in rural Damascus, have more difficult access to secondary schools than children living in urban areas. It is also apparent that children living in the western region (Lattakia, Homs and Hama) have easier access to secondary schools than other children.⁵

Table 4.1 Percent of households (n=4,869) and children aged 0–17 (n=11,926) with education facilities within 5–10 minute walk by type of facility.

	Households	Children 0-17
Kindergarten	94.9	94.8
Elementary school	97.9	97.7
Preparatory school	96.1	95.9
Secondary school for girls	69.2	66.7
Secondary school for boys	62.9	61.2

Table 4.2 Percent of children aged 0–17 lacking education facilities within 5–10 minute walk by type of facility and place of living (n=11,926).

		Kinder- garten	Elemen- tary	Prepar- atory	Secondary school for girls	Secondary school for boys	n
Urban- rural status	Urban	5.7	2.4	4.9	24.1	33.0	6,979
	Rural	4.6	2.2	3.0	46.2	47.1	4,947
Region	Urban Damascus	7.2	3.1	6.4	29.7	41.1	3,944
	Rural Damascus	4.5	2.7	3.3	56.9	57.8	2,621
	North	2.3	1.3	1.4	16.8	17.5	1,689
	West	0.9	0.5	0.7	6.6	7.0	2,242
	South	6.2	0.1	2.4	20.1	21.7	1,430
Type of area	Yarmouk camp	6.6	2.7	6.1	28.4	39.7	3,654
	Other camps	3.0	1.7	2.1	37.2	37.7	6,811
	Gatherings	10.7	3.8	6.5	34.1	40.8	1,461
All		5.2	2.3	4.1	33.3	38.8	11,926

⁴ L. Takkenberg, Deputy Director, UNRWA, Syria, in communication with one of the authors, 30 September 2002.

⁵ We may ask, however, what is the use of having kindergartens nearby if the kindergartens have too few places, and the demand for kindergarten is much higher than the supply?

4.2 Educational Attainment

Improved educational attainment over time

Educational achievements have improved steadily over time. This positive trend is evident from Table 4.3, which compares the educational level of the surveyed population aged 15 and above, belonging to different age groups. For example, while among persons aged 60–69, 27 percent has completed elementary school or more, some 90 percent in the age groups 15–19 and 20–29 have accomplished the same level. While taking into account that the youngest have not yet had the chance to complete higher education, the Table indicates a gradual increase in the proportion of persons with a post-secondary degree. However, comparing the 30–39 and 40–49 age groups, it seems that this positive trend does not mean more university graduates, but rather entails a higher proportion of individuals completing the secondary and semi-professional (vocational) levels. Also, the share of university degree holders is not larger among the 30–39 year-olds than among the 50–59 year-olds. Furthermore, a comparison of the 20–29 and 30–39 age groups suggests that the positive development may have stopped, since about 38 percent in both age groups have completed some education beyond preparatory. However, it is impossible to foresee the proportion that will successfully improve on their highest degree from secondary schooling with an intermediate diploma or a university degree. Overall, some 46 percent of the Palestinian refugees have extended their education beyond elementary school and about 32 percent have more than preparatory (basic) education.

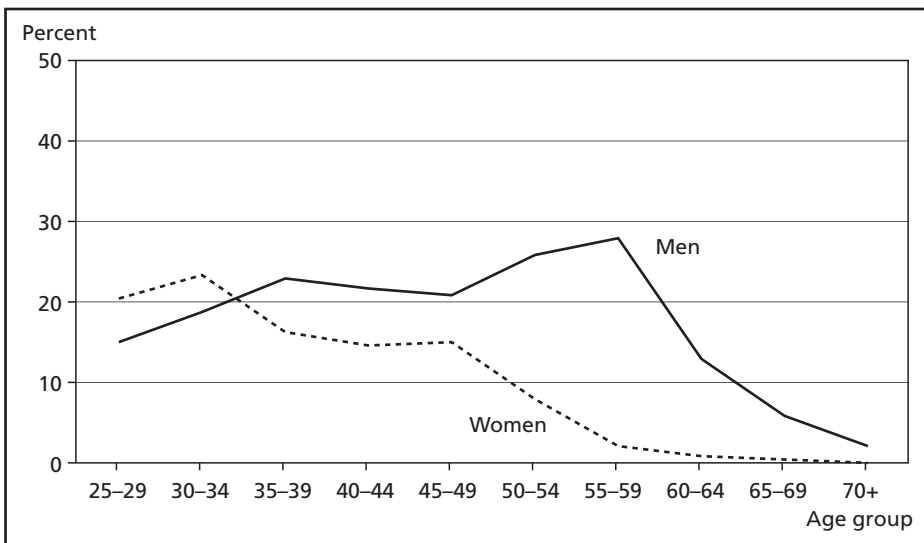
Table 4.3 Highest level of education completed among persons aged 15 and older, by age groups (n=16,921), in percentages.

	15-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+	All
Less than elementary	10.4	9.4	14.4	21.2	38.5	73.2	89.8	21.3
Elementary	43.6	36.2	30.9	33.9	23.0	14.4	8.2	32.8
Preparatory	10.0	17.2	17.1	13.9	11.1	4.5	0.6	13.5
Vocational after preparatory	28.9	7.1	5.2	3.9	2.4	0.1	0.0	9.5
Secondary	6.7	16.4	12.0	9.0	9.0	2.5	0.5	10.6
Vocational after secondary	0.4	10.9	12.4	10.8	7.8	1.7	0.1	7.9
Higher education	0.0	2.8	8.0	7.3	8.1	3.5	0.7	4.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0		100.0
n	3,283	4,756	3,565	2,256	1,425	1,036	600	16,921

Young women are better educated than young men

The Table, however, conceals gender disparities. As depicted by Figure 4.1, the survey recorded only very few Palestinian refugee women in the oldest age groups having completed any education above the secondary cycle. In contrast, some older men have such education. Remarkably, the group with the highest attained education is found among men in their 50s. One possible explanation here could be that younger, well-educated men more often have moved out of the surveyed areas (sometimes out of the country) than other men. A second reason may be that the first generation refugees, still used to the outstanding educational system under the British Mandate, were putting more emphasis on their offspring, particularly their sons, to pursue higher education.⁶ It could also be that the prevailing political and economic situation at that particular time opened more employment opportunities and thus encouraged post-secondary education more strongly than in later periods.⁷ However, we cannot test such a hypothesis with the LIPRIS data, so this is merely speculative. On the other hand, among the younger adults there are more women than men with higher education.

Figure 4.1 Percent of persons aged 25 years and above with a post-secondary degree, by age and gender (n=11,000).



⁶ Suggested by L. Takkenberg, Deputy Director, UNRWA, Syria, in communication with one of the authors, 30 September 2002.

⁷ Explanation put forward by M. Badran, Chief Field Education Programme, UNRWA, Syria, in communication with one of the authors, 30 September 2002.

A comparison of the educational attainment between the sexes reveals that a considerably higher proportion of women than men are without education, i.e. they have not completed even elementary schooling (Table 4.4). When contrasting different age groups, it becomes clear that older women have less education than all other groups. Only six percent of women over the age of 50 have obtained a secondary or higher educational degree, compared to 25 percent in the corresponding group for men. In the younger age group, however, a higher proportion of women than men have obtained this educational level: 25 percent of women contrasted with 17 percent of men. As a consequence of these developments, the stark effect of age found for women is not as apparent for men.

Table 4.4 Highest level of education completed; percent of persons aged 15 and more by gender and age groups (n=16,921).

	Male				Female				All
	15-29	30-49	50+	Total	15-29	30-49	50+	Total	
Less than elementary	10.6	12.0	41.0	16.4	9.0	21.9	78.3	26.2	21.3
Elementary	41.4	34.9	22.5	35.9	37.0	29.4	12.3	29.8	32.8
Preparatory	13.5	15.5	9.9	13.6	15.0	16.2	4.0	13.4	13.5
Vocational after preparatory	17.3	8.0	2.2	11.5	14.7	1.4	0.1	7.4	9.5
Secondary	10.4	8.6	7.7	9.3	14.6	13.0	2.8	11.9	10.6
Vocational after secondary	5.3	11.2	6.7	7.5	7.9	12.3	1.9	8.3	7.9
Higher education	1.5	9.8	9.9	5.8	1.8	5.8	0.6	3.0	4.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
n	4,086	2,864	1,498	8,448	3,953	2,957	1,563	8,473	

In respect of the middle-aged group in Table 4.4, it appears that women and men have made different educational choices. First, very few women have successfully completed a vocational education at a pre-secondary level, but are on a par with men on post-secondary vocational education (college). Second, women to a lesser extent than men seem to have pursued a university degree, but have chosen (or have had to) stop after secondary school or before completing their degree. With regard to the youngest women (aged 15–29), Table 4.4 suggests that they have accomplished more than men, with 24 against 17 percent having completed a minimum of a secondary degree.

Table 4.5 presents more details as it shows the educational accomplishments of adolescents and young adults by gender and five-year age groups. Our attention is at the secondary and post-secondary level, where the females consistently do as good as or better than the males. For the age groups 20–24 and 25–29 there is a significantly larger proportion of females than males with both post-secondary vocational (semi-professional) education and a university degree. Also, more adolescent girls than boys have obtained a secondary certificate. We will return to the issue of gender preferences and accomplishments when we examine current enrolment trends later in this chapter.

Table 4.5 Highest level of education completed among individuals aged 15–29 by gender and five-year age groups (n=8,039); in percentages.

	Male			Female		
	15-19	20-24	25-29	15-19	20-24	25-29
Less than elementary	11.5	10.2	9.8	9.2	8.6	9.1
Elementary	45.6	41.1	35.0	41.6	36.0	31.0
Preparatory	9.4	14.1	19.3	10.7	15.3	21.4
Vocational after preparatory	27.6	9.8	10.7	30.3	5.3	2.2
Secondary	5.6	16.6	9.9	7.7	21.9	16.1
Vocational after secondary	0.3	7.3	10.5	0.4	11.1	15.5
Higher education	0.0	0.9	4.7	0.0	1.8	4.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
n	1,667	1,351	1,068	1,616	1,287	1,050

Variation according to place of residence

The accomplishments of Palestinian refugees are not uniform across geographic regions, and vary by the urban-rural characteristics of the locations in which the refugees reside (Table 4.6). First, as shown by the Table, educational attainment is lower in rural than urban areas. While 26.9 percent of city dwellers aged 15 and over have a secondary certificate or above, 16.5 percent in the rural population have the same. Second, the population in Yarmouk camp is better educated than those residing in gathering areas, which again on average have a higher education than the Palestinian refugees living in other camps than Yarmouk. Third, people in Urban Damascus and the Western region (Lattakia, Homs and Hama) are significantly better educated than people elsewhere. There are more refugees in what we have called Rural Damascus without any or with only elementary schooling and less people with a secondary and post-secondary degree than refugees elsewhere.

Interestingly, there seems to be a relationship between geographic proximity of secondary schools and educational achievements, for, as reported in the introduc-

tion to this chapter, the refugees in Rural Damascus have the most difficult access to secondary schools and those living in the west have the easiest access to secondary schools of all.

Table 4.6 Highest level of education completed among persons aged 15 and older, by place of residence (n=16,921), in percentages.

		Less than elementary	Elementary	Preparatory	Secondary	Vocational after secondary	Higher education	Total	n
Urban-rural status	Urban	18.1	30.1	25.0	12.8	8.5	5.6	100.0	10,451
	Rural	26.6	37.4	19.7	7.0	7.1	2.4	100.0	6,470
Type of area	Yarmouk camp	17.8	29.9	24.7	13.3	8.3	6.0	100.0	5,515
	Other camps	24.8	35.7	21.2	8.3	7.3	2.6	100.0	9,405
	Gathering	20.1	32.0	24.0	9.5	9.3	5.2	100.0	2,001
Region	Damascus urban	17.8	29.9	25.1	13.1	8.1	6.0	100.0	5,997
	Damascus rural	29.0	38.8	18.6	6.2	5.2	2.2	100.0	3,395
	North	19.5	31.9	23.1	9.8	12.8	2.9	100.0	2,354
	West	18.2	30.8	25.4	12.2	8.7	4.6	100.0	3,293
	South	23.0	34.1	21.2	9.2	10.0	2.6	100.0	1,882
Total		21.3	32.8	23.0	10.6	7.9	4.4	100.0	16,921

4.3 Literacy

Throughout the world, literacy is playing an increasingly important role in the allocation of economic opportunity and success, because changes in the structure, content and organization of work are generating a rapid increase in the demand for reading skills. Syria is no exception. Nevertheless, “a failure to read renders the individual unable to fulfil important social, economic and democratic roles, or at least poor readers become dependent on the assistance of others to accomplish these tasks” (Murray 2000).

As we will show below, the development of literacy rates over time indicates the same positive trend in the field of education as depicted above with reference to the highest level of education completed. We have chosen a so-called functional definition of literacy. This definition takes into account the individual’s factual reading

and writing abilities. It is not assumed that a person who has completed a certain grade or year of schooling is literate.

Almost one in five are functionally illiterate overall

In the survey we asked all household members if they could read everyday written material such as newspapers (easily or with difficulty), and if they were able to write simple messages or letters to friends (easily or with difficulty).⁸ Table 4–7 shows the result in some detail for the refugee population aged 10 and older. More than four out of every five in this group are functionally literate, meaning that they can read and write well. Some nine percent are what we could call semi-literate, while nine percent are totally illiterate. There are, however, significant disparities between men and women, with the illiteracy rate for women being more than double that for men. A study on the living conditions among Palestinian camp refugees in Jordan presents data for ages 15 and above, and finds that semi-literacy and total illiteracy stands at 7.6 and 17.6 percent respectively (Khawaja and Tiltnes 2002). For people in the same ages, this survey found eight and 10 percent, respectively. Hence, the overall level of illiteracy is lower in Syria. The gender disparity, however, is similar in the two populations (although at lower levels in Syria). A study of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon conducted in 1999 found that 25 percent of women and 12.5 of men were functionally illiterate (Tyldum and Bashour 2003).

Table 4.7 Literacy among persons aged 10 years or older, by gender (n=20,170), in percentages.

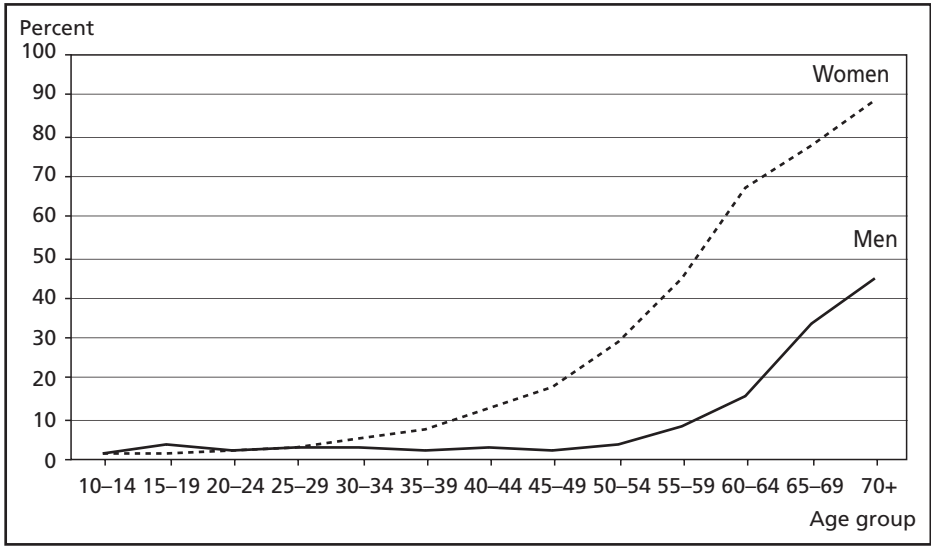
	Male	Female	Total
Read and write well	86.1	78.0	82.1
Read well, write with difficulty or not at all	1.3	1.3	1.3
Read and write with difficulty	6.7	6.8	6.7
Read with difficulty, cannot write	0.9	0.9	0.9
Illiterate	5.0	13.1	9.0
Total	100	100	100

⁸ No single definition of literacy for use in surveys and national censuses has been adopted worldwide and, according to UNESCO, a comprehensive analysis of current international practices is lacking. Yet during the last decades most countries have applied a variant of a definition saying that a literate person is any person “who can with understanding both read and write a short simple statement on his everyday life” (UNESCO 2000:30). Functional literacy would in addition entail that the person acquire “the knowledge and skills in reading and writing which enable him to engage effectively in all those activities in which literacy is normally assumed in his culture or groups” (UNESCO 2000:30). In this survey, functional literacy was defined as “being able to both read a newspaper and to write a personal letter with no trouble”.

Little disparity between boys and girls

A closer look at the literacy rate by gender and age enables a description of development over time. To make the illustration clear we have entered only the illiteracy rates in Figure 4.2, excluding the quasi-literate and the functionally literate. We see that the illiteracy is far higher in the older age cohorts, and the disparities between men and women are far greater. The remarkable improvement of the reading and writing skills of females stands out in the graph: notice the steep fall of the curve from a point of 90 percent illiteracy among the oldest women down to 12 percent in the 40–45 age group. The lines for females and males overlap for the four younger age cohorts, indicating similar reading and writing proficiency for the two sexes. If anything, girls and young women are slightly better off than their male counterparts.

Figure 4.2 Complete illiteracy among males and females aged 10+ by age groups (n=20,170), in percentages.



When Table 4.7 above is reproduced for persons aged 10 to 29 years only, the marginal differences between the sexes (but in favour of the females) become clearer (Table 4.8): while 90.3 percent of girls and young women master reading and writing fully, the percentage of boys and young men who do the same is 87.5.

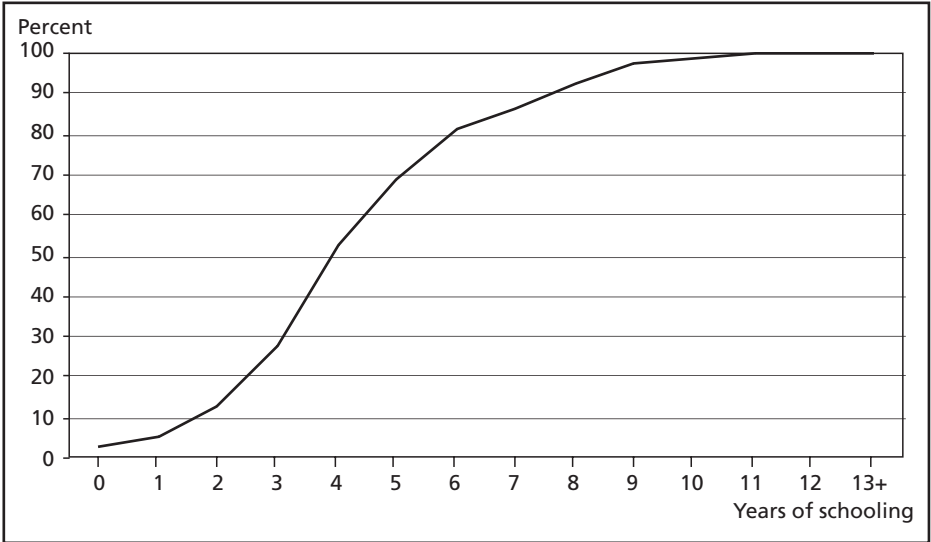
Table 4.8 Literacy among persons 10–29 years of age; by gender (n=11,277), in percentages.

	Male	Female	Total
Read and write well	87.5	90.3	88.9
Read well, write with difficulty or not at all	1.5	1.3	1.4
Read and write with difficulty	7.3	5.9	6.6
Read with difficulty, cannot write	1.0	0.6	0.8
Illiterate	2.6	2.0	2.3
Total	100	100	100

Literacy is obviously associated with years of training. Among the functionally illiterate persons aged 15 to 29 years, 12 percent have never been to school, 21 percent have had from one to four years of schooling, 15 percent have had five years and 21 percent have had six years of schooling (many of whom have left after completing an elementary education). Thirty-one percent of the functionally illiterate Palestinian refugees (aged 10+) have attended school for five years or more. For the literate young adults, those who both read and write well, the situation is of course completely different, as 98 percent have completed six years of schooling or more. The majority (52 percent) in fact have 10 years or more of formal education.

Amongst all persons aged 10 and above with no schooling only three percent can read and write well. After three years of education about one quarter are functionally literate; after one additional year just above 50 percent are literate; after six years in

Figure 4.3 Percentage of persons 10+ who can read and write well by years of schooling (n=20,168).



school about eight in 10 persons are literate; and after nine years almost everyone can read and write well (Figure 4.3). Here we should note that literacy skills also are learned outside of formal schooling, for example in adult literacy classes or by private tutoring.

Twenty thousand illiterate

How do the percentages presented above translate into real figures, i.e. how many literate and illiterate Palestinian refugees are there in Syria (in the sampled localities)? Table 4.9 shows the proportion and the actual number of adult Palestinian refugees according to the five categories of literacy presented in Table 4.7 and by three broad age groups. In the two youngest age groups, constituting altogether about 74 percent of the total Palestinian refugee population aged 15 years and more, there are altogether 9,153 functionally illiterate persons. Hence, more than 9,000 Palestinian refugees aged 15 to 44 cannot read and write well. Many of these persons could most likely reach a level of functional literacy quite easily, since about two thirds of them have already acquired some reading and writing skills. In the oldest age group (persons aged 45 and above) more than 11,000 people are functionally illiterate. On the whole there are more than 11,000 totally illiterate adult (aged 15+) Palestinians in Syria, whereas some 20,000 persons are functionally illiterate.

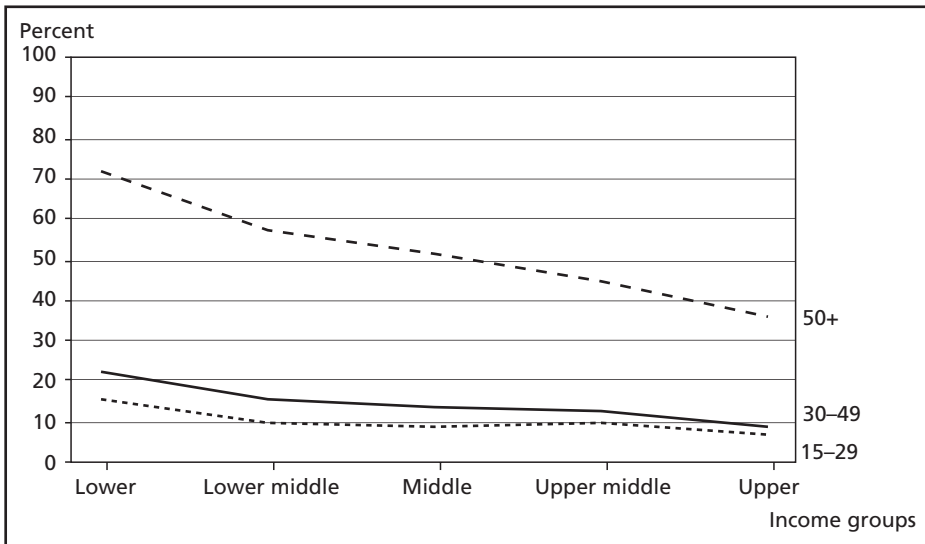
Table 4.9 Adult literacy within 3 broad age groups; percentages and real numbers (n=16,939).

	15-29		30-44		45+		All	
	Percent	Persons	Percent	Persons	Percent	Persons	Percent	Persons
Read and write well	90.5	47,179	87.0	27,305	56.6	14,548	81.5	89,032
Read well, write with difficulty or not at all	0.9	463	1.1	340	1.2	315	1.0	1,119
Read and write with difficulty	5.4	2,792	5.8	1,822	8.3	2,135	6.2	6,749
Read with difficulty, cannot write	0.7	357	0.8	238	1.2	320	0.8	914
Illiterate	2.6	1,353	5.4	1,681	32.6	8,370	10.4	11,404
Total	100	52,144	100	31,386	100	25,688	100	109,218

Illiteracy more widespread among the poor

The relationship between illiteracy and age remains the same regardless of income. Figure 4.4 illustrates two points of importance. The first point is that the older generation is a good deal more functionally illiterate in all income groups. The second point is that there is less illiteracy among the well off (to the right of the graph) compared to the poorest (to the left of the graph) for all five age groups. In other words, illiteracy has dropped radically in all income groups. Nonetheless, a literacy gap remains across income groups in the younger generations. The differential is most notable, however, between the lowest and the highest groups. While 16 percent of persons aged 15 to 29 years in the lowest income group cannot read and write well, seven percent are illiterate in the highest income group. For the age group 30–49, the illiteracy figures are 22 percent in the poorest segment and nine percent in the richest segment of the population.

Figure 4.4 Functional illiteracy by age groups and five broad income groups (n=16,910), in percentages.



Children’s literacy affected by the education of family heads

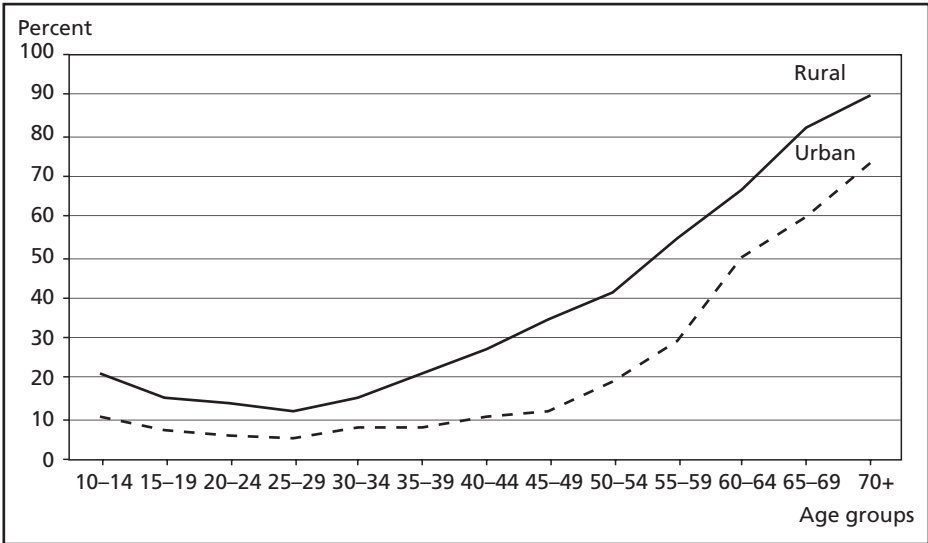
To what degree does the educational level of the home environment in which they grow up affect the reading and writing skills of refugee children? To investigate this we have looked at the literacy status of children aged 10 to 17 according to the educational level of the household head. As Table 4.10 shows, there is a clear association between the educational attainment of the household head on one side

and children’s literacy on the other. For example, whereas 77 percent of children with household heads in the lowest education group can read and write properly, a further 19 percent with household heads in the upper education group possess the same skills.

Table 4.10 Literacy of children aged 10 to 17, by the educational attainment of household head (n=5,263), in percentages.

Children’s literacy	Educational attainment of household head				Total
	Less than basic	Basic	Secondary	Post-secondary	
Read and write well	77	83	91	96	86
Read well, write with difficulty or not at all	2	2	3	0	2
Read and write with difficulty	15	11	5	2	8
Read with difficulty, cannot write	2	1	1	0	1
Illiterate	4	2	1	1	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Figure 4.5 Functional illiteracy rates of persons aged 10+ by age groups and urban-rural status (n=20,170), in percentages.



Illiteracy most frequent in Rural Damascus

Just as there is regional disparity in educational attainment, the survey documents some differentiation in literacy levels between various places of residence. In line with expectations, the proportion of functionally illiterate people is higher in rural areas than urban areas, and although the gap has diminished over time, it is significant even today. The same is true for the youngest age groups (Figure 4.5). Among all persons aged 10 and above there are 24 percent functionally illiterate in rural areas and 13 percent in urban areas. For the age band 15–29 the figures are 14 percent and six percent, a still quite substantial difference.

When we compare regions, we can see that Rural Damascus is by far worse off than the other regions. This holds whether we look at the figures for the entire population aged 10 and above, or concentrate on the 15–29 age group (Table 4.11). While there is some division between the other four regions when we consider the figure for all persons above the age of 10, difference in the functional illiteracy rate is statistically insignificant between Urban Damascus, North, West and South for persons aged 15–29. Yet the finding that 17 percent of young adults in the camps and gatherings surrounding the capital cannot read and write well stands out. In relative terms, about two and a half times as many 15–29 year-olds are illiterate here as compared to those living in the other regions. This is indeed an extraordinary finding, especially when taking into account that the basic school enrolment rate of rural Damascus, although lower, does not deviate significantly from that of the other regions (see Figure 4.8). We will investigate school attendance next.

Table 4.11 Functional illiteracy rates of all persons aged 10+ (n=20,170) and the 15–29 age group (n=8,046); by region.

	Damascus Urban	Damascus Rural	North	West	South	Total
15-29	6.5	16.7	6.5	6.7	7.4	9.5
10+	13.8	27.0	16.7	13.3	19.2	17.9

4.4 Current Enrolment

As stated above, the efforts by UNRWA and other school authorities have resulted in an ongoing trend of reduced illiteracy and an increase of individuals with higher education certificates amongst the Palestinian refugees. The gender gap has been closed and there are even indications that young women have been doing better than young men. Now, what is the situation today, amongst those currently enrolled? Below we present the current enrolment rates for the various levels of education, with

a particular emphasis on gender differences. The section also discusses the “inverse” of enrolment: non-enrolment and the premature withdrawal of a child from school; and it takes a look at grade repetition. First, however, let us examine early childhood programmes and children’s enrolment at the pre-school stage.

Fewer than one in six 3–6 year-olds attend kindergarten

Early childhood, pre-school education can provide a stimulating environment for young children where they may learn social skills and lay the basis for later enrolment in formal education. Also, for many parents, and especially mothers in this socio-cultural context, sending their children to a kindergarten may partially relieve them of care taking burdens as well as providing free time that can be used on productive work and income generating activities.

Pre-school services in Neirab camp, Aleppo

We visited a kindergarten in Neirab refugee camp outside of Aleppo sponsored by UNRWA. It was open four hours a day (08:00 to 12:00), and had 50 children aged 4–5 years who were supervised by three young women (two of whom were present when we visited). The facility was situated on the upper floor of a two-storey building.

The physical environment consisted of two rooms of about 45 and 20 square meters, averaging 1.3 square meters per child. In addition, the kindergarten had at its disposal 20 square meters of out-door space on a roof which was accessible from the larger room. However, an old, damaged swing was

stored in a corner of the roof area together with some junk, which reduced the play space available to the children.

The place was very modestly furnished with plastic tables and chairs, and had a blackboard on one of the walls. The rooms contained few, if any, toys and things for children to play with. The larger room was rather gloomy.

The fees were 175 pounds (= 3.5 USD) per child per month.

Neirab also has a second kindergarten for children aged 4–5 run by the Ba’ath party.

There are altogether about 33 non-profit making kindergartens in the surveyed Palestinian camps and other communities, which are run by either independent local Women Committees (some of them with financial support from UNRWA), or by women’s groups affiliated with one of the political parties/fractions.⁹ In addition there are in the range of 20 commercial kindergartens serving the Palestinian population. Only a few of the kindergartens have nurseries with places for very young children. The majority of the facilities offer care from 8 a.m. to 1–2 p.m., which is locally

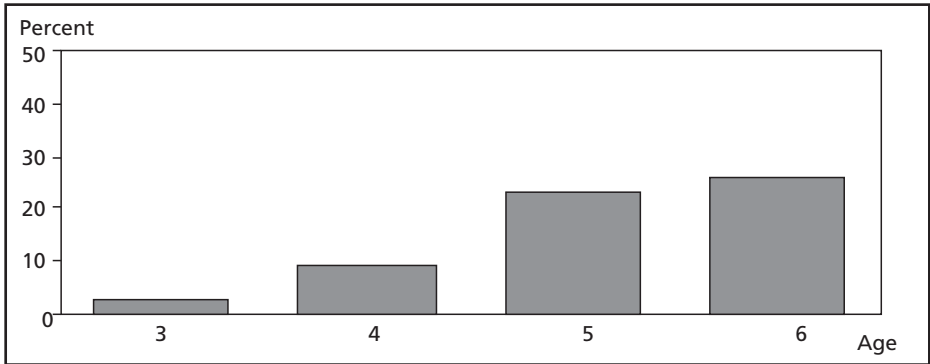
⁹ According to a study by GAPAR & Unicef (2002), there are seven political parties supervising kindergartens.

considered to be a full-day service. All kindergartens in Syria have to comply with a law (or provision) from the year 2000, which specifies the content (curriculum) and staffing as well as other requirements.¹⁰

Nonetheless, a field study of the majority of Palestinian kindergartens in Syria found that the “buildings were unsuitable, lacking adequate sanitary conditions, clean drinking water, lighting, windows, and outdoor play space, and that the classrooms were over-crowded, averaging only 0.6 square meters of space per child”. On top of that, it was concluded that, as a rule, the staff were poorly trained (GAPAR and PCBS 1995, referred to in UNICEF 2000:43). Our impression from a brief visit to a pre-school facility in the North (see Textbox) confirmed that the physical environment is inadequate, and that crowding is a problem. If on top of that, the pedagogical milieu is not good either, this could explain the fairly low use of pre-school services identified by the survey.

Fifteen percent of three to six-year-olds spend time in kindergarten. There are many more children in pre-school – aged six (26 percent) and five (23 percent) – than children in nursery – aged four (nine percent) and three (three percent) (Figure 4.6). This enrolment ratio is higher than in the Palestinian refugee camps of Jordan, where 18 percent of the five-year-olds and five percent of the four-year-olds are enrolled in kindergarten (Khawaja and Tiltnes 2002), but much lower than for Palestinian refugees in Lebanon where as many as half the children aged three to five are enrolled in pre-school (Blome Jacobsen, Endresen and Hasselkniippe 2003). Figure 4–7 shows that boys are more often enrolled than girls, and that pre-school is slightly more popular amongst the relatively well off and in families where the household head (in most cases the father of the child) had a secondary or tertiary

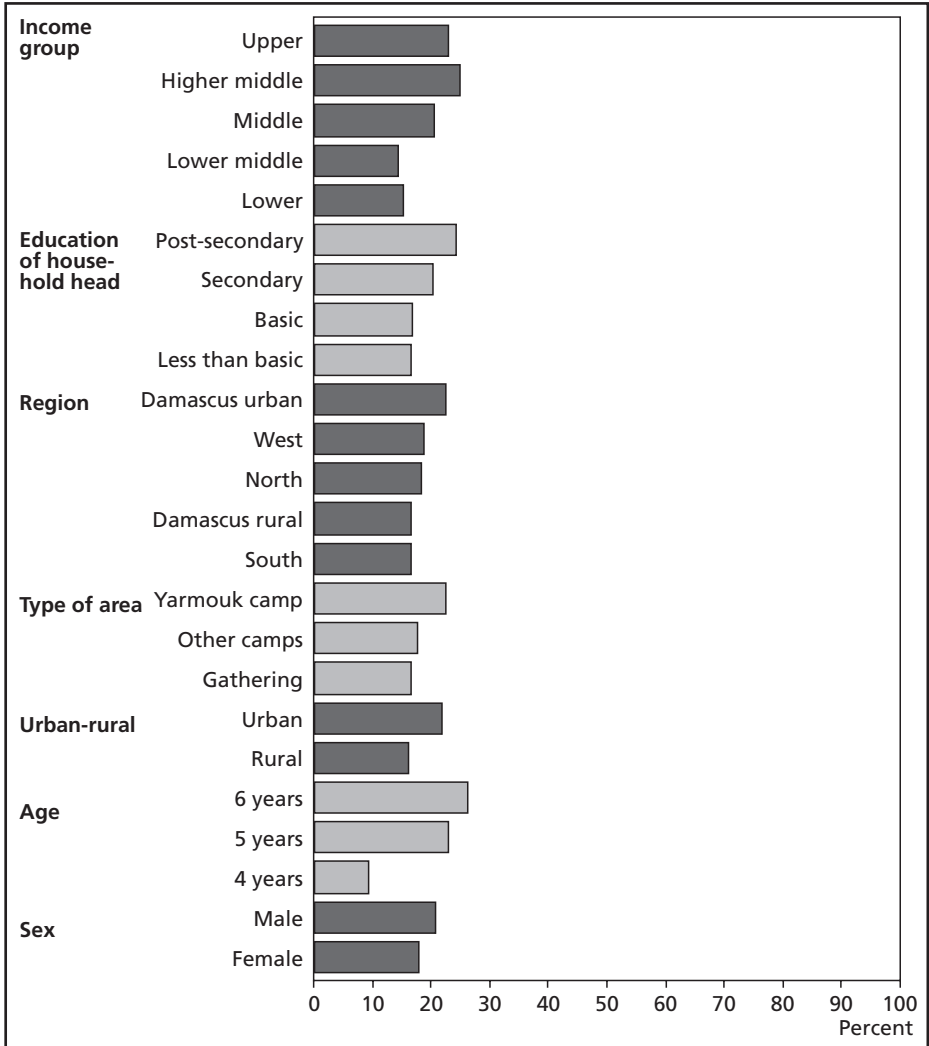
Figure 4.6 Kindergarten enrolment ratio by age (at interview) for children aged 3–6 (n=2,763).



¹⁰ Information from Dr. Adnan AbdelRahim, meeting in Damascus, 13 January 2002.

education. What is more, kindergarten enrolment is more common in urban than rural areas, and more children benefit from pre-school services in Damascus city, and particularly in Yarmouk camp, than elsewhere.

Figure 4.7 Children aged 4–6 enrolled in pre-school by various background variables (n=2,053), in percentages.



High enrolment in elementary school

The vast majority of Palestinian children start school. Only one percent of children aged seven to 19 never enrolled or did not complete year one. For about 90 percent of them the main reason for non-enrolment is health-related. Other reasons given are low interest and the family preferring not to enrol the child. Our data show no significant variation by sex, age, place of residence or education of household head, but suggest that children residing in the lowest of five income groups are slightly more likely not to commence school or complete year/grade 1.

Most young children, boys and girls alike, attend school. Following the regulation stating that children shall enter compulsory schooling from the year they turn six years of age, all children born in 1994 should have been enrolled at the time of the survey. As can be seen from Table 4.12, all children were enrolled. However, of those children born in 1994, 1.8 percent were enrolled in pre-school, and hence had postponed their school start date. Even some of the children born in 1993 (0.6 percent) reportedly attended pre-school and not elementary. The data suggest that more girls than boys delay school enrolment (2.9 against 1.0 percent).¹¹

However, when they reach the age of 12–13 (children born in 1988–89), children start leaving school and school attendance drops steadily from that age onwards. We should note that this age coincides with the end of elementary school, and hence the termination of compulsory education.

Table 4.12 School enrolment rates for boys and girls born in the years 1976–1994 (6 to 25 years of age) (n=11,473), in percentages.

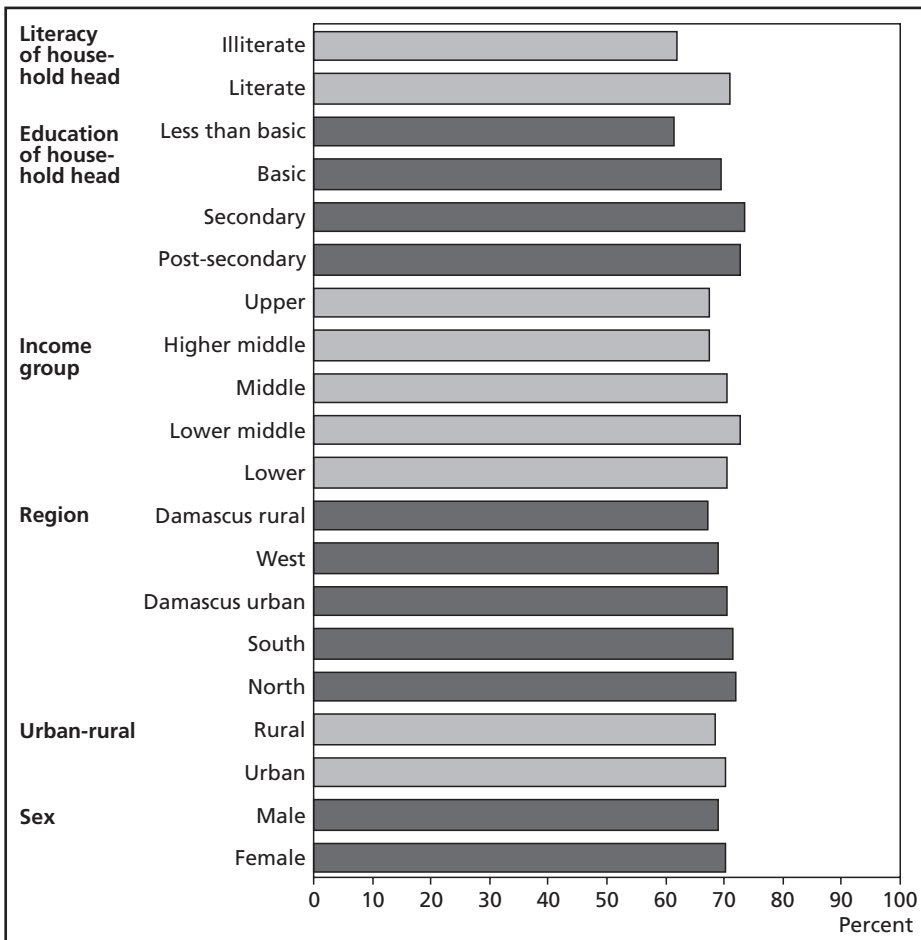
	Year of birth																		
	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94
Male	7.7	8.6	10.5	16.1	16.0	22.3	32.7	34.9	47.7	55.7	64.8	78.3	91.8	97.3	99.4	99.1	99.4	100.0	100.0
Female	2.4	8.3	9.5	13.9	15.3	27.8	36.1	46.1	44.6	66.3	70.2	84.1	87.4	95.4	98.1	99.1	100.0	100.0	100.0
All	5.3	8.4	10.0	14.9	15.7	24.9	34.4	40.6	46.2	60.5	67.6	81.1	89.7	96.3	98.7	99.1	99.7	100.0	100.0
n	465	473	501	530	572	553	614	656	634	693	666	692	641	649	601	639	663	617	614

¹¹ Some of the children enrolled in kindergarten instead of elementary school may be children with special needs who actually never make it into school.

Lower enrolment for basic schooling among children with illiterate parents

To explore variation in children's enrolment for basic schooling according to different socio-economic characteristics and different residential areas, we have compared the enrolment of children born in the years 1984 to 1995. We have covered 12 years to enable the inclusion of all children enrolled in elementary and preparatory – some enrol before they are supposed to, and some remain in school for one or more extra years. The result is shown in Figure 4.8. Although the gender difference is as expected and points in the same direction as other findings in this chapter, namely that girls out-perform boys, it is insignificant. There is also no significant effect of place of living or economic standing (as defined by household income). However,

Figure 4.8 Proportion of children born 1984–1995 enrolled in basic cycle (elementary or preparatory) by various background variables (n=7,872).



the educational status of the family has an impact on children’s enrolment. Here, this aspect is captured by the educational level of the household head (most often the father or mother of the child). About 10 percentage-points fewer children living with poorly educated and illiterate household heads are enrolled as compared to other children.

Early exit for many

Wastage is a concept used by educational researchers to denote “premature withdrawal of a student from a certain stage of education before completion of the last grade of that stage” (Mukherjee 2000:3). Because some of the children born in 1986 are still enrolled in elementary school (see Table 4.15), we restrict the term wastage to children born in the years 1976–1985 (aged 15–25 at the time of the interview). Children who never enrolled are excluded from the calculation. As is shown in Table 4.13, about nine percent of enrolled children have left school without completing year/grade six successfully.¹² The data does not indicate any trend over time, for the better or worse, and the gender difference is not statistically significant either, although it does concur with the general picture emanating from the survey data showing that the girls perform better at school than the boys do.

It is hard to assess the relative importance of the various reasons behind children’s premature school desertion. Such reasons might be sorted into three main groups. First, a child may be compelled to leave school by factors associated with his or her

Table 4.13 Wastage: Proportion of individuals born during 1976–1985 who enrolled in school but that did not complete compulsory elementary schooling (n=5,683).

	Year of birth										Total
	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	
Male	8.0	12.2	7.7	6.8	10.2	8.9	6.1	10.8	11.2	10.8	9.4
Female	9.7	7.9	7.7	7.9	7.0	5.8	8.7	9.9	8.5	6.0	7.9
All	8.8	9.9	7.7	7.4	8.8	7.5	7.4	10.3	9.9	8.6	8.7
n	464	473	500	529	572	551	612	656	634	692	5,683

¹² For comparison, UNRWA register data show that the drop-out rate for UNRWA’s elementary schools stood at 0.26 percent for the scholastic year 2000/2001. The preparatory cycle drop-out rate was 3.89 percent for the same year (UNRWA 2002:37, 40). The calculation is made by comparing the students enrolled in an UNRWA school in October one year with those enrolled in other schools in October the following year.

family and home milieu. Second, a child may be forced out of school due to his or her own capabilities and motivations, and thus unsatisfactory school performance, or because of misconduct. Third, the quality of the school plays an important role. For example, a well-qualified, helpful and encouraging teacher may compensate for an overcrowded home with illiterate parents – a poor study environment – and become the thing that brings a student through basic schooling. Conversely, poorly trained teachers, cramped classrooms and bullying classmates may lead students to drop-out despite a child’s school interest, and well-educated and supportive parents.

Table 4.14 displays the reasons for leaving school prematurely, i.e. before completing compulsory, elementary schooling. Low interest in school is by far the most important reason given, followed by “repeated failure”, i.e. poor school performance and grade repetition. Difficult access to school is of negligible importance, but poor treatment is given as a reason for one percent of the drop-out cases. Health-related explanations are provided for five percent of the cases. Thirteen-fourteen percent of drop-outs have quit school because their employment was needed to generate income or to help out in some family business. In five-six percent of the cases, the children had to leave school without the elementary certificate due to customs or norms hindering their continued school attendance, or they were needed in the

Table 4.14 Reasons for school drop-out among individuals born 1976–1985 who have not completed elementary (wastage), by sex (n=465), in percentages.

	Male	Female	All
Not interested in school	64.3	59.4	62.1
Repeated failure	20.0	18.5	19.3
Finished education	0.2	0.3	0.3
Bad treatment at school	1.4	0.9	1.2
School not available nearby	0.0	0.6	0.2
Transportation not available	0.0	0.6	0.3
Overcrowded school	0.0	0.0	0.0
Illness	3.1	4.5	3.7
Disability	1.6	1.2	1.4
Family poverty	8.7	6.5	7.7
Work to help family	8.7	2.1	5.8
Family disintegration	0.0	1.7	0.8
Caretaking	1.6	3.8	2.6
Social restrictions	0.0	4.0	1.8
Marriage	0.0	0.9	0.4
Other reason	0.0	2.9	1.3
n	256	209	465

home. The survey finds almost no gender differentiation here, although boys tend to drop out of school due to economic reasons somewhat more often than girls, while social and family reasons are more important motives for girls to drop out.

As suggested by Table 4.12, about half of the 17-year-olds (born 1984) are still enrolled in school, but of those aged 19 (born 1982) only one third remain. Very few are still enrolled in their early to mid-twenties. For the ages 14 to 20 (born 1987–1981), more girls than boys are enrolled, while amongst young adults (21 and over) there appears to be a higher proportion of men than women attending the formal educational system.

Grade repetition not uncommon

In principle, all children in Syria must begin the compulsory elementary cycle, which lasts for six years, the year they become six years of age. Yet some Palestinian children (about two percent), as mentioned previously, postpone their school start-up with a year. In addition, the LIPRIS indicates that a considerable proportion of children commence school one year too early.¹³

Like father like son (Bicycle repair shop)

Suleiman (15 years) has worked in his father's bicycle repair shop during the past three summer holidays. He says he enjoys it. Sometimes he also helps out after school. His brother Ahmed (12 years) also lends a hand. They both work even when the father is not with them in the shop.

Suleiman and Ahmed are two out of 10 siblings and attend year 6 and 7 at school. Suleiman should, according to his age, have been attending year 9, but he failed year 5 and had to repeat it. Why he is two years behind, he did not tell. He plans to continue and finish secondary school, and his aim for the future is to study at the university and become a teacher.

If they did not delay their school start-up, and did not repeat any class, the children born in the year 1988 should have completed elementary school and be enrolled in preparatory. However, as can be seen in Table 4.15, 21 percent were still enrolled in elementary school during the scholastic year 2000/2001. Six and a half percent of children born in 1987 had not completed elementary school. Hence, *grade repetition* which, in the specialist literature, is also known as retardation or stagnation, and may be defined as the “retention of a student in a grade or stage for more than the

¹³ This is a somewhat puzzling result, and might perhaps suggest inaccurately reported birth dates and ages for some.

normal period of stay on account of unsatisfactory progress” (Mukherjee 2000:3), is quite widespread. Grade repetition is more common in the preparatory than the elementary cycle.¹⁴ If they enrolled at age six, children born in 1985 should have completed preparatory school. However, as shown by the Table, 26 percent have not completed elementary school yet, and 9.5 percent of the children born in 1984 have still to complete the preparatory stage.¹⁵ Just like wastage, repetition may be a consequence of individual characteristics of the child (limited abilities, illness), characteristics of the family and home environment (parents education, poverty, attitudes towards education) and the school (physical infrastructure, teaching methods and teacher qualifications, classroom occupancy rates, one or two-shift arrangements). Grade repetition eventually may, and does, lead to premature withdrawal from school.

Table 4.15 Highest level of education completed amongst currently enrolled individuals born 1981–1994 by year of birth (n=6,675), in percentages.

	Year of birth													
	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94
Not completed elementary						1.0	6.5	21.3	82.1	99.3	99.3	99.8	100.0	100.0
Elementary			1.4	9.5	25.8	81.5	92.2	78.3	17.7	0.7	0.7	0.2		
Preparatory	28.0	51.9	88.2	89.1	73.6	17.5	1.3	0.4	0.2					
Secondary	72.0	48.1	10.4	1.3	0.6									
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
n	135	214	272	302	425	462	564	578	624	593	629	661	614	602

Wide variation in enrolment in secondary and higher education

As stated above, there is little variation in basic school enrolment, apart from the fact that children of poorly educated and illiterate parents have a reduced likelihood of being enrolled compared to other children. In this subsection we take a look at secondary and tertiary enrolment of children according to different socio-economic characteristics and places of living. Secondary school enrolment is concentrated in children born in the years 1979–1986, as in our sample only eight children born before 1979 and one child born in 1987 were enrolled in secondary. Hence, we consider the enrolment rates of the 1979–1986 age group here. Similar reasoning has led to the selection of certain age groups (birth years) for the calculation of enrolment in post-secondary vocational

¹⁴ Towards the end of each school year all students sit a test to evaluate their level. Those with a score below 50 percent shall have to repeat that particular grade.

¹⁵ According to UNRWA statistics, the Agency’s elementary schools had 4.99 percent repeaters in year 1998-99, while there were 9.9 percent repeaters in preparatory school UNRWA 2000b:Table 30, 49).

education and the universities. The enrolment rates for these three educational levels, plus for two measures combining two levels, are presented in Table 4.16.

As can be seen, a higher proportion of girls than boys are enrolled in secondary schooling. However, the LIPRIS data show no gender disparity when it comes to enrolment in post-secondary education, be it a 2–3-year vocational (semi-professional) education, or a university. This is a bit surprising given the earlier conclusion that more females than males in the age groups 20–24 and 25–29 have obtained these two certificates (see Table 4.5). The explanation might be (this is highly speculative) that women and men enrol to the same degree, but that men withdraw from the educational institution before taking the final exam and/or perform less well in the exams more often than women and, therefore, that women have a higher success-rate than men.

Table 4.16 Proportion of individuals (of different year groups) enrolled in various levels of education by various background variables.

Type of education included		Secondary	Second-ary and higher	Post-secondary vocational	University	Any post-secondary
Year of birth		1979-86	1979-86	1978-83	1965-83	1965-83
Sex	Female	21.0	28.8	4.2	5.0	6.7
	Male	17.3	24.6	4.2	5.0	6.8
Urban-rural	Urban	23.3	33.3	5.1	6.9	9.0
	Rural	12.6	16.6	2.9	2.3	3.5
Region	Damascus urban	23.0	33.7	5.2	7.5	9.7
	North	23.9	32.6	7.8	3.0	6.2
	West	24.2	32.0	4.9	4.7	6.7
	South	17.3	23.1	2.8	4.9	6.0
	Damascus rural	9.8	12.5	1.7	1.9	2.6
Type of residential area	Yarmouk camp	22.9	33.5	5.4	7.4	9.6
	Gathering	19.8	28.6	3.9	6.3	7.9
	Other camps	15.4	20.1	3.3	2.8	4.1
Household income	Upper	24.3	35.2	5.2	8.3	10.9
	Higher middle	17.5	24.4	3.7	5.1	6.7
	Middle	19.1	24.9	4.2	3.5	5.1
	Lower middle	17.0	23.2	4.1	3.4	4.9
	Lower	11.8	17.4	3.0	2.7	3.8
Education of household head	Higher	34.9	52.2	10.0	11.5	15.7
	Secondary	23.1	30.7	4.8	4.2	6.0
	Basic	13.1	16.6	2.1	2.3	3.2
	Less than basic	9.1	13.1	1.6	3.3	4.0
Literacy of household head	Literate	21.8	30.7	5.2	5.6	7.7
	Illiterate	9.0	12.0	1.0	3.1	3.5
n		4,971	4,971	3,460	8,671	8,671

We have earlier in this chapter provided evidence that school performance differs considerably by place of residence, but that the variation in enrolment for basic cycle education is much less pronounced. However, as Table 4.16 shows, enrolment in secondary and higher education is substantially different in some residential areas compared to others. First, the urban-rural differential is noteworthy and is growing the higher up the educational ladder one gets, the result being that there are three times as many children living in urban areas enrolled at a university as there are children enrolled from rural areas. The enrolment rates for rural Damascus are dramatically lower than those for the other four regions. One would assume that this, at least partly, has to do with difficult geographical access to secondary schools (see Table 4.2). Table 4.16 also shows that enrolment in secondary and post-secondary education is considerably more common among individuals from Yarmouk camp as compared to those living in other refugee camps, with persons from gathering areas being in the middle. The proximity to semi-professional training centres and universities in the capital is most likely a contributing factor to Yarmouk camp's superior position here.

The economic standing of the household is shown to have the expected effect on enrolment, whereby increased income is associated with a raise in the enrolment rates. The strongest impact on school enrolment at this level, however, seems to be the literacy and educational status of the household head. Youth with literate household heads (most often one of the parents) is two times more likely to be enrolled in secondary school than youth with illiterate heads. If the head has a post-secondary degree, the chance that a person born 1979–1986 is enrolled in secondary education is almost four times higher than if the head has not completed basic (preparatory) schooling. Table 4–16 indicates that the effect of the head's education is as strong, if not stronger, on enrolment in semi-professional and university education. Role modelling, parental guidance and ambitions (which may go unnoticed by the child, but which also may involve direct and explicit pressure) are probably factors forming a part of the picture here. We will look at parents' educational aspirations on behalf of their children towards the end of the chapter.

Extra tuition most common for students in preparatory and secondary schools

A small minority of the students (4.6 percent), notably those enrolled in preparatory and secondary school, take out-of-school classes to support their school performance (Figure 4.9). These are either provided on a private, individual basis by teachers (to 3.2 percent of the students) or provided by people's organisations (to 1.2 percent of the students). As expected, such additional tuition is most prevalent among students preparing for the preparatory and secondary examinations, where the marks are critical for continuation to the next stage of education (Figure 4.10).

The extent to which children benefit from extra tuition varies in much the same fashion as enrolment itself, except that there seems to be no significant discrepancy between females and males. As is shown in Figure 4.11, children residing in rural areas, living in households where the income is relatively low, and in which the household head is poorly educated, tend to be less likely to take private lessons than children elsewhere.

Figure 4.9 Prevalence of extra classes amongst those currently enrolled by stage of education (n=7,232), in percentages.

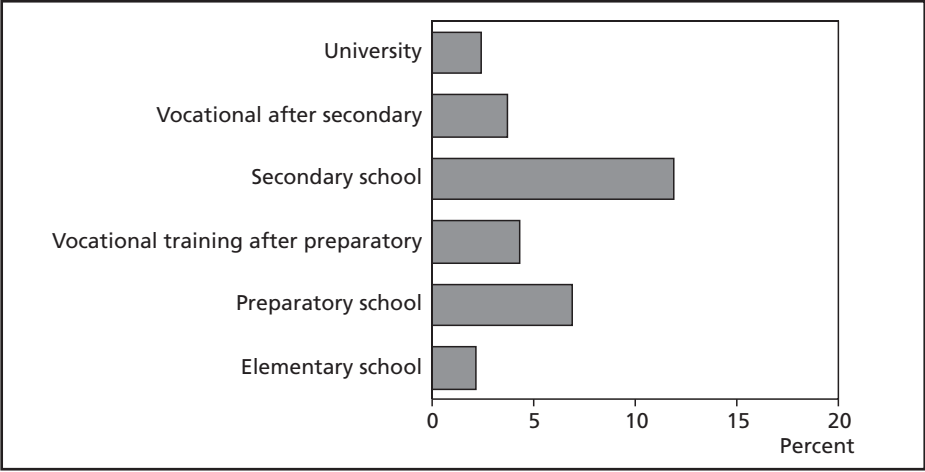


Figure 4.10 Prevalence of extra classes amongst individuals enrolled in basic and secondary education by grade/ year of current enrolment (n=7,096), in percentages.

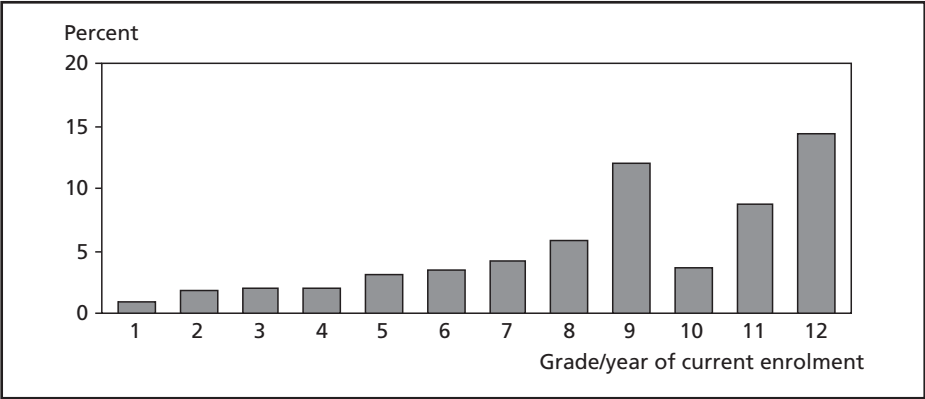
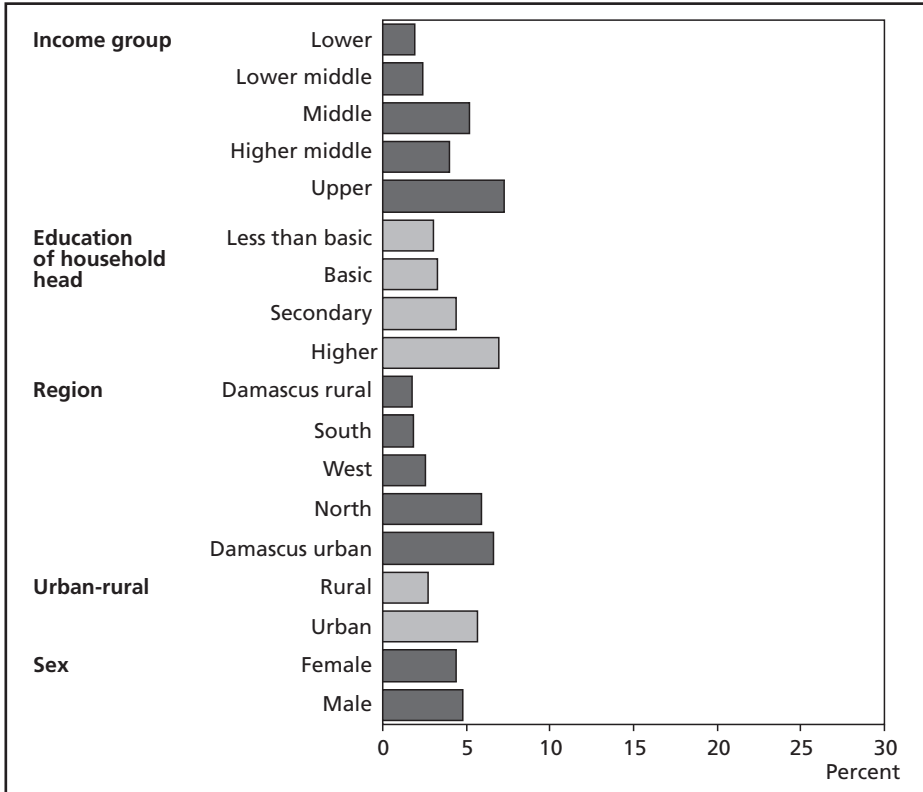


Figure 4.11 Prevalence of extra classes amongst those currently enrolled by various background variables (n=7,233), in percentages.



4.5 Vocational Education

In this subsection we will briefly present some information regarding the type of vocational skills that the Palestinian refugee population in Syria possesses. We will look at vocational training after preparatory school, semi-professional training after completion of secondary education, and competence acquired at more short-term courses, often outside of the formal educational system. We will look both at what takes place at present in terms of the type of courses the currently enrolled students attend, and examine the skills that have accumulated in the population over a longer time period by presenting the vocational background of adults who have left the educational system and who are, or have been, in the labour market.

Before we begin with the vocations of those still enrolled in school, a technical note: Some of the categories of vocations used in the tables of this subsection

are quite comprehensive. We have therefore presented some of the sub-categories pertaining to each of them in the textbox.

Gendered choices in post-preparatory education; less so in post-secondary education

Table 4.17, displaying the distribution of the currently enrolled students in vocational education on the different types of courses being run, contains relatively few observations when distributed on so many cells. Thus, we advise some caution when interpreting the results. We shall nevertheless make a few comments. First, the same three topics (business/administration, education, and paramedics) are ranked highest among females taking both post-preparatory and post-secondary education. The same applies to males undertaking semi-professional training. However, business topics, including secretarial work, and paramedics are considerably more frequently chosen by females than males. Second, in post-preparatory vocational education the more traditionally “male” trades of electricians, mechanics and construction are more popular among adolescent boys than girls. Yet, eight percent of the girls are into electricians. Third, a “new” and modern topic like computer science is studied at both levels, and by the same proportion of students, although it seems that computers are more popular amongst the males. Fourth, arts and crafts are more popular among females than males.

Table 4.17 Proportion of enrolled students in post-preparatory and post-secondary vocational education by sex and type of course being attended (n=864).

	Post-preparatory vocational training			Post-secondary semi-professional training		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
Business/ administration	10.9	29.6	18.6	13.4	33.0	22.6
Education	15.4	15.5	15.4	28.7	23.2	26.1
Electrical	17.5	8.0	13.6	7.0	1.7	4.5
Paramedical	5.8	12.1	8.4	10.3	17.4	13.6
Mechanical	12.3	1.2	7.7	2.7	0.0	1.5
Arts and crafts	4.2	10.5	6.8	1.5	7.2	4.2
Computer science	5.9	4.9	5.4	8.0	1.8	5.1
Building	6.6	2.9	5.1	7.9	4.4	6.3
Agriculture	2.1	1.1	1.7	2.3	0.8	1.6
Personal grooming	0.4	2.3	1.2	0.0	0.8	0.4
Clothing	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	18.9	12.0	16.0	18.0	9.8	14.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
n	154	116	270	84	78	162

Broad groups of vocations studied at post-secondary and post-preparatory schools, and at short-term courses

- Business/ Administration: Business & office practice; Secretarial work; Office management; Typing; Word Processing; Accounting
- Education: Elementary school education; Language proficiency courses
- Electrical: General electrician; Industrial electrician; Radio/TV mechanic; Auto electrician; Refrigeration and air conditioning; Electrical installation and auto rewinding
- Paramedical: Assistant pharmacist; Laboratory technician; Public health inspector; Nursing (Nurse diploma, three years; Assistant nursing, two years; Post-diploma nursing, 12 months); Dental assistant (hygienist); Assistant physiotherapist; Secretarial & medical records
- Mechanical: Office machine mechanic; Auto mechanic; Diesel and construction equipment mechanic; Mechanic; Blacksmith welder; Sheet metal worker; Machinist/welder-aluminum fabricator; Auto body maintenance technician; Maintenance and filter machinist; Welder and pipe fabricator
- Arts and crafts: Painting and glass ceramic; Engraving on brass; Photography; Engraving; Burning ornamentation; Macramé manufacturing and design; Flower arrangements and design; Silk typing; Straw work; Leather work
- Computer science: Computer programming; Computer operator
- Building: Construction; Builder; Plumber; Plasterer/tile setter; Assistant civil engineer; Architectural drawing; Assistant architect; Technical drafting; Quantity surveyor; Land surveyor; Carpenter and furniture maker; Framework carpentry; Plumbing and central heating; Tile laying; Decoration; Interior decoration
- Agriculture
- Personal grooming: Hairdressing; Beautician
- Clothing: Dressmaking; Clothing production; Tailoring; Sewing; Clothes design; Industrial triko
- Other

Table 4.18 contains similar information to Table 4.17, but for those persons aged 15 and above and who have completed their education. The male-female differences are comparable to those we identified for the currently enrolled and more noticeable at the lowest than at the highest educational level. If we contrast the two tables, it seems that firstly the overall paramedical topics remain (approximately) as popular amongst the currently enrolled as they have been in the past. Yet their relative importance has diminished for girls taking post-preparatory vocational training. Secondly, electrics and mechanics do not have the same central position among adolescent men enrolled in post-preparatory education today as it had for those young men who received the same training in the past. Thirdly, the gender gap in business and administration studies, whereby topics such as office manage-

ment, accounting and secretarial work are read, is roughly the same amongst those currently enrolled as amongst those who have received this kind of training before, although the proportion that take these courses today is considerably larger than has been the case in the past. And finally, although still very important, teacher training and other education courses do not have the dominant place at the semi-professional stage today as it used to have.

Table 4.18 Proportion of non-enrolled individuals aged 15 and over with post-preparatory and post-secondary vocational education, by sex and type of course attained (n=4,150).

	Post-preparatory vocational training			Post-secondary semi-professional training		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Business / Administration	1.9	12.6	3.8	6.5	11.4	9.1
Education	1.2	4.5	1.8	33.4	49.9	42.1
Electrical	27.4	2.9	23.1	8.2	1.3	4.5
Paramedical	2.6	38.7	8.9	13.0	16.5	14.8
Mechanical	39.6	1.2	32.8	8.7	1.0	4.6
Arts and Crafts	5.3	28.3	9.3	2.8	6.1	4.6
Computer science	0.3	1.2	0.4	3.8	2.7	3.3
Building	9.1	1.2	7.7	9.3	2.4	5.7
Agriculture	0.5	1.6	0.7	2.1	0.9	1.5
Personal grooming	-	-	-	0.2	0.2	0.2
Clothing	0.3	2.8	0.7	0.5	0.0	0.2
Other	11.9	5.0	10.7	11.5	7.6	9.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
n	528	123	651	675	749	1 424

Short training courses more popular among the youngest and best-educated adults

In addition to the formal school system, we were interested in finding out to what extent Palestinian refugees had obtained skills and gained work-relevant experience from short vocational courses. A 'short' course was defined as any course with duration of less than a full school year, or 12 months. Such short-term courses may either provide a basic level of knowledge and skills to persons without prior training in the field or upgrade the expertise of persons who already possess skills in a particular area or occupation.

Five percent of persons aged 15 years and over and who have left the formal school system have taken at least one short vocational training course in their lifetime. This is a considerably lower proportion than among Palestinian camp refugees in Jordan. There, almost four times as many, or 18 percent to be exact, have taken short-term vocational training (Khawaja and Tiltnes 2002). However, similar to the situation in

Jordan, women have been more involved in such training than men (six as against four percent). Figure 4.12 strongly suggests that socio-economic status is associated with the probability of attending vocational training courses. The tendency is most noticeable for education, where more education increases the likelihood that a person has taken a short training course. The other indicator of socio-economic status, household income, has a more moderate yet significant effect on the propensity to take vocational training. The effect of educational attainment is robust when controlled for income (Figure 4.13), meaning that the positive association between education and short training courses is significant within each income group. The same conclusion was reached when analysing data from the Palestinian refugee camps in Jordan (Khawaja and Tiltnes 2002).

The gender difference is present for the lowest education levels only, whereas among individuals with a secondary or post-secondary degree the proportion of women and men who have ever taken a short vocational training course is the same at 10 percent (not shown).

Figure 4.12 Proportion of persons aged 15+ and not currently enrolled in education who have ever taken a short vocational training course, by five income groups, educational attainment and gender (n=13,303).

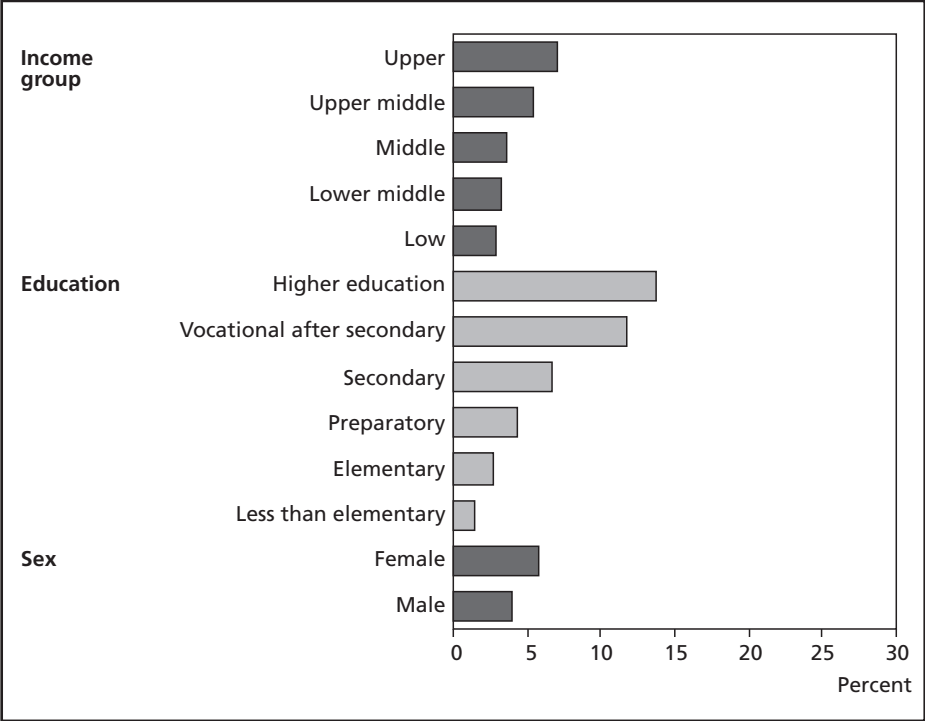


Figure 4.14 demonstrates that the distribution of short vocational courses is highest among young and middle-aged people: from the age of 50 the proportion of persons with a vocational training course falls rapidly. This is almost certainly a reflection of the increased availability of such training for younger generations compared to the older generations. Again, a similar trend (albeit at a “higher” level) was observed in the Palestinian refugee camps of Jordan (Khawaja and Tiltnes 2002).

What kind of short-term courses have the Palestinians attended, and where have they received their training? Let us answer the latter question first. The most common place to receive training is from a privately run training centre. Table 4.19 shows that approximately 30 percent of both women and men who have ever received short vocational training have visited some commercial centre. The second and third most popular places to obtain vocational schooling and instruction differ between the sexes. While many men receive on-the-job training, and attend lessons and obtain instruction at public vocational centres in addition to private ones, women more often than men benefit from UNRWA programs and training set up by people’s organisations. This fact may suggest that women and men attend training that differs in content.

Figure 4.13 Proportion of persons aged 15+ and not currently enrolled in education who have ever taken a short vocational training course, by income groups and education (n=13,251).

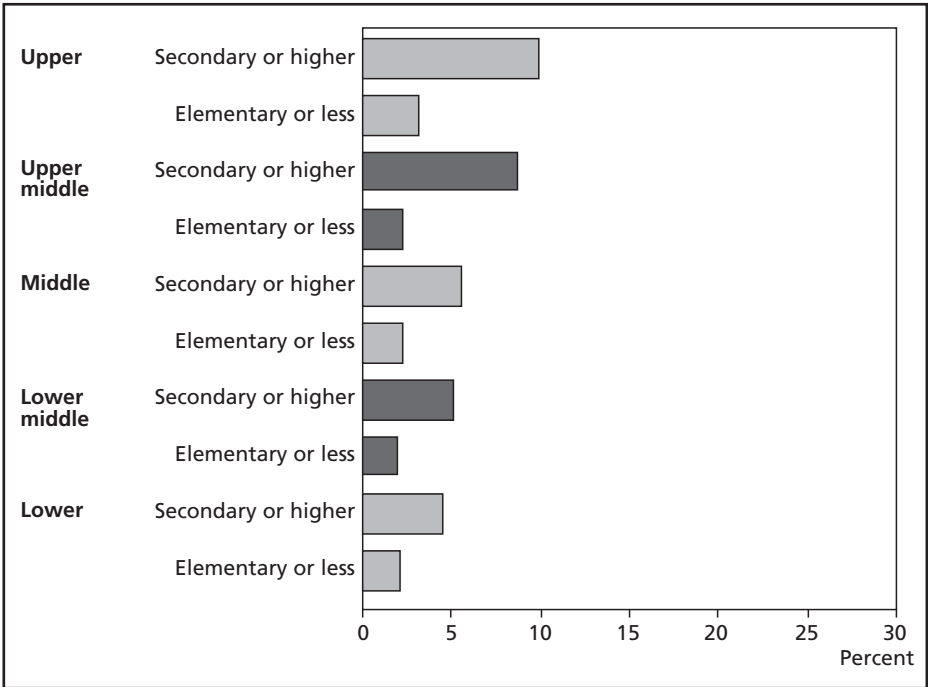


Figure 4.14 Proportion of persons 15+ and not currently enrolled who have ever taken a short vocational training course by five-year age groups (n=13,303).

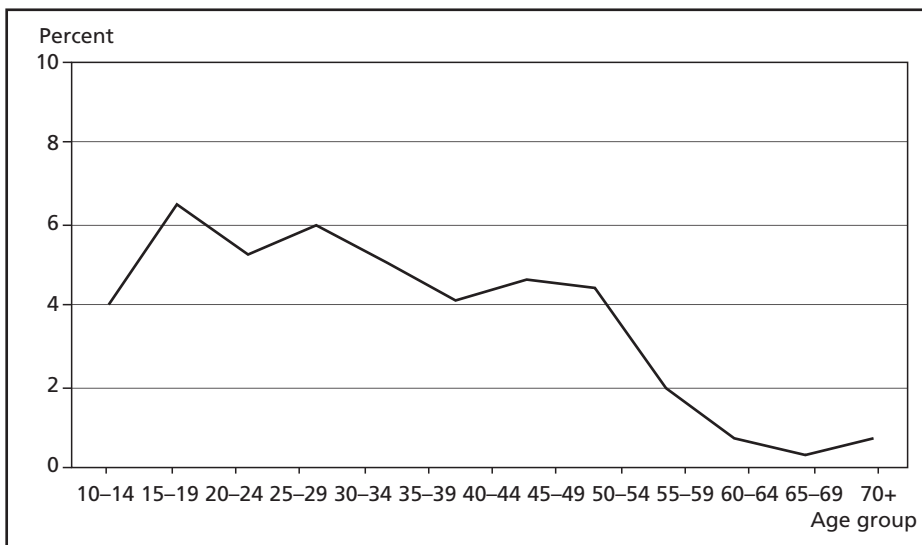


Table 4.19 Proportion of persons 15+ and not currently enrolled in the formal educational system who have ever taken a short vocational training course, by place of training and gender (n=631).

	Male	Female	All
Private, commercial centre	34	27	30
UNRWA program	16	37	27
On the job training	24	15	19
People's organisation centre	9	12	11
Public vocational centre	14	6	9
Other place	5	5	5

The columns add up to more than 100 percent since some persons have received training from more than one place.

Young aspiring girls in Khan Danoun camp

Reem (15 years old) attends an embroidery class at the Women Programme Centre in Khan Danoun refugee camp during the summer holidays, and sometimes after school. Like her friends at the course, Reem wants to become well known for her sewing, but she also wishes to commence university studies after secondary schooling.

Reem is one of six siblings and her two elder sisters have a university and college degree respectively. Her younger brothers either go to school or are too young to have

started yet. Reem enjoys school very much, her favourite subjects being languages (Arabic and English).

The girls in the embroidery class know many girls who have dropped out of school for employment. Most of them work in the fields during the summer season, and in factories or as servants in private houses during winter.

Reem and her friends are in no hurry to get married; they are all determined to finish their education first.

To some extent, men and women have gained experience from different kinds of training courses, a disparity that to a certain degree follows 'traditional' gender lines. Our comments on Table 4.20 overlook the fact that 'other' subjects of study and training comes high up on the list, especially for men, because it is unknown what this category covers. Computer science is the most popular topic among both men and women, but relatively more men (48 percent) than women (30 percent) have

Table 4.20 Type of short vocational training course: proportion of persons aged 15+ and not currently enrolled who have ever taken such a course, by gender (n=631).

	Male	Female	All
Computer science	48	30	38
Education	10	17	14
Personal grooming	4	16	10
Clothing	1	13	8
Other	9	3	6
Electrics	10	1	5
Arts and crafts	2	7	5
Paramedical	5	5	5
Business	4	5	5
Mechanics	7	4	5
Building	2	0	1
Agriculture	0	0	0
Total	101	101	101

The columns add up to more than 100 percent since some persons have received more than one type of training.

taken a computer-related course. In second place for both men and women are issues related to education and teaching. From there down, traditional, gendered choices are dominating the picture, with electrics and mechanics for men, and personal grooming (including hairdressing), clothing, and arts and crafts for women. However, we observe that business courses as well as training in paramedics and health related subjects have been equally popular amongst men and women.

4.6 Attitudes Towards Education

For randomly selected adults who had children in basic school, the survey asked a series of questions pertaining to the parent's attitudes and expectations concerning the child's future schooling. If the respondent had more than one child in elementary or preparatory school, the questions referred to the eldest.

Parents very optimistic about their children's future educational achievements

Almost nine in 10 (87 percent) Palestinian refugee parents think that their child will complete the basic educational cycle. This is quite ambitious, and not in line with reality, as 22 percent of the 14 year-olds have left school and 45 percent of the 20–29 year-olds surveyed did not complete basic schooling (preparatory).

Table 4.21 shows the expectations that parents have concerning the educational level their children will finally reach. About one fourth think their child will not get any certificate beyond preparatory schooling, although some parents think their child will become an apprentice or take (short) vocational training courses (not shown in the Table). Nine percent of parents believe their child will stop after secondary school, while eight percent think he or she will take post-secondary semi-professional or vocational education.

More than half of the parents expect their child to achieve a university degree. This does not match the educational level of young adults where, in the age group 25–29, only five percent have completed a university degree. Therefore, the parents' very high aspirations seem rather unrealistic, notwithstanding that the interviewers specifically asked the respondents to be sensible. Yet, the results perhaps carry the positive notion of what could be. Interpreted positively, the answers look a lot more like hopes and desires.

Our analysis has revealed no significant variation in opinions by such background factors as sex of parent, sex of child, or household income. However, we find variation by place of residence and educational attainment of the responding

parent (Table 4.21). In rural communities, twice as many parents think their child will not complete preparatory education as in urban communities, at 20 *versus* nine percent. Instead, in urban areas, 61 percent of the parents consider that their child will accomplish a university degree compared to 47 percent of the parents in rural areas. A similar discrepancy is found between Urban Damascus and Rural Damascus where only nine percent in the former area think their child will leave school before completing preparatory education compared to 24 percent in the latter area (not shown).

Table 4.21 Parents' expectations about which educational level their child will finally reach by urban rural status (n=1,394) and education of household head (n=1,389); percent of parents with children currently enrolled in basic cycle.

	Place of residence		Educational attainment of household head				All
	Urban	Rural	Less than preparatory	Preparatory	Secondary	Post-secondary	
Less than preparatory	9	20	25	16	9	4	13
Preparatory	10	12	19	12	8	5	11
Academic secondary	10	8	10	13	10	3	9
Semi-professional	7	10	12	8	7	5	8
Undergraduate degree	45	39	23	38	49	58	43
Graduate degree	16	8	9	9	11	21	13
No opinion	3	4	2	3	5	3	3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

"Better to work than to pursue education"

"Mohammed" is a 24-year old man with his own key-making shop in a rented building in a busy street of Khan Eshieh refugee camp. He learned the trade from his father who was also in the key-making business. "Mohammed" is the oldest son in a family of seven children, and his oldest sister (aged 25) works in the shop as well.

"Mohammed" started secondary education, but quit. According to him, there is no need for higher education, because you

will not find a better job even with more education.

If he ever has a son, he would like him to pursue education, but only if the employment situation improves. Otherwise he could just as well work in the shop.

"Mohammed" earns SYP 8,000 (160 USD) per month and pays a monthly rent of SYP 3,000 for the shop area. He gives SYP 3,000 to his family and keeps the remaining SYP 2,000 to himself.

Several studies have documented that parental expectations and outcome, i.e. the educational attainment of children, is associated. The comparatively lower aspirations of parents with a modest educational background may contribute to lower educational achievements by their offspring, while higher expectations among better-educated parents may affect positively their children's school achievements (El-Sanabary 1993; Burney and Irfan 1995). We have already described the link between the educational attainment of the household head, on the one side, and the enrolment rate and educational attainment of household members (children), on the other. Now, as can be seen from Table 4.21, there is a considerable difference in aspirations between parents with high and low education. Consider for instance that among parents with post-secondary education, 79 percent say their child will attain a university degree compared to 32 percent of parents who did not complete preparatory.

LIPRIS also asked why the child would not finish basic education. Answers are broadly similar to the answers given by parents whose children have already dropped out of basic schooling. Up to three reasons were allowed. No interest in school (75 percent), repeated failure (31 percent), and poverty/economic need (eight percent) are the three leading reasons given. Some respondents mentioned disability (two percent) and care of family members (one percent). Somewhat surprisingly, since it was given as a reason by nine percent in a similar survey of Palestinian refugee camp residents in Jordan (Khawaja and Tiltnes 2002), marriage did not come up as a reason for leaving school.

5 Health and Medical Services

Åge A. Tiltnes

This chapter describes the current health situation among the Palestinian refugees in Syria. Being in good health is regarded as highly valuable in itself, as a vital aspect of a “decent life”. At the same time, good health is generally considered a prerequisite to educational achievements, participation in the labour market and consequently income earning opportunities. While the lack of access to productive assets or employment often explains the persistence of poverty among potentially productive groups, labour skills and market access may be of little value unless the population is in good health.

The LIPRIS, as other Fafo surveys in the region, approaches health status by focusing on self-reported health and illness. The survey does not enquire about diseases or collect exact diagnostic information. Instead, it concentrates on the (possible) negative effects of chronic illness and disability, and also establishes the relation between prolonged illness and a number of background variables. In this context, health is very much defined as the absence of (serious) illness and health failure.

Furthermore, we analyse self-perceived health simply by asking the respondents to rate their general health status on a five-point scale. As researchers we do not define “good health” for the respondents by, for example, assigning the concept any positive ethical-philosophical feature along the lines of “leading a life of purpose” or “positive self-regard and mastery” (Ryff and Singer 1998). Nonetheless, it is known that the layman’s health definition encompasses more than the non-existence of illness (a negative dimension). Research seems to concur that two other important dimensions are the capacity to cope with the challenges of everyday life (a functional dimension) and the feeling of well-being, energy and vigour (a positive dimension) (Bjørndal 1992).

Besides chronic health deficits and self-perceived general health, the LIPRIS covers reproductive health. Moreover, the study gives attention to health behaviour and raises questions such as: How widespread is cigarette smoking? To what extent do the acutely ill seek medical advice and treatment? The latter question draws attention to the health care system itself as the use of services is affected by, for example, the geographic proximity and cost of services. Do most Palestinians have access to basic curative and preventive health care, we ask.

5.1 The Health Care System in Brief

The national health care system in Syria provides primary and secondary health care to Palestinian refugees on a par with Syrian nationals. This state-managed health system has universal coverage and facilitates high accessibility to health services. The Government does not operate an insurance programme, but provides primary care free of charge at public health centres. Hospital care is highly subsidised, so the patient has to share part of the hospitalisation costs (medical tests, x-rays, medicines, blood transfusions), with the exception of emergency cases. UNRWA runs 23 clinics (10 in the refugees camps; 13 outside), and provides primary health care services, mother and child health care, family planning programmes, disease prevention and control programmes, and dental services free of charge to registered Palestinian refugees. The UN Agency also offers laboratory services, provides medical supplies, and refunds part of the bills for hospitalised persons being referred by an UNRWA physician.

The relationship between UNRWA and the Ministry of Health is reported to be good, and they co-operate and share resources across a wide range of health activities including disease control, vaccination, and health statistics generation.

In addition to public and Agency services, the Palestinian Red Crescent Society offers health services to the refugee population in three hospitals (in Homs, Dara and Yarmouk) and nine polyclinics. Treatment is not free of charge.

Apart from the health services provided free of charge, there is a growing private health care system emerging in Syria, and many physicians employed in the public sector also operate their own private clinics in the evening after government facilities close (Gallay 2001). Although the services provided in private clinics and hospitals are costly, the survey finds that a large proportion of Palestinian refugees utilise these services as the public health system and UNRWA are unable to meet the mounting demand caused mainly by rapid population growth – especially in urban areas. Recent economic problems in Syria have led to a limited health budget and the necessity to focus on primary care at the expense of improving hospital care. UNRWA has also reduced the number of contracted hospital beds reserved for refugees and made cuts to the reimbursement scheme.

UNRWA does not provide any mental health care in Syria. The Agency's services are limited to referrals to hospitals. A number of general and university hospitals have beds allotted for psychiatric patients and provide therapeutic outpatient services, but no specialized facilities are in operation.

5.2 Chronic Illness

Twelve percent of Palestinian refugees residing in Syrian camps and gatherings claim to suffer from a physical or psychological chronic illness, including problems resulting from accident, injury or old age. One-half of them have a severe chronic illness, here defined as a condition preventing the individual from going out on his or her own without help from other person(s). These results are very similar to what was found in a study of Palestinian refugees in the camps of Jordan (Khawaja and Tiltnes 2002), but considerably lower than what has been reported for Palestinian refugees in Lebanon (Tiltnes 2003). Not surprisingly, chronic illness is more frequent among the older population, and more than one out of two persons aged 60 years and above has an illness of a prolonged nature. There is no gender difference overall but, as shown in Table 5.1, boys and young men suffer more from chronic illness than their female counterparts, while women are more likely than men to become chronically ill over the age of 50. The same picture was also found for Palestinian refugees in Lebanon (Tiltnes 2003).

About one percent of the chronically ill say that their health problems are war-related, while one-half as many report having a *severe* lasting illness due to a war or war-like event (not shown). The latter are in their thirties or older.

Table 5.1 Percentage of people suffering from chronic (n=26,820) and severe chronic illness (n=25,528) by gender and age groups*).

		0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	
Chronic illness	Male	3	4	5	7	8	9	13	18	
	Female	2	3	4	4	5	7	9	13	
	All	2	4	4	5	6	8	11	15	
			40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70+	Total
	Male	24	28	30	35	49	46	55	12	
	Female	16	26	33	41	51	59	66	12	
All	20	27	31	38	50	52	61	12		
		2-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	
Severe chronic illness	Male	1	2	2	2	2	4	5	7	
	Female	0	2	1	2	1	2	4	5	
	All	1	2	2	2	2	3	4	6	
			40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70+	Total
	Male	11	14	14	20	27	32	39	6	
	Female	7	13	17	22	31	40	55	6	
All	9	13	16	21	29	36	48	6		

*) Note that severe chronic illness is reported for the age group 2-4, while chronic illness is reported for the age group 0-4.

Prevalence of chronic illness varies by socio-economic status of household

Surveys of this kind typically present evidence that health is influenced by socio-economic status variables such as education and income. This is also a conclusion to be drawn here. First, the proportion of people suffering from chronic health failure is greater where the head of the household has not completed basic schooling than where households are headed by better-educated people. Among individuals in households where the head has secondary or higher education, only half as many suffer from chronic and severe chronic illness compared with people living in households where the head has less than basic education (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2 Chronic and severe chronic illness by educational attainment of household head (n=26,742) and household income (n=26,782)*.

		Chronic illness	Severe chronic illness
Educational attainment of household head	Not completed basic	19	11
	Basic	12	5
	Secondary	10	5
	Post-secondary	7	3
Income groups	Low	19	12
	Lower middle	12	6
	Middle	12	5
	Upper middle	11	5
	High	9	4
Total		12	6

* The income groups in this chapter are calculated with data about the total yearly household income. The five income brackets, dividing the population into approximately equally large groups, are: low (<60,000 SYP); lower middle (60,000 – 87,450 SYP); middle (87,500 – 122,950 SYP); upper middle (123,000-182,000 SYP); and high (>182,000 SYP).

Second, the poorer segments of the Palestinian population in Syria have a higher likelihood of suffering from chronic illnesses than the more affluent segments. For example, as shown in Table 5.2, three times as many refugees in the lowest income group report having a severe longstanding health problem compared to those in the highest income group. Our survey suggests no variation in the incidence of chronic illness according to place of residence (region, urban rural location, or refugee camp *versus* gathering/non-camp living area).

5.3 Physical Impairment

Chronic health problems may vary significantly in seriousness and hence influence those afflicted to a varying degree. To get a somewhat clearer picture of the extent to which adult persons are physically impaired, we inquired about their ability to perform five everyday activities: ascending and descending stairs; going for a quick five minute walk; carrying an item weighing 5kg for at least 10m; reading a newspaper (with glasses, if necessary)¹; and following a normal conversation (with a hearing aid, if necessary). Although only a limited number of activities are measured, we believe that they capture important aspects of people’s ability to operate freely and to perform normal, everyday activities and, as such, are good indicators of physical well-being.

As shown in Table 5.3, more people have mobility problems than sensory problems. Furthermore, while women and men suffer from problems with hearing and vision to the same degree, more women than men are hindered from getting around because they have not got the physical strength and capacity to do so. The finding that women are more often functionally impaired than men is in accordance with the previous section about chronic illness.

Furthermore, we have constructed an additive index to investigate how the five indicators of ambulatory and sensory problems accumulate. Those who reported any problem related to a described activity were given the score “1” on that particular activity. We then counted the scores for each respondent and grouped all respond-

Table 5.3 Adults’ ability to perform 5 everyday activities: the percentage who can do it with difficulty or not at all, and the percentage who cannot perform these activities easily (the sum of the two first measures) (n=4,867).

Impairment indicators	Can with difficulty			Cannot			Cannot do easily		
	Men	Women	All	Men	Women	All	Men	Women	All
Climb stairs	19.0	24.7	21.8	1.8	2.7	2.2	20.8	27.4	24.1
Carry 5 kilo	10.7	18.5	14.6	3.6	6.3	4.9	14.3	24.8	19.6
Go for a brisk walk	14.0	17.9	16.0	2.4	4.2	3.3	16.4	22.2	19.3
Read newspaper	12.4	12.5	12.4	1.2	1.6	1.4	13.5	14.1	13.8
Hear conversation	8.2	7.2	7.7	0.5	0.8	0.6	8.7	8.0	8.4

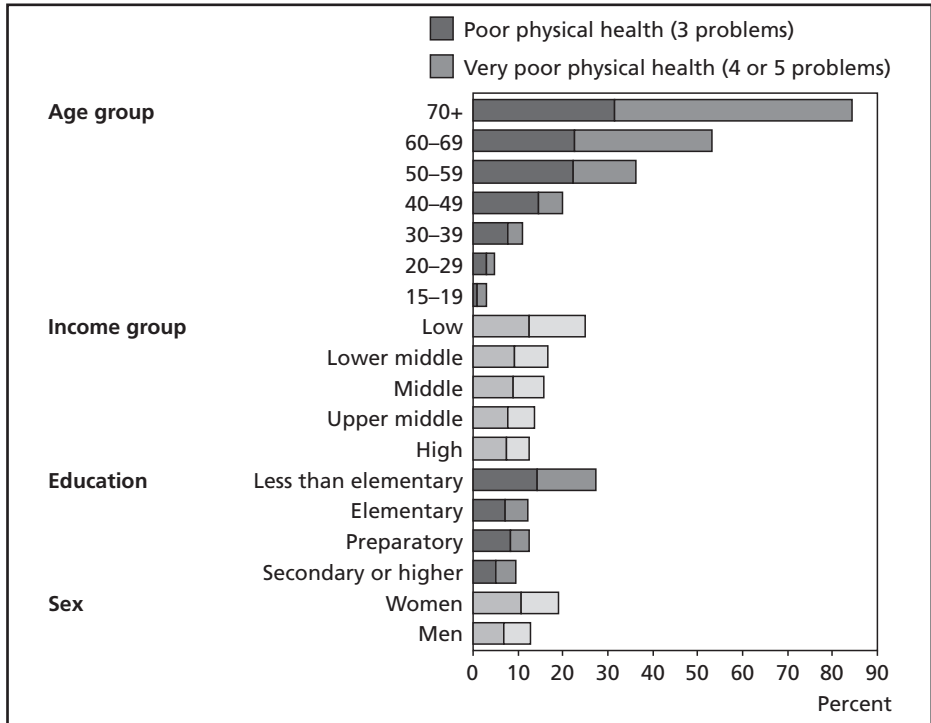
¹ The interviewers took great care to explain to the respondents that this was a question about eyesight, not reading skills.

ents accordingly. The result is displayed in Table 5.4. It shows that women report a higher number of problems than men, but that about two-thirds of all adults do not suffer from any physical impairment.

Table 5.4 Percentage distribution of adults by number of sensory and mobility problems by gender (n=4,867).

Number of problems	Men	Women	All adults
0	69.2	61.4	65.3
1	10.2	12.3	11.2
2	7.8	7.3	7.5
3	6.9	10.8	8.8
4	2.4	4.2	3.3
5	3.6	4.1	3.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Figure 5.1 Difficulties with everyday life activities: percentage of adults having problems with three or more activities, by sex, education, household income and age (n=4,867).



Poor physical health linked to low education and income

We have sorted adults according to the number of impairment symptoms they report, so that persons having problems with or who cannot at all perform three of the five listed activities are labelled as having “poor physical health”, while those who have problems with four or five of the activities are classified as having “very poor physical health”. As displayed in Figure 5.1, women are worse off than men. In addition, the Figure shows how age gradually brings more health problems to the individual. Furthermore, we notice that those with very low education fare much worse than other people. Finally, physical health deteriorates gradually from higher to lower income groups, and poor and very poor health (as defined here) are two times as prevalent in the lowest income group compared to the highest income group. The effect of income holds for different age groups, even though it is not completely consistent (not shown).

5.4 Psychological Distress

The indicators

In addition to physical health, the more psychological and emotional aspects of health are naturally of great importance to people’s general well-being and living conditions. “Psychological distress” is a term used quite frequently in mental health literature. It is seen as a prime indicator of mental health, and symptoms of distress are critical because they stimulate care-seeking. (McDowell and Newell 1996).

To measure psychological distress, the LIPRIS used a short form of the so-called Hopkins Symptoms Check-List or “HSCL-25” (Moum 1992b). One randomly selected adult in each household was asked whether seven symptoms or problems that people sometimes have had bothered or distressed him or her very much, quite a bit, a little, or not at all during the past week. The symptoms were: (1) worrying too much about things; (2) feeling depressed and sad (blue); (3) feeling hopeless about the future; (4) feelings of worthlessness; (5) nervousness or shakiness inside; (6) feeling continuously fearful and anxious; and (7) headaches.

Although the original HSCL-25 was constructed to measure anxiety and depression only and not to assess poor psychological health in general, it has been argued that the list (including the short-form used here) “may serve as a good proxy to global general mental health because most states of mental illness or distress are accompanied by anxiety and/or depression” (Tambs and Moum 1993:364).

One in five adults report 5-7 symptoms of distress

Figure 5.2 shows the respondents' scores on each of the seven items. Between 13 percent ("feelings of worthlessness") and 60 percent ("nervousness") of the Palestinian refugees report to have been bothered "very much" or "quite a bit" by these symptoms during the week preceding the interview.

Using the limited battery of questions, we have constructed a simple additive index where we assume that the higher the number of stress symptoms reported, the poorer the individual's general mental well-being and the more intense the psychological distress. For each item, the respondent is given the score "1" if he or she answered "very much" or "quite a bit". Otherwise he or she is given "0". We have

Figure 5.2 Percentage distribution of the adult population (15+) according to 7 indicators of psychological distress (n=4,870).

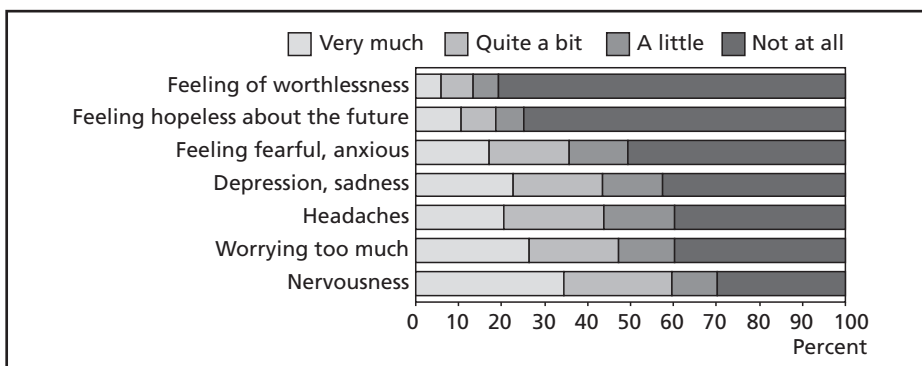


Table 5.5 Percentage distribution of seven indicators of psychological distress in the adult (15+) Palestinian population in Syria (n=4,870) as compared to Palestinians in Lebanon (n=3,263) and Palestinian camp refugees in Jordan (n=2,274)*.

	Syria 2001	Lebanon 1999	Jordan camps 1999
No symptom	21	16	21
1 symptom	15	13	12
2 symptoms	17	14	15
3 symptoms	13	16	12
4 symptoms	13	14	13
5 symptoms	10	13	12
6 symptoms	6	8	9
7 symptoms	5	7	5
Total	100	100	100

* Data for Lebanon and Jordan are from two household surveys conducted by Fafo in 1999.

next summarised the total scores for all respondents and assigned them a number on the mental distress index ranging from zero to seven.² As is shown in Table 5.5, Palestinians in Syria appear to be somewhat less bothered by symptoms of mental ill health than their "cousins" in Lebanon and Jordan.

Reduced mental health associated with gender, chronic health failure, place of residence, socio-economic status and widowhood

We next take a look at the relationship between various background factors and psychological distress. Figure 5.3 displays the proportion of adults that reported five, six or seven out of the seven symptoms in our checklist during the two weeks preceding the interview, and according to different variables frequently found to be associated with health outcomes.

First, women are more distressed than men. Second, psychological well-being does not seem to deteriorate with age. If anything, the oldest generation report better psychological health than other persons. This is a bit surprising given that the prevalence of chronic illness and poor physical health increase gradually by age and that, as shown by the Figure, there is a strong relationship between having a longstanding illness and reporting many symptoms of psychological distress. Figure 0.3 furthermore shows that the incidence of psychological distress varies by place of residence. People residing in rural areas report more symptoms than those living in towns and cities. Palestinians from the Western and Northern regions tend to report less distress than Palestinians in the capital and in the Southern districts. It is unclear why this is the case.

Finally, Figure 5.3 presents the effects of two socio-economic status-indicators on the mental well-being of people. Unmistakably, persons in the poorest households are more distressed than other persons. In fact, the lowest income group scores higher than the other four income groups on all seven indicators (not shown). For example, 51 percent said they had felt depressed and sad as compared to 38 percent in the highest income group, and 53 percent had been "worrying too much" compared to 44 percent of those with higher incomes. Education, however, has a stronger impact on people's emotional and mental well-being than income, and more than two times as many individuals in the lowest education group suffer from 5-7 distress symptoms compared to the highest education group. What is more, this conclusion is robust when "controlled for" age. As can be observed in Figure 5.4, improved education reduces psychological distress in all age groups. (There were too few individuals who had completed any education to report on the oldest age group.)

² The index' standardised item alpha = 0.8098.

Figure 5.3 Percentage of persons aged 15+ reporting 5-7 symptoms of psychological distress by various background factors (n=4,867).

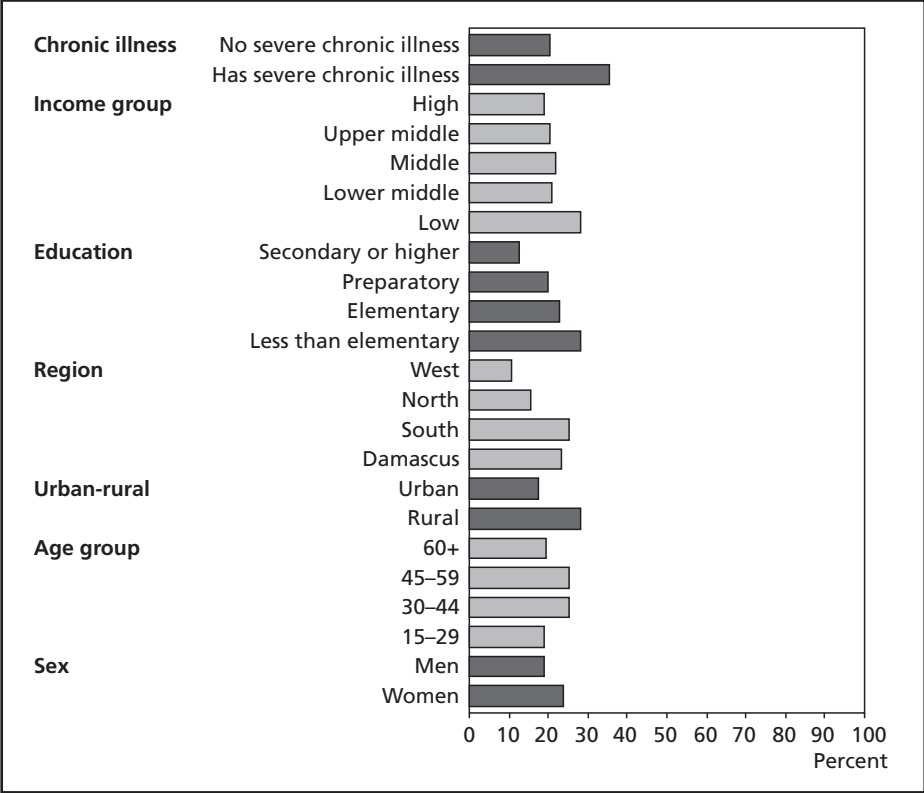
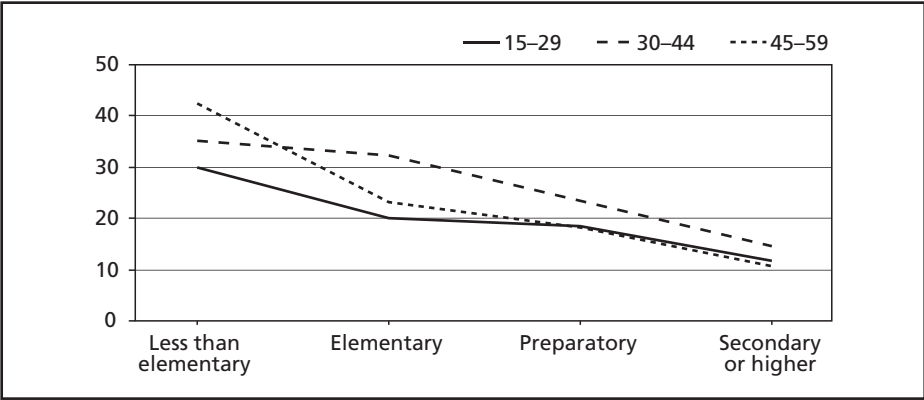


Figure 5.4 Percentage of persons aged 15-59 reporting 5-7 symptoms of psychological distress by age and educational attainment (n=4,332).



Civil status is an indicator of a person’s life stage. The various life stages are typically characterised by different responsibilities and stress factors. As a consequence, it may be reasonable to assume that civil status affects the happiness of a person. The LIPRIS indicates that single, never-married people (making up about 14 percent of individuals in the 30-44 age group) are generally more content in life than other persons. As shown by Table 5.6, they report fewer symptoms of psychological distress than both those currently married and those who have been married before (some separated or divorced, but the majority widowed). The divorced and widowed are significantly more distressed than the other two groups. This may have emotional and economic as well as other explanations. One cause of their worries and depressed moods can be the increased responsibilities that follow from being alone at a later stage in life - many of them are lone parents with young children. Also, there is variation by sex here. Married women report a higher number of symptoms than married men do, but there is no significant difference between single, never married women and men (not shown). There are too few observations to allow comparison across gender in the third group (single, married before).

Table 5.6 Psychological distress by civil status: Percentage of persons aged 15+ by number of symptoms of reduced mental well-being (n=4,867).

	Single, never married	Married	Single, married before	All
No symptoms	23.8	18.8	17.4	20.8
1-2 symptoms	36.1	29.8	24.4	32.0
3-4 symptoms	22.4	27.8	29.0	25.7
5 or more symptoms	17.7	23.5	29.1	21.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

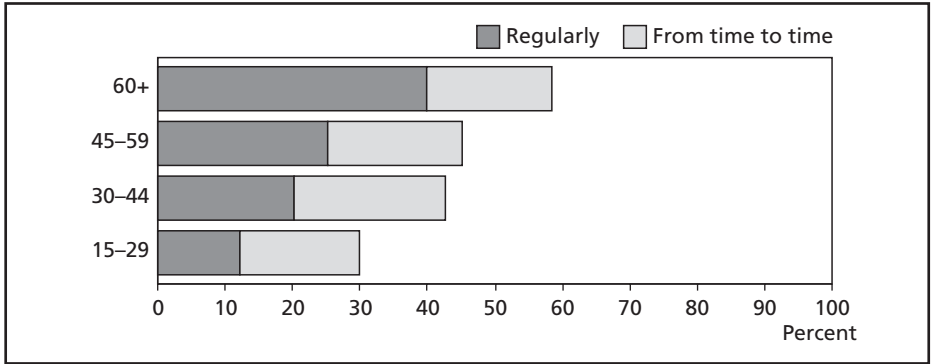
Few see a professional for psychological distress; one in five has taken medicine due to mental problems

During the six-month period before the interview, 1.5 percent of the adults saw a physician due to emotional strain or psychological distress and difficulties. In contrast, some 38 percent visited a doctor for other symptoms and conditions of ill health. Since there are relatively few psychologists, psychiatrists and specialist institutions to turn to, it is reasonable to believe that a higher number of individuals would have sought help for their emotional and psychological problems if adequate services had been more abundant. However, these are mere speculations.

Some 19 percent of the adult respondents acknowledged taking anti-depressants, sedatives or other medicines (e.g. pain-killers) regularly to treat and alleviate psychological symptoms and problems during the same six-month period, while a further

20 percent had used such drugs occasionally. This is indeed a very high number. Seventy-one percent of those taking medicine had it prescribed by a doctor. The survey found only marginal variations in medicine used according to sex, education or income. Frequent use of medicine for nerves and to alleviate psychological or psychosomatic conditions, problems and illnesses is only a bit more common among women, individuals with low education and income. Also, women, the poorly educated and individuals with low incomes consult a doctor for such symptoms and conditions somewhat more often than other people do. There is, however, a clear tendency that the use of medicines for psychological problems grow with age (Figure 5.5).

Figure 5.5 Percentage of persons aged 15+ using medicine for psychological distress experienced in the past 6 months, by age groups (n=4,866).



5.5 Tobacco Smoking

Tobacco smoking is one of the major causes of disease and death in the industrialized countries and according to the World Health Organisation (WHO), it is “emerging as the world’s largest single preventable cause of illness and death” (WHO 1995:34). The World Health Report claims that one in two long-term smokers die from smoking; cancer, coronary heart disease and respiratory disease are the three most common causes of death related to smoking (WHO 1999). How many Palestinians in Syria smoke; how much do they smoke; and when did they take up the habit? These are among the questions answered here, based on information given by one randomly selected adult (15 years and over) from each household. In the following section, the relationship between smoking, as health risk behaviour, and the general health situation of the individual is presented.

Wide gender disparity in smoking habits

Only a minority smoke. In the entire adult population 28 percent are regular smokers, and only three percent smoke from time to time. Thirty-two percent of adults have *ever* smoked daily and 37 percent have *ever* smoked daily or occasionally. All current tobacco smokers claim to smoke cigarettes, and 3.5 percent of them say they smoke at least one *argileh* (water pipe) each day.

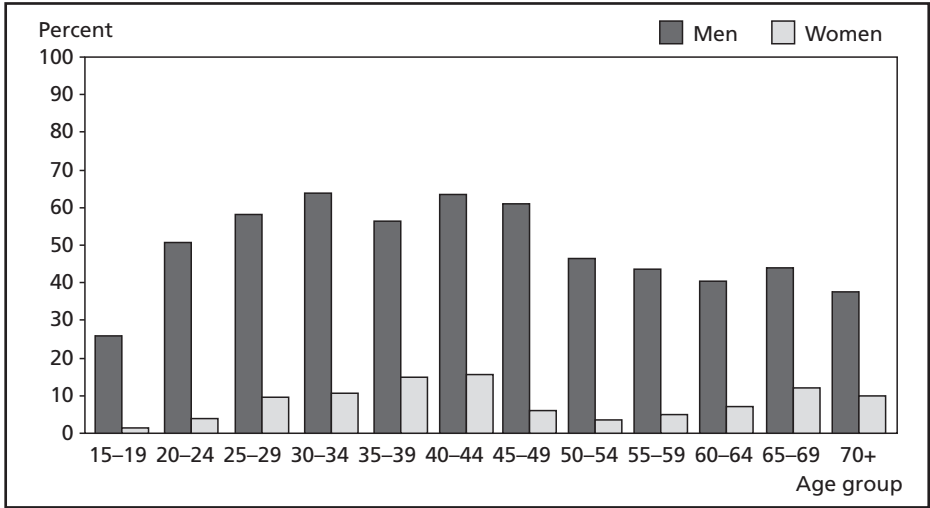
Nevertheless, there is a noticeable gender difference in smoking habits. While 49 percent of men smoke daily, only eight percent of women do the same. Four percent of men and three percent of women say they smoke from time to time. Not only are there fewer female smokers, but those women who do smoke regularly tend to smoke less than men. The mean and median³ number of cigarettes smoked daily is 16 and 17 for women, compared to 22 and 20 cigarettes for men. Furthermore, women start smoking later than men, on the average at age 21.5 as against age 17 for men. The median onset of smoking is 17 years for men as against 20 years for women. These things matter because, the earlier the smoking starts, the greater reduction in life expectancy. By way of comparison, we can contrast the LIPRIS results with those of a 1996 national living conditions survey in Jordan (Kharabsheh and Tiltnes 1998) and the 1999 living conditions survey of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon (Tiltnes 2003) which applied exactly the same methodology as the LIPRIS, and the 1997 Palestinian Health Survey (PCBS 1998).⁴ The rates of daily smoking amongst men is higher in Syria at 49 percent, with five percentage points less in Jordan and Lebanon, and 40 percent in the Palestinian territories. There is also a substantial difference in the prevalence rate for women when compared with men. Whereas the rate in Syria stands at eight percent, the study of Palestinians in Lebanon reports that 16 percent of females are daily smokers compared to less than five percent in Jordan and three percent in the West Bank and Gaza. This puts women surveyed by the LIPRIS in the middle range, between women surveyed in Lebanon and the exceptionally low number of female smokers observed in Jordan and the self-ruled Palestinian areas. The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics suggests that some under-reporting takes place due to social conventions that disapprove of smoking among the young and particularly among young women (PCBS 1998). Such norms may have had a similar effect in this survey. Even so, it does appear that only one sixth as many women as men in the Palestinian community in Syria are regular tobacco smokers.

³The mean, often called the average, is the most common measure of central tendency. Here, the values for all observations are added together and divided by the number of observations. In contrast, the median, a second measure of central tendency, is the outcome that divides a distribution of observations – ranked from low to high value – exactly into halves: half the cases will have values above the median and half will have values below the median (Bohrnstedt and Knoke 1994).

⁴The PCBS reports on persons 14 and over, and not 15 and over as reported by the three other studies.

Figure 5.6 portrays the smoking habits of Palestinians in Syria according to gender and age groups. It is evident that the difference between the genders applies to all ages. The prevalence peaks for both sexes in middle age. This is according to expectations as similar trends have been found in other studies (see for example Nuwayhid et al 1997, Tiltnes 2003).

Figure 5.6 Percentage of regular smokers (aged 15+) by gender and age groups (n=4,866).



5.6 Subjective General Health Assessment

The survey asked one randomly selected adult in each household to describe his or her own health according to a five-point scale ranging from “very good” to “very bad”. The question was posed because previous research has shown that the answer to this simple question describes the overall health situation of each individual accurately, and reflects “objective” (medical) assessment rather well (Moum 1992a). Other studies have concluded that single-item measures of self-rated health similar to the one applied in the LIPRIS correlate strongly with scores on more extensive health measurement scales (Mackenback et al 1994).

Less than 10 percent assess own health to be poor or very poor

The majority of the Palestinian refugees in Syria, more than nine in 10, consider their own health to be satisfactory. One in four respondents (25 percent) say their

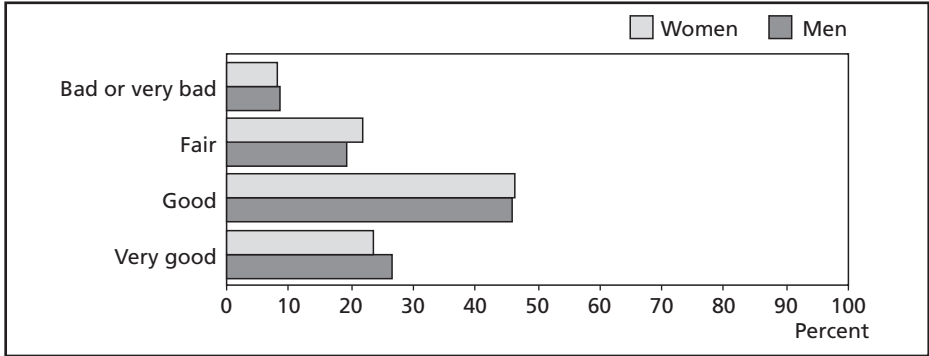
health is “very good”, almost one half (46 percent) say it is “good”, while one in five (21 percent) describe it as “fair”. Altogether, eight percent of the adults feel that their general health situation is bad or very bad. These numbers suggest that the health situation of the adult population in the Palestinian camps and gatherings in Syria is as good as that in the Palestinian refugee camps in Jordan (Khawaja and Tiltnes 2002), and substantially better than that of Palestinians in Lebanon. There, two times as many persons aged 15 and above than in Syria report poor or very poor general health (Tiltnes 2003). As shown in Figure 5.7, women’s global health is slightly poorer than that of men, but not by much.

Self-rated health best among the young, persons with high education and income; linked to other health indicators

Here we will show how self-assessed general health is associated with various individual and household background factors, including other health indicators. In doing so, although presenting all findings in the accompanying tables, we will restrain our comments to the occurrence of “very good” health.

As could be expected, and in accordance with conclusions given above, age and socio-economic status are important determinants of people’s subjective global health (Table 5.7). First, the effect of age is substantial. While extremely few in the oldest age group state that their health is excellent, almost four in 10 in the youngest age group do. Second, three times as many persons with a secondary degree or more report being in very good health compared to those who have not completed elementary schooling. Third, the relationship between the level of household income and self-rated health is clear, although perhaps not as pronounced as that between education and health. Finally, Table 5.7 indicates that health status varies by place of residence. More precisely, it appears that people residing outside of the refugee

Figure 5.7 Self-assessed general health by sex (n=4,867). Percent of persons aged 15+.



camps and Yarmouk camp (making up 10 percent of the total surveyed population) are better off. It is unclear to us why this is the case, if indeed it is the case. For this finding is not entirely consistent with the findings on other health indicators. The population of the gatherings does actually report less chronic and severe chronic illness than the two other components of the Palestinian community, but indicators of physical and psychological health here are not significantly different from that of the other two areas. The result may, therefore, be a measurement artefact not representing real-world variation. A point that supports such an argument is that the proportion that report very good *and* good health is not significantly different in the three population groups.

We have just stated that the factors influencing people’s subjective health assessment basically are the same that have an effect on other health indicators. Now, let us take a closer look at the relationship between some of these other indicators on the one side, and self-assessed global health on the other. Theoretically there should be firm associations between them. Indeed, Table 5.8 shows that such relationships exist. Twenty-seven times as many individuals without a serious chronic health fail-

Table 5.7 Self-assessed health by selected characteristics: place of residence, age, education and income groups (n=4,867).

		Very good	Good	Fair	Bad or very bad	Total
Household income	Low	19	39	26	16	100
	Lower middle	23	49	20	9	100
	Middle	24	46	21	8	100
	Upper middle	25	46	22	6	100
	High	30	48	17	5	100
Educational level completed	Less than elementary	9	30	37	25	100
	Elementary	25	49	20	6	100
	Preparatory	33	48	14	4	100
	Secondary or higher	31	52	15	2	100
Age groups	70+	0	12	37	51	100
	60-69	2	23	48	28	100
	50-59	13	31	39	17	100
	40-49	16	46	28	10	100
	30-39	22	51	21	5	100
	20-29	34	52	12	2	100
	15-19	38	51	9	2	100
Place of residence	Yarmouk camp	21	47	23	9	100
	Other camps	26	47	20	8	100
	Gathering	38	39	17	6	100
Total		25	46	21	8	100

ure claim that their general health is very good compared to those who report such longstanding problems. Conversely, half of the adults with a severe chronic illness rate their global health as poor or very poor as against only five percent of persons without such an illness. As can also be seen from Table 5.8, people with poor physical health, i.e. they report problems with carrying out many activities that usually fill our everyday lives, also assess their global health as poorer than other people. The effect of psychological health, although significant, is weaker than that of the first two factors. However, smoking, being a health risk factor, at best shows a small effect on people's assessment of their own general health.

Table 5.8 Self-assessed health by selected health risk and health indicators: smoking habits, chronic illness, physical health condition and psychological distress (n=4,867).

		Very good	Good	Fair	Bad or very bad	Total
Smoking habit	Smoking daily	23	44	23	10	100
	Do not smoke	26	47	20	8	100
Chronic illness	Has severe illness	1	9	40	50	100
	No severe illness	27	49	19	5	100
Physical health status	Very poor	3	18	40	38	100
	Poor	3	20	44	33	100
	Somewhat reduced	9	38	39	13	100
	Good	13	49	31	7	100
Psychological distress	Very good	34	53	12	1	100
	5+ symptoms	20	35	29	16	100
	3-4 symptoms	25	42	23	10	100
	1-2 symptoms	26	51	18	5	100
Total	No symptoms	28	54	13	4	100
		25	46	21	8	100

Poor health reduces labour force participation

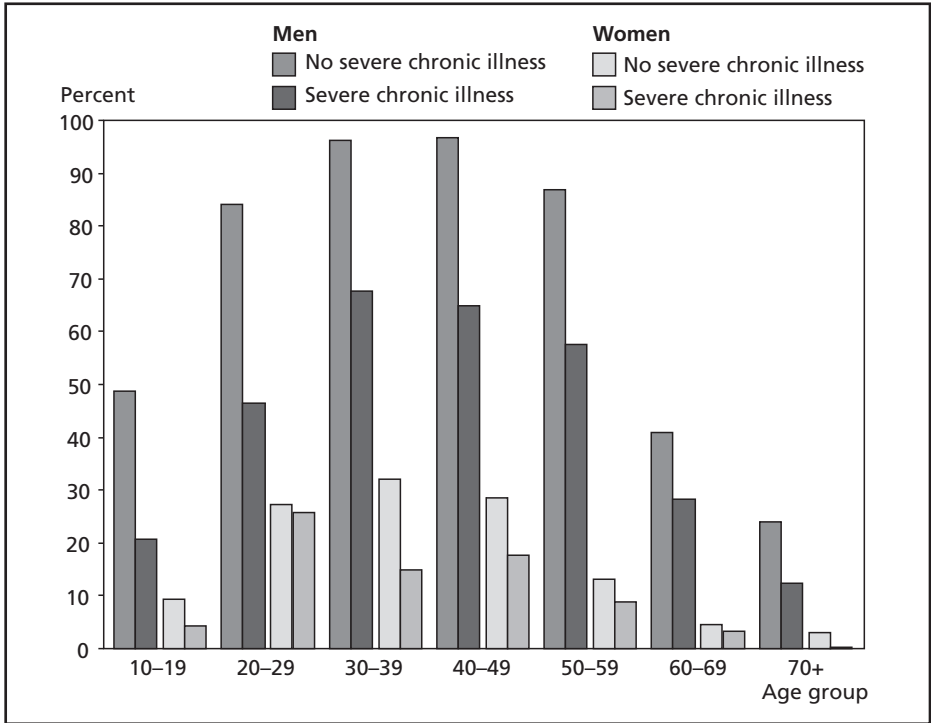
Obviously, the ability to engage in economic activities and earn a living is influenced by one's health condition. Approximately one in four adult persons with a severe chronic illness participates in the work force (as defined by the ILO; see Chapter 7 for details about the framework applied in this study), while the rate is two times higher for adults without such lasting health failure (Table 5.9). Men dominate the work force. Even among men with chronic health problems that hamper their capability to move around, almost one in two are employed, compared to less than one in 10 women in the same situation.

Table 5.9 Labour force participation rates for persons aged 15+ by gender and severity of chronic illness (n=16,946).

	No chronic illness	Chronic illness	Severe chronic illness
Men	78	60	45
Women	22	13	8
All	50	37	26

As is evident from Figure 5.8, chronic illness has a negative effect on the income-generating activities of people at all ages. Yet the largest effect is seen for men in their prime working age. For men in their twenties, the labour force participation rate is almost 40 percentage points lower among those with serious health problems compared to those who do not have such problems, and for men in their thirties and forties, the gap is close to 30 percentage points.

Figure 5.8 Labour force participation rates for men and women with and without severe chronic health problems by age groups (n=16,946).



5.7 Use of Maternity Health Services

The LIPRIS collected information about all pregnancies that Palestinian refugee women had experienced during the five years prior to the survey (altogether 4,023 pregnancies).⁵ We enquired about both pre and postnatal care, as well as where women had given birth.

Pregnancy care is the norm; a majority benefit from UNRWA's services

The vast majority of pregnant women see professional medical personnel for prenatal check-ups. Only 0.3 percent of pregnancies pass without pregnant women going to a health control and seeing a medical doctor, a midwife or a nurse. This is slightly better than reported for Palestinian refugee populations elsewhere (Khawaja and Tiltne 2002, Tiltne 2003) and much better than in the Syrian national population where as many as three in 10 women do not receive such care (PAPFAM and CBS 2002: Table 9.1). The survey found that 80 percent of all pregnant women see a medical doctor at least once, and 17 percent and 14 percent of pregnancies involve at least one check-up with a midwife and/or a nurse present, respectively.⁶ Some, of course, receive maternity assistance from more than one health professional. There are no statistically significant differences across place of residence.

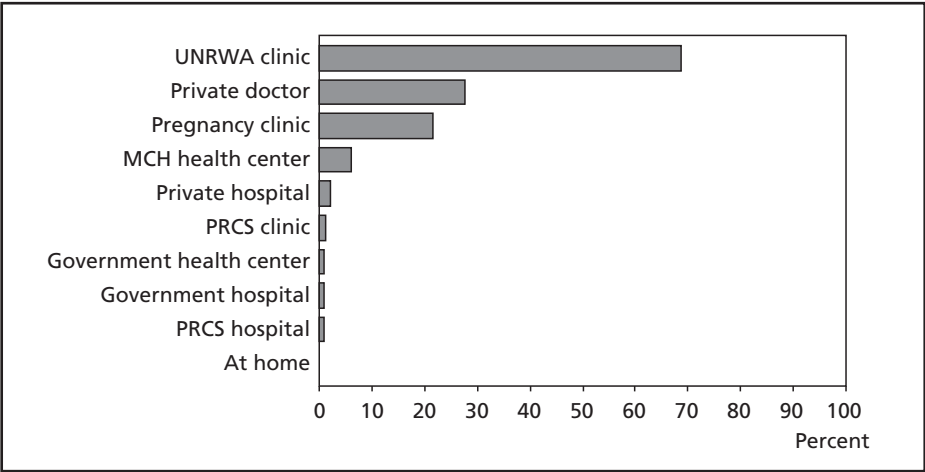
As can be seen from Figure 5.9, by far the most common provider of maternity care to Palestinian women is UNRWA: two-thirds of all pregnant women receive maternity care at one of the Agency's clinics. Many also use private doctors and clinics specialised in prenatal care, while other providers are less important and reach out to a negligible proportion of the population only. Place of visit varies somewhat across geographic locations. Private doctors are more important to pregnant women in Yarmouk camp and the South than elsewhere, while UNRWA is less important. However, even in Yarmouk and the South a majority of 55 and 63 percent of pregnancies, respectively, have included at least one visit to an UNRWA.

Two-thirds have been to a pregnancy check-up within the first three months of the pregnancy. Women on the average go to many check-ups, the median number of controls being six.

⁵ Almost seven percent of pregnancies had resulted in miscarriages/abortions, while one percent of all pregnancies ended with stillbirths.

⁶ We have excluded from the calculations those pregnancies that terminated with an abortion/miscarriage or cases where women were still pregnant at the time of the interview.

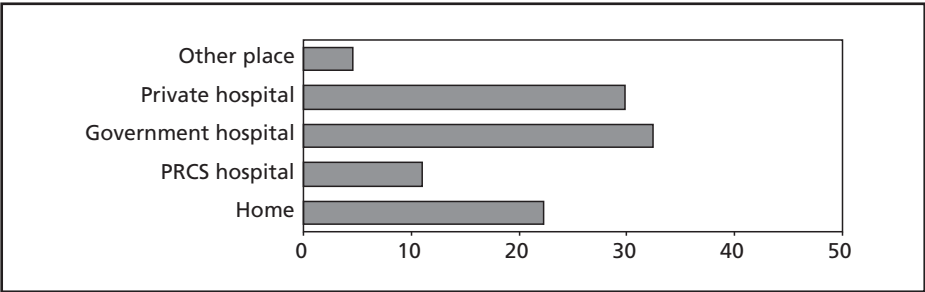
Figure 5.9 Place of visit for pregnancy check-ups. Percent of pregnancies during the past 5 years by type of health facility (some have visited more than one type) (n=3,364).



Three-quarters of deliveries at hospitals; majority attended by a physician

The bulk of deliveries (73 percent) in the five-year period before the survey took place at a hospital (Figure 5.10). Government and private hospitals were equally important while a smaller number of women gave birth at a hospital owned and managed by the Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS). One-fifth of deliveries happened in a private home, which is the same as found among Palestinian refugees in Lebanon (Tiltnes 2003).

Figure 5.10 Deliveries during the past 5 years by place of delivery (n=3,364).



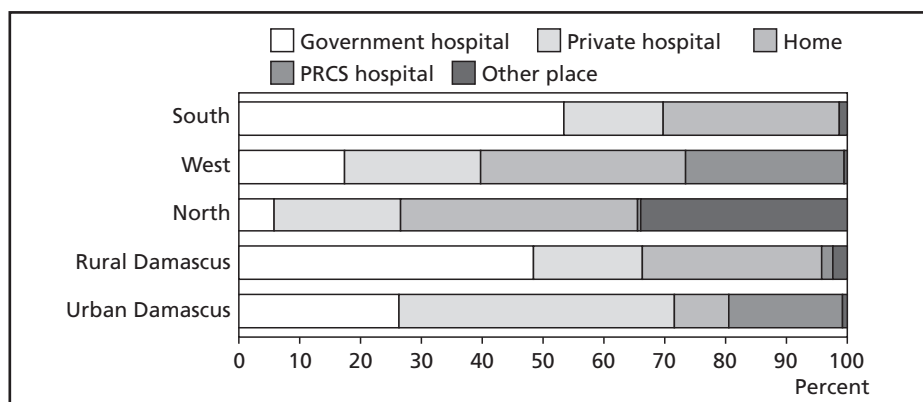
Meeting with health personnel in Ein el Tal refugee camp

A brief meeting with three professional midwives and a nurse (three of them Syrians; one Palestinian) at UNRWA's health point in Ein el Tal informed us that home deliveries are quite common among Palestinians in and around Aleppo. Professionals, usually midwives, attend all births. At the time, there was only one *dayah* (traditional midwife) residing in Ein el Tal, and she did not practise any longer. Attending midwives usually charge from SYP 1,000-2,000 per delivery, but less (SYP 500-

1,000) if the family is poor. For comparison, private hospitals charge SYP 4,000 per (uncomplicated) delivery. Nevertheless, the explanation for staying at home instead of going to a hospital to give birth was not one of cost, but rather that mothers preferred staying at home with their children and family. Even women giving birth for the first time tend to prefer doing it at home, the health workers said.

Place of delivery can be determined by factors such as traditions, availability of services, and costs. Here we look at variation by place of residence only. Surely geographic proximity, or availability, to services plays a role. Figure 5.10 indicates that people benefit from the services at hand: PRCS only serves people in Urban Damascus (mostly Yarmouk) and the Western region. On other hand, home deliveries are relatively rare in the capital as compared with all other regions. Giving birth at home is particularly common in the North (Aleppo), where four in 10 deliveries are of this type.⁷ Instead of home deliveries, giving birth at a private hospital is frequent in Urban Damascus. Government hospitals top the list over the most widespread place of delivery in the outskirts of Damascus, and in the South. These are the two regions with the highest proportion of Palestinians with rural characteristics.

Figure 5.11 Place of delivery. Percent of deliveries during the past 5 years by region (n=3,364).



⁷ The considerable proportion of deliveries at “other places” in the North suggests that LIPRIS may have overlooked a category there, probably an NGO hospital.

Overall, physicians assist 68 percent of deliveries; 35 percent have support from a midwife, 17 percent receive help from a trained nurse; while during a few deliveries (one percent) there are also traditional midwives present. A substantial proportion benefit from the presence of both a medical doctor and a midwife or a nurse. Again, there are differences across geographic locations (Table 5.10). The main observation is that deliveries in the North are assisted less by doctors and more by professional midwives, while it is the other way around in Urban Damascus. For the other regions, the situation is in between these two.

Table 5.10 Personnel assisting the delivery by region. Percent of deliveries during the past 5 years (n=3,364).

	Urban Damascus	Rural Damascus	North	West	South	All
Doctor	85.0	67.3	29.2	60.9	42.3	68.3
Midwife	21.2	36.0	72.2	41.6	47.7	34.9
Nurse	22.8	13.7	6.5	10.3	15.9	16.6
Traditional birth attendant (<i>dayah</i>)	0.6	2.1	0.6	1.9	4.3	1.4

Women were asked to evaluate the experience from their latest delivery and tell if they wanted any changes for the better. Four out of five deliveries were judged satisfactory as the respondents said no changes were needed. Almost one in 10 women (between eight and nine percent) suggested better hygiene. Six percent mentioned personnel with higher skills and two percent wanted more personnel and increased attendance. The same two points received the most complaint among Palestinian refugee women in Lebanon also, and the suggestions were put forward by about as many women (Tiltnes 2003). Else, more spacious rooms, better food and enhanced information were listed by about one percent of the respondents. A few would have preferred female personnel only. Finally, some five percent mentioned “other”, unspecified improvements. (Each respondent could put forward more than one suggestion).

One-half receive postnatal care

More than one-half (53 percent) of the deliveries were followed by post-natal check-ups of the women’s health within 40 days. The actual percentage could in fact be a bit higher, as some of the interviewees may have given birth less than 40 days prior to the interview and thus had not had the chance of going to such a control yet. Apparently, women in the Western region have an increased tendency to attend postnatal health controls in comparison with other women (60 percent), while women in the South less often receive such service (41 percent). The proportion

receiving postnatal care is slightly higher than in Lebanon and significantly higher than that reported for Jordan's refugee camps (Tiltne 2003).

We enquired why almost one-half did not opt for postnatal medical follow-up after the delivery. Almost everyone (95 percent) said there was no need. About three percent of those who had not attended a postnatal control were of the opinion it was too expensive.

5.8 Use of Health Services After Acute Illness

The LIPRIS is not concerned with the prevalence of acute illness and injury per se, but such data serve as an introduction to our focus on the use of health services. Nevertheless, the data allow comparison across age groups and other factors, data that we present below. On the subject of health services, the survey asks whether or not the persons suffering from a sudden health problem sought professional assistance, and if so, what kind of health personnel they saw, what sort of health facility was contacted, did the person travel far, and what was the out-of-pocket expenditure on consultation and treatment? We analyse data on individuals aged five years and above.

Acute illness and injury vary with age and socio-economic status

Almost seven percent suffered from acute illness (92 percent of all cases) or injury (eight percent of cases) at some point during the two weeks prior to the interview. Females had slightly more problems than males. The elderly report acute illness more frequently than the younger generation (Figure 5.12), and equally so between the sexes (not shown). As shown in the Figure, acute illness is reported more often among those with little formal education and among people residing in low-income households. On the other hand, acute illness decreases with higher education and income. The relationship between education and income on the one hand and acute illness on the other is robust even when controlled for age (Table 5.11, Table 5.12). However, as can be seen in Figure 5.12, the largest impact on the prevalence rate of acute illness is caused by chronic health failure. In fact, individuals having a severe longstanding health problem experienced acute illness four times more often than other people.

For all individuals over the age of five, the severity of the acute illness was assessed by enquiring if it had prevented him or her from carrying out normal duties such as playing, going to school or work, or doing domestic chores for a period of three days or more. About two thirds (64 percent) of the acutely ill, constituting some four percent in the age group, had a serious episode of illness as defined here.

Figure 5.12 Prevalence of acute illness (including injury) among persons 5 years and over during the past two weeks by various background factors (n=23,484); percent.

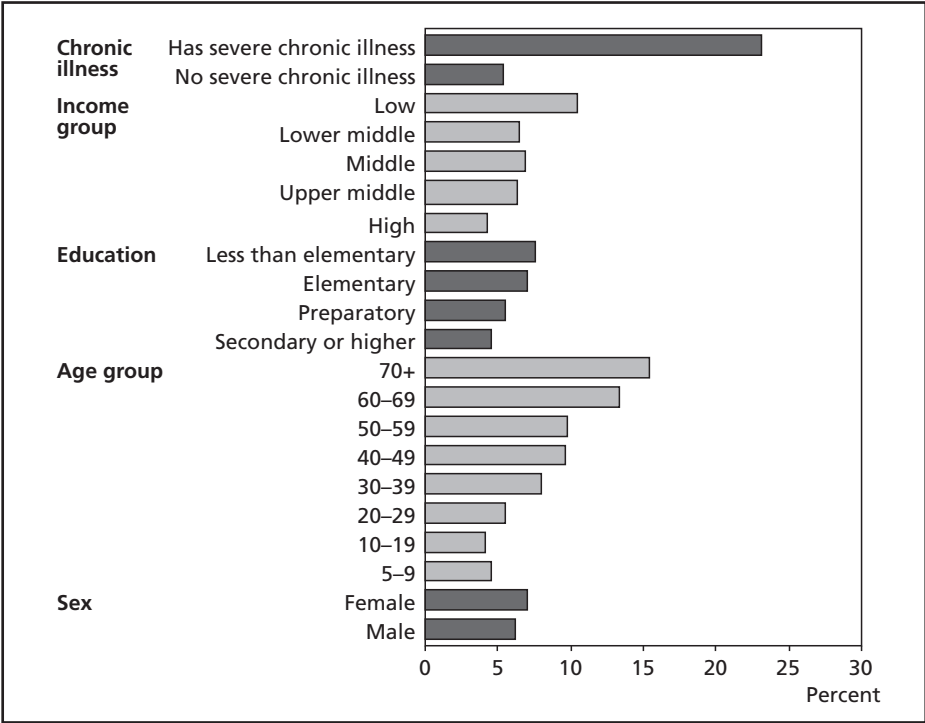


Table 5.11 Incidence of acute illness during the past two weeks by age and educational attainment; percent of persons 15+ (n=16,921).

Age group	Less than elementary	Elementary	Preparatory	Secondary or higher
15-29	7.4	5.6	4.2	3.7
30-44	12.3	10.4	7.7	4.7
45+	14.3	11.1	8.3	6.2
Total	12.3	7.7	5.6	4.6

Table 5.12 Incidence of acute illness during the past two weeks by age and income groups; percent of persons 5+ (n=23,457).

Age group	Low	Lower middle	Middle	Upper middle	Upper
5-14	5.4	4.1	4.3	4.5	3.2
15-29	9.2	4.8	5.7	4.9	2.9
30-44	12.2	9.3	8.6	7.6	5.1
45+	17.1	10.7	11.9	11.0	8.3
Total	10.4	6.5	6.8	6.4	4.3

Majority of sick consult private medical providers

Four in five refugees seek medical consultation outside of the household during acute illness. Roughly one fourth of those who did not seek medical consultation said they did not need help; one half treated themselves with modern medicines (46 percent) or traditional methods (three percent), while one in five (21 percent) reported that they could not afford professional services. Although we advise caution due to a rather limited number of observations, it looks as if individuals from low-income households and households with poorly educated heads chose not to seek medical consultation for economic reasons more often than others did (Table 5.13).

Apart from the economic factor, geographic proximity and the quality of services are factors that determine what kind of service someone will use when acutely ill. We return to these two relevant aspects as part of a discussion of health services in a moment. Let us first look at where people go and who they see. We start with the latter issue.

Table 5.13 Reasons for not consulting anyone following acute illness by education of household head and household income (n=279).

		No need	Cannot afford treatment	Traditional self-treatment	Modern self-treatment	Other reason	Total
Household income	Low	11	45	7	27	10	100
	Lower middle	23	29	1	41	6	100
	Middle	38	12	6	42	2	100
	Upper middle	19	12	-	65	5	100
	High	32	8	2	48	9	100
Education of household head	Less than basic	21	38	6	29	6	100
	Basic	23	18	1	50	8	100
	Secondary	20	23	2	50	5	100
	Post-secondary	35	5	7	49	5	100
All	24	21	3	46	6	100	

More than one half (52 percent) of those who consulted someone went to a specialist doctor, while 42 percent consulted a general doctor. The remaining saw a pharmacist or other person. Our data indicate that the richest one-fifth of the population are more likely to see a specialist (58 percent as opposed to 48 to 54 percent for the other four income groups). However, the difference is not large and should be treated with some caution. Furthermore, we should not necessarily interpret this as an effect of socio-economic standing. Instead, it may be a result of (geographic) availability. For

example, residents of Yarmouk camp also tend to see specialists more frequently (58 percent) than people living in other camps (45 percent) and gatherings (55 percent). Income levels on the whole seem to be above average in Yarmouk (see Chapter 8), as does the availability of doctors and medical specialists.

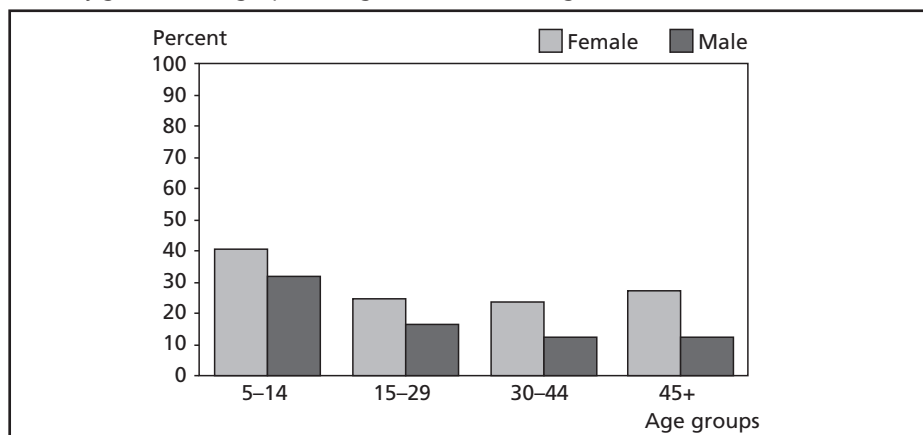
Regarding place of consultation, almost one in two visited a private clinic, while half that many (23 percent) consulted UNRWA. As we see from Table 5.14 more women than men address UNRWA for help. We can think of several explanations for this. One explanation is that the UNRWA clinics are usually open during day time only (from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.), making it harder for the employed, of which the majority are male, to benefit from the Agency's services. The employed (men) tend to see a private doctor after working hours. If something really serious should occur that needs immediate medical attention, it is more likely that they will go, or are taken, directly to a hospital or a specialist than to an UNRWA clinic. A second explanation is related to UNRWA's well-developed mother and child care programmes and the fact that many women are familiar with the Agency's services. What is more, a number of the health problems experienced by women may be directly related to childbearing and, since a majority of pregnant women visit UNRWA clinics for check-ups, it is quite natural for them to go there if complications should occur. Nevertheless, and for whatever reason, females of all ages use UNRWA services more than males following acute infirmity (Figure 5.13).

Table 5.14 furthermore shows that UNRWA clinics are more popular among individuals from the poorest income groups and among the non-insured. This, no doubt, is related to cost of services which, as we shall see below, are the lowest at UNRWA. The Table also suggests that, when acutely ill, Palestinian refugees in Yarmouk camp visit UNRWA clinics less often than refugees living in other camps or gatherings. This may be explained by the close proximity of alternative health facilities in Yarmouk compared to facilities serving other living areas. An alternative, or complementary, explanation may be the higher income levels in Yarmouk.

Table 5.14 Place consulted after acute illness, by gender, age, income, health insurance and type of living area; percentage of those aged 5+ who sought consultation (n=1,151).

	PRCS hospital	Private hospital	Government hospital	Private clinic	UNRWA clinic	Other provider	Total
Gender							
Male	4	7	13	46	17	13	100
Female	5	4	8	48	28	8	100
Age group							
5-14	6	4	9	35	36	10	100
15-29	3	5	12	53	21	6	100
30-44	4	5	9	50	18	13	100
45+	5	6	10	46	21	12	100
Income group							
Low	4	4	10	41	33	9	100
Lower middle	4	4	10	50	22	9	100
Middle	5	6	15	47	19	8	100
Upper middle	4	7	9	49	20	12	100
High	6	5	7	49	19	14	100
Health insurance							
Not insured	5	5	10	47	24	9	100
Insured	3	8	10	46	9	23	100
Type of area							
Yarmouk camp	6	7	11	43	19	14	100
Other camps	4	4	10	49	26	7	100
Gathering	1	2	6	56	28	7	100
All	5	5	10	47	23	10	100

Figure 5.13 Percentage of persons aged 5+ receiving consultation from UNRWA following acute illness by gender and age; percentage of those who sought consultation (n=1,151).



Three in 10 patients travel afar

While 43 percent of acutely ill persons receive professional medical assistance within the *hara* or neighbourhood where they live, 26 percent travel within the locality or town, and 29 percent will travel to see a medical doctor or similar in another locality or town. Table 5.15 displays distance travelled from place of residence to place of consultation by various background factors. First, it shows variation according to geography: people residing in Yarmouk refugee camp have easier access to health services than people dwelling in other refugee camps or outside of camps. This is reflected in the distance travelled across regions – we see that residents in the capi-

Table 5.15 Travel distance to place of consultation and treatment following acute illness (n=1,149) (no travel, i.e. home treatment not included).

	Within neighbourhood	Within locality/town	To another or nearest locality/town
Type of area			
Yarmouk camp	51	27	20
Other camp	36	26	37
Gathering	36	26	35
Region			
Damascus urban	49	27	21
South	49	14	37
West	43	21	32
Damascus rural	33	32	34
North	29	17	53
Place consulted			
Other	62	8	16
UNRWA clinic	59	38	3
PRCS hospital	54	27	14
Private clinic	37	29	34
Private hospital	28	22	51
Government hospital	18	9	72
Type of physician			
Regular	46	31	21
Specialist	35	25	37
Income group			
Low	36	33	29
Lower middle	43	31	22
Middle	42	23	35
Upper middle	46	22	30
High	49	20	28
All	43	26	29

tal, or “Damascus urban” as the Table labels it, are better off. Of the five regions, “Damascus rural” and particularly the North do poorly. In the latter region more than one-half of consultations take place after travelling from the place of residence to a health care facility in a different locality, for example a trip from Neirab refugee camp to the city of Aleppo.

Second, Table 5.15 demonstrates variation by type and authority of health care facility. Disregarding those who see “other” providers, patients visiting UNRWA clinics travel the shortest distances. People basically do not need to travel far to receive assistance at UNRWA facilities, and can obtain professional help through UNRWA services found close to their homes. However, people will travel farther to reach private and especially government hospitals. Many specialists are found there something that arguably contributes to the finding that people – as might be expected – tend to travel longer distances to see specialist doctors.

Third, access to needed (or desired) health services appears to be harder for the poorest patients. This situation is in keeping with what was written above, namely that the residents of Yarmouk – harbouring about one-half of the Palestinian refugees in Syria – have the easiest access to health services and are the least impoverished of the surveyed population.

5.9 Medical Insurance

As stated at the opening of this chapter, public health care is basically free for all in Syria, including Palestinian refugees. None of the insurance companies in the country run medical insurance programmes.⁸ Nevertheless, some private businesses, government companies, public ministries and directorates have systems whereby medicines, treatment and care, including advanced surgery, are provided free of charge (or greatly subsidised) to their employees. Some schemes have contracted certain specialist doctors, clinics and hospitals, whereas in other schemes the insured are freer to choose among the services available on the market. The general principle seems to be that the insured does not pay any fee for the “insurance” (for example a deduction from their salaries). Rather, it is seen as part of the employee’s remuneration. In some “insurance plans” the dependants (spouse, children) of the employees are covered, while in other plans only the employees themselves are.

Although the services provided may vary considerably between different programmes, being covered by a programme gives the insured a benefit over the non-

⁸ Information about health insurance was provided by Ali Mostafa, Director of GAPAR and before that Director of an insurance company; interview, 21 April 2002.

insured. As a consequence health insurance - and we will use this term here – is an important determinant of accessibility and utilisation of health services. Below we will describe how insurance is distributed in the surveyed population and explore its effect on the utilization of services.

Less than one tenth insured; highest coverage in the North

Only seven percent of the refugees in camps and gatherings benefit from health insurance. A slightly higher proportion of males than females hold medical insurance (Figure 5.14). Also, the distribution of medical insurance varies by socio-economic status, represented by three variables in the Figure: yearly household income, educational attainment of household head, and the heads' relation to the labour market. There are, for instance, more than three times as many medical insurance holders in the highest income groups than the lowest one, and a similar relationship exists between the highest and lowest education group. Moreover, in households with employed heads eight percent are covered compared to only three percent in households where the head is outside of the labour force. Also, insurance holders tend to be adults of working age. The above information indicates that medical insurance is associated with employment rather than being purchased in the market as is the case in many other countries, including in Jordan and Lebanon.

Indeed, the proportion of insured rises when only adults in the labour force are accounted for. Among the employed 11 percent are insured. As Figure 5.15 reveals, the largest proportion of medical insurance holders work within public administration, and education, health and social work.

When it comes to medical insurance coverage, the survey shows no significant difference between persons living in camps and those residing in gatherings, or between urban and rural areas. However, Palestinian refugees in the northern region are more often insured than refugees residing elsewhere (Figure 5.14). This may be explained by variation in employment sectors (industries) across the different regions. The most important industries for Palestinian refugees in the North are manufacturing and mining, and public administration – sectors where, as we have just seen, the insurance coverage is high. For example, the nearby Ghee factory, a manufacturing company, is an important employer for residents of Neirab camp. In Ein el-Tell camp on the opposite side of Aleppo, a relatively high proportion of people work in education and public administration, which are also sectors with more insurance holders than other sectors.

Figure 5.14 Percentage of medical insurance holders by various determinants: gender; household income; education and employment of household head; age; and place of residence (n=26,820).

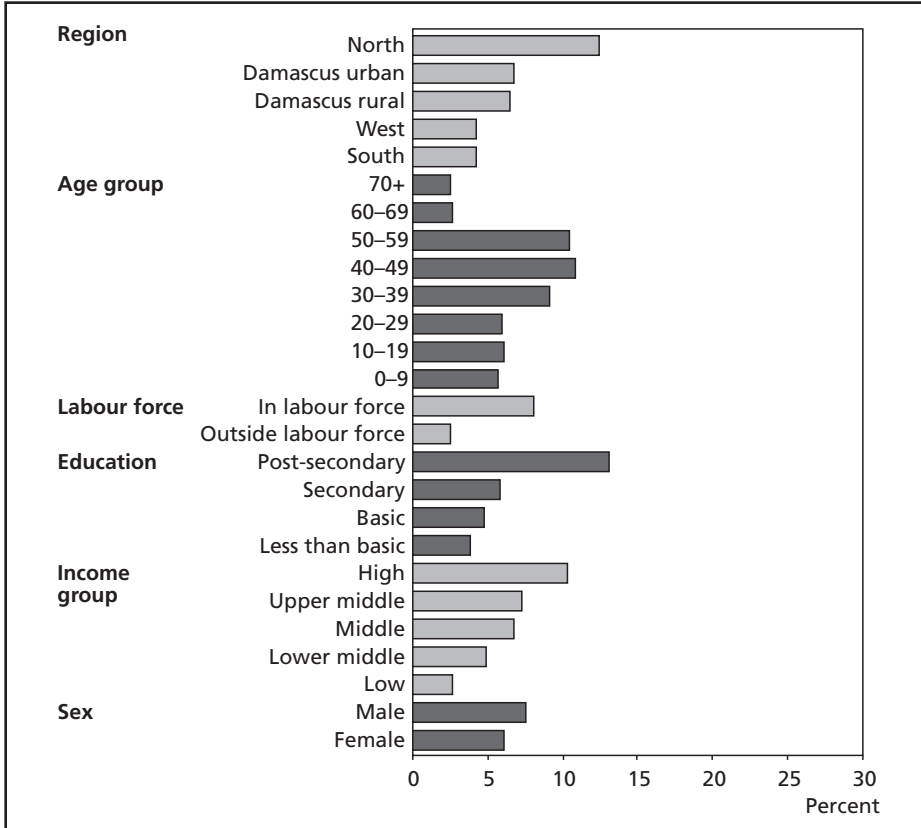
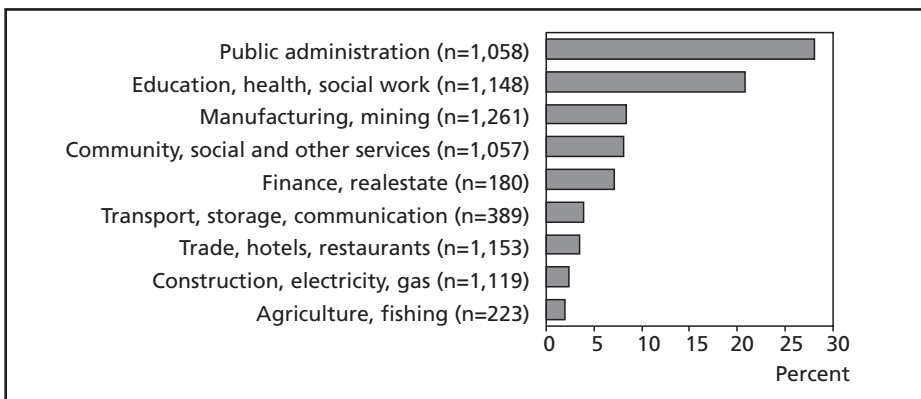


Figure 5.15 Percentage of adult (15+) labour force members with medical insurance by sector of employment (n=7,588).



The insured more frequent users of health services

In countries where medical insurance is more widespread than in Syria, one typically finds that insured persons utilise health care facilities more often than those lacking insurance. This trend is also prevalent among Palestinian refugees in Syria, where 89 percent of insured people contrasted with 79 percent of non-insured people had sought professional help following acute illness. However, since the number of insured persons is so small, it does not have a large overall effect on the total number of consultations.

Furthermore, insured Palestinian refugees tend to use UNRWA clinics less and private services more than Palestinian refugees with no insurance (see Table 5.14).

5.10 Expenditure on Health Services

Overall, 45 percent of those who consulted someone following acute illness did not pay anything for the services. Twenty-five percent did not pay for treatment. As mentioned at the outset of this chapter, public and UNRWA medical consultation is basically free of charge. In contrast, private medical services require fees. These differences are clearly reflected in Table 5.16, which presents the costs of all surveyed individuals aged five years and above who sought professional assistance after suffering acute illness during the two weeks preceding the interview. On average the total out-of-pocket expenditure per visit (consultation and/or treatment) in private clinics is about seven times more expensive than in UNRWA clinics, while consultation and treatment at private hospitals costs, on average, three times more than at government hospitals. Average total costs range from 163 Syrian pounds at UNRWA clinics to 3,535 pounds at private hospitals. These differences arise as a result of various subsidies and hence price policies between the service providers, but also result from the fact that the various providers offer different types of services, some more costly than others.

Salem private hospital in Khan Eshieh camp, 26 June 2002

Dr. Mohammad Agag, Director of Salem private hospital in Khan Eshieh refugee camp, provides the following information about his institution and hospital costs: Salem is a small hospital, which receives on the average 4-5 emergency cases (including severe traffic accidents) a day, offers a variety of surgical procedures (including heart surgery), receives mothers for delivery,

etc. An operation (including a caesarean) typically costs SYP 8,000 (USD 160). Birth deliveries cost SYP 2,500 (USD 50). In addition, patients pay SYP 500 (USD 10) per night. A nurse earns SYP 4,000 (USD 80) a month. A doctor would usually receive one-half of the cost of an operation, while the hospital would get the other half.

Table 5.16 Consultation and treatment costs and total out-of-pocket expenditure in SYP following acute illness during the past two weeks; percentage in various expenditure groups, and mean and median costs (n=1,151).

	PRCS hospital (n=57)	Private hospital (n=59)	Government hospital (n=115)	Private clinic (n=542)	UNRWA clinic (n=259)	Other (n=114)	All (n=1,151)
Consultation costs							
0	40	21	70	12	96	70	45
1-199	39	8	11	26	2	14	17
200-499	8	15	7	40	1	9	22
500+	12	55	12	22	0	8	16
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Mean	154	1,723	217	326	11	70	281
Median	50	500	0	200	0	0	75
Treatment costs							
0	20	12	23	7	72	14	25
1-199	26	11	14	19	13	47	20
200-499	32	20	25	33	9	22	25
500-999	13	21	19	19	2	10	14
1,000+	9	35	20	22	3	6	16
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Mean	307	1,778	1,020	781	152	329	644
Median	200	500	300	300	0	100	200
Total out-of-pocket expenditure							
0	16	12	20	4	73	14	23
1-399	47	7	36	25	21	62	29
400-999	23	21	20	40	3	17	25
1,000+	14	59	24	31	3	7	22
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Mean	461	3,535	1,249	1,109	163	399	927
Median	269	1,449	300	600	0	100	350

Table 5.17 shows how total expenditure varies by level of household income. It appears that persons from poorer households tend to pay *slightly* lower fees than persons from more affluent households (a higher proportion paying nothing and a lower proportion paying more than 1,000 Syrian pounds in the lowest income group; lower median expenditure in the two lowest groups). Yet the overall picture is one of relative similarity across the five income groups. How can this be? The better coverage of health insurance in the higher-income households and thus the reduced costs incurred by them compared to the non-insured is perhaps balanced

by their tendency to choose more expensive services. Added to that, persons belonging to so-called “special hardship cases” (SHC) households, and thus more often in the lowest income groups⁹, receive substantial subsidies for hospitalisation from UNRWA, paying only five percent of their hospital bills and 12 percent of other hospital costs recognized by UNRWA.

Table 5.17 Total out-of-pocket expenditure following acute illness during the past two weeks; percentage in various expenditure groups, and mean and median costs; by household income (n=1,140).

	Income group					All
	Low	Lower middle	Middle	Higher middle	High	
0	27.5	25.7	20.3	22.8	20.4	23.6
1-399	29.1	29.3	29.4	29.5	28.6	29.2
400-999	25.7	22.0	24.7	26.3	27.3	25.2
1,000+	17.8	22.9	25.7	21.4	23.6	22.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Mean	934	762	984	1,025	913	927
Median	300	300	400	350	400	350

5.11 Satisfaction with Services

The majority of Palestinian refugees surveyed by the LIPRIS claim to have health facilities in their neighbourhood or within easy reach (5–10 minute walk). Almost everyone has a physician (98 percent), pharmacy (98 percent), dentist (97 percent), or a health clinic (96 percent) in the vicinity of his or her home. Just about two-thirds (64 percent) even have a hospital in close proximity of their dwelling.

The survey asked about the households’ general satisfaction with the health services they were offered. Here we assume that geographic accessibility as well as other factors such as the cost and quality of services were taken into consideration when the answers were given. In most instances, the respondents to these questions were housewives. The results are displayed in Table 5.18. Almost eight in 10 households state that they are very or fairly satisfied with the health service, whereas less than 10 percent hold the opinion that the services are fairly or very unsatisfactory.

Table 5.18 indicates only minor variation across place of residence and income level. Apparently, people in the Western region (Homs and Hama) are more content than people elsewhere. Also, refugee households in Yarmouk camp are more

⁹ Some 55 percent of SHC individuals belong to the two lowest income clusters.

satisfied with the overall health services than refugees residing in other camps or gatherings. Furthermore, the higher-income households express more satisfaction than the middle and lower-income households. This is most likely so because they have a somewhat higher propensity to make use of private institutions which provide services of a comparatively higher standard (and are also rated as giving better service and care – see below) than public institutions. This said, the main conclusion to be drawn from Table 5.18 is that Palestinian refugees in Syria of different socio-economic backgrounds and residing in different places are in agreement about the health services as a whole.

Table 5.18 Satisfaction with services following acute illness, by place of living area and household income; percent of persons aged 5+ acutely ill during the past two weeks (n=1,054).

	Very satisfactory	Rather satisfactory	Acceptable	Rather unsatisfactory	Very unsatisfactory	Total
Type of area						
Yarmouk camp	62.0	18.9	11.9	3.4	3.8	100.0
Other camps	56.2	19.5	15.5	3.7	5.1	100.0
Gathering	56.2	16.2	12.7	6.1	8.8	100.0
Region						
Damascus	56.4	20.0	14.2	4.0	5.4	100.0
North	58.8	16.1	20.1	4.0	1.0	100.0
West	72.4	14.0	9.4	2.6	1.5	100.0
South	60.6	18.9	6.1	3.7	10.8	100.0
Income group						
High	56.0	17.0	16.9	4.1	5.9	100.0
Higher middle	55.2	20.4	15.7	4.1	4.6	100.0
Middle	56.0	19.5	14.0	5.1	5.5	100.0
Lower middle	61.3	19.0	12.4	3.7	3.5	100.0
Lower middle	62.9	18.4	11.1	2.6	5.0	100.0
All	58.7	18.9	13.7	3.8	4.9	100.0

High overall satisfaction with health care actually provided, but lowest with UNRWA

Among camp and gathering refugees in Syria who sought medical consultation following acute illness in the recent two weeks prior to the interview, there is a high overall satisfaction with the medical services received. In as many as 83 percent of cases, people reported overall satisfaction with the services provided. This is a slightly higher figure than for Palestinian refugees in both Lebanon (Tiltnes 2003) and Jordan (Khawaja and Tiltnes 2002). Furthermore, this is a mildly more posi-

tive assessment than the more general feedback on health services given above. A 62 percent majority were very satisfied with the services and 21 percent reported that they were fairly satisfied with the services, while six percent were neutral and 11 percent were unsatisfied. The respondents reported higher satisfaction with specialist doctors (88 percent) than with general practitioners (76 percent).

There is nothing in our data indicating that males rate their experience any differently from females, or that there is any significant variation according to age. Regarding place of consultation, those visiting private hospitals and clinics are more satisfied than other users (87 percent and 86 percent report satisfaction). UNRWA clinics received the poorest rating with 76 percent saying they were very or fairly satisfied (Table 5.19). In addition UNRWA received the highest proportion of dissatisfaction with two times as many patients reporting dissatisfaction with their services as compared to patients who received treatment and care at private clinics.

Table 5.19 Satisfaction with services following acute illness, by place of consultation; percent of persons 5+ acutely ill during the past two weeks (n=1,054).

	Very satisfied	Rather satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	dissatisfied	Total
Private hospital	63.9	22.6	0.0	13.4	100.0
Private clinic	65.4	20.6	5.1	8.9	100.0
PRCS hospital	56.8	24.8	4.8	13.6	100.0
Government hospital	52.0	28.6	11.0	8.4	100.0
UNRWA clinic	55.1	21.0	6.5	17.4	100.0

One reason for the relatively high number of unsatisfied clients at UNRWA clinics may be lack of medicines in these clinics as the Agency only distributes medicines to its facilities every third month. It is also possible that refugees have higher expectations of UNRWA than of public hospitals. As treatment is free of charge in both government and UNRWA clinics, the cost of services is not a factor explaining why clients are more displeased with UNRWA than other providers. More likely, a client's satisfaction with health facilities stems from availability and quality of services. Being stationed in all camps, UNRWA is available for all but, taken into consideration the high number of patients per doctor at UNRWA clinics, the perception is of less availability. Average number of patients per doctor per day was 98 in 1999 (UNRWA 2000a). If a doctor receives 98 patients per day, it must have an effect on the quality of the consultation given and, furthermore, patients unable to spend a lot of time waiting for consultation will seek alternative providers, if possible.

6 Social Networks

Laurie Blome Jacobsen

In this chapter we describe patterns of nuclear and extended family formation and settlement patterns. Variation in these patterns is also described, as many factors influence with whom and where families decide to locate. It is commonly held that rural households, for example, have more closely-knit family networks than do urban. Here, we can determine whether or not this is the case among refugee households. In contrast, does the refugee camp represent a homogeneous, unifying entity such that even urban camps have similar family networks as those in rural areas? Another related aspect of family networks is whether or not there appears to be a drift of younger family members into urban areas for employment opportunities and other reasons – which could be the case if we see smaller family networks in rural areas among older household heads. It is traditionally held that the Arab family is close-knit, homogenous with a preference for marriage between first or second cousins in order to retain that homogeneity and family resources. Data collected on attitudes towards marriage, and actual marriage practices can tell us whether or not this view reflects reality among Palestinian refugees in Syria.

In addition we also consider the “strength” of their family network. Living nearby does not mean that family members automatically have much contact, regardless of how many there are. To measure the strength of the family tie we use proxy measures such as how often family members visit one another and how often they give, take or exchange various kinds of help among one another. With the same data, we can determine general patterns of exchange within families. This describes the flow of social welfare value from and to distinct groups (from young to old, for example).

An implicit assumption is often made that geographic access to family networks, visitation patterns and exchanges of help can tell us whether or not a family network is a “supportive” one. In other words, the network has more social capital for its members, the larger it is and the more frequently members have contact or exchange help. To make this direct line of reasoning, a social network analysis, including data on the perceptions of closeness among family members and more complete data on their interaction, would be necessary. For example, members may feel very close to and gain much support from family members who do not live nearby but with whom they have frequent telephone contact. Our survey would not capture this since we gather information only on geographic closeness and physical visits.

6.1 Type, Size and Geographic Proximity of Family Networks

Household type

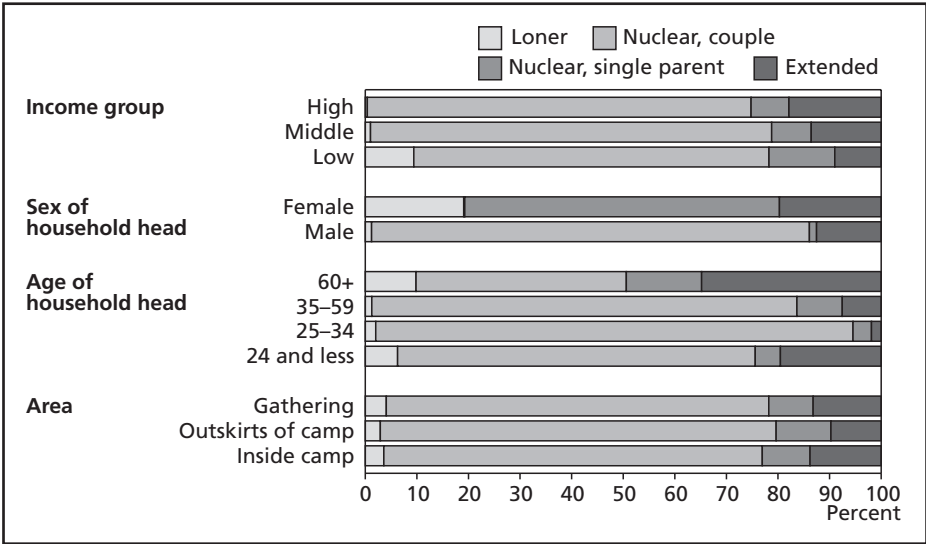
The types of households families form and the settlement of households near larger family networks are similar among camp and gathering refugees in Syria, as against those found in the region as a whole. Few people live alone. Even young unmarried persons and extended households (those with non-nuclear members living together) are commonly found, but the predominant household type is the nuclear family (83 percent). A "nuclear" family is here understood as a couple with or without children, or a single person with children (2nd to 6th row in Table 6.1). This distribution of the camp and gathering refugee population in Syria across different types of households does not vary according to whether the households are in camps or gatherings, or by urban or rural location.

Table 6.1 Household type. Percent of households (n=4,487).

Person living without family	3.6
Couple without children	4.8
Couple with youngest child above 14 years	10.2
Couple with youngest child 14 years or less	58.7
Single with youngest child above 14 years	5.8
Single with youngest child 14 years or less	3.5
Extended family	13.5
Total	100.0

Aside from the expected variation as the household moves through the lifecycle, certain characteristics of household types stand out (Figure 6.1). This is most apparent for lone households and single parent households, both of which are poorer. About one in 10 households are single parent, and nearly all of these are headed by females (80 to 90 percent). Half of these households fall into the lowest income category. This is more frequent than all other household types, except lone households. Lone households, moreover, are also mostly females (70 percent) and elderly (68 percent), and most are poor, with 87 percent falling into the lowest income bracket. In contrast, extended families are slightly better off, are often quite large households (20 percent of them have 10 or more persons), and are usually headed by an elderly family member (64 percent have heads over 60 years of age).

Figure 6.1 Household type by background factors. Percent of households (n=4,487).

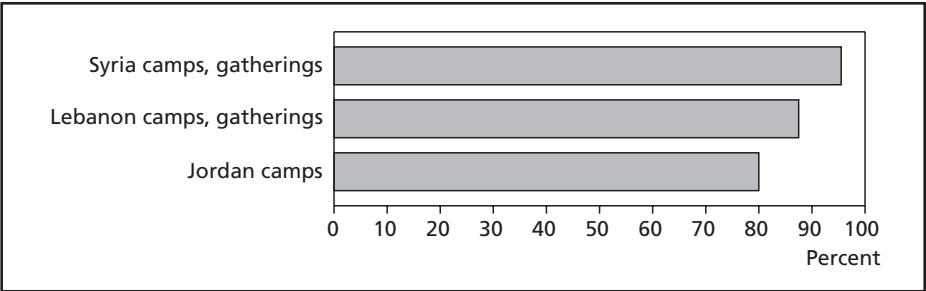


Any family living nearby

Nearly all camp and gathering refugee households are settled among family and relatives (95 percent). By “settled among”, we mean that there are relatives of either the head or spouse living in the *hara* or neighbourhood, or so close that it is possible to walk to visit them.

Figure 6.2 shows that camp and gathering refugees in Syria are more often closely settled among family than Palestinian refugees elsewhere in the region. Moreover, few household characteristics would change this tendency. We would expect to see less settlement among family in urban areas, for example, or in younger households, but this is not the case in Syria. The only factor which results in any meaningful difference in the number of people living among family is that lone households do so somewhat less often (85 percent).

Figure 6.2 Percent of Palestinian refugee households with any family living nearby.



What kind of family members live nearby?

The LIPRIS asked both the head of household and their spouse specifically what types of relatives lived nearby. Siblings are the most common kind of relatives that households chose to settle near. About five in 10 wives and seven in 10 husbands live close by their siblings (Figure 6.3). It is also quite common to live near parents.

Another way in which refugees in Syria have somewhat different social network patterns than refugees elsewhere in the region is that there is less gender bias in the local relative network. Elsewhere, we see households settle predominantly among “patrilateral” relatives, that is near to the husband’s family, his father’s over his mother’s and so on. However, although there are somewhat more of the husband’s relatives than the wife’s in Syria, this difference between the husband and wife’s relations is much less pronounced than has been found in previous studies of refugees in Jordan or Lebanon. This may be due to less mobility in general among refugees in Syria compared to elsewhere, particularly compared to refugees in Jordan. In the latter

Figure 6.3 Percent of households having relatives living nearby, by type of husband and wife’s relatives (n=4,887).

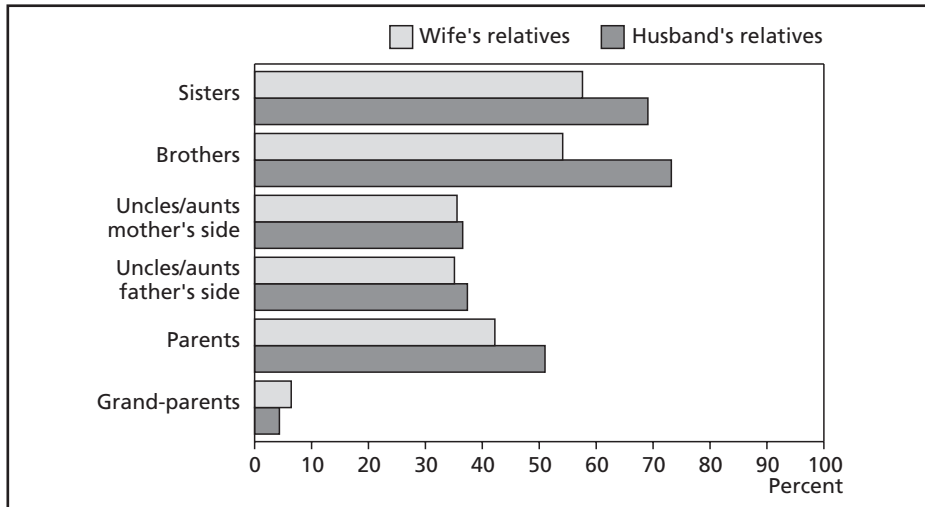


Table 6.2 Types of relatives living nearby. Percent of households (n=4,675).

	Camp	Gathering	All
No relatives nearby	4.5	4.0	4.5
Lineals nearby	29.9	38.6	30.7
Collaterals nearby	0.5	0.4	0.5
Lineals and collaterals nearby	65.2	57.0	64.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

setting, quite a lot of movement of households into and out of refugee camps, and between different camps has been found (Khawaja and Tiltnes 2002), while in Syria there is very little.

“Lineal” relations are the most common type of relative living nearby. These include siblings, parents, grandparents, children and grandchildren. “Collateral” relations, which include cousins, aunts and uncles, nephews and nieces, less often live close by. Table 6.2 shows the distribution of types of family networks according to lineal and collateral types. Families with relatives of both lineal and collateral type are considered to be “complex” networks. Gathering residents less often have complex family networks than camp residents.

Size of the local family network

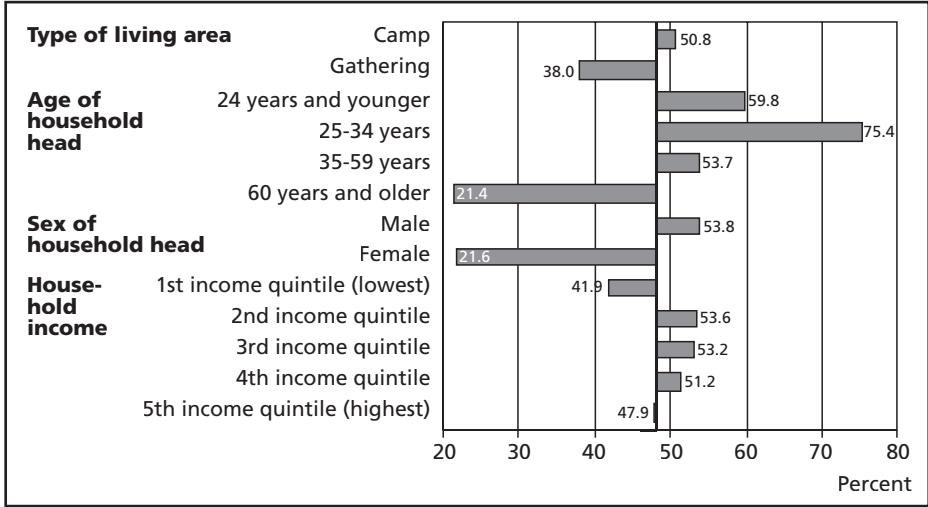
The size of the local family network is grouped as: none; some (one through 10 members); and many (11 or more members). The majority of households (six in 10) have quite large family networks, with 11 or more family members living nearby. Camp refugees in Syria have larger local family networks than are found among refugees elsewhere. For example, among camp refugees in Lebanon, five in 10 have 11 or more family members living nearby. Within Syria, local family networks are larger among camp than gathering residents. In general, the more complex the family networks, the larger the network will be. Some 90 percent of households with both lineal and collateral family members also have “many” relatives nearby.

Table 6.3 Size of local family network. Percent of households (n=4,675).

	Camp	Gathering	All
None nearby	4.5	4.0	4.5
Some nearby (1–10)	36.0	48.6	37.2
Many nearby (11+)	59.5	47.4	58.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

When we combine the measures of size of the local family network (density) and variety (complexity), differences among groups in Syria become more pronounced (Figure 6.4). Female and elderly headed households are least likely to have complex and dense family networks. Younger heads have more extensive family networks up to age 34, then the size and variety decreases through successive age groups thereafter. Those in the lowest and highest income groups have extensive family networks less often than those in the middle income groups. This is, in part, due to the fact that household types with smaller and less diverse networks (loner, female-headed, elderly) also more often are low income than others.

Figure 6.4 Percent of households with complex and dense local family networks by household income, sex and age of household head, and type of living area. Bars represent distance from mean of 49 percent.



Satisfaction with distance to relatives and friends

Satisfaction with the household’s distance to relatives and friends is high among camp and gathering refugees in Syria, with some 85 percent satisfied with the former and some 90 percent with the latter (Table 6.4). Surprisingly, there is little relationship between satisfaction with distance to relatives and the actual access household’s have to some relatives nearby. Among those with no relatives at all only 16 percent are dissatisfied (compared to 14 percent overall). There are, however, differences by household life-cycle (or head age) and urban or rural location. Young heads are most often dissatisfied with their distance from friends, almost twice as often as older heads. This is probably due to their leaving some friends as they settle down and begin a family elsewhere. Rural households are less satisfied with their distance from family and friends, especially from relatives, with 17 percent being dissatisfied as compared with 12 percent of urban households. The most dissatisfied with distance from relatives are those residing in rural Damascus, with 20 percent being dissatisfied.

Table 6.4 Percent of household satisfied with distance to family and friends (n=4,886).

	Camp	Gathering	All
Distance to relatives	86.4	86.4	86.4
Distance to friends	92.5	93.8	92.7
Neighbours	95.9	97.1	96.0
n	4,313	573	4,886

6.2 Marriage Practices: Who Decides, Kinship Marriage, and Other Common Roots among Partners

Marriage patterns serve to either retain the homogeneity, or to diversify larger extended family networks. Thus, the choice of a marriage partner may, in turn, influence the stability of the family network. This section examines the degree to which people find it acceptable for women to actually choose their own marriage partner, people's attitude about an appropriate age for women to marry, how common kinship marriage practices are and trends over time, and finally, other aspects of family and individual origins that spouses have in common other than direct kinship ties.

Previous studies by Fafo and others have found that, although cousin marriage is reported to be common and highly preferred in the region, this is by no means universal across all settings. Historically, marriage between cousins has been preferred in order to retain resources within the extended family unit. We have found, however, that the frequency of this practice really depends on locality (among other factors). It is less common among refugees in Lebanon, for example, than in Jordan, where some 50 percent of marriages are between related partners. In both settings, but particularly in Lebanon, there are large variations in the commonality of kinship marriage by socio-economic background, although this is decreasing over time. Fewer women are married to relatives at a younger age, although there are more among uneducated and rural women than other women.

In addition to marrying someone from within the kinship group, it is common that refugees marry someone with strikingly similar geographic and refugee status backgrounds. Thus, marriage partners often come from the same location and their families came from the same location in Palestine, in addition to them having the same refugee status (1948 refugees or 1967 refugees, for example) (see Tuastad 1997).

Who should choose a woman's husband?

Attitudes about autonomy for women in the marriage choice

It is reported that it is common for the region that parents play a considerable role in the marriages of their children. Particularly for women, the family may play an initial screening role in finding "appropriate" marriage partners for their daughter, from whom she is left to choose (Ibrahim 1995:154). We asked randomly selected adult individuals what they thought about this. Should it be mainly the daughter who decides who she will marry, or should it be mainly the family who decides? What we do not know from their responses is, indeed, whether or not they were supportive of choice among a group of family pre-screened partners or that if the respondent answered "mainly up to the daughter", this meant she was allowed com-

pletely free choice. Thus, our data basically tells us what types of individuals have attitudes that support *some degree* of autonomy for the daughter and those who are not supportive of women having much autonomy. Previous Fafo studies elsewhere in the region have found that these attitudes vary considerably by factors such as age, socio-economic status and location (Blome Jacobsen 2002). Thus, while historically the family has been a major player in the marriage choice, at present most report attitudes supportive of some choice on the part of the women.

Table 6.5 Attitudes towards who should mainly make the decision about a woman's marriage partner. Percent of persons.

	Male		Female		All
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	
Mainly the choice of the family	21.8	17.9	17.9	11.1	17.8
Mainly the daughter's choice	78.2	82.1	82.1	88.9	82.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
n	1,380	737	1,669	1,092	4,878

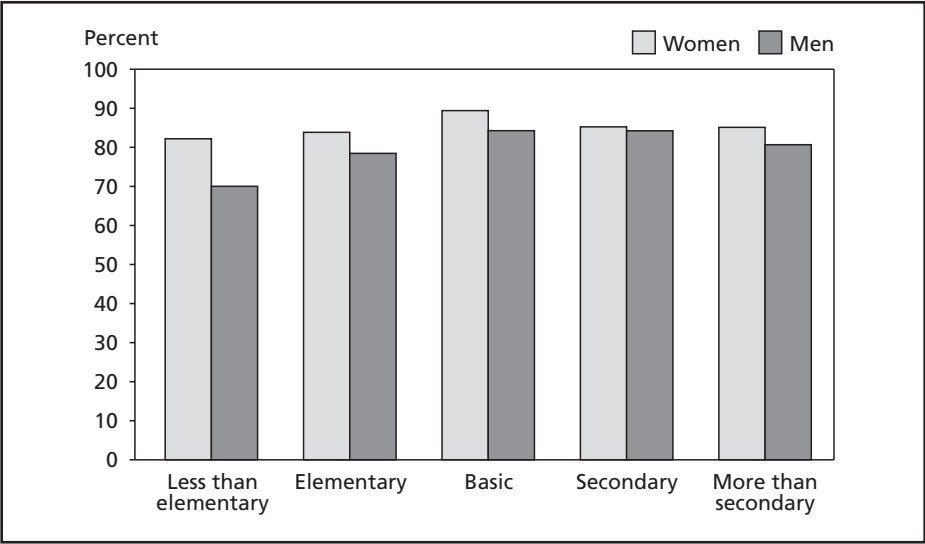
Among Palestinian refugees in camps and gatherings in Syria, we find similar results as among the same in Lebanon, 82 percent report that they think it is mainly up to the women to decide who she will marry. Slightly more women than men report having this opinion, but the difference is minimal.

This particularly applies to a significantly higher percentage of rural women, around 90 percent. This is not too surprising as it is typical that rural women in general are afforded somewhat more autonomy than urban women due to the fact that many of them need to be engaged in some type of work. The urban-rural divide among women's attitudes towards autonomy becomes even more marked when we consider specific locations. Yarmouk camp women more often express conservative attitudes in this regard than other camps, with 80 percent supportive of women's autonomy of choice compared to 88 percent of women in other camps. Part of the reason for this difference is that 70 percent of non-Yarmouk camps are rural. We find similar differences by region with women from the more rural areas like the North more often expressing liberal attitudes towards women's autonomy in the choice of a spouse than elsewhere. There is no difference among men in urban and rural attitudes.

Surprisingly, household income does not appear to play a considerable role in attitudes towards women's autonomy in marriage choice, but education level does among men. Similar to elsewhere in the region, men's attitudes towards this aspect of women's autonomy are most conservative among those with very low and high

levels of education. Contrary to elsewhere, attitudes among women do not grow more liberal with high levels of education.

Figure 6.5 Proportion of adults (aged 15+) who report that women should be responsible for choosing their own marriage partner. By education.



Appropriate marriage age for women

Adults were also asked what age they thought it was appropriate for women to marry. The exact marital age was recorded. Here we present results from these age groups: (1) 15 years or younger; (2) 16 through 18 years; (3) 19 through 21 years; and (4) 22 years or older.

Some 95 percent of individuals think that women should not marry until at least age 16. Most (80 percent) considered that women should marry between the age of 16 and 21 years old. Women reported that they thought women should marry between the age of 19- 21, while men’s preference was split evenly between the two age groups 16–18, and 19–21 years.

More educated persons felt that older marrying ages were more appropriate for women than less educated individuals (Figures 6.6 and 6.7). Preferred marriage age increases with every level of education held by the interviewee. There is a large drop in the number who prefer a very young marriage age (15 years or less) between those with no education and those with elementary education.

While we did not see much difference in attitudes towards women’s autonomy in the marriage choice among rural and urban men, we did see it with regard to appropriate marriage age. More than twice as many rural men thought it was appropriate for women to marry at the age of 15 years or younger than urban men, and two times as many rural women agreed as compared to urban women.

Figure 6.6 Most appropriate age for women’s marriage considered by women. By age and education. Percent.

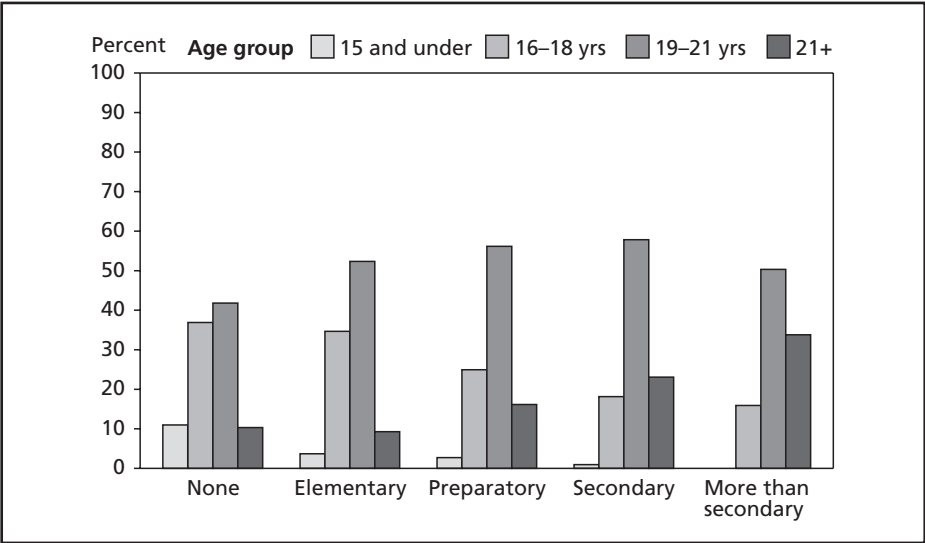
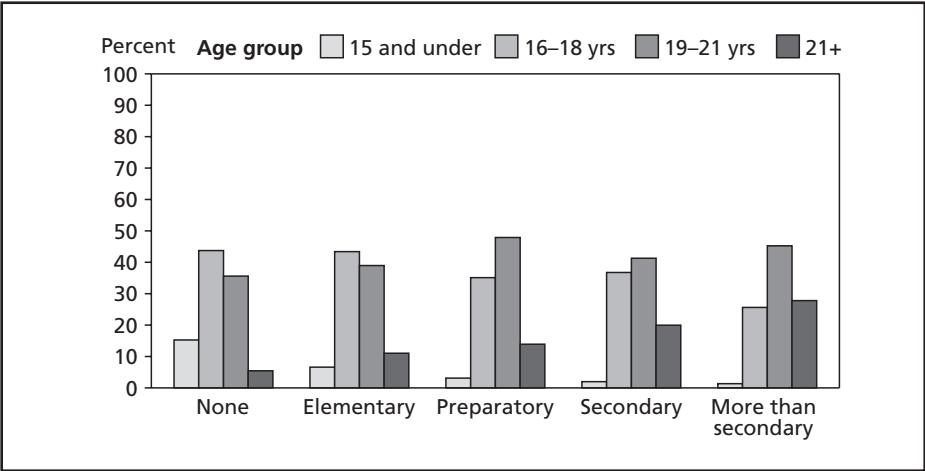


Figure 6.7 Most appropriate age for women’s marriage considered by men. By age and education. Percent.



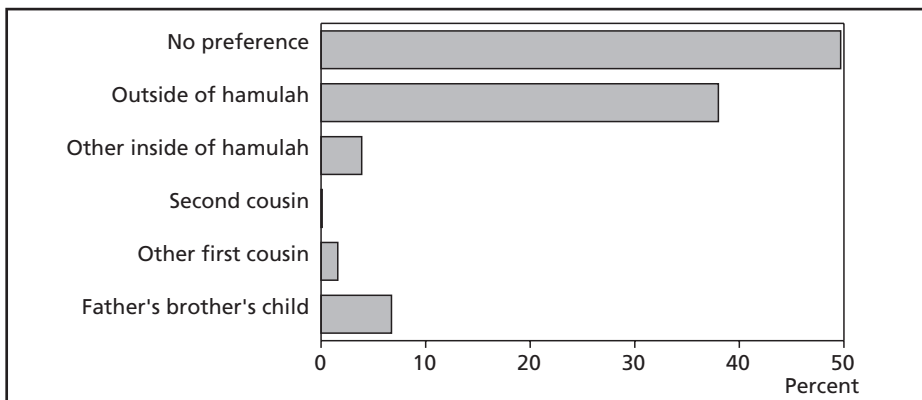
Is cousin marriage really preferred?

The LIPRIS asked randomly selected individuals whom they would prefer their child to marry, regardless of whether or not they had any children. They were asked to choose among a list of types of family relations, no family relation and an option for no preference (Figure 6.8). Half of the respondents reported having no preference when it comes to their “child’s” marriage partner. Thirty-eight percent reported a preference for an out of kinship marriage. Thus, only 12 percent of the total preferred marriage within the kinship group. Among those preferring kinship marriage, most preferred marriage to the father’s brother’s offspring.

More often women reported that they would prefer a marriage partner outside the *hamulah* (kinship group) than men. Any preference, preference for within the *hamulah*, and preference for the father’s brother’s child all decreased with the income and education of the respondent. The reverse was true with age. Particularly among women, any education appears to lead to a large increase in preference for marriages outside the *hamulah* (from 29 percent of uneducated women to 44 percent of those with just elementary education). Among both men and women, their level of education was reflected in their declining interest in marriage with the father’s brother’s child, the traditionally favoured marriage partner for offspring. Those with no education, twice as often favour this type of marriage partner than those with elementary education.

Both men and women in rural areas more often reported that they preferred kinship marriage than individuals in urban areas. However, it is also the case that a larger proportion of rural individuals than urban individuals report that they do not have any preference at all. We get this result because a relatively larger proportion of urban residents report having a preference for marriage outside the kinship

Figure 6.8 Preference for child’s marriage partner’s kinship affiliation. Percent of persons (n=4,874).



group, while the rural individuals are somewhat split between strong preference for marriage inside the kinship group and no preference at all.

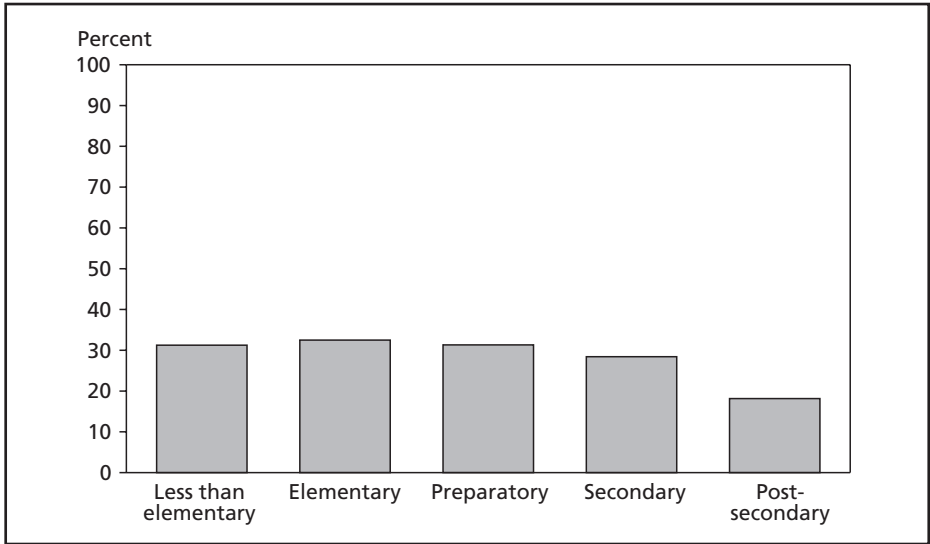
Frequency of cousin marriage

The LIPRIS asked women about their specific kinship relationship to their latest husband. About three in 10 marriages are between partners that are related by kinship. This is similar to that found elsewhere in the region. Among those related in some way to their latest husband, it is most common that they are married to second cousins from their father’s side (28 percent) or to their father’s brother’s son (22 percent). Over all, among marriages within the kin group, marriage to first cousins is more common than to second cousins (59 versus 41 percent).

Thus, considering the continuity between expressed preferences and actual marriage practice, although we see a clear *preference* for the traditional marriage to the father’s brother’s son and among first cousins for those related, the majority of *actual marriages* are between those not within the same kinship group.

What types of women enter into kinship marriages? We would expect to see significant variation by age, indicating a trend towards less “traditional” marriages over time, however, this is not the case for marriages among Palestinian refugees in Syria – in contrast to elsewhere in the region. Although there has been a slight decrease among those under 50 years of age (from 33 percent for those aged 50

Figure 6.9 Percent of women with marriages to a first or second cousin, by educational attainment of woman (n=1,267).



years and older to roughly 30 percent for other age groups), there has been no recent change to this. What is different about marriage patterns in Syria compared with elsewhere is that there are fewer cousin marriages between older people, but relatively high rates of cousin marriage among young women. For example, among Palestinian refugee women in Lebanon aged 15 to 19 years, about 25 percent are married to cousins, compared to 31 percent of women in this age group in Syria. The main factor in the latter setting that is correlated with cousin marriage rates is the women's education. As shown in Figure 6.9, women with secondary or more education are less often married to someone in the kin group.

Inter-kin marriage is more common in gatherings than in refugee camps (40 percent compared to 30 percent), and somewhat more common in rural areas (34 percent) than urban areas (29 percent). Regional differentiation in such marriages, however, does not parallel these rural, urban differences with a very high rate of kinship marriage in the South in particular (41 percent) despite that fact that this region is only 50 percent rural.

Other common origins among marriage partners

Aside from kinship marriages, it is very common that marriages occur between individuals who come from the same geographic location in Syria or elsewhere, also that their parents come from the same location, and finally, that they have similar backgrounds in terms of refugee status. These are other aspects of marriage practices that serve to retain the homogeneity of the family network. Of course, in the case of in-marriage these common roots are more often found than with other marriages. Among those married to a cousin, 87 percent came from the same birthplace and their parents came from the same location. Table 6.6 provides a summary of these types of common origins among spouses.

Table 6.6 Common links between spouses: Own place of origin, place of family origin and refugee status. Comparison between camps and gatherings in Syria and Lebanon. (Lebanon source: LIPRIL, 1999).

	Percent of persons (married heads and spouses)	
	Syria	Lebanon
Same place of origin	98.5	67.6
Same family's place of origin	59.9	65.5
Same refugee status	79.0	88.6
Either own or family's origin same	38.7	38.1
Both own & family's origin same	59.9	47.5
Own & family origin same & refugee status same	67.5	47.2

In the Table, we include data from the LIPRIL (1999)¹ as a comparison. Here, we see evidence of the lack of mobility among camp and gathering refugees in Syria. Nearly all currently married partners have the same geographic origin (98 percent). This is a much higher proportion than in Lebanon where mobility is higher, at 68 percent. Camp and gathering refugees in Syria have somewhat more diverse family roots than those in Lebanon and more varied refugee status. Nearly all camp and gathering refugees in Lebanon have been refugees since 1948.

Two background factors are linked to having multiple common origins among marriage partners: education and urban, rural status. The less education an individual has, the more common it is to have multiple common origins. For example, some 70 percent of persons with no education have such multiple common origins compared to 45 percent of those with higher education. It is also somewhat more common in rural (at 69 percent) than urban areas (55 percent).

6.3 Social Network Ties: How “Connected” are Families and Friends?

Thus far, we have described friendship and family networks, marriage patterns and attitudes towards marriage decisions. While all these factors are associated with different types of family networks which might be more or less accessible to members, this does not necessarily tell us about the activity occurring within the family network. It is this activity which serves to “bind” members together. In this section, we look closely at what is happening within family (and friendship) networks by describing visitation patterns, and financial and non-financial assistance that is exchanged.

One must bear in mind, however, that how connected relatives/people feel is subjective. Regardless of the frequency of contact and level of inter-dependency, closeness among family and friends is what the persons themselves experience. However, the type of network, its character and its activity are all ways in which the network can shape behaviour, which ultimately has some bearing on people’s subjective views on closeness.

¹ The Living Conditions of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon (LIPRIL) survey was carried out by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), based in Damascus, and Fafo in 1999, and covered all refugee camps and about 40 other refugee communities in the country. Statistics and analyses are found in Ugland (ed.) 2002.

The LIPRIS collected data on visitation patterns and exchange of non-financial help among family and friends during the two-week period prior to the survey, and also collected data on the giving and receiving of financial help during the 12-month period prior to the survey. We know from this data which side of the family this activity has originated from or was given to (the mother or the father’s side), but we are not able to “match” givers with receivers. We can identify those who give to any person within the family (and from which side of the family), and those receiving from someone. Thus, we have a general view, but are not able to completely map out patterns of visitation or assistance between specific persons in the network. This would be the case in a more in-depth and comprehensive analysis of social networks, however. This is beyond the scope of this survey.

Giving and receiving help

Some 60 percent of camp and gathering refugees in Syria have engaged in some sort of giving and receiving of help with family or friends during the relevant reference period (two weeks for non-financial help and 12 months for financial help). Patterns of giving and receiving of financial and non-financial help are similar. Women are more actively engaged in offering support than men, especially for non-financial help, and are more often “exchangers”, that is to say that both give and receive help.

As shown in Figure 6.10, the level of activity within a network is considerably higher among family members than friends. Financial assistance is more common than non-financial. Women are more often takers of financial help and men are more often givers. Among family members, financial assistance is more often given or received, rather than “exchanged” as compared with non-financial help. Among

Figure 6.10 Givers, takers and exchangers of help (n=4,881). Givers only give help; takers only receive help.

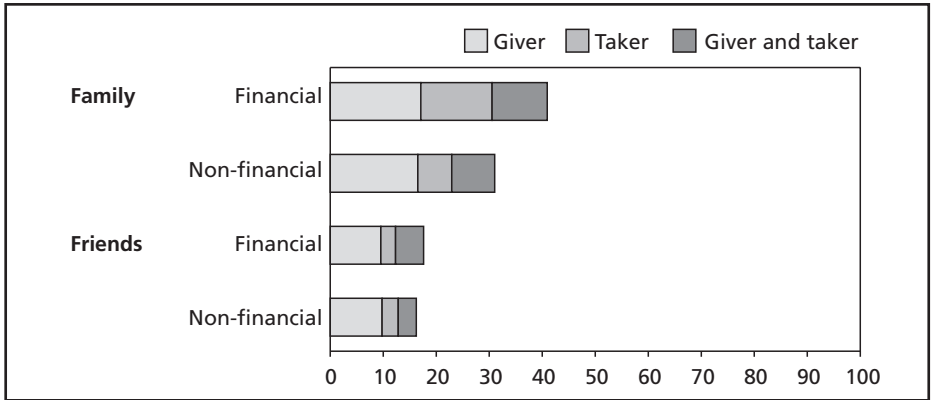
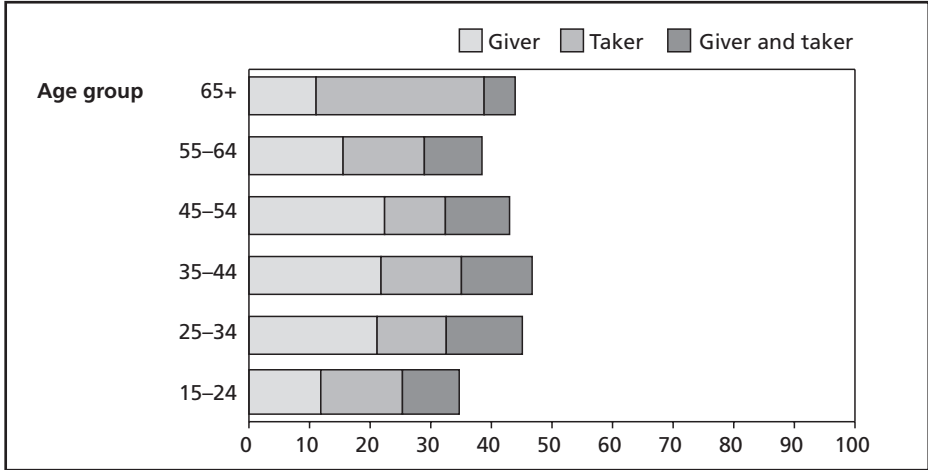


Figure 6.11 Giving, receiving and exchanging financial help within the family by age (n=4,878). Give=only give help; Take=only receive help; Exchange=both give and receive help.



family, we also find that resources, both non-financial and financial, flow from the better-off members to the poorer ones and, more markedly, from the young to the old. This is most evident in financial assistance flows (Figure 6.11).

There is a sharp increase in “takers” of financial help among those aged 65 and older, from 13 percent among those aged 55 to 64, to 28 percent for the oldest age group. Giving financial help (rather than receiving financial help) increases sharply during the younger adults’ working years and then levels off, reaching its peak in the 45 to 54 age group. This is what we would expect given the typical earning patterns of the employed. At typical retirement ages (late 50’s and 60’s), finance giving activities decrease dramatically.

Table 6.7 gives a more detailed look at who gets and who gives, and to or from whom. Those who primarily only give and do not receive give only to family members. Those who exclusively receive help also mostly gain this assistance from family members. This type of exchange is “generalised,” that is to say it is one-sided giving or receiving. Friends usually both give and receive. Part of the explanation for this difference in patterns among family versus friends is that when a family member assists another, he or she can trust that this family member or another will also offer assistance in return when it is needed. Social networks characterised by such patterns of exchange have been found to be closer because they are embedded with the kind of trust and norms of obligation that make this exchange useful (Blau 1964).

What kind of help do family and friends usually give or receive? Table 6.8 provides insight into this. Among family members, financial help is the most common type of help followed by domestic help. It would be expected that help with productive (in the economic sense) or occasional activities would be reported less often, as these types of activities, by their nature, occur less frequently than the need for household help. Among friends, financial help is also the most common followed by household help, although it is also common to give help with productive or occasional activities (among those exchanging any help).

Table 6.7 Givers and receivers of help by categories of others. Percent of persons (n=4,885).

Givers of help to	Receivers of help from				Total
	No help	Only family	Family and friends	Only friends	
No help	42	9	2	1	53
Only family	12	9	1	1	23
Family and friends	5	5	5	2	17
Only friends	3	1	1	1	6
Total	63	24	8	5	100

Table 6.8 Types of help given and received. Percent of persons (n=4,885).

	Family and relatives		Friends, neighbours	
	Given	Received	Given	Received
Household activities (housework, child care, shopping, etc.)	14	11	5	4
Productive activities (House-building or repair, transportation, family business, etc.)	4	2	3	1
Occasional activities (Post-natal care, wedding or funeral arrangement, etc.)	4	1	3	0
Financial help	28	24	15	8

Visiting family

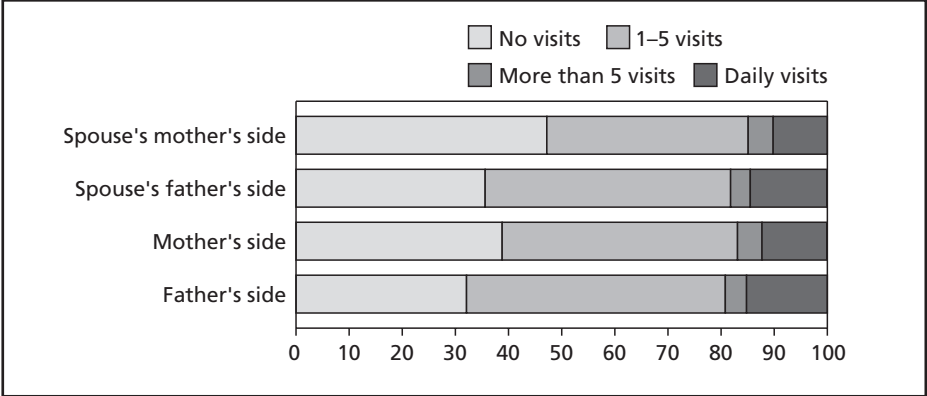
In this final section, we will look at patterns of family visitation – both how often people visit and which side of the family. The norm is to visit one’s own family regularly. Sixty to 70 percent have visited their own family at least once during the two-week reference period. Moreover, many make frequent visits, with some 20 percent visiting more often than five times or daily during the two-week period. Individuals visit their own family more than they visit their spouse’s family.

If we consider only those individuals who claimed that these types of relatives were “relevant” (meaning they were married or that it was possible to visit these types of relatives), comparisons among groups more accurately reflects underlying “connectedness” (Figure 6.12). For example, an individual may have many family members located geographically far from one’s place of residence. In this case, that individual would respond to the question on visitation by saying that visits from these relatives located far away would fall into the answer category “not relevant”, because it simply would not be feasible for visits to occur due to geographic distance. If we filter out of our data all of the “not relevant” data we therefore can better compare among all those individuals who actually report visitation by certain relatives to be “relevant” or possible. In so doing, we see that for both one’s own and one’s spouse’s family, it is somewhat more common to visit the father’s side than the mother’s side.

The frequency of visits can be considered to be evidence of a strong or weak tie to either side of the family. We further summarised the data by assuming that a strong tie was represented by having five visits or more, or daily visits with family members in order to more easily make comparisons across groups. Using this measure, it was found that women much more often have a strong tie to their spouse’s family *only*, than men (14 percent compared with nine percent). It follows that men more often have a strong tie to their own family than do women (17 percent *versus* 10 percent).

Gathering residents more often have a strong tie to any side of the family than do camp residents (45 percent *versus* 35 percent), which is an interesting result given that gathering refugees less often have relatives living nearby than do those in the camps. Finally, those in the South more often have a strong tie to any side of the family than in the other regions, but there are no differences across the urban, rural divide.

Figure 6.12 Frequency of visits with family by type of relative. Percent of married persons with family type “relevant” or possible to have visits with one another (n=4,885).



7 Work and Working Conditions

Willy Egset and Yousef al-Madi

Palestinian refugees in Syria have the same social and economic rights as Syrian citizens, granted to them by Legislative Decree No. 260 of 1956. The right to seek work in all sectors is inclusive of these rights, and the size and characteristics of the Palestinian labour force in Syria is the topic of this chapter. The Palestinians do not have Syrian citizenship, however, which restricts their access to labour markets outside of the country.

The main conclusion emerging from the LIPRIS data is that the labour force of the Palestinian camps and gatherings in Syria share all the main characteristics of the non-Palestinian labour force. The industrial distribution of the Palestinian labour force in Syria is the same as the national Syrian one, with the exception of the agricultural and service sectors where Syrians have a greater concentration than Palestinians. Since Palestinian refugees do not own agricultural land and are also concentrated mostly in urban areas, their representation in the agricultural sector is insignificant. In common with Syrians, 30 percent of employed Palestinians work in the public sector.

7.1 The Labour Force Framework

The labour force consists of all economically active adult persons, defined here as the population aged 15 years and above.¹ In the survey sample, the adult population comprises 16,903 persons, or 63 percent of the total population. Thirty-seven percent of the population in the refugee camps and gatherings are thus below 15 years of age.

¹ All definitions of basic labour force concepts used in this chapter – such as labour force, employment and unemployment – adheres to the definitions and recommended practises of the International Labour Office (ILO 1990).

Labour force statistics divide the adult population into two main groups – those who are in the labour force and those who are not (ILO 1990), as described below.

1. The labour force, or the economically active population, which further consists of,
 - a. The employed. An employed person is defined as an individual who worked at least one hour in the reference period (one week preceding the interview) or who was temporarily absent from work during that week. Persons working 35 hours or more during the reference period are defined as full-time workers, while those who worked between one and 35 hours are defined as part-time workers². And,
 - b. The unemployed. Individuals who did not work, even for one hour, in the reference period, but were actively seeking work and were available for work in the same period.
2. People outside the labour force, or the economically inactive population, which is made up of all persons who did not work and were not seeking or were not available for work during the reference period.

The principal categories of the labour force framework are strictly defined in resolutions adopted by the International Labour Office (ILO) and have been criticized – among other things – for defining people who work very few hours per week as being employed. This problem is addressed by the concept of underemployment, which is discussed below.

7.2 The Labour Force and the Population

The employed have high support burden because of a young population and low female labour force participation

A population's overall rate of economic activity is not fully captured by the standard labour force participation indicator since it is calculated on the basis of the adult population only. Using the total population as a basis instead gives us the crude em-

² Contrary to the other stipulations in the labour force framework, the exact definition of full-time work in terms of the required hours per week may be adapted to local conditions.

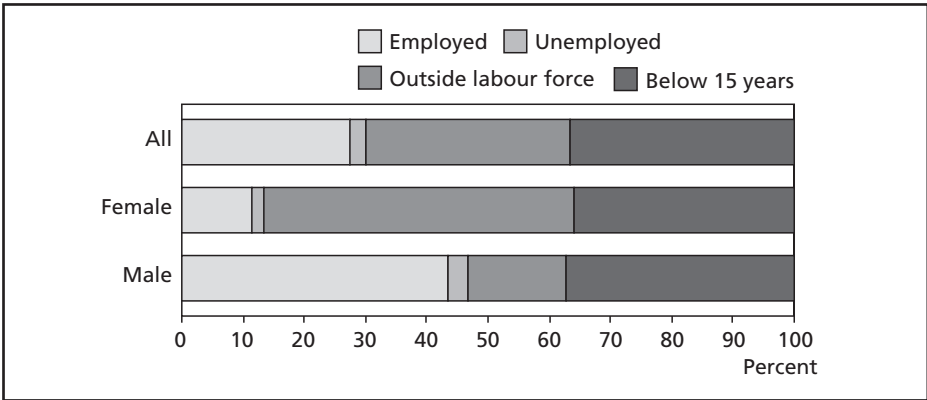
ployment and labour force participation rates, defined as the number of economically active people as a proportion of the total population. Table 7.1 shows that the crude labour force participation rate is 30 percent in the Palestinian camps and gatherings, including the unemployed. The total crude employment ratio is 28 percent, or only 21 percent if counting only the full-time employed. Every employed person thus has to support him or her self and about three additional persons.

Table 7.1 Crude labour force rates, Palestinian refugee camps and gatherings in Syria

Total Population 172,569 (100 percent)					
Population 15 years of age and above 109,318 (63 percent)					Below 15 years of age
In labour force 53,757 (30 percent)				Not in labour force	
Employed Persons 48,774 (28 percent)			Unem- ployed 4,803 (3 per- cent)	56,865 (32 per- cent)	63,251 (37 per- cent)
Full time 35 hours or more	Part time 34 hours or less	Temporarily absent			
36,645 (21 percent)	5,980 (4 percent)	5,712 (3 percent)			

This low figure is due to two main factors. Firstly, a large percentage of the population (37 percent) is less than 15 years of age and thus not considered part of the labour force reserve.³ Secondly, crude labour force participation for women is only 14 percent, in contrast to 47 percent for men, as shown in Figure 7.1.

Figure 7.1 Crude labour force indicators by sex in percent of total population.

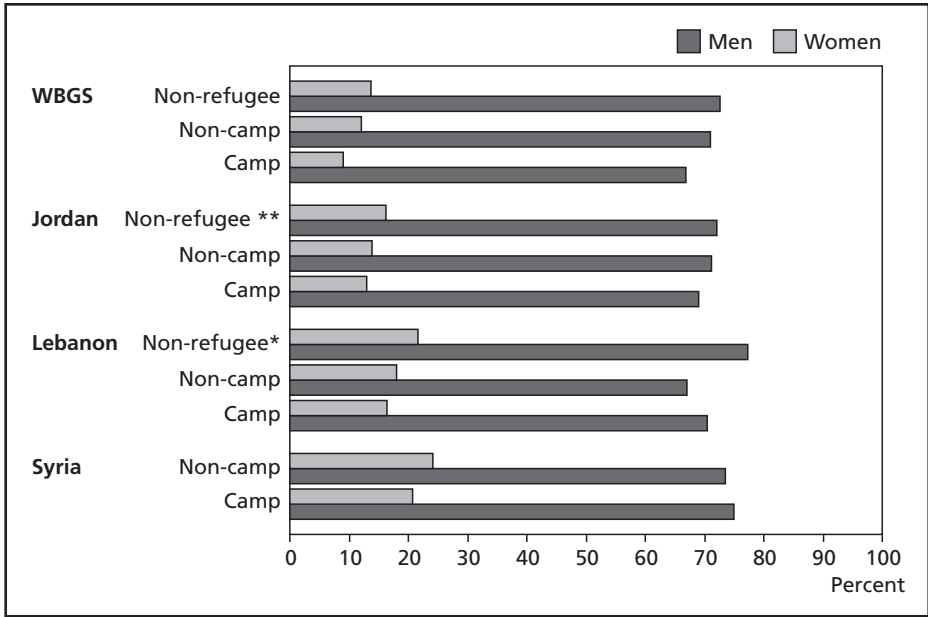


³ However, as shown in a short section on child labour below, some six percent of the minors aged 10-14 years are economically active.

Labour force participation rates are higher in the Syrian camps and gatherings than among refugees and non-refugees in all other host countries

The adult labour force participation rate is 48 percent in the Palestinian camps and gatherings in Syria, which is higher than in any of the other major refugee host countries, including Lebanon, Jordan and the West Bank and Gaza Strip (WBGS). Male labour force participation is 75 percent in the Syria camps, as compared with 70 percent or less among camp men in Lebanon, Jordan and the WBGS, as shown in Figure 7.2. The 21 percent participation rate for camp women in Syria is also considerably higher than in any other field. Female participation is 16, 13 and nine percent respectively among camp women in Lebanon, Jordan and the WBGS. As in Lebanon, there are only minor differences in economic activity rates between the camp and gathering populations.

Figure 7.2 Labour force participation by location, sex and region



* The figures for non-refugees in Lebanon refers to the population aged 15–65 years. Camp and non-camp refugees are reported on the basis of population 15 years and above for comparison across regions. When using the 15–65 of age population, labour force rates are 74 (camp) and 71 (non-camp) percent among men and 18 (camp) and 19 (non-camp) among women compared to 77 and 22 percent, respectively, among men and women in the national Lebanese population.

** "Non-refugee Jordan" refers to non-Palestinian Jordanians (Faf0 1996).

Sources: Faf0 1996, 1999a, 1999b; ACS 1998; PCBS 2000.

In fact, the camp and gathering refugees in Syria have higher rates of labour force participation than the populations of the other host countries, regardless of refugee status. Only non-refugee Lebanese have almost as high rates, at 77 and 22 percent for men and women respectively when using a 65 year upper limit in the definition of the adult population as practised by the Lebanese statistical office. Using the same definition gives Syrian camps and gatherings rates of 78 percent male participation and 22 percent female participation in the labour force.

7.3 Determinants of Labour Force Participation

Participation in the labour force is determined by many factors. One of the most important is the traditional attitude relating to the Palestinian family, which holds that women should stay at home to take care of their children and the house. Married women in particular are not expected to work outside the house (Khawaja and Tiltnes 2002). Our data confirm that these patterns still prevail, as women comprise only 22 percent of the total labour force in the Palestinian camps and gatherings in Syria. This is higher than the female share of the labour force in the other main countries hosting Palestinian refugees, but lower than the 26 percent average reported for the Middle East and North African region (WDI 1999: Table 2.3).

As a result of the different expectations of work outside the home for men and women respectively, they should be expected to show very different patterns of labour force participation. As it is primarily the responsibility of the husband to provide cash income to the Palestinian household, one expects the labour force participation among men to remain high during all their main breadwinning years, from marriage and into retirement age.

Women both work to a much lesser extent than men and in fewer types of sectors than men, notably in more highly skilled work in education, health, and social services (see below and Egset 2003b). It should thus be expected that women's qualifications for work in such sectors would be a key determinant of their participation in the labour force.

Highest labour force participation rates found in rural Damascus

The highest labour force participation rates are found in rural parts of Damascus both for men and women, with 79 and 25 percent for men and women respectively (Table 7.2). Vice versa, urban Damascus stands out, together with the Western region (Homs, Hama and Latakia) as having the lowest participation rates. This is partly because the effect of region on labour force participation is only indirect, and explained by regional variations in individual skills and expertise. When comparing all regions to urban Damascus in a logistic regression, only the Western region retains an independent effect for men when controlling for individual characteristics, including health status, marital status and education level (see Table 7.3). For women, however, the labour force participation rates are significantly higher in rural Damascus, the North and the South as compared to urban Damascus, and also when other variables are controlled for.

The particularly high participation rate in rural Damascus may also be explained by poor access to non-wage incomes⁴ in this area. As compared with an overall average transfer income of SYP 10,900, households in the camps and gatherings in rural Damascus on the average receive only SYP 6,300. Furthermore, the supply of jobs in education and health relative to population size appear to be lower in Damascus compared to regions outside of Damascus (see industries below, Table 7.10). In the Western region, recent reductions in the agriculture and manufacturing labour forces are likely to have contributed to the low level of employment in those sectors.

Table 7.2 Labour force participation rates by sex and region (in percent of population 15 years and above).

Region	Male	Female	All
Damascus urban	74	19	46
Damascus rural	79	25	52
North*	74	24	49
West**	69	17	43
South***	75	21	47
Total	75	21	48

* North: Aleppo

** West: Homs, Hama, Latakia

*** South: Dar'a

⁴ Non-wage income includes private and official transfers, self-employment income, property income and other less significant sources of income not earned by own work such as capital income.

Women with education but no husband take up work outside home

In addition to differences in labour force participation rates by region and sex, the rates vary according to background characteristics, such as education levels and the household's life cycle, as reflected in differences of age and marital status. Below, these associations are examined in some detail and eventually summarised in a logistic regression model for the purpose of comparing net effects of individual characteristics when simultaneously taking other characteristics into consideration. Men's participation rates are stable and high at 90 to 95 percent from their early 20s, until their mid-50s. This pattern concurs with expectations, as illustrated in Figure 7.3 and Figure 7.4. From the age of 55 and onwards, men withdraw quickly from the labour force. Less than half (45 percent) of all men are still employed at the age of 60 to 64. The decline is closely associated with failing health. While 17 percent of the adult population report chronic health problems, this rises to 51 percent in the 60 to 64 age group and increases rapidly for older people. The effect of education on men's participation is mainly that it slows down their exit from the labour market at higher ages, a likely effect of more favourable working conditions in the skilled sectors compared to other sectors.

Education has a much stronger effect on the labour force participation of women than men, although education level is the strongest predictor of labour force participation in both groups. From the age of 25 through to 54, the participation rates for women with at least preparatory education are three to four times higher than for women with elementary or no education, as shown in Figure 7.4. From their mid 50s, women depart from the labour market at an even faster rate than men.

Figure 7.3 Labour force participation by sex and age

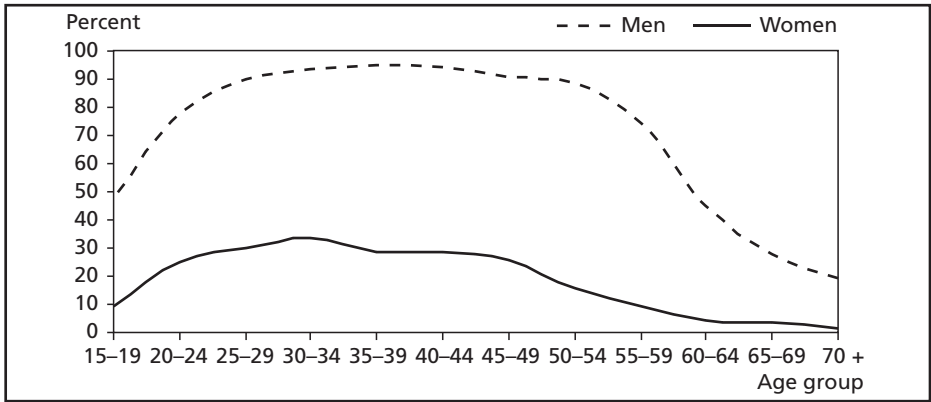
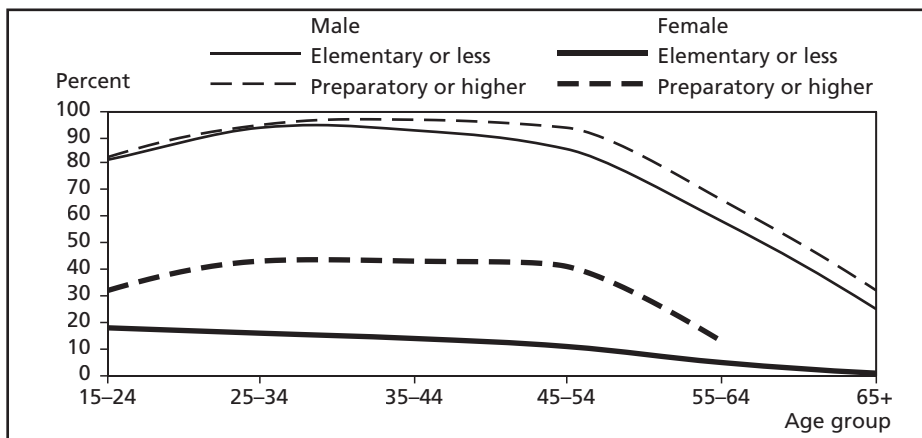


Figure 7.4 Labour force participation by sex, age and education*



* Persons currently enrolled in school are excluded.

Table 7.3 Predicted labour force participation by sex (excerpted logistic regression results).

Variables in the model	Women		Men	
	Sig.	Beta	Sig.	Beta
Education (vs. no education)	0.00		0.00	
Elementary	0.73	0.04	0.00	0.32
Preparatory	0.00	0.52	0.00	0.74
Secondary or higher	0.00	2.19	0.00	0.48
Marital status (vs. married)	0.00		0.00	
Never married	0.00	1.58	0.00	-1.75
Widowed	0.08	0.41	0.00	-1.04
Divorced or separated	0.00	1.40	0.00	-1.32
Health status (vs. no health problem)	0.02		0.00	
Illness or injury	0.01	0.34	0.00	-0.70
Serious health problem	0.49	-0.12	0.00	-1.91
Region (vs. Damascus urban)	0.00		0.00	
Damascus rural	0.00	0.78	0.01	0.24
North	0.00	0.49	0.68	0.06
West	0.11	-0.18	0.02	-0.28
South	0.01	0.38	0.32	0.17
Age (vs. 15-24)	0.00		0.00	
25-44	0.00	0.87	0.01	0.47
45-54	0.00	0.95	0.00	-0.49
55 +	0.30	-0.27	0.00	-2.58
Constant	0.00	-1.13	0.00	0.77

Similarly, unmarried women – with the exception of widows – are far more likely than married women to be members of the labour force. In total, 28 percent of the never married women and 34 percent of divorced or separated women were working or seeking work outside the home, compared to 18 percent of married women. If those currently enrolled in school are excluded (as they are in the regression model, see Table 7.3), the differences are further reinforced. Although marital status is closely correlated with age and also with education, it has a strong effect on labour force participation when controlling for those variables, as seen in the logistic regression coefficients in Table 7.3.

The effect of marital status among men is the opposite from that among women, as expected. Unmarried men have a significantly reduced likelihood of being in the labour force compared to the married, irrespective of their reason for being unmarried.

Similarly, it can be predicted that there would be a reduced likelihood that men will participate in the labour force if they suffer failing health, which is among the most salient factors contributing to keeping men out of the labour force. Nearly one-third of adult men that are outside the labour force do have a chronic health problem, and the effect is significant also when controlling for age. Among women, health seems not to be a relevant factor in explaining their low labour force participation.

Failing health and old age draw men out of work; most women never entered the labour market because of domestic duties

In the survey, those who were neither employed nor actively seeking work were asked why they did not look for work. The answers confirm the suggestions given by the characteristics of the employed population, namely that women's responsibilities in the domestic sphere is the main impediment to their participation in the labour force, while men are drawn out of the labour force when their health fails.

The only partial exception to this pattern is found for the younger age group, those aged below 25 years, where education is the main reason for not working, both for men and women, cited by 65 and 39 percent respectively (Table 7.4). Also, among women in this age group, domestic duties are mentioned nearly as many times. Combined with those who mention "social restrictions" explicitly, reasons pertaining to traditional sex-role patterns are mentioned by 42 percent of women below 25 years of age. In the most work-intensive age group, between 25 and 55 years old, domestic duties are nearly the sole reason given by women, cited by 79–85 percent.

Among the minority of men aged between 25 and 55 who are not member of the labour force, health reasons are most frequently given by about half of the inactive.

From the age of 45 years and up, health and retirement (which is of course closely affiliated with health reasons) are cited by 77 to 93 percent of economically inactive men. Furthermore, in the group of 25–44 year-olds, 23 percent of the economically inactive have been discouraged from seeking work. However, because the labour force participation is high in this age group (93 percent), the 23 percent represent only 1.6 percent of the total male population aged 25–44 years. One may conclude, therefore, that discouragement does not contribute significantly to keeping either men or women out of the labour market.

Moreover, nine out of 10 currently inactive men (88 percent) have worked before. Most of them thus stopped working only when their health could no longer sustain their working activities. On the other hand, eight out of 10 (78 percent) women that are not members of the labour force today, have never been so.

Table 7.4 Reason for not working or seeking work by sex and age

Age	Men				Women			
	15–24	25–44	45–54	55 +	15–24	25–44	45–54	55+
Discouraged*	15	23	(12)	(2)	8	5	(1)	(1)
Full time student	65	12	0	0	39	2	(1)	0
Domestic duties	(1)	(3)	(1)	(1)	29	79	85	51
Health reasons	6	45	59	28	2	3	5	12
Retired	0	(1)	18	65	0	0	3	33
Social restriction	0	0	0	0	13	6	3	(1)
Other**	12	16	(10)	5	10	4	(2)	(2)
Total***	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
n	1,220	245	93	642	2,481	2,478	654	1,173

() = Few observations (<15) in cell.

* Includes those who report that “no jobs are available” or have “given up seeking”.

** “Other” includes “waiting for job in public sector”, “available jobs not compatible with skills”, pay or other conditions “not acceptable”.

*** May not add to exactly 100 because of rounding.

7.4 Unemployment

Unemployment is down from the 1980s and 1990s when regional tensions disrupted labour markets

Among the adult, economically active population in the Palestinian camps and gatherings in Syria, nine percent are not employed but are actively looking for work, which are the key criteria by which unemployment is defined.⁵ This unemployment rate is slightly lower than the rate measured in two previous surveys in 1998 and 1988, and is comparable to the rate measured in 1980 (Table 7.5). The unemployment rate among Palestinian camp and gathering refugees is very similar to that measured in a household survey among Syrian citizens one year earlier.⁶

High rates of unemployment in the years 1988 and 1998 may be explained by the wars that took place in the region in its recent history. First, the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, which led to the withdrawal of the PLO from Lebanon and the closure of most of the PLO establishments in Syria and Lebanon. Later, the Gulf war in 1991, which resulted in vast numbers of Palestinian workers being expelled from the Gulf countries, including many that returned to Syria and the Syrian labour

Table 7.5 Unemployment rates in the camps (and gatherings), 1980–2001. In percent of the labour force

Year	Palestinian camps and gatherings			Syria****		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
1980*	6	15	8			
1988**	11	21	13			
1998***	11	13	11			
2001 / 2000	7	16	9	7	19	10

* Comprehensive survey data.

** Sample survey (1,500 households), labour force survey for Palestinian living in camps in Syria, PCBS.

*** Sample survey (2,900 households), education among Palestinian refugees in camps and gatherings in Syria, PCBS.

**** Syria Internal Migration Survey, University of Damascus, Syrian Central Bureau of Statistics and Fafo 2000. The sample excluded Palestinian refugees residing in camps and gatherings.

⁵ In addition, one must be available for work in the reference period.

⁶ Neither the difference in unemployment in the camps and gatherings in 1980 as compared with 2001, nor the difference between the camps/gatherings as compared with the national figure for Syria, are statistically significant.

market. Although tensions are still high in the region today, the current conflict in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip has not had any regional ramifications comparable to those associated with the Lebanese or Gulf wars.

Less unemployment in the Palestinian camps and gatherings in Syria than in Lebanon and Jordan

In all countries hosting Palestinian refugees other than Syria, the refugee camps (together with gatherings in Lebanon) have higher rates of unemployment than the national average, most particularly so in Lebanon (Table 7.6). The prevailing rates in Syrian camps and gatherings (as in Syria outside the camps and gatherings) are lower than those found in the camps and gatherings of the other host countries, including the West Bank and Gaza Strip (as measured in 1999).

Unemployment rates change quickly with the economic trends, and cross-country comparisons based on data from different years may be misleading in some respects. However, the general observation that there is less unemployment in the Syrian camps and gatherings than elsewhere holds also when using the 1998 figures for Syria, which is closer in time to the other surveys. The result is also supported by other findings, including a higher incidence of wage-income and lower rates of poverty for Syria's camp and gathering population as compared with similar populations in Jordan and Lebanon (see Chapter 8).

Table 7.6 Unemployment rates in Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, West Bank and the Gaza Strip

Syria* 2000/ 2001			Jordan** 1999		Lebanon*** 1999 /1998			West Bank**** 1999			Gaza***** 1999		
All	Camp	Gather-ings	Camp	All	Camp	Gather-ings	All	Camp	Non-camp refu-gee	All	Camp	Non-camp refu-gee	All
9	9	8	13	10	17	17	9	13	9	10	20	17	17

* PCBS/Fafo 2001 (camp, gathering), Syria Internal Migration Survey, University of Damascus, Syrian Central Bureau of Statistics and Fafo 2000 (all).

** Fafo 1999a (camp), DOS 1999 (all).

*** Fafo 1999b (camp, gathering), ACS 1998 (all).

**** PCBS 1999.

Young, urban and semi-educated women have the highest rates of unemployment

Although unemployment is moderate in the camp and gathering population, rates vary strongly between different population groups. First of all, it is noted that women have an unemployment rate that is more than double that of men, at 16 *versus* seven percent. The high female rate should be considered against the background of their low overall labour force participation rate. Low participation rates indicate that, seeking employment or not is far more of a choice among women than it is among men. By implication, to a larger extent than men, women may resist taking less preferred jobs or self-employment activities while looking for more preferred employment. Importantly, this is not simply a choice made by the individual woman, but is as much the effect of constraints imposed on her decision through the expectations of employers, family and broader social norms.

For the same reasons, female unemployment also varies much more between different groups of women than does male unemployment vary between groups of men. The overall male unemployment rate of seven percent shows only minor variations across regions, level of education and age, with the exception of men below 25 years of age, shown in Table 7.7. Among women, on the other hand, unemployment is considerably higher in urban Damascus (which consists mostly of Yarmouk

Table 7.7 Unemployment rates by region, location, education and sex, in percent of the labour force

		Men	Women	All	n
Region	Damascus urban	7	20	10	2,790
	Damascus rural	7	14	9	1,780
	North	7	9	7	1,168
	West	8	15	10	1,431
	South	7	14	8	897
Urban-rural	Urban	8	18	10	4,764
	Rural	7	13	8	3,302
Location	Yarmouk camp	8	20	10	2,545
	Other camps	7	13	9	4,544
	Gatherings	5	17	8	977
Education	Less than elementary	10	14	11	1,045
	Elementary	8	18	9	2,754
	Preparatory	7	26	10	1,757
	Secondary or higher	5	13	8	2,487
Age	15–24	12	28	15	2,266
	25–44	6	13	7	4,300
	45–54	5	7	5	944
	55 +	6	10	6	556

camp), at 20 percent, compared to all other regions. The North has the lowest rate of female unemployment at nine percent.

Increasing levels of education is associated with lower unemployment among men. Among women, on the other hand, the association is ambiguous. Unemployment increases from 14 percent for women without any education to as much as 26 percent for women that have completed preparatory education. Then again, with completed higher education, unemployment drops to 13 percent for women (Table 7.7). However, when education levels reach secondary or higher, unemployment drops sharply, but only to the same rate as those without any completed education.

Most job-seekers hope that friends and relatives can help finding a job

On the question of their methods of job searching, the most frequently cited method was to ask friends and relatives about available jobs in their workplaces or other places, reported by 80 percent of the unemployed. Eleven percent had enquired for jobs at potential employers, while only four percent of the unemployed registered in labour offices.

Majority of unemployed have prior work experience – but not so among women

Although unemployment is highest among younger people, only one-third of all unemployed are new entrants to the labour market. Yet among job-seeking women, 56 percent of the unemployed have never worked before, as compared with 21 percent for job-seeking men. Sixteen percent of the unemployed have been unemployed for more than two years; women experiencing longer periods of joblessness than men.

7.5 Underemployment

Our discussion on labour force participation, employment and unemployment so far has adhered strictly to the definitions of the ILO labour force framework. By those definitions a person should be classified as employed if he worked at least one hour in the reference period. Only if the person has not worked even one hour, is actively seeking work, and is available for work in the reference period, does he qualify as unemployed. The so-called “priority-rule”, implicit in this framework, further stipulates that employment takes precedence over unemployment (and unemployment over economic inactivity), so that a person that has worked for at least one hour is employed even if he or she is also actively looking for another job.

A problem with the standard labour force framework is that it does not capture partial lack of employment among labour force members, or underemployment (defined by the ILO as a situation in which “employment is inadequate, in relation to specified norms or alternative employment, account being taken of his occupational skill” – ILO 1990: 121). Employment may be inadequate in two principal ways: The first type of employment inadequacy is referred to as invisible underemployment. Invisible underemployment relates to the inherent productivity of employment, defining as underemployed those employed workers whose productive capacity is under-utilised because they are employed in low productivity industries or services, typically characterised by low wages and often long working hours.

Although the wage and working hour characteristics of low productivity are often measured in household surveys, the productivity of enterprises is definitely not. The ILO has thus concluded that “for operational reasons the statistical measurement of underemployment may be limited to visible underemployment” (ILO 1990:121). Visible underemployment exists when the volume of employment available to the employed is insufficient. More precisely, three criteria have been established to identify the visibly underemployed: (a) that the employee works less than normal duration; (b) that he does so on an involuntary basis; and (c) that he is seeking work and is available for work during the reference period (ILO 1990:123).

Every fifth worker expresses desire to work more – but few qualify as “visibly underemployed”

Eighteen percent of the Palestinian camp and gathering workforce affirm that they would have preferred to work more hours in the week preceding the interview. The reason why they are not working more, according to a majority among them, is simply that additional work is not available.

However, the majority of those who wish to work more hours do work long hours already, and only one-third of them work less than 35 hours per week.⁷ In addition, nearly half of those who would like to work more have not actively sought work or been available for more work. As a result, only five percent of the workforce meets the ILO criteria for underemployment (Table 7.8). Only in two industrial sectors, agriculture and construction, is the rate of underemployment significantly higher, at 11 and 14 percent respectively. Visible underemployment is also higher in the private sector than in the public sector.

Table 7.8 Underemployment and desire to work more by sex, industry and sector of employment, in percent of the employed

		Percent ILO under- employed	Percent that want to work more	n
Sex	Male	5	21	5,836
	Female	5	10	1,503
Industry	Agriculture	11	22	220
	Manufacturing and mining	6	20	1,211
	Construction, electricity	14	34	1,012
	Trade, hotels, transport	3	15	1,502
	Public administration and financial intermediation	2	19	1,224
	Education, health and social work	4	10	1,133
	Community, social services and other	4	14	1,037
Type of employer*	Public enterprise or administration	3	15	2,287
	Private company	7	22	4,050
All		5	18	7,339

* People employed in private households, by UNRWA or the popular organisations are not included because of low group sizes.

Visible underemployment – an unsuitable indicator on labour market imbalances?

While a large proportion of the employees express a desire to work more, despite their already long working days, the percentage of workers qualifying as visibly underemployed is small. The further significance of the results is hard to interpret. In fact, rather than an insufficient volume of work, most groups of workers work very

⁷ As working hours vary greatly between industries, sectors and types of workers, we have chosen to follow the conventional 35 hour per week as the cut-off for part-time work.

long hours, with average number of weekly working hours as high as 52 hours.⁸ As discussed further below, there is also a negative correlation between the number of hours worked and the hourly salary received. That is, characteristics associated with low productivity are also associated with long hours of work. This finding points to a contradiction between the two forms of underemployment, indicating that the visible (and measurable) form is the least relevant one in a context such as ours. Working hours and salaries are discussed in more detail in a section on “working conditions” below.

7.6 Structure of Employment

Having established the labour force indicators for the population in the preceding sections, this section examines the employed part of the population and its characteristics, with regard to its employment status, its industrial and occupational composition, and its working conditions.

Eight out of 10 camp and gathering workers are wage-employees

A total of 80 percent of the workers in the Palestinian camps and gatherings in Syria are wage employees and 14 percent are self-employed, whereas five percent report to be employers (Table 7.9). Not surprisingly given the high rate of public employment in Syria, the rate of wage-employment as contrasted with self-employment is higher in the camps and gatherings in Syria (80 and 14 percent) than it is both in Lebanon (71 and 21 percent) and in Jordan (76 and 17 percent).

Self-employed with UNRWA’s help

Ahmed is one of many so-called Special Hardship Cases in Khan Danoun refugee camp. He is blind and lives with wife and four children in a dwelling consisting of 2 rooms and a kitchen. Ahmed has benefited from UNRWA’s income generation program and received SYP 26,700 (USD 520) from the Agency to establish a modest shop/kiosk. UNRWA has supported an additional 6 small income-generating projects in the camp, but such assistance had to stop due to austerity measures within the Agency.

Ahmed earns SYP 200 (USD 4) per week from the shop and SYP 50 (USD 1) per day from selling sweet corn that he buys from outside. In addition, he receives rations from UNRWA worth USD 40 every 3 months (flour, sugar, oil) plus SYP 450 in cash per family member every 3 months (which adds up to SYP 2,700 or USD 52 for his family of 6). As Ahmed and his family cannot live on these means alone, he relies on assistance from generous people.

⁸ Excluding the temporary absent.

A successful shop owner (Khan Eshieh camp)

Although widespread, not all refugees in camps suffer from poverty. When "Tareq" retired 10 years ago, he received a large lump sum from UNRWA, after having worked as a teacher with the Agency for 28 years. He spent part of the money to invest in a large furniture and carpet shop, which he now runs with help from his two sons. Both sons are well educated and one of them even owns and runs a language institute. The shop owner's family moreover consists of two daughters still attending school and his wife who is a full-time housewife.

The shop attracts customers both from the camp and outside it, but since most of them cannot afford to pay up front, they instead buy on credit and pay monthly instalments. Most of the time this works well, but every now and then "Tareq" has to soften the terms, be patient and wait a little longer for the down payments.

"Tareq" suffers from kidney problems. The family visits UNRWA's health clinic when ill, but lack of medicines there is perceived as a problem.

Table 7.9 Status in employment by sex, education and industry, in percent of the employed

		Employee	Employer	Self-employed	Other*	Total**
Sex	Male	77	5	17	1	100
	Female	90	1	6	2	100
Education	Less than elementary	75	4	19	2	100
	Elementary or preparatory	78	5	15	2	100
	Secondary or higher	85	4	11	1	100
Industry	Agriculture	61	3	20	16	100
	Manufacturing	87	4	8	1	100
	Construction	68	8	23	1	100
	Trade, hotels, transport	55	9	32	4	100
	Public administration***	93	2	5		100
	Education, health, social work	95	1	4		100
	Community services	87	3	9	1	100
All		80	5	14	2	100
n		5,810	306	1,101	122	7,339

* Includes trainees and unpaid workers in family businesses and farms.

** May not add up to 100 because of rounding.

*** Financial intermediation and real estate are included in this group.

Although the self-employed group is a highly mixed bag, including street vendors as well as lawyers, both Table 7.9 and results from previous studies of Palestinian refugees (see Egset 2003b) indicate that self-employment is primarily an adaptation to labour markets pursued by those with weak resources to compete in the “formal” wage-labour market. Thus, people completely lacking schooling or who only have a basic education are more prone to engage in self-employment activities than people who have completed secondary or higher education. The incidence of self-employment also varies greatly by the industrial affiliation of the employee. As is the case for Palestinian refugee camps (and gatherings) in Jordan and Lebanon, the trade sector has the highest incidence of self-employment, with 32 percent. Finally, men are far more likely to engage in self-employment than women, who have a higher barrier for entry to the labour market in the first place.

More than half of working women are employed in education, health and social services

Whereas the male workforce is spread out on a number of sectors in groups of rather similar sizes, as many as 40 percent of all employed women work in the sector of education, health and social work. Combined with the related sectors of public administration and community services, 68 percent of women work in the skilled service sectors. In construction, a key sector for men, women are completely absent.

Women’s concentration in certain sectors is to a significant degree an effect of the selection of women that are economically active. Among the 18 percent of adult women who are employed, 54 percent have completed secondary or higher education. Among the 70 percent of adult men who are currently employed, only 24 percent have that level of education. For both men and women, education pulls workers away from manufacturing, construction and trade over to public administration, education, health and social work and services. About half of the workforce (46 percent) has secondary or higher education. In that group, 70 percent work in the three sectors mentioned. The only predominantly private sector industry that has a larger proportion of educated than non-educated employers is “financial intermediation and real-estate”, which includes new services such as computer services. Yet the total size of that group is small.

Regardless of education, however, women are over-represented in the indicated service sectors. Even among female employees without any completed education, 45 percent are employed in public administration, education, health, and social work and services, as compared with 26 percent of men with a similar educational attainment. On the other hand, nearly one-third of women with less than a secondary education work in the manufacturing sector, which is a sector that attracts only seven percent of the educated women.

As to regional differences, the role of agriculture is the most noticeable. In a population residing mostly in refugee camps, one does not expect to find much agricultural activity. In the South, however, nearly half of the surveyed households live in the gatherings, where agriculture is the largest single sector of work in that area. Trade is the largest single sector of work in urban Damascus, whereas manufacturing employs more than one-quarter of the workforce in the capital's rural outskirts.

Table 7.10 Industrial distribution of the workforce by sex, education and region. In percent of the employed within each group

		Agriculture	Manufact.	Construction	Trade	Transport	Financial intermed.	Public adm.	Education, health	Social services	Total	
Sex	Male	2	17	17	19	6	3	15	7	15	100	
	Female	4	20	0	6	1	2	13	40	15	100	
Education	All	No education	5	25	15	19	4	2	10	*	16	100
		Element. or prep.	2	18	15	20	7	2	16	5	14	100
		Secondary+	1	9	5	10	2	4	19	37	12	100
	Men	No education	4	23	20	21	6	2	11	1	13	100
		Element. or prep.	2	17	17	22	8	2	16	3	14	100
		Secondary+	1	10	8	15	4	5	20	24	14	100
	Women	No education	10	31	0	13	*	*	6	10	28	100
		Element. or prep.	5	23	0	6	*	*	21	25	15	100
		Secondary+	*	7	0	3	0	2	16	61	11	100
Region	Damascus urban	0	15	16	19	6	4	13	13	15	100	
	Damascus rural	2	27	8	12	5	1	17	10	17	100	
	North	0	19	14	13	4	1	12	26	10	100	
	West	0	12	18	14	5	3	16	17	14	100	
	South	21	4	13	14	5	0	13	17	12	100	
All		2	18	13	16	5	3	14	14	15	100	
n		220	1,211	1,012	1,128	374	171	1,053	1,133	1,037	7,339	

* Too few observations in cell (<15).

Educated workers prefer to obtain work in the public sector

The distinction between the industries preferred by the educated workers (Table 7.10), on the one hand, and those attracting most of the unskilled workers, on the other, largely reflects the distinction between the public and private sectors. In addition to people employed in public administration, 71 percent of those working in education, health and social services are public sector employees. Vice versa, only three, six and 14 percent of those employed in trade, construction and manufacturing respectively work in public enterprises. Finally, there is the third sector that is neither private nor public, and which comprises of a variety of social and political corporations, including UNRWA and the so-called “popular organisations”.

In Syria, a young population⁹ produces a large number of new entrants to the labour market every year while the public sector has faced mounting economic pressures to scale down since the 1980s. Still, today the public sector employs 36 percent of all employed Palestinian refugees covered by the survey, and as much as 46 percent of the employed women surveyed, as shown in Table 7.11. Yet the fact that the proportion of younger workers in public employment is far lower than for older age-groups, despite the fact that younger people are better educated than older generations, probably indicates that the public sector no longer absorbs new entrants at the relatively high rate that it has done in the past. Although 25 percent of the employed below 35 years of age are employed in the public sector, this is considerably fewer than the 37 percent of workers above that age.

The incidence of public sector employment is much lower in the younger as compared with the older age group when contrasting groups with only basic or intermediate education. Although age-specific preferences and opportunities may explain part of this disparity, the result accords well with expected effects of the demographic and macro-economic changes mentioned above. The higher rate of young workers in the private sector is mainly absorbed by the manufacturing industry (not shown here), and to some extent by various types of social work (hence the higher rate of young people employed in the “popular organisations”, cf. Table 7.11).

However, among those with secondary or higher education, there is no difference in the relative importance placed on public employment by different generations. Among young and old alike, just over 50 percent of this trained group are employed by the public sector. In other words, the relative downscaling of public employment has mainly shifted low and unskilled workers from the public to the private sector, while those with higher education continue to prefer to obtain public employment.¹⁰

⁹ Forty-nine percent of the Palestinian refugees in our survey are below 20 years of age.

¹⁰ In fact, the percentage of private-sector workers that have completed secondary education or more is lower in the younger age-group than in the older one (28 as compared with 36 percent), whereas the percentage with such education is practically identical for public sector workers in the two age-groups (69 and 68 percent). (Individuals enrolled in school are excluded from these estimates.)

Table 7.11 Sector of employment by sex and education by age; in percent of the employed

			UNRWA	Popular organisa- tion /NGO	Public	Private	Other**	Total
Sex	Male		3	8		61	2	100
	Female		8	3		37	6	100
Education and age	Less than elementary	15-35 years	*	12		72	4	100
		36 years +	*	2		70	5	100
	Elementary or prep.	15-35 years	2	9		66	3	100
		36 years +	3	5		56	2	100
	Secondary +	15-35 years	5	6		35	2	100
		36 years +	13	4		29	1	100
All		5	6		50	3	100	
n		270	501	2,276	4,044	219	7,310	

* Too few observations in cell.

** Includes private households and other.

Table 7.12 Occupational distribution of the workforce; in percent of the employed within each group

		Profession- als and managers	Clerical workers	Service and sales workers	Skilled agricult. workers	Craft workers	Plant and machine opera- tors	Elemen- tary occupa- tions	Total
Men	All	17	10	14	*	35	12	12	100
	Less than elementary	4	7	17	*	38	14	21	100
	Elementary or preparatory	9	12	16	*	40	12	10	100
	Secondary +	49	13	11	*	17	5	4	100
Women	All	49	9	7	*	14	4	17	100
	Less than elementary	2	2	15	*	23	4	52	100
	Elementary or preparatory	36	14	11	*	19	5	15	100
	Secondary +	78	12	2	*	4	2	2	100
All	32	11	12	*	25	8	11	100	
n	1,782	705	887	24	2,270	685	963	7,316	

* Too few observations in cell.

On the other hand, employment at UNRWA is far less important for educated young people than among educated older people. Again, the effect of age may play a role independently of the jobs available at UNRWA, but several years of budget austerity, together with the large number of new and educated job seekers entering the labour markets in Syria, probably explain most of the diminished significance of UNRWA as an employer for skilled workers.

In the section on working conditions below, we shall examine possible reasons, such as wages, for the educated job seekers' preference for the public sector.

Working women are professionals

Closely reflecting the industrial sector of employment, the occupational distribution of the surveyed workforce shows that "craft work" is the largest single type of occupation among men (35 percent), while nearly one-half (49 percent) of female workers work in a professional occupation (Table 7.12).

7.7 Working Conditions and Wages

The highest hourly wages are paid in education, health and social services, being the largest sector of employment among workers with secondary education or more (see Table 7.13). Although this sector is predominantly public, the public sector does not in general offer higher wages than the private sector. In public administration, for example, hourly wages are, on the whole, average and similar to the large private sector of trade, hotels and restaurants, at USD 0.7 (SYP 37) per hour. In addition, the average number of hours worked per week is eight hours, or one full day, *less* in the public sector than in the private.¹¹ Thus, total average wages are lower in the public sector than in the private sector, whether one uses hourly or weekly wages.

The highest average wages are found neither in the private nor the public sector, but at UNRWA, which is a small employer in terms of its total employment volume but is significant, especially among educated women. However, the wages offered must be seen in conjunction with the skill-level of the workers in each sector or industry. Compared to the multifarious private and public sector, UNRWA offers a relatively narrow range of skill-intensive services, mainly in health, education and social services. As a consequence, 72 percent of UNRWA employees have completed

¹¹ Note that despite of this, both underemployment strictly defined, and the desire to work more hours, are far less prevalent in the public than in the private sector (see Table 0.8).

secondary or higher education, compared to 53 percent in the public sector, 17 percent in the private sector and 22 percent employed in the popular organisations.

Working hours vary considerably with industry and employment status. In general, workers appear to compensate for low hourly wages by working long hours, an observation supported by a statistically significant, negative correlation between hourly wage and working hours.

People working in trade, restaurants and hotels have the longest working hours and work on average more than 57 hours per week. On the other hand, the lowest average number of working hours is found in the education and health sectors, with only 42 hours. In fact, because most teachers (who have the shortest working hours) were on holiday in the reference period, and thus were exempted from the average, the normal average in this industry may be lower than 42.¹²

Age and education are strongest predictors of wages

The net association between education, sector of work and wages is more feasibly examined by multivariate techniques that take those and other variables into account simultaneously. In addition to sector, industry and education, we hypothesise that wages could be explained by age and employment status. Sex is entered as a control for gender discrimination in the labour market. The regression results are printed in Table A7.2 in the Annex to this chapter, with more details about the variables.

The regression result confirms, noticeably, that public sector employment is associated with lower wages than private sector, when education and age, and other variables are controlled for. Wages cannot, therefore, by themselves explain the preference for the public sector on the part of educated workers.

Among the variables included in the model, age has the strongest positive effect on wage. Nearly as strong an effect is associated with education, measured by the total number of years of schooling.¹³ Education and other variables do not, however, fully explain the higher wages associated with the education, health and social services, and also with public administration. Work in any of those industries is associated with a net positive effect on wages.

Noticeably, self-employment has a positive though weak net effect on wage. This result appears to contradict the finding in Chapter 8 that households relying mainly on self-employment income were more exposed to poverty than those

¹² Note that “average working hours” here refer to main job only and does not reflect hours worked in possible additional jobs.

¹³ A similar result is found if education is included in the form of highest completed level instead (as dummy variables).

relying mainly on regular wage-income. However, one should remember that the self-employed is a highly mixed bag in which a minority with high education are likely to have wider opportunities for personal profits than would be the case in regular wage employment.

Finally, women earn more than men, other variables included in the model being equal. One would have expected that the higher average wage among women than among men was simply the result of higher education, and possibly different sector preferences for women and men. Yet none of these factors suffice to explain

Table 7.13 Working hours, average wages and working condition indicators by sex, industry, sector, status in employment and level of education

		Weekly hours*	USD / hour	USD / week	Index of fringe benefits (0-7)**	Percent that fear losing the job**
Sex	Men	53	0.6	28	1.0	28
	Women	43	0.7	26	2.1	25
Industry	Agriculture	49	0.7	20	*	*
	Manufacturing	53	0.5	24	0.9	37
	Construction	51	0.6	29	0.2	33
	Trade, hotels, restaurants	57	0.7	32	0.3	30
	Transport	55	0.6	29	0.5	32
	Financial intermediation, real estate	52	0.7	34	0.7	17
	Public administration	47	0.7	29	2.9	21
	Education, health, social work	42	0.9	31	2.8	13
	Community services	49	0.5	22	1.2	22
Sector	UNRWA	44	1.4	47	2.6	22
	Popular organisations	52	0.3	11	1.2	15
	Public	45	0.6	25	2.9	16
	Private	53	0.7	31	0.3	35
Status	Paid employee	51	0.6	25	1.5	
	Self-employed	52	0.9	36	0.0	
Education	Less than elementary	49	0.5	22	0.5	37
	Elementary or preparatory	52	0.6	27	1.1	30
	Secondary or higher	48	0.9	37	2.2	18
All		50	0.7	30	1.5	25

* Those absent from work and reporting zero hours of work last week are excluded from the average on working hours and hourly salaries.

** From the Randomly Selected Individual data; includes 1,422 valid cases of employed persons.

women's higher wages. Other, unobserved factors related to women's labour force participation, may contribute to the observed difference. Generally, our data on female labour force participation shows that women are not main, or even secondary, breadwinners in households with able-bodied adult men. Women may thus to a larger degree than men choose not to accept low-paid work.

Non-wage benefits increases the attraction of the public sector

As the continuing attraction of the public sector among educated workers can only partly be explained by wages, other qualities may contribute to its competitiveness. First, the sheer availability of suitable employment for those with higher education is probably limited in the private sector, which is still mainly of the informal, small-scale type in Syria. A related issue is the question of the appropriateness of employment, especially for women. Finally, non-wage benefits and associated qualities may add to the competitiveness of the public sector.

The possible role played by non-wage benefits receives support from the average scores on an index of non-wage benefits, included in Table 7.13, which varies from zero (none of the benefits) to seven (all of the benefits).¹⁴ In fact, the fringe benefits in question hardly exist at all in the private sector, with an average score of 0.3 benefits for all private sector workers. This stands in contrast to public sector employees having access to almost three out of seven benefits on average. On this indicator, the public administration, which had the lowest pay of the major public sector industries, receives the highest average score.

As examples of some of the most common benefits, according to the survey data, 81 and 83 percent of the public sector employees have paid holiday and paid sick leave, while 12 to 13 percent of the private sector employees report the same. The UNRWA staff enjoy mostly the same benefits as public sector employees, though fewer have the right to retirement benefits, mentioned by 56 percent of employees in the public sector, 22 percent in UNRWA and two percent in the private sector.

One of five in public administration fear losing their job

A significant 16 percent of employees in the public sector fear that they may lose their jobs. In particular, as many as 21 percent of civil servants and others working in public administration worry about losing their jobs. This may point to increasing job insecurity as a result of reorientations in the national economy, which is

¹⁴ The seven benefits included in the index are: (1) paid holiday; (2) paid sick leave; (3) paid maternity leave; (4) retirement pension; (5) subsidized or free housing; (6) subsidized or free medical care; and (7) other benefits such as free telephone or newspapers.

expected to reduce the role of the public sector, at least in a relative sense. In the meantime, the even stronger feeling of job-insecurity in the private sector demonstrates that this sector has yet to develop stable and secure employment, especially for less educated employees.

Manufacturing and construction offer the most hazardous working conditions

Workers in manufacturing and construction are clearly the most exposed to adverse working conditions, in terms of working high above ground, or being in close contact with dangerous machines, hazardous chemical substances or explosive materials. Not unexpectedly, the majority of construction workers work high above ground, whereas nearly half of the manufacturing workers are in close contact with dangerous machines. Strangely, a rather high proportion of people employed in public administration also state that they work high above ground or are in close contact with dangerous machines or materials.

Table 7.14 Adverse working conditions by industry and sector

		High above ground	Dangerous machines	Chemically hazardous materials	Explosive materials	Irregular working hours	Access to protective equipment	Use protective equipment
Industry	Agriculture	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	Manufacturing	12	42	20	17	34	30	9
	Construction	64	29	17	14	34	34	6
	Trade	3	12	7	11	43	10	2
	Transport	2	7	3	6	43	9	2
	Financial intermediation	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	Public administration	11	24	14	15	17	25	11
	Education, health, social work	0	5	7	3	17	5	2
	Community services	9	9	13	13	33	13	7
Sector	UNRWA	2	3	6	4	20	8	6
	Popular organisations	12	17	16	24	26	21	11
	Public	9	17	11	12	20	18	8
	Private	20	22	14	11	38	21	5
All	15	19	12	12	31	19	6	

* Too few observations in cell.

Approximately one-third of workers in the manufacturing and construction industries have access to protective gear and devices. However, less than 10 percent of workers actually use such equipment.

In terms of working schedules, however, the most unfavourable conditions are found in the trade and transportation, both of which are industries with a high rate of self-employment. In the two mentioned industries, 43 percent usually work outside the “normal” schedule between 6 am and 6 pm.

Half of the labour force have opportunity to acquire new skills on their job; 25 percent have received specific job-training

When asking employed persons if they acquire new skills or competence in their job, 22 percent say that they acquired skills on a regular basis, while an additional 28 percent reported that they do so occasionally. The percentage of workers given the opportunity to acquire new skills in their jobs is, as expected, highest in education, health and social services, where 74 percent of the workforce have received such skill upgrade. Vice versa, only 25 percent of those employed in the transportation sector are given the same opportunity.

A much smaller percentage, 26 percent, of those who are employed or have been employed in the past 12 months have received specific job-training either on the job or through courses and instruction outside the workplace. Again, the percentage is highest in education, health and social services, where 43 percent have received training. Out of the 26 percent who have received training, the majority (81 percent) use their training in their current or most recent job.¹⁵

Training is most commonly received through internal job-training programs

Among those who have received job-training, approximately one-third received their training through a training program on their job, as shown in Table 7.15. Only seven percent received such training through vocational education or training programs, while 18 percent received their training through an apprenticeship program.

An employer paid for the training in 19 percent of the cases, while 33 percent of the trainees covered the expenses themselves. In addition, the Government paid for 31 percent of the training, while UNRWA covered training for 11 percent.

¹⁵ Our data on on-the-job training include those who were not employed at the time of the survey but who had worked during the past 12 months.

Table 7.15 Type of training programs and the percentage of employees that have received each type of job training

Type of training program	Percent received training from program*
Apprenticeship program	18
Vocational secondary or short course	7
Academic secondary, intermediate diploma	12
Informal training by family members	6
Training program on the job	37
Training received in previous job	11
Other	13

* Some persons have received more than one type of training.

Child labour strictly defined is limited; concentrated in trade and manufacturing

Six percent of children in the Palestinian refugee camps and gatherings in Syria between 10 and 14 years of age are economically active. Of these, 92 percent are boys and 43 percent are not enrolled in school. In addition, 17 percent of working children (who are also attending school) state that they were away from school often or sometimes due to employment during the twelve months preceding the interview. Using non-enrolment in school as a simple criterion to define child labour, we thus arrive at a child labour rate of three percent among 10 to 14 years olds. Although these figures are too small to break down reliably by regions, child labour appears to be more common in Damascus and in the South than in the North and West.

Nearly half of the working children (42 percent) are employed in the trade, restaurant and hotel sector, followed by 32 percent in the manufacturing sector and 13 percent in the construction sector. That is to say that children are employed in those industries where they are most likely to be exposed to dangerous materials and have a poor working environment.¹⁶ More than half (56 percent) of working children were supervised by household members at their work.

¹⁶ Only five percent of children aged 10-14 years are reported as having been involved in accidents. However, the interview is made with adult household members, rather than the children themselves. There is reason, therefore, to believe that children's accidents and work-related injuries, and possibly also their employment activities as such, are under-reported.

7.8 Household Enterprises and Entrepreneurship

In developing economies, the supply of wage-employment is most often limited and many are forced to create their own employment, typically in small enterprises employing only themselves and possibly other household members. Because of their small scale and usually very low productivity, these household businesses are often referred to as “survival-enterprises”. However, both due to their contribution to the survival of many households and because of their potential to develop into larger enterprises hiring non-household employees, the factors that facilitate or impede the establishment and growth of household enterprises has attracted much attention in development studies.

In the Palestinian refugee camps and gatherings in Syria, 14 percent of the employed are self-employed and an additional five percent are employers. However, the presence of a large public sector and significant manufacturing and construction sectors has contributed to reducing the need for self-employment creation. Nevertheless, due to the contraction of the public sector expected to gain pace in the coming years, job-creation in the private sector will assume larger importance. The following may help predict the potential for such job-creation to occur at a household level.

Every fifth person has thought of starting up a business; few realise their ideas

Eighteen percent of the population report that they have had ideas for self-employment activities in the past two years, three times as many men (27 percent) as women (nine percent). However, less than half of these have attempted to realise their ideas, and only three percent of the population have successfully established a self-employment activity.

Table 7.16 Self-employment by sex and age

		Idea	Attempt	Success
Sex	Men	27	13	5
	Women	9	3	1
Age	10 to 24	12	4	1
	25 to 44	21	10	4
	45 to 54	19	9	4
	55+	6	3	2
All		18	8	3

As shown in Table 7.16, the propensity to pursue self-employment is highest in the same age groups where labour force participation is highest in general, from the mid 20s to the mid 50s.¹⁷

Table 7.17 Self-employment by education

	Idea	Attempt	Success
Less than elementary	9	4	2
Elementary or prep.	20	9	3
Secondary +	19	9	4

Higher education and household income bring more self-employment efforts

Personal resources such as education are normally expected to be positively associated with entrepreneurial skills and initiative (Khawaja and Tiltnes 2002:102). However, the expectation is only partly supported by our data (Table 7.17). Those with completed elementary or preparatory education report more ideas and attempts of self-employment than those without any elementary education. The association is probably much related to age, as most adults without any education are old. Furthermore, the propensity for self-employment does not increase further at the next level of education shown, secondary or higher. In addition, the success-to-ideas ratio does not increase with education as one might have expected. Thus, the result rather supports our previous finding that the educated part of the workforce in the camps and gatherings prefer “formal” employment, primarily in the public sector, rather than in the private and more “informal” sector.

Broad experiences and personal acquaintances promote entrepreneurship

In the survey, respondents were asked about their experiences or job training in 17 different crafts, trades and services. In addition, they were asked whether or not any of their close family or friends had started their own self-employment enterprises. In Table 7.18, the 17 different possible types of personal experiences have been grouped into no experience, one to two, three to four, and more than four fields of experience.

¹⁷ Because these data were collected in the Randomly Selected Individual part of the questionnaire, there are few observations (330 ideas, 153 attempts and only 57 successes in self-employment), preventing us from making more detailed breakdowns.

The results clearly show that the incidence of self-employment ideas increases strongly with the number of fields of experience a person has. Also, those who have close friends or relatives having started their own businesses are far more likely than others to consider starting up their own business. However, for both groups, the increasing number of ideas for self-employment is not matched by increased success.

Lacking access to credit main obstacle to starting up self-employment activities

Access to credit appears to be the main obstacle to the establishment of self-employment enterprises. Among those who have had an idea of starting self-employment business but not succeeded, 79 percent claim that lack of access to credit was the main reason for not realising their idea. Among those who actually started a business during the previous year and worked at least one month, 30 percent mentioned that access to and cost of credit is the main problem in managing their enterprise (Table 7.19).

Table 7.18 Self-employment by experience and acquaintances

		Idea	Attempt	Success
Experi- ence	No experience	8	3	1
	1 to 2 fields of exp.	18	8	3
	3 to 4 fields of exp.	24	10	4
	5 or more fields of exp	39	16	4
Acquaint- ances	Close family or friends have started business	34	16	6
	No close family or close friends have started business	13	6	2

Table 7.19 Main problems in managing self-employment enterprise

Problem	Total
Lack of access to credit	26
High cost of credit	4
Lack of management skills	1
Difficult to sell product	15
Difficulties with the authorities	3
Difficult to buy raw materials	2
Difficulties in production	1
Heath reasons	5
Family (spouse) objections / social	2
Other	10
No problems	31
Total	100

7.9 Conclusion

The Palestinian refugees in the camps and gatherings in Syria have a low average labour force participation rate (48 percent), mainly because only every fifth woman works or seeks work outside the home. In addition, men begin leaving the labour market rapidly from their mid 50s as a result of inadequate health. The total support burden of main earners is further aggravated by a young population structure in which 37 percent are below 15 years of age. On average, every employed “bread winner” in the surveyed population must thus support four persons, including him self. Traditional responsibilities in the domestic sphere, and probably also notions of appropriate female work outside the home, are the starkest factors limiting female participation in the labour force.

Nevertheless, the labour force participation rates, both for men and women, are higher among the Palestinian camp and gathering refugees in Syria, than among refugees as well as non-refugees in Lebanon and Jordan (and the West Bank and Gaza Strip before the second Intifada). This *relatively* high rate of participation in the labour market is evidence of the undiscriminating access to employment enjoyed by Palestinian refugees in Syria, including access to its large public sector where 36 percent of the surveyed Palestinians work. Also in other respects, the structure of Palestinian employment resembles that of Syrian nationals, with the exception of work in the agricultural sector. As Palestinian refugees generally do not own land, and live mostly in urban areas, their representation in that sector is lower than among Syrians. Instead, Palestinians have a higher representation in the service sectors.

The public sector continues to be the preferred sector by well-educated people, despite the fact that it does not offer higher wages than the private sector when controlling for the level of education. More than half of the workers with secondary education or more have public sector employment, with no difference between age groups. The availability of jobs of the skilled type, non-wage benefits, working conditions and job stability contribute to explaining the continued attraction of the public compared to the private sector.

Yet demographic as well as economic factors are working against the public sector’s ability to maintain its employment capacity on the same relative scale as earlier. The role of public employment is already less important in the younger age groups than in the older ones. Palestinian refugees, as Syrian nationals, are thus becoming more dependent of the private sector’s ability to create new jobs. Every fifth Palestinian interviewed has considered starting up a business on his own during the past two years. However, only three percent has successfully done so, mostly blaming the lack of credit for their failures.

Chapter Annex: Regression outputs

Table A7.1a Logistic regression output, women

		Labour force participation		Percentage Correct
Observed		Not in labour force	In labour force	
Labour force participation	Not in labour force	4289.27	309.54	93.27
	In labour force	1070.56	535.20	33.33
Overall Percentage				77.76
The cut value is .500				

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Education (vs. no education)			864.47	3.00	0.00	
Elementary	0.08	0.12	0.51	1.00	0.48	1.09
Preparatory	0.67	0.13	28.58	1.00	0.00	1.96
Secondary or higher	2.37	0.12	414.58	1.00	0.00	10.68
Marital status (vs. married)			307.37	3.00	0.00	
Never married	1.34	0.08	290.68	1.00	0.00	3.83
Widowed	0.00	0.23	0.00	1.00	0.98	1.00
Divorced or separated	1.36	0.20	45.44	1.00	0.00	3.90
Health status (vs. no health problem)			7.21	2.00	0.03	
Illness or injury	0.29	0.13	4.72	1.00	0.03	1.33
Serious health problem	-0.23	0.18	1.66	1.00	0.20	0.80
Region (vs. Damascus urban)			110.12	4.00	0.00	
Damascus rural	0.78	0.08	86.99	1.00	0.00	2.19
North	0.51	0.12	19.16	1.00	0.00	1.66
West	-0.18	0.11	2.53	1.00	0.11	0.83
South	0.41	0.14	8.45	1.00	0.00	1.50
Age squared	0.02	0.01	15.06	1.00	0.00	1.02
Constant	-1.29	0.14	90.91	1.00	0.00	0.27

Table A7.1b Logistic regression output, men

		Predicted		
		Labour force participation		Percentage Correct
Observed		Not in labour force	In labour force	
Labour force participation	Not in labour force	275.1	776.35	26.16
	In labour force	118.6	5856.32	98.01
Overall Percentage				87.26
The cut value is .500				

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Education (vs. no education)			34.15	3.00	0.00	
Elementary	0.24	0.11	4.86	1.00	0.03	1.27
Preparatory	0.71	0.13	30.48	1.00	0.00	2.04
Secondary or higher	0.42	0.12	11.48	1.00	0.00	1.52
Marital status (vs. married)			424.98	3.00	0.00	
Never married	-2.72	0.13	418.16	1.00	0.00	0.07
Widowed	-0.60	0.36	2.83	1.00	0.09	0.55
Divorced or separated	-1.40	0.37	14.00	1.00	0.00	0.25
Health status (vs. no health problem)			235.57	2.00	0.00	
Illness or injury	-0.68	0.12	31.62	1.00	0.00	0.51
Serious health problem	-1.81	0.12	230.44	1.00	0.00	0.16
Region (vs. Damascus urban)			10.57	4.00	0.03	
Damascus rural	0.11	0.10	1.19	1.00	0.28	1.11
North	0.05	0.14	0.14	1.00	0.71	1.05
West	-0.31	0.12	6.77	1.00	0.01	0.74
South	0.02	0.17	0.01	1.00	0.93	1.02
Age	-0.10	0.00	485.15	1.00	0.00	0.90
Constant	2.96	0.18	281.21	1.00	0.00	19.24

Table A7.2 Regression on wages

R		R Square	Adjusted R Square		Std. Error of the Estimate	
0.66		0.43	0.43		0.86	
		Unstand- ardized Co- efficients	Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	1.63	0.05		34.42	0.00
Sex	Women (vs. men)	0.20	0.03	0.07	6.32	0.00
Age		0.03	0.00	0.32	30.98	0.00
Years of education		0.05	0.00	0.20	18.99	0.00
Industry*	Agriculture	-0.11	0.08	-0.01	-1.24	0.21
	Construc- tion	0.14	0.04	0.04	3.51	0.00
	Trade	-0.18	0.04	-0.06	-4.75	0.00
	Transport	0.04	0.05	0.01	0.71	0.48
	Public administra- tion	0.14	0.05	0.05	3.09	0.00
	Financial interme- diation	0.02	0.07	0.00	0.27	0.79
	Education and health	0.20	0.05	0.05	4.02	0.00
	Social and community	-0.42	0.04	-0.13	-9.36	0.00
Sector**	Public	-0.31	0.04	-0.12	-8.33	0.00
	UNRWA	0.61	0.08	0.08	8.13	0.00
	Popular organisa- tion	-1.61	0.05	-0.38	-30.44	0.00
	Other	0.00	0.07	0.00	-0.03	0.98
Status***	Self- employed	0.11	0.03	0.03	3.20	0.00
	Employer	0.22	0.05	0.04	4.23	0.00
	Other status	-0.11	0.34	0.00	-0.32	0.75
Dependent Variable: Logged wage per hour						

* Entered as dummy variables, "manufacturing" is reference category.

** Entered as dummy variables, "private" is reference category.

*** Entered as dummy variables, "employee" is reference category.

8 Household Income and Poverty Profile

Willy Egset

This chapter analyses the household income data collected in the LIPRIS survey. The chapter consists of two main sections: First, the general household income situation is examined, focusing on the absolute levels as well as the composition and distribution of the income in the camp and gathering population. A second main section provides a poverty profile of this same population. Comparisons are made on some key indicators with Palestinian refugees in the Lebanese and Jordanian camps (and gatherings). Comparative material on the refugee populations in Lebanon, Jordan and the West Bank and Gaza Strip is available in Egset 2003a-c. Although Palestinian refugees in Syria do not have Syrian citizenship, they do enjoy unrestricted access to most economic activities, except for the right to own agricultural land. Palestinian refugees have equal access to public services and public sector employment with Syrian citizens (Arzt 1997:48). They are also not discriminated against in access to public employment. Nevertheless, the refugees are relative newcomers in Syria and retain a distinct group identity. This historical fact continues to influence the status of the Palestinian refugee community, and their social and economic activities, even though today nearly 90 percent of them were born in Syria.

8.1 The Syrian Economy

As an economically integrated segment of the Syrian population, the household economy of Palestinian refugees is more affected by the general characteristics of the Syrian national economy than circumstances specific to the refugees as a group. The official Syrian economic policy has been based on “Bathist Arab socialism” since the 8 March Revolution in 1963. Its local application followed patterns that are familiar in other countries in the region. Its economic policy could briefly be described by import-substituting industrialisation, public ownership of larger industrial and agricultural enterprises, with a small-scale urban “informal” private service sector and a rural smallholding agricultural sector existing side-by-side. Syria still maintains an extensive system of consumer (and producer) subsidies, and free or inexpensive public provision of health and education services (Hinnebusch 1997: 261). Since

the early 1980s, declining oil-prices (and the thereby declining internal and external rent), industrial underperformance, and later the shock arising from the demise of the Soviet Union, have pressed the agenda of reform. Until now, however, modest structural reforms have not altered the basic tenets of official policies since 1970.

Table 8.1 National income levels in Palestinian refugee host countries.

	Gross national income per capita (USD) 1999	PPP gross national income per capita (USD) 1999
Syria	970	3,450
Lebanon (1997)	3,350	6,090
Jordan	1,630	3,880
West Bank and Gaza	1,780	n.a.
Middle East & North Africa	2,060	5,000
Low income countries	420	1,870
Middle income countries	1,980	4,250

Source: WDI 2001: Table 1.1.

Low income partly offset by low prices when compared to neighbouring countries

In the group of major host countries of Palestinian refugees in the Middle East, Syria has by far the lowest national income level with a gross national income¹ (GNI) per capita at 970 USD in 1999 (Table 8.1). This is only one-quarter of the same figure for Lebanon, and slightly more than half of Jordan's GNI. Measured by such national macro-economic indicators, Syria is one of the poorest countries in the Arab region with a GNI that is less than half the region's average. Among the Arab countries, only Yemen and Mauritania have lower national incomes. In a global ranking of 206 countries by their GNI per capita, Syria ranks as number 135 (WDI 2001: Table 1.1).

The regional picture changes significantly when adjusting the national per capita income by local costs. Comparing the resulting income expressed in "purchasing power parities" (PPP), Syrian and Jordanian incomes converge and reduce the gap

¹ Gross national income (GNI) is defined as the "sum of all value added by all resident producers plus any product taxes (less subsidies) not included in the valuation of output plus net receipts of primary income (compensation of employees and property income) from abroad" (WDI 2001: Table 1.1, Definitions).

with Lebanon (column two in Table 8.1).² Although there is a large potential for errors in the international PPP adjustments, relatively low prices (compared to Lebanon in particular) are an intended effect of the country's official economic policies, including subsidies of goods (primarily food) and services (health and education services).

Is the income in Palestinian camps and gatherings in Syria lower or higher than in other host countries? A question of interpreting data

Since the vast majority of Palestinian refugees in all host countries earn most of their income from work in the national labour markets, one would expect that their respective income levels should reflect the prevailing income levels in their countries of refuge. Considering the many restrictions on Palestinian employment in Lebanon (see Egset 2003b), the correlation between refugee income and national income should be expected to be weaker there.

These expectations are largely confirmed by the figures on annual household income among the camp households in the four host countries in Table 8.2.³ The annual *nominal* household income (column 2) of refugee households in Syria of USD 2,186, compared to USD 3,577 in the Jordan camps, corresponds exactly to the differences in national macro-economic figures between the two countries reported in Table 8.1. Both figures show an income level in Syria that is equal to about 60 percent of the Jordanian one.

The Lebanese GNI, as reported in Table 8.1, is nearly four times higher than that of Syria and more than double Jordan's GNI. However, the nominal household income of camp and gathering refugees in Lebanon is more or less identical to those of camp refugees in Jordan. Similarly, the general income levels in the West Bank and

² The Purchasing Power Parities (PPP) expresses the "exchange rate" of US dollars for goods in the local economy. For example, the Syrian per capita income of is 970 USD, for which one can purchase a certain quantity of goods and services in the domestic Syrian market. To purchase similar goods and services in the US market, however, one would have to pay. The difference may, among other things, be caused by subsidies on food, education, transport, or other goods and services. The local prices of various goods and services are collected in local surveys, implemented by the International Comparison Programme (WDI 2001: Table 1.1, Definitions).

³ For several reasons, the per capita income reported in Table 8.2 is not comparable to gross national income figures. One main reason is that the value of public expenses in kind (e.g. education and health services) is not included in the household income estimates.

Gaza are considerably above those for Jordan and Syria, but below that for Lebanon (Table 8.1). Yet camp refugee *expenditures* are higher in the West Bank and Gaza Strip than the income in any other camp area (Table 8.2).⁴

Nominal household income of Palestinian refugees in Syria is lower by far as compared both with Jordan and Lebanon. Applying the PPP adjustments, we observe in Table 8.2 that the per capita income of the refugees in Syria actually surpasses those of camp refugees in both Jordan and Lebanon. The effect reflects both the relatively favourable situation of refugees in Syria and the strong effect of price level adjustment. Again, PPP adjustments should be interpreted with caution. Among several possible sources of error in the estimation of PPPs, it should be noted that international price surveys are conducted only with long intervals and not in all countries.

Table 8.2 Annual household and per capita income levels in USD (nominal and PPP) for Syria, Lebanon, West Bank and Gaza camps (and gatherings in Syria and Lebanon).

	Survey year ⁽⁵⁾	Annual household income / consumption USD	Annual per capita income USD	Annual per capita income in PPP \$ ⁽⁶⁾	n
Syria camps and gatherings ⁽¹⁾	2001	2,186	456	1,622	4,887
Lebanon camps and gatherings ⁽²⁾	1999	3,686	794	1,444	3,391
Jordan camps ⁽³⁾	1999	3,577	616	1,357	2,483
WB camps (total consumption) ⁽⁴⁾	1998	4,907	-	-	124
Gaza camps (total consumption) ⁽⁴⁾	1998	4,206	-	-	340

(1) Fafo and PCBS, the LIPRIS survey, 2001.

(2) Fafo and PCBS, the LIPRIL survey, 1999.

(3) Fafo, the Jordan Camp survey, 1999.

(4) PCBS Ramallah, 1998, Expenditure and Consumption Survey.

(5) Figures are not adjusted for inflation.

(6) Purchasing Power Parities (PPP) from WDI 2001: Table 1.1.

⁴ Note that the PCBS' household economy data for the West Bank and Gaza are based on consumption rather than income data, which is used in Fafo's surveys in the camps and gatherings of Lebanon, Syria and Jordan. Many consider consumption data to be more accurate than income data if the consumption data are collected properly. In most cases where comparisons have been possible, household consumption estimates are found to be higher than income by 20-30 percent in the same surveys (McKay 2000:96).

Income higher in Damascus and other urban areas than elsewhere

We find distinct regional income differences between urban and rural areas. In a pattern familiar in nearly all developing countries, rural areas lag behind urban areas in income, as shown in Table 8.3. Underestimation of the value of consumption of self-produced food may contribute to exaggerated income differences between rural and urban areas. In this population, however, agriculture is mainly concentrated in the South, where household income is in fact higher than the total average, though lower when looking at per capita income. Wage differences (within and across employment sectors) are probably a more plausible explanation. Several higher paid jobs are found in urban areas, and in the capital in particular, including high skill jobs in public administration and public services and in certain type of self-employment professions.

Households residing in so-called gatherings (smaller clusters of Palestinian households outside of official refugee camps) have on average considerably higher income levels than those in refugee camps, with the exception of Yarmouk camp in central Damascus.

Table 8.3 Annual household and per capita income levels in SYP and USD by regional background variables.

	Annual household income SYP	Annual household income USD	Annual per capita income SYP	Annual per capita income USD	n
All	114,173	2,186	23,810	456	4,887
Urban	119,221	2,283	25,822	494	3,050
Rural	105,613	2,022	20,400	390	1,837
Yarmouk camp	122,620	2,348	26,753	512	1,632
Other camps	103,795	1,988	20,571	393	2,682
Gatherings	124,711	2,388	25,729	493	573
Damascus urban	121,915	2,335	26,673	511	1,774
Damascus rural	101,911	1,952	19,697	376	958
North	110,161	2,110	22,537	432	684
West	108,336	2,075	23,525	450	982
South	122,041	2,337	21,026	403	489

The number of employed to non-employed in the household is a key determinant of per capita income

Some regions are negatively associated with household income when controlling other variables in a simple regression model which includes region, age, sex and education of head, number of relatives abroad, household size and household employment ratio (see Table 8.4). The regression shows a significant (on the 0.05

level) though weak negative effect on income associated with the North and rural Damascus regions, as compared with urban Damascus.

Predictably, the household's employment situation is the most important variable. An increase in the number of employed members to the number of household members is associated with a very strong rise in the per capita income, controlled for household size. The education level of any employed member also has a strong effect (this is at zero if there are no employed members).

Only a small positive effect is associated with having relatives abroad. The finding matches results from the studies on the refugee camps (and gatherings) in Lebanon and Jordan, concluding that relatives abroad do not contribute much to their families at home on a general basis, but may do so only when the household's regular income is disrupted (Egset 2003a).

Finally, it is noted that the sex of the household head does not have an independent effect on the per capita income. The situation in the case of female-headed households is discussed more in the poverty section below.

Table 8.4 Regression on per capita income, all households.

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
		0.57	0.32	0.32
	Unstandardized Coeff.			
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.
(Constant)	9.72	0.06	165.25	0.00
Employment ratio	0.84	0.07	12.17	0.00
Household size	-0.11	0.01	-21.10	0.00
No. of relatives abroad	0.01	0.00	2.80	0.01
Sex of household head	0.04	0.04	1.18	0.24
Age of household head	0.00	0.00	4.05	0.00
South	0.01	0.06	0.25	0.80
West	-0.04	0.04	-1.11	0.27
North	-0.08	0.04	-2.05	0.04
Damascus rural	-0.10	0.04	-2.78	0.01
Highest education of any employed member	0.12	0.01	15.09	0.00
Dependent variable: Per capita income, logged				

All non-interval variables are entered as dummy variables, except highest education of any employed member, which is included in the ordinal form with values zero to six.

Higher income associated with private sector employment

In a revised model, the minority of households (13 percent) that do not have any employed members are excluded in order to examine the effects of the sector-specific nature of employees within the household (Table 8.5). The revised model includes the sum of employed household members respectively in the public and private sector, and in the various political and social organisations belonging to the so-called “popular organisations”. Because this model includes only households with employed members, the UNRWA sector serves as the reference for other sectors. Instead of employment ratio, dependency ratio⁵ is included as a control for the household support burden. Results show that having household members employed in the private sector is associated with a higher level of household income than having someone employed in the public sector, when controlling for the education level of employed members.⁶ When not using controls for education, the situation is

Table 8.5 Regression on per capita income, households with employed members.

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
0.58	0.34	0.33	0.58	
	Unstandardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error		
(Constant)	9.97	0.07	139.93	0.00
Household size	-0.14	0.01	-22.26	0.00
Dependency ratio	-0.25	0.06	-4.05	0.00
No. of relatives abroad	0.01	0.00	1.49	0.14
Sex of head	-0.07	0.04	-1.49	0.14
Age of head	0.00	0.00	2.67	0.01
South	0.03	0.06	0.62	0.54
West	-0.06	0.04	-1.55	0.12
North	-0.08	0.04	-1.95	0.05
Damascus rural	-0.05	0.04	-1.32	0.19
Popular organisation	0.01	0.03	0.34	0.74
Public sector	0.11	0.02	5.29	0.00
Private sector	0.14	0.02	8.48	0.00
Highest education of any employed member	0.15	0.01	18.22	0.00
Dependent variable: Per capita income, logged				

⁵ The dependency ratio is the number of household members below 15 and above 64 years of age divided by the total number of household members.

⁶ This is done by recording the highest education of any employed member in the household.

the opposite because of a higher level of education among the public employees.⁷ Regardless of sector, the education level of employed household members has the single strongest effect on household income.

8.2 Sources of Income

Nearly half report transfer income

Three-quarters of the households received some form of wage income in the year preceding the survey; this is slightly higher than the corresponding figure for the Jordanian and Lebanese camps (see Egset 2003a). One-third of the households received some form of income from self-employment, more in urban than in rural areas, and more in higher than in lower income brackets. Nearly half of the households received transfer income of some sort, the most common being private domestic transfers (cf. Table 8.8). This result is very similar to that found in Jordanian and Lebanese camps.

Table 8.6 Frequency of grouped income types by selected characteristics.

Income types	All	Area		Location			Income quintiles				
		Urban	Rural	Yarmouk camp	Other camps	Gathering	Lowest 20 %	2 nd 20%	3 rd 20%	4 th 20%	Highest 20 %
Wage	74	71	81	70	79	74	48	74	82	84	85
Self-employment	35	39	29	40	30	38	27	26	37	38	48
Transfers	46	47	45	46	44	52	59	44	45	41	42
Property	6	7	4	7	5	5	2	2	4	7	15
Other	13	11	16	11	14	15	8	10	16	13	16
n	4,887	3,050	1,837	1,632	2,682	573	963	979	966	1,007	972

⁷ See Chapter 7 for a more detailed discussion on wages and working conditions in the public as compared with the private sector.

Few have transfers as main source of income

Although transfers are received by many, only 13 percent of the households have transfers as their largest source of income, a somewhat smaller proportion than that of the camp households in Jordan (19 percent) and Lebanon (18 percent). Like there, regular wage income is by far the most important source of income, followed by self-employment income. Altogether, 84 percent of the households draw most of their income from their own work, when combining wage and self-employment income.

Table 8.7 Largest source of grouped income.

Main source	All	Area		Location			Income quintiles				
		Urban	Rural	Yarmouk camp	Other camps	Gatherings	Lowest 20 %	2 nd 20%	3 rd 20%	4 th 20%	Highest 20 %
Wage	63	57	72	56	70	62	41	66	71	71	66
Self-employment	21	25	15	25	16	24	21	19	21	21	23
Transfer	13	14	10	15	11	11	36	12	6	6	4
Property or other	4	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
n	4,887	3,050	1,837	1,632	2,682	573	963	979	966	1,007	972

Income from self-employment is most important in the highest income group

The share of income contributed by transfers diminishes from the lowest income group through to the highest while the share of wage income increases accordingly (Figure 8.1). The relative contribution from self-employment remains more or less constant.

Meeting with a restaurant owner

Basel (25 years of age) finished school after year 9, and bought a chicken restaurant with his father's help in 2000. He rents the facilities consisting of a small room with a kitchen and a table. Outdoors, on the pavement, he has the chicken grill and a second table.

Basel buys the chicken in Damascus at

SYP 65 a piece and re-sells it for only SYP 75, since the customers in the camp cannot afford higher prices.

His gross earnings are SYP 7–8,000 (USD 140–160) per month. With the rent of SYP 3,000, this gives him a net income of SYP 4–5,000 (USD 80–100).

Among the 10 percent of households with the lowest income (the lowest decile), transfers contribute as much as 48 percent of total income. The transfer contribution drops to around 20 percent in the second, third and fourth deciles, remaining at around 10 percent from that point up. Similarly, the wage contribution is only 26 percent in the lowest decile, increasing to about 60 percent in the second and third decile, and further up to about 66 in the higher deciles. There is one exception from that tendency, namely that the importance of self-employment income is higher in the highest decile than in the lower ones, even above that of regular wages.

Figure 8.1 Composition of household income, by income deciles (n=4,887).

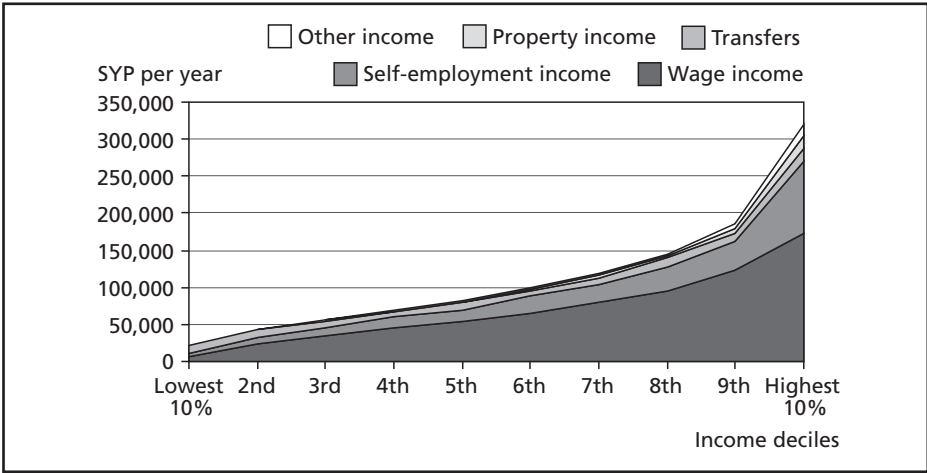
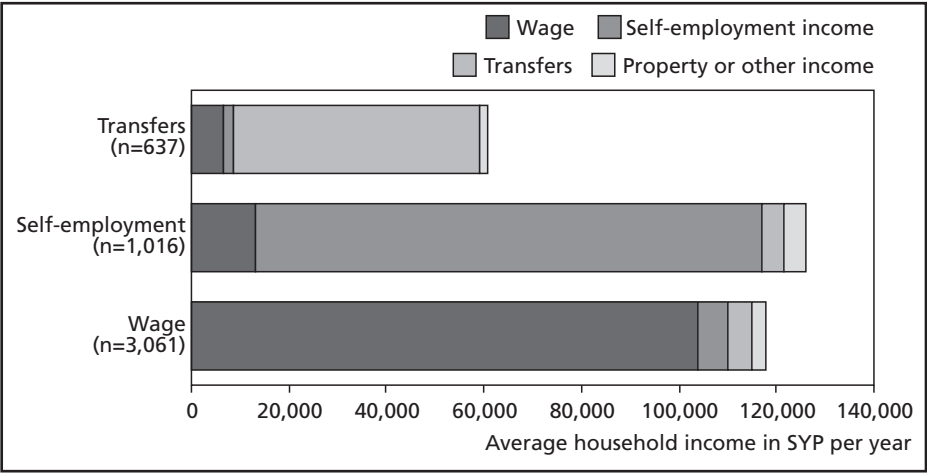


Figure 8.2 Household income level and composition by main source of income (n=4,714).



Mean income is higher among those relying on self-employment income

Just like Figure 1 showed a higher share of self-employment income in the highest income decile compared to the lower deciles, it also appears that the mean income of those households relying mainly on self-employment income is slightly higher than the mean income of those relying on wage income. However, the income inequality within this group is high. Using a median measure instead of the mean, one finds an identical income level between the two groups.⁸

The transfer-dependent households stand out, with household income being only around half of the two other groups. But, as elderly people living in rather small households dominate the transfer-dependent group, using a per capita income-measure instead considerably reduces the differences between the transfer-dependent and other groups.

Table 8.8 Composition of household transfers by income quintiles in SYP per year.

	Quintiles									
	Lowest 20 %		2nd 20%		3rd 20%		4th 20%		Highest 20 %	
	Transfers	% of transfers	Transfers	% of transfers	Transfers	% of transfers	Transfers	% of transfers	Transfers	% of transfers
Private transfers	5,373	55	4,836	55	4,256	50	6,314	55	8,703	57
Pensions	1,194	12	1,546	17	1,640	19	2,880	25	3,143	21
UN-RWA support	2,978	30	2,356	27	2,451	29	2,132	19	2,695	18
Other transfers	293	3	111	1	91	1	190	2	605	4
Transfers	9,840	100	8,848	100	8,438	100	11,516		15,145	100
% of household income	30		14		9		9		6	

1 USD=52 SYP

⁸ The median is the mid-point in a distribution sorted from highest to lowest value, with an equal number of scores above and below, regardless of the value of the scores. The mean is the arithmetic average of all scores in the distribution. A higher mean than median thus reflects that the distribution contains extreme scores in the upper end of the distribution.

Private assistance is the most important source of transfers

The majority of transfers accruing to the households come from private sources, regardless of income level. Private transfers include cash and in-kind assistance from relatives and friends inside or outside the country (of which remittances from abroad contribute 59 percent). Of the total transfers, private sources contribute 50 percent or more in all income groups.

Second largest is the combined sum of UNRWA transfers, which contributes a remarkably similar amount, around 2,500 SYP (48 USD) per household per year, across the income distribution (slightly more to the lowest income bracket).⁹ While UNRWA transfers thus contribute a larger relative share of the income in the lower income groups than in the higher, the absolute amount transferred is about the same.

Pensions are the transfer type most biased in favour of the higher income group: the 20 percent of households with the highest income receive nearly three times as much in pensions as the 20 percent of households with the lowest income.

8.3 Income distribution

In the first sections of this chapter, the Syrian economy was described as one with a traditional Arab-socialist orientation in which the Palestinian refugees are an integrated segment, influenced by the macro-structure of this economy on a par with Syrian nationals. Against that backdrop, the higher level of equality in the refugee camps (and gatherings) in Syria as compared with the Jordanian and Lebanese camps, and those countries' national figures, comes as no surprise.

Looking at the income distribution by income brackets, the differences may not appear to be large (Table 8.9). For example, the 10 percent of households with the lowest income receive 1.8 percent of the total income in the Syrian camps, compared to 1.4 percent in the Jordanian and 0.9 in the Lebanese camps (and gatherings). In Jordan, national figures show that the lowest decile receives 2.4 percent. On the opposite end of the scale, the share of total income received by the 10 percent of household with the highest income is 4–5 percentage points lower in the Syrian camps compared to the other Palestinian refugee areas.

⁹ Note that according to UNRWA, 6.5 percent of the refugee households were eligible for the Special Hardship Cases program in 2002. Each of these would receive 40 USD in cash support plus 60 USD worth in kind support. The 6.5 percent corresponds to 8,948 families comprising 26,233 persons.

Table 8.9 Household income distribution and Gini coefficients, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon.

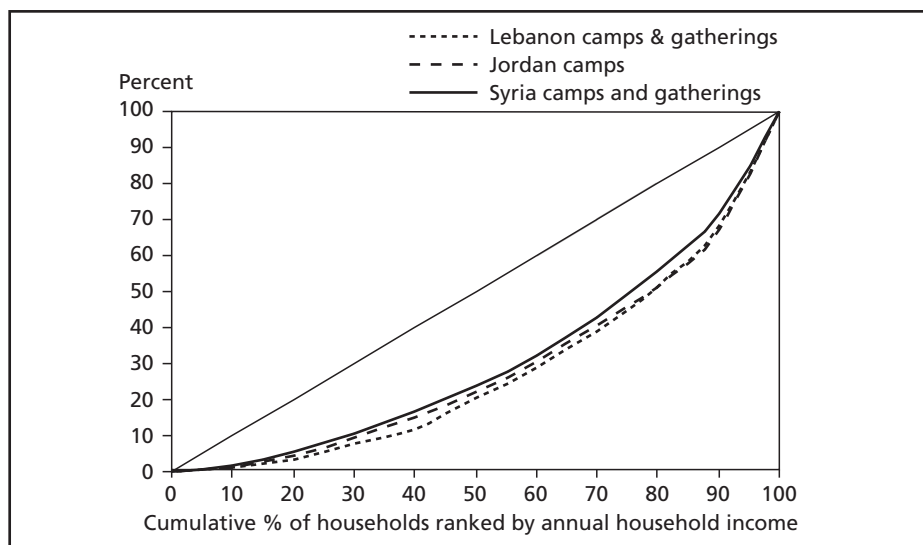
	Household income distribution in Palestinian refugee camps (& gatherings) in Syria, Jordan and Lebanon							Gini coefficient
	Lowest 10%	Lowest 20%	Second 20%	Third 20%	Fourth 20%	Highest 20%	Highest 10%	
Syria Camps ⁽¹⁾	1.8	5.8	11	15.5	23.6	44.2	28.1	0.37
Jordan refugee camps	1.4	4.5	10.7	15.4	20.7	48.7	32.7	0.46
Jordan	2.4	5.9	9.8	13.9	20.3	50.1	34.7	0.43
Lebanon camps ⁽¹⁾	0.9	3.4	8.5	16.9	22.4	48.7	31.8	0.48
Lebanon	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.44

Sources: Fafo 1999a, Fafo 1999b, Fafo 2001, CAS 1998:71, WDI 1999.

(1) Includes gatherings.

Yet, the seemingly modest differences are consistent across the distribution as shown by the Lorenz curves below, and result in a much lower Gini coefficient¹⁰ in the Syrian camps compared to all other areas. As we will soon see, the comparatively low level of inequality, combined with the high PPP adjustment factors discussed initially, contribute to low rates of income-poverty in the camps and gatherings in Syria compared to Jordan and Lebanon.

Figure 8.3 Lorenz-curves, camps (and gatherings) in Syria, Jordan and Lebanon (n=4,887).



¹⁰ Which is calculated by ranking *all* households and their income, not the grouped distribution.

8.4 The Nature of Poverty

A poverty profile based on 1 and 2 USD per day poverty lines, adjusted for purchasing power

In the remaining parts of this chapter, focus shifts away from descriptions of the general income situation in the camps towards an analysis of the extent and nature of poverty. Poverty will be defined as income-poverty, using as our poverty and ultra-poverty lines the 1 and 2 US dollar per capita per day, commonly used in international poverty statistics, and adjusted for local prices by purchasing power parities reported by the World Bank.¹¹ The poverty measures used are the headcount index, the gap-ratio (G) and the poverty-gap index (PG). Since we have two poverty lines, a lower and an upper line, the proportion falling below the lower line (the so-called “ultra-poor”) is also included in the proportion falling below the upper line (“the poor”). In the tables, the headcount index, the gap-ratio, and the combined poverty-gap index are shown separately.

The headcount index is the proportion of households (or persons when specified) whose income or consumption is below a specified poverty line. The gap ratio (G) is the average shortfall from the poverty line, expressed in percent of the poverty line (at zero among those exactly at the poverty line and at 100 among those with zero income). Finally, the PG index is the product of the headcount index and the gap-ratio, providing us with a measure that combines both the depth and the incidence of poverty. The gap ratio and the poverty-gap are both calculated only for the poor, and not the ultra-poor.

The poverty profiles below present two types of information. First, the incidence of poverty for each sub-group is defined by various background characteristics. For example, how many female-headed households versus male-headed households are poor? Second, the poverty profile presents the incidence of such characteristics among sub-groups defined in terms of their poverty status. For example, how many of all the poor households are headed by women? This is reported in the tables below as the “contribution” to poverty, and is particularly useful for predicting the effect of poverty alleviating programs in reducing total poverty (see also Ravallion 1992: 52). Note that the contribution to poverty is only calculated for the poor and not the ultra-poor.

¹¹ See the introduction to Egset (2002c) for a short discussion on the choice of this poverty measurement approach.

Poverty is less extensive and less deep in Syria than in Jordan and Lebanon

As noted previously, Syria's unfavourable regional ranking in terms of national income levels is improved when using income figures adjusted for local prices (PPP). It has also been shown that the Palestinian income distribution in Syria is more equitable than in the Jordanian or Lebanese camps. Thus, low local prices (compared to neighbouring countries), along with a comparatively low level of income inequality, combine to explain that the lowest level and depth of poverty among Palestinian camp and gathering refugees in any of the three major host countries outside of Palestine is found in Syria, shown in Table 8.10.¹²

The 23 percent of households and 27 percent of the population that fall below the poverty line in Syria is a rather high rate of poverty. It is still significantly less than the 31 and 35 percent of camp (and gathering) households that are poor in Jordan and Lebanon respectively. The level of ultra-poverty, at five percent of households, is only one-third of the level found in Lebanon. In terms of estimated population figures, the number of ultra-poor persons in Syria (10,590) is roughly half of the number of ultra-poor in Lebanon (24,340) or Jordan (17,480).

Furthermore, the income of both the ultra-poor and the poor are nearer to the poverty line in Syria than they are in the two other areas. In Syria, the ultra-poor and the poor are on average 29 and 31 percent below the poverty line, as compared to 42 and 43 percent in Lebanon and 38 and 36 percent in Jordan.

The minimum eradication costs is the sum of all of the income shortfalls from the poverty line by all of the ultra-poor and the poor respectively, establishing a theoretical estimate of the cost of lifting the ultra-/poor out of ultra-/poverty for one year by perfectly targeted cash transfers. As shown in Table 8.10, eliminating ultra-poverty from the camps and gatherings in Syria this way would cost about USD 300,000 for one year, assuming zero leakages to the non-ultra poor and zero implementation costs. Eliminating both ultra-poverty and other poverty, under the same assumptions, would cost 10 times that amount, namely USD 3,000,000. The fact that the costs of eliminating poverty is so much higher than the costs of eliminating ultra-poverty is primarily because the poverty line is twice as high as the ultra-poverty line and that there are nearly 5 times as many poor as ultra-poor. In addition, the average gap-ratio is slightly higher for the poor than for the ultra poor. That is, the average incomes of the poor are further below the poverty line, than are the average incomes of the ultra-poor from the ultra-poverty line.

¹² Note that the poverty figures are calculated with basis in per capita incomes adjusted by purchasing power parity. Changes in the PPP for any one of the countries compared will thus change the poverty rates accordingly. The possible errors and biases in the purchasing power parity adjustments mentioned in the first sections of this chapter should be taken into account.

Table 8.10 Poverty and ultra-poverty in camps (and gatherings) in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan.

	Syria camps and gatherings		Lebanon camps and gatherings		Jordan camps	
	Ultra-poor	Poor	Ultra-poor	Poor	Ultra-poor	Poor
% households	5 %	23 %	15 %	35 %	9 %	31 %
% persons	6 %	27 %			10 %	36 %
Gap-ratio (G)	29 %	31 %	42 %	43 %	38 %	36 %
Poverty gap (PG)	2	7	6	15	3	11
N (estimated population)	10,590	45,850			17,480	64,150
Minimum eradication costs (\$)	303,500	3,017,000				

Half of the poor households have experienced a lack of food – most cope by consuming lower quality food

When asked whether or not the household has experienced lack of food or lack of money to buy food during the last month, 55 percent of the ultra-poor and 45 percent of all poor answered yes. Comparatively, some 18 percent of the non-poor had experienced the same. Lack of food should be understood in the sense of lack of *preferred* or *usual* food, since only four to five percent of those who report lack of food claim that the lack of food has prevented them entirely from eating on some days. More commonly, those who lack food cut down on the number of daily meals, limit the adults’ consumption, or seek help outside the household. Yet, by far the most common adaptation to food shortages is shifting to lesser quality food, a strategy pursued by 65 to 75 percent of those in this situation.

Figure 8.4 Percent of households reporting lack of food or money for food in the past month by poverty status (n=4,885).

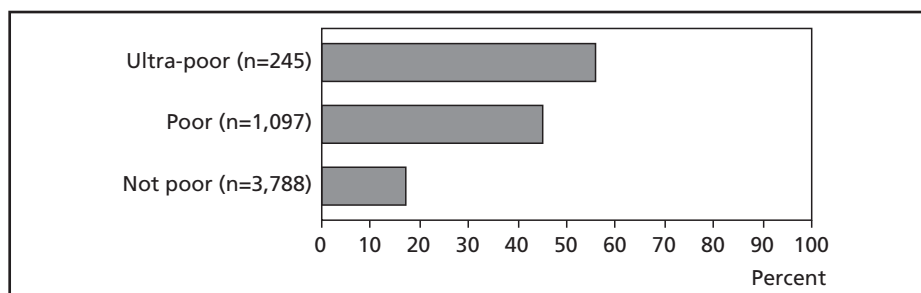
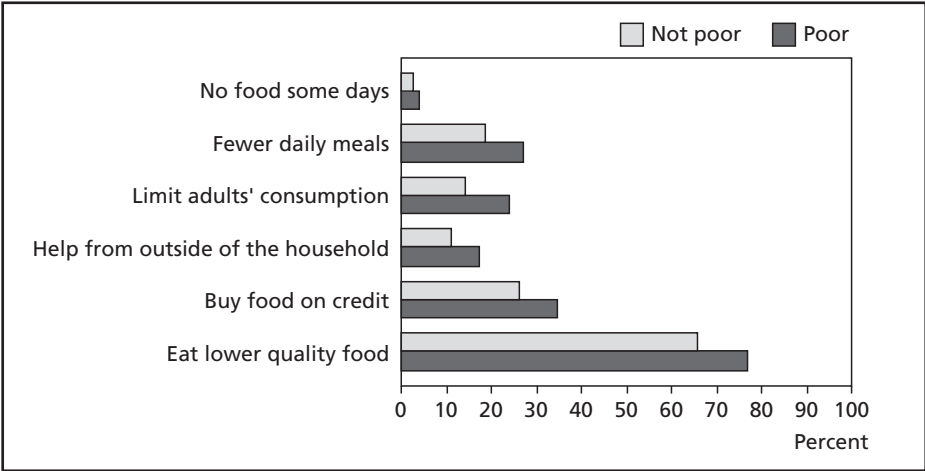


Figure 8.5 Ways of coping with food shortage by poverty status. Percent of households with reported food shortage (n=4,885).



Economic vulnerability is high among the poor – help from outside the household is a significant safety net

In addition to the income and food security indicators presented above, the surveyed population were asked about their access to savings or emergency cash as a measure of their economic vulnerability. Vulnerability is not identical to poverty but refers to the “risk that a household or individual will experience an episode of [...] poverty over time” (World Bank 2001: 19), which in turn is associated with a number of other social risks. Though conceptually distinct, poverty is very often associated with high vulnerability because income poverty prevents the accumulation of many assets that serve as insurance against risks (such as bank savings, property investments, formal insurance) (World Bank 2001: 135).

Results are mixed with respect to the availability of safety nets against risks of future income shortfalls in the surveyed population. Asked if their household would be able to raise SYP 5,000 (slightly less than USD 100) in a week, 65 percent of the ultra-poor and 57 percent of the poor declined (see Figure 8.6). Yet, given the fact that the annual household income is only SYP 46,600 among the poor and SYP 24,900 among the ultra-poor, the result is not very surprising. More telling is the fact that a considerable minority of the poor (31 percent of the ultra-poor and 41 percent of the poor) claim they would be able to raise the amount of money with the help of people outside their own household. Given the relatively high amount of money in question, the result could be interpreted as evidence of strong social solidarity among the camp residents.

Formal bank accounts are not a form of saving of any relevance among the surveyed population, held by barely five percent of the non-poor. The use of more traditional saving types, in gold and jewellery or in the informal *jamiyyas*, are also limited, although with a distinct difference by poverty status. Twenty-one to 23 percent of the non-poor have savings in a *jamiyya* or in the form of gold or jewellery, as compared with nine percent among the poor and six percent among the ultra-poor (on both types).

However, the lack of insurance-type savings should also be considered in light of the risk environment of the refugee population. The refugees are entitled to free or inexpensive access to health and education services, as well as a certain amount of hardship and poverty support, with the UNRWA (and also the state in Syria). The need for private insurances by implication is lower than it would have been without, or with a lower level of, such service provision.

Figure 8.6 Ability to raise SYP 5,000 by poverty status. Percent of all households (n=4,885).

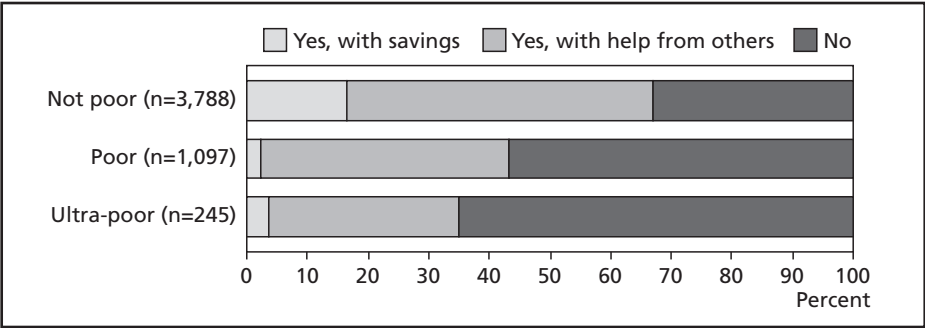
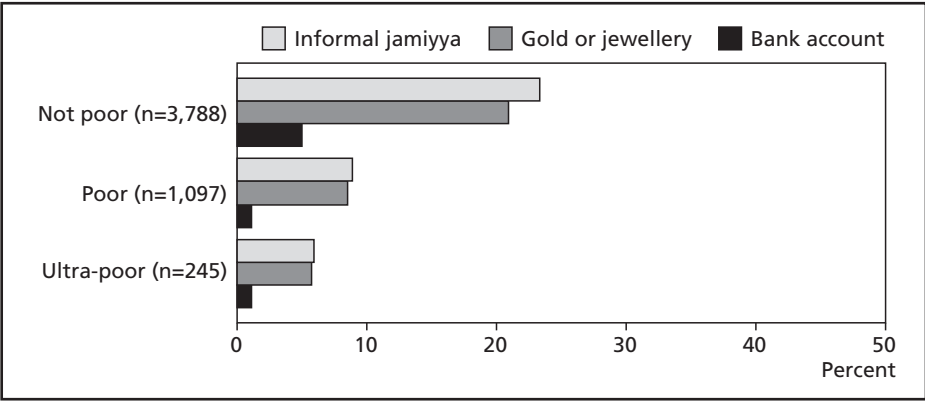


Figure 8.7 Incidence of saving forms by poverty status. Percent of all households (n=4,885).



Most of the poor are not materially deprived

The low incidence of savings should also not be considered evidence of broad-based material deprivation, for example: from about 80 percent of the ultra-poor to some 95 percent of the non-poor own basic household durables, such as a refrigerator, a washing machine, and a TV set (Table 8.11). Much fewer have their own satellite dish, but such receivers of foreign broadcasts are owned by one-quarter of the poor and ultra-poor households, and as many as 42 percent of the non-poor. Cars, on the other hand, are exclusive luxury items owned by only three to seven percent of the households.

The ownership of items that in many other developing countries would be considered luxury goods, such as TV, can be explained in two ways. First, it is most probably an indication that the poverty experienced by the poor in the camps and gatherings today, has not been one that has lasted all their lives. In accordance with other data, the ultra-poor households in particular have become so because their income earning capacity has been reduced due to a specific event or process, in most cases old age or failing health. Their TVs and washing machines could thus have been obtained before that event occurred.

In addition, among the working poor in particular, even their meagre per capita incomes may have, or have had in earlier years, a purchasing power that enabled them to obtain basic household durables, such as a TV.

Table 8.11 Ownership of household durables in percent of households.

	Ultra-poor	Poor	Not poor
Refrigerator	85	90	95
Washing machine	79	87	92
Television set	79	87	93
Satellite dish	23	26	42
Video player	3	7	15
Car or truck	*	3	7

*Too few observations in cell.

8.5 A Profile of Poverty

No regional concentration of poverty

A breakdown of poverty by various geographical variables does not reveal any strong geographical concentration of poverty (Table 8.12). Yet, rural areas do have a higher level of poverty than urban areas, at 27 compared with 20 percent. The vast majority of the camp households reside in camps in the Damascus area, and differences between the other regions are marginal. Because of the low sample size in the group of gathering households, we cannot conclude that the seemingly lower levels of poverty among these compared to the camp household is statistically significant.

Table 8.12 Poverty by area, type of location and region.

Regional variables		Ultra poor	Poor	Contribution	G	PG	HH size	n
Area	Urban	5	20	57	31	6	5.3	3,050
	Rural	6	27	43	32	8	5.8	1,837
Location	Yarmouk camp	5	20	40	33	7	5.2	1,632
	Other camps	5	25	51	31	8	5.7	2,682
	Gathering	3	21	9	27	6	5.5	573
Region	Damascus urban	5	20	42	32	6	5.2	1,774
	Damascus rural	6	29	33	32	9	5.9	958
	North	5	20	8	32	6	5.5	684
	West	4	21	10	29	6	5.3	982
	South	5	26	7	30	8	6.4	489

Female-headed households are poorer than male-headed

Poverty alleviation programs often target households headed by women, including UNRWA's hardship programs, because of their low income and frequently high support burden. As shown by the analysis of these households in the Lebanon camps and gatherings and the Jordan camps (see Egset 2003c), the concern is well founded. The vast majority of the female heads are not employed, and often there are no alternative income earners in the household. In the camps and gathering populations in Syria, the situation is very similar. Forty percent of the female-headed households do not have an employed household member and, correspondingly, 43 percent of them rely mainly on transfer income.

In the case of the Syrian camp and gathering refugees, households headed by women are also poorer than the male-headed households (Table 8.13). Although the difference is marginal with respect to overall poverty, there is a significantly higher level of ultra-poverty among female-headed households compared with the male-headed households. Private and official transfers to households headed by women thus fail to compensate adequately for the dearth of wage income in these households.

In addition, households headed by women are much smaller in average size than those headed by men. As our poverty figures are based on a flat per capita income, another income measure adjusted for the scale and composition of households¹³ might have increased the difference between the two household types found here.

Table 8.13 Poverty by gender of household head.

Sex of head	Ultra poor	Poor	Contribution	G	PG	HH size	n
Female-headed	10	26	15	39	10	4.1	634
Male-headed	4	22	85	30	7	5.7	4,253

Poverty is highest in the prime child rearing phase of the household life cycle

Similar to what was found in the analysis of poverty in the Jordan camps and the Lebanon camps and gatherings, the poverty rate is highest in the group of households whose heads are between 36 and 45 year old. However, the largest average shortfall from the poverty line is in the group of poor households with the oldest heads. The probable explanation for the high incidence of poverty in the 36 to 45 year age group is that the household in this phase have had all of their due children, while most or all of the children are still minors and live in the households, providing for a high dependency burden and low per capita income.

Table 8.14 Poverty by age of household head.

Age of head	Ultra poor	Poor	Contribution	G	PG	HH size	n
Up to 35	4	18	20		5	4.4	1,182
36-45	6	28	36		9	6.0	1,410
46-55	5	22	19		7	6.8	948
56-65	4	20	13		6	5.9	763
66+	7	23	12		8	3.9	584

¹³ Adjustment for economy of scale assumes that the total household income has a stronger purchasing power per household member the larger the household is. Adjusting for scale would thus have increased the adjusted per capita income in male-headed relative to female-headed households.

Majority of the poor have health problems in the household

As many as 34 percent of all poor households have one or more members with a serious illness in the household, defined as a self-reported health problem that is serious enough to make it difficult to leave the household without help (Table 8.15). An additional 19 percent of the poor households have one or more members with a chronic illness or injury. In total, a majority of 53 percent of the poor households have chronic health problems among its members. Among the households with at least one serious health problem incident, 31 percent fall below the poverty line and ten percent fall below the ultra-poverty line, as compared to 19 percent and 4 percent respectively of households without any chronic health problem. The poor with serious health problems also have lower income than the poor without health problems, as shown by the higher gap-ratio (G) in the first group. Noticeably, and contrary to what was found in the Lebanon and Jordan surveys, there are no significant differences between the group of households without any health problems and those with health problems of a less serious type.

Table 8.15 Poverty by household health problems.

Health problems in HH	Ultra poor	Poor	Contribution	G	PG	HH size	n
No health problem	4	19	47	29	6	5.3	2,757
Health problem	4	23	19	28	7	5.8	934
Serious health problem	10	31	34	36	11	5.7	1,196

High levels of poverty are associated with high dependency ratios

There is a strong positive correlation between the household dependency ratio and poverty (Table 8.16). Poverty nearly doubles from the group of households with no dependants, to the group of households with a dependency ratio higher than zero but less than 1/2. Poverty increases sharply again among households with more dependants than providers, up to as much as 42 percent when the dependency ratio surpasses 2/3 (that is to say when the number of dependants is double or more of the number of adults aged between 15 and 64).

Table 8.16 Poverty by household dependency ratio.

Dependency ratio	Ultra poor	Poor	Contribution	G	PG	HH size	n
0	2	12	8	28	3	3.9	776
Between 0 and 1/3	4	20	24	31	6	6.0	1,332
Between 1/3 and 1/2	4	20	21	31	6	5.6	1,191
Between 1/2 and 2/3	6	30	31	30	9	5.9	1,157
Between 2/3 and 1	15	42	16	38	16	5.2	431

Relatives in high-wage countries significantly reduces the risk of poverty

Having one or more close relative abroad would be expected to serve as a solid safety-net against poverty, especially if the relative is in a high-wage country. The relative is likely to make more money (if in a high-wage country) than their family members in Syria, and would be expected to share some of his or her wealth if need be. In addition, the relative abroad is not affected by accidents, natural disasters or other sudden misfortunes that may reduce the income earning capacity of the entire household in the home country.

The association between poverty and the resource represented by relatives abroad is particularly complex because causes and effects are so highly intertwined. For example, having a relative successfully installed in a high-wage country would probably require a type and level of resources – such as education, money for travel, knowledge of visa arrangements – in the migrant’s household which preclude many of the poor.

Furthermore, the value represented by relatives abroad may not be fully captured by static poverty figures. The reason is that the resource may be mobilised only for particular and irregular occasions such as to cover medical expenses, and thus may serve as an insurance against social risks but may not be reflected fully in the household’s regular income level. Our data from the surveys on Jordan and Lebanon camps indicated such mechanisms (Egset 2003c).

The results confirm that the 55 percent of the households that have relatives abroad have a lower rate of poverty (Table 8.17). The risk is lowest for households with relatives in high-wage countries such as the Gulf or Western countries. In this group, the poverty rate is 16 percent, compared to 26 percent among households without relatives in high-wage countries.

However, the figures also show that relatives abroad are no guarantee against poverty. Noticeably, only 22 percent of those who have relatives abroad, and 27 percent of those who have relatives in high-wage countries, receive any remittances at all.

The opposite result is found when looking at the association between domestic remittances and poverty. If the household receives gifts and assistance from domestic relatives and friends, they seem to do so because there is a particular need. In fact, while the average transfer of external remittances are strongly biased in favour of the non-poor, the distribution of domestic remittances is far more equitable. On average, the non-poor households receive SYP 3,720 in external remittances per year, compared to SYP 785 received by poor ones. In addition, the non-poor households receive an average of SYP 3,000 per year in internal remittances, as compared with SYP 2,300 to the poor households. Both types of remittances are, however, of marginal significance to their total income. For example, internal remittances represent only five percent of the total income of the poor.

Lack of employed members in the household is a serious poverty risk

Households without any employed member are very strongly at risk of suffering poverty (Table 8.19). Most at risk are households with no employed members but in which one or more members are looking for work. In this group, which represents seven percent of all households, as many as 46 percent are poor and 24 percent ultra-poor. The group is very different from the group of households with no economically active members, which are small households consisting mostly of elderly people.

Table 8.17 Poverty by household network, relatives abroad.

Household network – relatives	Ultra poor	Poor	Contribution	G	PG	HH size	n
Relatives abroad	5	19	46	31	6	5	2,720
No relatives abroad	6	27	54	32	9	6	2,166
Rel. in high wage areas	4	16	25	31	5	5	1,747
No rel. in high wage areas	6	26	75	32	8	6	3,140

Table 8.18 Poverty by household network, remittances.

Household network – remittances	Ultra poor	Poor	Contribution	G	PG	HH size	n
External remittances	3	14	8	28	4	5	668
No external remittances	6	24	92	32	8	6	4,219
Internal remittances	7	26	24	32	8	5	1,043
No internal remittances	5	22	76	31	7	6	3,844

Then again, as in the Jordanian and Lebanese camps, employment is no guarantee against poverty. On the contrary, the majority (78 percent) of poor households have employed members. Vice versa, every fifth household with employed members fall below the poverty line. However, few of them fall below the ultra-poverty line.

Table 8.19 Poverty by household employment situation.

Employment status	Ultra poor	Poor	Contribution	G	PG	HH size	n
At least one employed	3	20	78	28	6	5.8	4,259
At least one unemployed (and no one employed)	24	46	7	48	22	4.8	171
None in labour force	16	37	15	41	15	3.1	455

Those depending on transfers are at a high risk of poverty

Table 8.20 lends further evidence to our observation that wage-income in the household is key to preventing ultra-poverty while not guaranteeing against poverty as such. Households that rely mainly on wage-income also have a lower rate of poverty than those relying mainly on self-employment income.

Table 8.20 Poverty by main source of income.

Main source of HH income	Ultra poor	Poor	Contribution	G	PG	HH size	n
Wage	3	19	54	27	5	5.8	3061
Self-employment income	6	24	22	32	8	5.6	1016
Transfers	17	38	21	42	16	3.7	637
Property or other	5	18	3	34	6	5.2	173

Key determinants to poverty are associated with the household's economic support burden

Finally, a logistic regression model is proposed in order to check the net effects on poverty by the variables examined in the preceding tables. Our model uses poor versus non-poor as its dependent variable and includes the variables discussed in the poverty profile as predictors. We tested two models. The first model includes all of the households, whereas the second model includes only households with employed members.¹⁴

The poverty profile above suggested strong correlations between poverty and variables associated with the household's support burden, broadly defined. The regression model amply substantiates the above correlations. A very strong and positive association is found between the household's "dependency ratio" and its poverty risk. The increase is particularly sharp at the point where households have more dependants than adults aged between 15 and 64 in the household – i.e. a dependency ratio of more than 0.5. A similar strong effect is associated with the related variable "employment ratio", which is the number of employed members in the household to the total household size. An improved support burden, in the form of fewer children or increased labour force participation, or both, would thus contribute most considerably to reduce poverty.

"Illness in the household", which increases the support burden both directly and indirectly, also contributes significantly to an increased risk of poverty.

¹⁴ The regression output is given in the Chapter Annex, as Table A8.1 and Table A8.2.

With regard to the effects of household networks, results are more ambiguous. Although “having a relative in a high-wage country” reduces the risk of poverty (while having relatives in low-wage countries does not), actually “receiving remittances from abroad” means an increased risk. The results indicates that although migrated relatives are a resource that may be vital to the welfare of the household at home, the economic mobilisation of that resources follows from a situation of dire needs. The resulting observable and somewhat paradoxical effect is that external remittances are associated with poverty. “Internal remittances” do not have a significant effect in the model.

“Female headship” does not have a significant independent effect on poverty in spite of the higher average rate of poverty in that group compared to the male-headed ones. In other words, other conditions being equal the sex of the head does not affects poverty status. On the other hand, those conditions are not equal among the sexes that result in different average poverty rates.

“Region” is included as a control variable and confirms the result found in the profile, that rural Damascus and the Southern regions, also predominantly rural, stand out as having an increased risk of poverty.

The effects on poverty by the household dependency ratio are even stronger when looking only at households with employed members. Of particular interest in this model are the possible effects of the sectors in which employed members work.¹⁵ “Having members employed in UNRWA” contributes most strongly to reducing the poverty risk for the household. On the other hand, “having someone employed in political and social organisations”, referred to as “popular organisations”, is associated with a slightly increased risk of poverty. Finally, although the difference is a minor one, “having members employed in the public sector” reduces the risk of poverty more than having someone employed in the private sector. As seen above, the regression on income showed the opposite effect of the two sectors on overall household income.

¹⁵ The variables “employed in UNRWA”, “in public sector” etc. represent the number of household members employed in each of the indicated sectors, the coefficient representing the effect of an increase by one† person.

8.6 Conclusion

Poverty in the Palestinian camp and gathering population in Syria is less extensive and less severe than among the camp population in Jordan or the camp and gathering population in Lebanon, when measured by income adjusted by international purchasing power estimates. There are many similarities between the description of the income and poverty situation among the Palestinian camp and gathering refugees in Syria and that of the refugees in Jordan and Lebanon. The majority, about eight out of 10 households, make their living from their own work. Most of these have regular wage income; a minority have income from self-employment. A significant minority of the households make most of their income from transfers, the largest supply of which come from private sources, with UNRWA support being of secondary importance. The transfer-dependant group (13 percent) consists mostly of elderly people and lags considerably behind households with other income sources with respect to annual household and per capita income.

With respect to poverty, there are many similarities between the camps and gatherings in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan. A minority of poor persons, around 20 percent, are jobless or retired, a large part of whom tend to fall below the ultra-poverty line. Old age and failing health are key characteristics of this group. Yet, the majority of the poor have employed members in their household, but low labour productivity and a heavy economic support burden contribute to keep many below or just above the poverty line. The support burden is compounded both by having many children and low female labour force participation, as well as by any reduced work capacity resulting from health problems.

The relatively extensive system of subsidies on goods and services in the Syrian economy combined with a more equal distribution of income in the camp and gathering population contribute to a higher level of absolute income and a lower rate of poverty as compared with their counterparts in Jordan and Lebanon. Given Syria's unfavourable regional position in terms of its gross national product and recent growth record, this is a remarkable finding. It is a credit to the Syrian policy of integration of its refugees. Another implication is, however, that the Palestinian refugees in Syria stand to face the consequences of economic austerity reforms that are likely to be more extensive in the near future than has been the case until now. In this situation, the risks of poverty may increase unless growth in the private sector picks up.

ANNEX: Regression outputs

Table A8.1 Logistic regression on poverty, all households.

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Location (vs. gathering)						
Camp	0.09	0.14	0.45	1.00	0.50	1.10
Region (vs. Damascus urban)						
			28.37	4.00	0.00	
Damascus rural	0.45	0.09	22.73	1.00	0.00	1.57
North	0.10	0.14	0.51	1.00	0.48	1.11
West	-0.04	0.13	0.10	1.00	0.75	0.96
South	0.42	0.16	6.54	1.00	0.01	1.52
Sex of household head (vs. Female-headed)						
Male-headed	-0.01	0.12	0.01	1.00	0.91	0.99
Age of household head (vs. 15 to 35)						
			73.67	2.00	0.00	
36 to 55	0.46	0.10	22.32	1.00	0.00	1.58
56 and above	-0.38	0.12	9.06	1.00	0.00	0.69
Dependency ratio (vs. 0)						
				4.00	0.00	
Between 0 and 1/3	0.51	0.14	13.38	1.00	0.00	1.67
Between 1/3 and 1/2	0.57	0.15	15.62	1.00	0.00	1.78
Between 1/2 and 2/3	1.31	0.14	82.07	1.00	0.00	3.70
Between 2/3 and 1	1.44	0.16	80.30	1.00	0.00	4.20
HH health (vs. no health problem)						
			40.45	2.00	0.00	
Illness or injury	0.32	0.10	10.49	1.00	0.00	1.38
Serious health problem	0.58	0.09	38.98	1.00	0.00	1.78
Relatives abroad (vs. no relatives abroad)						
			32.33	2.00	0.00	
Relatives in high income countries	-0.54	0.10	32.25	1.00	0.00	0.58
Relatives in low income countries	-0.19	0.10	3.50	1.00	0.06	0.83
External remittances	0.97	0.19	25.56	1.00	0.00	2.65
Internal remittances	0.20	0.14	2.14	1.00	0.14	1.22
Employment ratio	-2.95	0.17		1.00	0.00	0.05
Constant	-0.78	0.15	25.36	1.00	0.00	0.46

Table A8.2 Logistic regression on poverty, households with employed members only.

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Sex of head (vs. female-headed)						
Male-headed	-0.21	0.15	1.88	1.00	0.17	0.81
Location (vs. gathering)						
Camp	0.01	0.15	0.00	1.00	0.96	1.01
Region (vs. Damascus urban)						
Damascus rural	0.33	0.11	9.54	1.00	0.00	1.39
North	0.16	0.16	1.01	1.00	0.32	1.18
West	0.07	0.14	0.24	1.00	0.62	1.07
South	0.56	0.18	9.26	1.00	0.00	1.75
Age of household head (vs. 15 to 35)						
36 to 55	0.77	0.11	50.75	1.00	0.00	2.17
56 and above	0.40	0.15	7.21	1.00	0.01	1.48
Dependency ratio (vs. 0)						
Between 0 and 1/3	0.93	0.17	29.89	1.00	0.00	2.54
Between 1/3 and 1/2	0.90	0.18	25.50	1.00	0.00	2.45
Between 1/2 and 2/3	1.46	0.18	68.14	1.00	0.00	4.29
Between 2/3 and 1	2.12	0.21	99.34	1.00	0.00	8.34
HH health (vs. no health problem)						
Illness or injury	0.25	0.11	5.15	1.00	0.02	1.28
Serious health problem	0.58	0.11	29.93	1.00	0.00	1.79
Relatives abroad (vs. no relatives abroad)						
Relatives in high income countries	-0.42	0.11	15.27	1.00	0.00	0.66
Relatives in low income countries	-0.29	0.11	6.54	1.00	0.01	0.75
External remittances	0.77	0.22	12.03	1.00	0.00	2.16
Internal remittances	0.03	0.16	0.03	1.00	0.87	1.03
Employed members in UNRWA	-1.60	0.30	27.80	1.00	0.00	0.20
Employed members in popular organisation	0.28	0.11	6.67	1.00	0.01	1.33
Employed members in public sector	-0.62	0.09	52.47	1.00	0.00	0.54
Employed members in private sector	-0.39	0.06	46.47	1.00	0.00	0.67
Highest completed education of employed members (vs. No completed education)						
Elementary	0.41	0.14	8.50	1.00	0.00	1.50
Preparatory	0.10	0.15	0.48	1.00	0.49	1.11
Secondary or higher	-0.85	0.16	26.93	1.00	0.00	0.43
Constant	-1.13	0.20	31.72	1.00	0.00	0.32

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Annex 1 The LIPRIS Sample and Weights

Guri Tyldum and Jon Pedersen

This chapter describes the sample for the 2001 survey of Living Conditions among Palestinian Refugees in Syria (LIPRIS). Its main aim is to document the sampling procedures, the weights used and procedures for post-stratification and handling non-response in the survey.

Overview of the Sample

The main design characteristics for the sample are:

1. The target population of the study is all Palestinian households living in camps and gatherings in Syria;
2. The population was divided into 32 strata (one stratum per camp or gathering with more than 25 households), and a single stage stratified sample was drawn within each;
3. The sample frame was the census lists from the 2000 Population Census conducted by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Natural Resources (PCBS) in Damascus;
4. The enumeration units of the sample are Palestinian households. The questionnaire calls for one respondent to answer for the household, one interview with each ever-married woman in the household aged 15 or more, and one interview with one randomly selected individual (RSI, man or woman) aged 15 or more. The sample thus gives four types of analytical units – the household, the individuals in the household (all ages), the ever-married woman, or women, of the household, and one randomly selected individual of the household (RSI), aged 15 years or above; and

5. A sample of 5,001 addresses was drawn from the census lists. 4,933 interviews were conducted. 0.35 percent of the selected households (18 households) could not be contacted or refused to participate, and one percent of the sample (50 households) fell out due to frame imperfections, giving an overall response rate of 98.6.

Stratification and Sample Allocation

The Palestinian population in Syria is unevenly distributed across the country. 74 percent (of the population covered by the PCBS Census) live in Damascus and surrounding areas, while only two-three percent live in each of the governorates (*mohafazat*) of Hama and Lattakia. As living conditions were expected to vary with place of residence, the sample was disproportionably allocated to the governorates, in order to enable analysis of regional variation.

The sample was allocated to the six main governorates in the following manner:

Governorate	Population size (households)	Sample take	Sampling fraction
Damascus	23,809	2,803	0.12
Alleppo	2,855	699	0.25
Homs	1,937	500	0.26
Hama	982	300	0.31
Lattakia	708	200	0.28
Dar'a	1,917	499	0.26

The sample was stratified into 32 strata (all 13 camps and the 19 gatherings with a population of more than 25 households). Within each governorate, the allocation of the sample was proportional to the population size of the camp or gathering, according to data from the last census.

The Sample Frame

The PCBS conducted a census of all Palestinian households in February 2000. After checking the census lists for five camps and gatherings with differing locations and characteristics, we concluded that there had been limited change in residential patterns among the Palestinians in the months after the census (spot-checks were conducted in May 2001), and that the census registration had been of high quality. An extensive re-listing of all camps and gatherings would give little gain in coverage, and would entail using a two-stage cluster sample, which would increase the variance and reduce the efficiency of the sample. Using the census lists as sampling frame was thus decided to be the most efficient and cost-effective approach.

As the fieldwork was conducted 18 months after the census, some households were expected to have changed residence, and no longer be correctly registered in the census lists. To deal with this the census list was treated as a list of addresses – where information was gathered for the household living at the address, even if the person listed (and his/her household) had moved. Had this not been done, all the migrants in the country would have fallen out of the sample as it would not have been possible to follow them to their new place of residence. On some occasions, another household than the originally sampled household was interviewed. This method introduced a slight bias to the effect that people having recently moved to a newly constructed house or a house that had not formerly been used for housing, could not be selected in the sample. We have no estimates of how large a share of the population this involves. Palestinians having moved out of the camps or gathering do by definition no longer belong to the target population.

Of the 5,001 addresses selected, 49 addresses, or 1 percent gave non-response due to frame imperfections. In 34 of these cases the dwellings existed, but were vacant.

Randomly Selected Person

In addition to the information gathered for all household members, one randomly selected individual (RSI) aged 15 and above was asked questions on migration, working conditions, health, family planning and contraception, domestic violence, social networks and attitudes.

The interviewer was responsible for selection of the RSI. The interviewer should first determine household membership using the household roster part of the questionnaire. She should then use a specially constructed sampling sheet to make a list of the adults that was ordered so that, firstly, men were listed by descending age

and, secondly, women by descending age. The roster number should also have been noted adjacent to the name. For each line on this list, there could be a pre-printed X. The interviewer started at the bottom of the list and selected the first line with an X. This should be the randomly selected person. The Xs were put on each line with a probability that was $1/(\text{line number})$. The method is described in Deming 1960: 240-241.

Inclusion Probabilities and Weights

Notation

In this section the following notation will be used:

Table 1: Notation used

Symbol	Meaning
p	Inclusion probability
$W^{(e/r)}$	Weight (expansion and relative)
N	Population count
n	Sample count
hh^{15}	Number of members in household aged 15 and above
s	Index of stratum
hh	Index of household
i	Index of person within the household
rsi	Index of randomly selected individual (RSI)

As mentioned above, the design defined four sub-populations in the survey: the randomly selected individual, the household and the individuals of the household. The household, the individuals of the household and the married women have the same inclusion probabilities (household inclusion probability), while the inclusion probability of the RSI depend on the number of household members aged 15 and above in the household.

Inclusion Probabilities of Household

Within each stratum (camp or gathering) the households were selected with inclusion probability proportional to the number of households in the stratum. Thus the inclusion probabilities are as set out below:

Equation 1

$$P_{s,hh} = n_s/N_s$$

Inclusion Probabilities of RSI

The selection of the RSI was in all cases by simple random sampling among all household members aged 15 and older. The inclusion probability of RSI thus depends both on the inclusion probability of the household, and the number of household members aged 15 and older, and is:

$$P_{rsi} = P_{hh} \times 1/hh_{15}$$

Sampling Weights

Weights are calculated as the inverse of the selection probabilities. This yields so-called *expansion weights*, as they expand the sample to the population. The expansion weights of the RSI are thus given by the following formula:

Equation 2

$$W_{rsi}^e = \frac{1}{p_{rsi}}$$

For most analyses relative (or estimation) weights are used. These are the expansion weights divided by the mean of the expansion weights, which gives a set of weights where the weighted total number of cases is the same as the unweighted number of cases – given by the formula (also here for the RSI weights):

Equation 3

$$W_{rsi}^e = \frac{W_{rsi}^e}{\frac{\sum W_{rsi}^e}{n}}$$

Unit Non-response

The results of the interviews or attempted interviews can be studied using a fairly detailed classification of non-response in the questionnaire, derived from Hidi-roglou, Drew and Gray (1993). The response categories in the framework are given in Table 2.

The framework is built around the observation that an interview can be missing for two reasons. First, it may be that the selected household does not belong to the sampling frame. For instance, this is the case for diplomats. Second, a selected household, which actually exists and is eligible, may refuse, or not be found at home. Also, the classification has to take into account that there will be some situations where the interviewer cannot determine if a household exists or not. Interviewers also sometimes encounter the situation that the household is available for interview, but that no useful information can be obtained because the respondent is sick or otherwise incapable of answering.

Table 2 Response categories

Category	Interview possible?
1 Interview completed	Yes
2 Refusal converted by supervisor (The respondent initially refused, but co-operated after a visit by the supervisor)	Yes
3 Partly completed	Yes
4 Status not determined (The field work team could not find out if a household was living at the address)	Not clear
5 No usable information (for instance because the respondent was sick, mentally ill, not really co-operating)	Yes, non-response
6 Dwelling unit did not exist	No
7 Dwelling unit is vacant	No
8 Dwelling unit is under construction	No
9 Not eligible	No
10 No contact (the household exists, but could not be found at home)	Yes, non-response
11 Refusal	Yes, non-response

Weight Adjustment and Estimation Weights

When there is a unit non-response, direct use of the sampling weights will result in biased estimation. The biases generally take two forms. One is that when totals are estimated with sampling expansion weights, the total will be too small because non-response implies that units that should be added into the total are missing. The other form is that estimation may be biased because non-responding units may have particular characteristics.

One way to reduce the biases produced by unit non-response is to adjust the sampling weights. The method of correction of the weights for non-response that is used here, is the so-called “adjustment cell method” (see for instance Lehtonen and Pahkinen 1995; Little and Rubin 1987). In this approach, households that are considered to be fairly similar are identified and the non-response rate is calculated for each group of households, called adjustment cells. Only the non-response of those that could have responded, but for some reason did not do so, is considered (i.e. non-response due to frame imperfections is not adjusted for).

The inverse of the non-response rate in each adjustment cell is then used to adjust the sampling weights (both expansion and relative) for each household. In this case, the 32 camps and gatherings are chosen as adjustment cells.

Using the notation in Table 3, the correction factor to the weights for non-response is given in Equation 4.

Table 3 Notation for non-response adjustment

Symbol	Explanation
C	Adjustment (Correction) factor
a	Index of adjustment cell
h ^r	Number of responding households
h ^f	Number of non responding households

The number of possible interviews (i.e. the denominator in the non-response rate) is the sum of categories 1, 2, 3, 5, 10 and 11 in Table 2. The number of non-respondent units is the sum of the categories 5, 10 and 11. The Status Not Determined category may be distributed over the other categories.

Equation 4

$$C_a = \frac{1}{\frac{h_a^r}{h_a^r + h_a^f}}$$

The weights are then adjusted according to the following equations:

Equation 9

$$W_i^{estimation} = C_i W_i^e$$

Equation 10

$$W_i^{r,estimation} = \frac{W_i^{e,estimation}}{\frac{\sum W_i^{e,estimation}}{n}}$$

The effect of the corrections is that the expansion weights are increased so that the sum of the estimation expansion weights corresponds to the sum of units in the sample frame (less non-existent or non-eligible units). The relative estimation weights are normalised. This means that the sum of the weights is the sum of the household records in the data file.

In spite of thorough interviewer training and control, some mistakes in the field lead to a slight bias on the RSI files. Relative to the distribution for all members in the household, men, and in particular employed men with lower education, were underrepresented as RSI. Men with higher education were slightly over-represented, while women in all age groups, in particular non-working women, were over-represented. In order to adjust for these biases, the RSI weights were post-stratified. The sample was stratified into 21 groups according to age, gender, educational level and employment status (see Table 4). The weights were thus multiplied with the ratio of the proportion of the population in each group according to the data for all household members, and the proportion in the corresponding strata in the RSI sample.

Table 4 Overview of adjustment cells for post-stratification.

	15-24	25-40	41-57	58 and older
Men	Employment status (worked last week) and education (secondary education or higher)	Employment status and education	Employment status	
Women	Employment status and for non-working women: education	Employment status and education	Employment status	

The final relative weights range from 0.51 to 1.37 for the household, and from 0.13 to 5.36 for the RSI. The large variation in the RSI weights is largely caused by a few particularly large households, while the 10th and 90th percentile are at 0.32 and 2.00 respectively.

Annex 2 Tables for Figures

Chapter 2

Table for Figure 2.2 Origin of Palestinian refugees currently residing in Syria

			Percent
Valid	1	Safad	40.5
	2	Akka	8.0
	3	Tiberias	19.7
	4	Nasra	5.1
	5	Haifa	20.2
	6	Bisan	0.6
	7	Jenin	0.2
	8	Tulkarm	0.2
	9	Nablus	0.6
	10	Jaffa	2.5
	11	Ramallah	0.2
	12	Lud	0.2
	13	Ramla	0.7
	14	Jerusalem	0.2
	15	Gaza	0.7
	16	Khalil	0.3
	17	Beersheba	0.1
	Total	Total	100.0

Table for Figure 2.3 and Figure 2.4 Age and sex structure of the Palestinian refugees in Syria (weighted data)

5-year age group	Men		Women		Sex ratio (males/females)
	All	Ever married	All	Ever married	
0-4	10 637	-	10 613	-	1.00
5-9	11 331	-	9 678	-	1.17
10-14	10 626	-	10 343	-	1.03
15-19	10 888	25	10 492	806	1.04
20-24	8 856	556	8 432	3 469	1.05
25-29	6 839	2 694	6 728	4 477	1.02
30-34	5 845	4 664	6 298	4 860	0.93
35-39	5 203	4 816	5 601	4 786	0.93
40-44	4 267	4 133	4 207	3 711	1.01
45-49	3 176	3 104	2 994	2 795	1.06
50-54	2 595	2 583	2 290	2 145	1.13
55-59	2 124	2 114	2 387	2 329	0.89
60-64	1 767	1 767	1 772	1 730	1.00
65-69	1 469	1 457	1 471	1 455	1.00
70-74	684	684	981	969	0.70
75-79	492	492	519	519	0.95
80-84	257	248	376	376	0.68
85-89	98	98	65	65	1.51
90-94	37	37	85	85	0.44
95-99	25	25	20	20	1.24
Total	87 216		85 353		1.02

Table for Figure 2.5 Median age at first marriage by year of birth

Year of birth	Men	Women	Total
1900-09	22	16	17
1910-19	20	16	18
1920-29	22	16	18
1930-39	22	17	20
1940-49	25	19	22
1950-59	25	20	23
1960-69	26	21	25

Table for Figure 2.6 Development of total fertility rate (TFR) 1985–2000

Year	Total fertility rate
1985	5.42
1986	4.98
1987	5.10
1988	4.65
1989	4.52
1990	4.41
1991	4.31
1992	4.23
1993	3.96
1994	3.78
1995	4.02
1996	3.87
1997	3.69
1998	3.80
1999	3.13
2000	3.25

Table for Figure 2.7 Age-specific fertility rates by labour force participation 1995–2000

Age group	Not in labour force	In labour force	All
15-19	0.06	0.01	0.05
20-24	0.21	0.09	0.17
25-29	0.20	0.15	0.18
30-34	0.17	0.13	0.16
35-39	0.11	0.08	0.10
40-44	0.04	0.03	0.04
45-49	0.00	0.00	0.00

Chapter 3

Table for Figure 3.1 Type of dwelling by type of living area and urban-rural status (n= 4,887)

	Yarmouk camp	Other camps	Gathering	Urban	Rural	All
Apartment building	64.4	40.4	53.4	82.3	27.0	61.8
Dar	34.9	59.2	46.2	17.2	72.0	37.6
Villa	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.3
Barakia	0.1	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.2
Barrack	0.2	0.0	0.0	0	0.6	0.2
Other	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0.1	0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table for Figure 3.2 Dwelling rent-to-income ratio by household income (n=220), and compared to other (group of) states

Low income	50.0
Middle income	24.8
High income	18.6
All	33.8
Arab States (cities)*	45.4
Industrialised Countries (cities)*	19.1

* Source: *Urban Indicators, 1998. Habitat for Humanity. P31*

Table for Figure 3.4 Percent of camp refugee households with 3 or more persons per room. Lebanon, Jordan, the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and Syria compared

Syria	22
Lebanon	28
Jordan	34
West Bank and Gaza Strip	35

Sources: *Syria (LIPRIS), Lebanon (LIPRIL, 1999), Jordan (Jordan Camp Survey, 1999), WBGS (PCBS, 1998)*

Table for Figure 3.5 Percent of households with 3 or more persons per room (overall average is 21.8 percent) by various variables (n=4,901)

10+ persons in household	62.3
Dara governorate	35.9
Dar (traditional house)	35.2
Other camps	31.3
Aleppo governorate	28.7
Low income	25.7
Gathering	24.6
High income	17.2
2-4 persons in household	13.6
Apartment	13.5
Yarmouk camp	11.5

Table for Figure 3.6 Percent of households with extra space in and near dwelling (n=4,001)

Garden space	12.1
Compound space	25.5
Balcony, work, roof space	75.0

Table for Figure 3.7 Percent of households with all, and lacking infrastructure amenities (n=4,901)

	Number of amenities				Total	n
	All amenities	Lack 1 amenity	Lack 2 amenities	Lack 3+ amenities		
Type of dwelling						
Dar	26.0	35.2	19.9	18.9	100.0	1 958
Apartment building	64.6	26.4	6.3	2.7	100.0	2 902
Type of living area						
Yarmouk camp	69.4	24.6	4.5	1.5	100.0	1 632
Other camps	35.1	32.9	16.9	15.0	100.0	2 682
Gathering	32.6	38.0	16.7	12.7	100.0	573
Region						
Damascus urban	67.0	26.2	5.1	1.8	100.0	1 774
Damascus rural	3.2	46.5	26.0	24.3	100.0	958
North	54.9	26.9	11.2	7.0	100.0	684
West	85.9	11.3	2.7	0.1	100.0	982
South	41.2	25.6	15.8	17.4	100.0	489
Household income						
Low income	42.7	29.1	14.5	13.8	100.0	1 621
Middle income	50.7	30.9	11.2	7.2	100.0	1 636
High income	56.7	29.4	8.4	5.6	100.0	1 642

Table for Figure 3.8 Discomfort and disturbances in the indoor environment.

Percent of households (n=4,901)

Humid/damp	46.8
Cold in winter	54.3
Hot in summer	55.6
Poorly ventilated	22.1
Smoking in dwelling	66.1
Daily severe noise from inside building	9.7
Daily severe noise from outside building	28.2
Dark and gloomy	23.4

Table for Figure 3.9 and Figure 3.10 Services within walking distance from dwelling; percent of households (n=4,887)

	Yarmouk	Other camp	Gathering	Urban	Rural
Kindergarten	94.0	97.0	89.2	94.6	95.4
Elementary school	97.9	98.5	95.6	98.0	97.9
Preparatory school	94.7	98.1	93.1	95.5	97.1
Secondary girls school	74.3	64.7	67.4	77.7	54.8
Secondary boys school	61.9	64.3	61.1	68.0	54.3
Grocery	99.0	96.9	98.2	98.8	96.5
Hospital	94.7	43.0	37.7	88.6	25.8
Health clinic, center	96.9	98.0	85.2	96.6	95.8
Physician	98.5	97.4	95.9	98.4	96.6
Dentist	98.7	97.7	91.1	98.7	95.4
Pharmacy	99.3	97.5	95.9	99.0	96.6
Police station	86.6	73.9	72.0	84.9	70.0
Bank	83.8	13.8	19.0	65.4	11.0
Post office	83.7	73.2	53.5	82.5	64.8
Place of worship	98.3	97.2	93.5	97.9	96.3
Cultural center	63.5	42.2	38.2	58.8	38.3
Library	59.7	18.2	9.3	46.4	17.5
n	1 632	2 682	573	3 050	1 837

Table for Figure 3.11 Percent of household describing area around the house as unclean by type of living area (n=4,899)

	Yarmouk	Other camps	Gathering	All households
Very dirty	2	2	5	2
Dirty	8	13	16	11
Not so clean	53	48	36	49
n	4 109	250	540	4 899

Table for Figure 3.12 Percent of households dissatisfied with housing conditions and environment (n=4,900)

	Yarmouk	Other camp	Gathering	All households
Space, size	28.4	36.2	32.6	32.3
Privacy	20.2	28.5	23.4	24.3
Housing cost	21.9	23.2	17.1	22.1
Noise	32.7	39.0	28.2	35.2
Indoor environment	14.2	19.5	16.5	16.9
Outdoor pollution	25.5	22.7	23.6	24.0
Safety for children	28.4	27.3	23.8	27.5
Traffic	18.3	14.8	12.1	16.0
Water supply	51.8	37.8	25.8	42.8
Water quality	32.2	32.9	16.7	31.0
Housing conditions	11.3	16.6	16.1	14.2
Haraj/Neighbourhood	6.1	9.9	11.1	8.4
n	1 632	2 682	573	4 900

Table for Figure 3.13 and Figure 3.14 Percent of households dissatisfied with certain aspects of their neighbourhood (living area)

	Inside camp	Outskirts of camp	Gathering/displacement	All households
Neighbours	4.0	5.4	3.0	4.0
Distance to relatives	13.4	15.0	14.1	13.6
Distance to friends	7.3	8.9	6.8	7.4
Schools	3.7	7.9	12.8	4.8
Health services	7.9	8.7	14.9	8.6
Transportation	3.6	1.6	4.4	3.6
Shopping and commerce	4.8	7.9	10.6	5.6
Cultural facilities	56.7	63.3	53.7	56.9
Work and business opportunities	77.7	87.1	75.9	78.2
n	4 110	250	540	4 900

Chapter 4

Table for Figure 4.1 Highest level of education completed by gender and age groups; percent of persons aged 25 years and above (n=11,000)

	Sex and age groups	Educational level completed						Total	n
		Less than elementary	Elementary	Preparatory	Secondary	Vocational after secondary	Higher education		
Men	25-29	9.8	35.0	30.1	9.9	10.5	4.7	100.0	1 068
	30-34	11.8	31.4	27.0	11.0	10.9	7.8	100.0	906
	35-39	11.8	36.2	22.7	6.3	11.3	11.7	100.0	811
	40-44	12.6	36.0	20.0	9.7	12.3	9.4	100.0	657
	45-49	12.1	37.4	23.3	6.2	10.2	10.7	100.0	490
	50-54	15.1	28.4	20.3	10.4	12.3	13.5	100.0	370
	55-59	19.4	20.2	18.1	14.6	11.1	16.6	100.0	339
	60-64	46.2	24.3	10.4	6.0	4.5	8.5	100.0	287
	65-69	64.6	22.8	4.1	2.6	1.1	4.8	100.0	234
70+	80.6	14.8	1.4	1.2	0.2	1.7	100.0	268	
Women	25-29	9.1	31.0	23.5	16.1	15.5	4.7	100.0	1 050
	30-34	14.1	27.0	19.7	15.6	15.8	7.7	100.0	980
	35-39	20.0	30.0	19.9	14.0	11.0	5.2	100.0	868
	40-44	27.3	32.3	15.0	10.9	10.2	4.3	100.0	646
	45-49	34.4	29.3	12.9	8.5	10.1	4.9	100.0	463
	50-54	49.5	24.6	11.3	6.6	6.6	1.5	100.0	348
	55-59	70.1	18.5	4.4	4.8	1.4	0.9	100.0	368
	60-64	89.7	5.8	2.5	1.2	0.8	0.0	100.0	284
	65-69	94.3	4.5	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.6	100.0	231
70+	96.8	3.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	332	
All persons 25+	27.5	28.2	18.3	9.7	9.9	6.4	100.0	11 000	

Table for Figure 4.2 Literacy among males and females aged 10+ by age groups; percent (n=20,170)

Sex and age	Reading and writing skills					Total	n
	Read and write well	Read well, write with difficulty or not at all	Read and write with difficulty	Read with difficulty, cannot write	Illiterate		
Male							
10-14	83.0	3.1	11.2	1.2	1.5	100.0	1 617
15-19	87.7	0.7	6.5	1.2	3.9	100.0	1 664
20-24	89.7	1.0	6.1	1.0	2.3	100.0	1 350
25-29	91.5	1.2	4.2	0.4	2.6	100.0	1 073
30-34	91.8	0.5	4.4	0.4	2.8	100.0	907
35-39	91.1	1.4	4.7	0.9	1.9	100.0	813
40-44	89.4	1.4	5.7	0.4	3.2	100.0	657
45-49	90.5	0.7	5.5	0.9	2.4	100.0	495
50-54	88.8	0.7	6.6	0.2	3.8	100.0	371
55-59	86.4	1.0	4.4	0.0	8.3	100.0	340
60-64	72.1	0.2	9.4	2.3	16.0	100.0	288
65-69	54.8	1.1	8.1	1.9	33.9	100.0	235
70+	39.5	2.9	12.1	1.0	44.5	100.0	267
Female							
10-14	86.9	2.3	8.2	0.9	1.7	100.0	1 614
15-19	91.1	1.2	5.2	0.8	1.7	100.0	1 617
20-24	91.9	0.7	5.2	0.1	2.0	100.0	1 291
25-29	92.1	0.5	4.2	0.2	3.0	100.0	1 051
30-34	86.4	0.9	6.9	0.5	5.3	100.0	981
35-39	84.0	0.8	6.6	1.1	7.6	100.0	869
40-44	77.8	1.8	6.5	1.5	12.4	100.0	646
45-49	71.1	0.7	7.4	2.6	18.2	100.0	463
50-54	57.1	2.4	10.5	1.3	28.7	100.0	348
55-59	38.9	1.4	13.0	2.1	44.5	100.0	368
60-64	16.5	2.3	12.3	1.4	67.5	100.0	283
65-69	10.4	1.1	10.0	0.6	77.9	100.0	231
70+	5.7	1.0	3.9	0.4	89.0	100.0	331
All persons 10+	82.1	1.3	6.7	0.9	9.0	100.0	20 170

Table for Figure 4.3 Percentage of persons 10+ who can read and write well by years of schooling (n=20,168)

Years of schooling	% functionally literate
0	2.8
1	4.9
2	12.4
3	26.9
4	53.0
5	68.9
6	81.8
7	86.8
8	92.4
9	98.0
10	98.5
11	99.4
12	99.7
13+	100.0

Table for Figure 4.4 Functional illiteracy (cannot read and write easily) by age groups and five broad income groups; percent (n=16,910)

Age groups	Income groups					All in age group
	Lower	Lower middle	Middle	Upper middle	Upper	
15-29	15.5	9.7	8.7	9.5	7.2	9.5
30-49	22.4	15.4	13.4	13.0	8.7	13.9
50+	71.6	57.7	51.2	44.8	35.8	51.1
All persons 15+	31.6	19.9	16.9	16.7	12.6	18.5

Table for Figure 4.5 Functional illiteracy rates (cannot read and write easily) of persons aged 10+ by age groups and urban-rural status (n=20,170)

	Urban	Rural
10-14	11.0	21.0
15-19	7.6	15.5
20-24	5.7	14.0
25-29	5.3	12.3
30-34	8.2	15.1
35-39	7.7	21.2
40-44	10.7	27.1
45-49	12.2	34.4
50-54	19.1	41.4
55-59	29.3	54.9
60-64	49.8	66.5
65-59	59.8	82.1
70+	73.7	90.2

Table for Figure 4.6 Kindergarten enrolment ratio by age (at interview); children 3-6 (n=2,763)

	Age				Ages 3-6	Ages 4-6
	3	4	5	6		
% enrolled	3.2	9.3	23.0	26.1	15.1	19.4

Table for Figure 4.7 Percent of children aged 4-6 enrolled in pre-school, by sex, age, urban-rural status, region, education of household head and household income (n= 2,053)

		% enrolled
Sex	Female	17.9
	Male	20.8
Age	4 years	9.3
	5 years	23.0
	6 years	26.1
Urban-rural	Rural	16.1
	Urban	21.8
Type of area	Gathering	16.6
	Other camps	17.6
	Yarmouk camp	22.4
Region	South	16.5
	Damascus rural	16.6
	North	18.3
	West	18.7
	Damascus urban	22.3
Education of household head	Less than basic	16.5
	Basic	16.6
	Secondary	20.2
	Secondary +	24.2
Household income	Lower	15.1
	Lower middle	14.3
	Middle	20.3
	Higher middle	24.7
	Upper	22.8
All children aged 4-6		19.4

Table for Figure 4.8 Proportion of children born 1984-1995 enrolled in basic cycle (elementary or preparatory), by sex, urban-rural status, region, household income, and education and literacy of household head (n=7,872)

		% in basic cycle
Sex	Female	70.6
	Male	69.2
Urban-rural	Urban	70.6
	Rural	68.8
Region	North	72.3
	South	71.9
	Damascus urban	70.7
	West	69.3
	Damascus rural	67.5
Household income	Lower	70.7
	Lower middle	73.0
	Middle	70.9
	Higher middle	67.7
	Upper	67.8
Education of household head	Secondary +	73.0
	Secondary	73.9
	Basic	69.7
	Less than basic	61.8
Literacy of household head	Literate	71.3
	Illiterate	62.1
All persons born 1984-1995		69.9

Table for Figure 4.9 Prevalence of extra classes amongst the currently enrolled by stage of education (n =7,232); percent

	% taking extra classes
Elementary school	2.2
Preparatory school	6.9
Vocational training after preparatory	4.3
Secondary school	11.9
Vocational after secondary	3.7
University	2.4
All enrolled	4.6

Table for Figure 4.10 Prevalence of extra classes amongst individuals enrolled in basic and secondary school by grade/ year of current enrolment (n=7,096); percent

	Level (grade/year) of schooling amongst the currently enrolled											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
% taking extra classes	0.9	1.7	2.1	2.1	3.0	3.4	4.2	5.9	11.9	3.7	8.8	14.3

Table for Figure 4.11 Prevalence of extra classes amongst the currently enrolled by various background variables (n=7,233)

		% taking extra classes
Sex	Male	4.8
	Female	4.4
Urban-rural status	Urban	5.7
	Rural	2.7
Region	Damascus urban	6.6
	North	5.9
	West	2.6
	South	1.8
	Damascus rural	1.7
Educational attainment of household head	Higher	7.0
	Secondary	4.4
	Basic	3.3
	Less than basic	3.0
Income groups	Upper	7.3
	Upper middle	4.0
	Middle	5.2
	Lower middle	2.4
	Lower	1.9

Table for Figure 4.12 Proportion of persons 15+ and not currently enrolled who have ever taken a short vocational training course; by sex, educational attainment and five income groups (n=13,303)

		% with vocational training course
Sex	Male	4.0
	Female	5.7
Educational attainment	Less than elementary	1.4
	Elementary	2.7
	Preparatory	4.3
	Secondary	6.7
	Vocational after secondary	11.8
	Higher education	13.8
Income groups	Low	2.9
	Lower middle	3.3
	Middle	3.7
	Upper middle	5.5
	Upper	7.1
All persons 15+		4.8

Table for Figure 4.13 Proportion of persons 15+ and not currently enrolled who have ever taken a short vocational training course by income groups and education (n=13,251)

Income groups	Education	% with vocational training course
Low	Elementary or less	2.1
	Secondary or higher	4.5
Lower middle	Elementary or less	2.0
	Secondary or higher	5.1
Middle	Elementary or less	2.2
	Secondary or higher	5.6
Upper middle	Elementary or less	2.3
	Secondary or higher	8.7
Upper	Elementary or less	3.1
	Secondary or higher	9.9
All persons 15+		4.8

Table for Figure 4.14 Proportion of persons 15+ and not currently enrolled who have ever taken a short vocational training course by five-year age groups (n= 13,303)

	% with vocational training course
15-19	4.0
20-24	6.5
25-29	5.2
30-34	6.0
35-39	5.0
40-44	4.1
45-49	4.6
50-54	4.4
55-59	1.9
60-64	0.7
65-69	0.3
70+	0.7
All 15+	4.8

Chapter 5

Table for Figure 5.1 Difficulties with everyday life activities: percentage of adults having problems with three or more activities, by sex, education, household income and age (n=4,867)

		Poor physical health (3 problems)	Very poor physical health (4 or 5 problems)
Sex	Men	6.9	6.0
	Women	10.8	8.3
Education	Secondary or higher	4.9	4.6
	Preparatory	8.3	4.2
	Elementary	7.2	5.0
	Less than elementary	14.3	12.9
Yearly household income	High	7.4	5.3
	Upper middle	7.7	5.8
	Middle	8.9	6.7
	Lower middle	9.4	7.4
	Low	12.5	12.6
Age	15-19	1.0	2.0
	20-29	2.9	1.8
	30-39	7.7	3.3
	40-49	14.6	5.4
	50-59	22.2	13.9
	60-69	22.5	30.6
	70+	31.5	52.9

Table for Figure 5.2 Percentage distribution of the adult population (15+) according to 7 indicators of psychological distress (n=4,870)

	Nervousness	Worrying too much	Headaches	Depression, sadness	Feeling fearful, anxious	Feeling hopeless about the future	Feeling of worthlessness
Not at all	29.7	39.7	39.7	42.4	50.7	74.7	80.9
A little	10.7	13.2	16.6	14.0	13.4	6.8	5.7
Quite a bit	25.0	20.6	23.1	20.9	18.9	7.8	7.4
Very much	34.6	26.5	20.6	22.6	16.9	10.7	6.0

Table for Figure 5.3 Percentage of persons aged 15+ reporting 5-7 symptoms of psychological distress by various background factors (n=4,867)

Sex	Age groups					Urban-rural status		Region				
	Women	Men	15-29	30-44	45-59	60+	Rural	Urban	Damascus	South	North	West
	24.0	19.0	18.7	25.0	25.3	19.3	28.0	17.6	23.5	25.2	15.4	10.9

... continuing

Educational level		Income groups					Chronic illness			
Less than elementary	Elementary	Preparatory	Secondary or higher	Low	Lower middle	Middle	Upper middle	High	Has severe chronic illness	No severe chronic illness
28.4	22.8	19.7	12.8	28.2	21.1	21.7	20.4	18.8	35.3	20.3

Table for Figure 5.4 Percentage of persons aged 15-59 reporting 5-7 symptoms of psychological distress by age and educational attainment (n=4,332)

	Less than elementary	Elementary	Preparatory	Secondary or higher
15-29	30.0	20.1	18.6	11.8
30-44	35.3	32.3	23.5	14.6
45-59	42.6	23.1	18.2	10.6
60+	21.4	7.5 *	0.0 *	17.5 *

* Few observations

Table for Figure 5.5 Percentage of persons aged 15+ using medicine for psychological distress experienced in the past 6 months, by age groups (n=4,866)

	Age groups				
	15-29	30-44	45-59	60+	All persons 15+
Regularly	12.1	20.2	25.2	39.8	18.8
From time to time	18.0	22.4	20.0	18.6	19.6
No psychofarmaca use	70.0	57.3	54.8	41.6	61.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
n	2 008	1 790	547	521	4 866

Table for Figure 5.6 Percentage of regular (daily) smokers (aged 15+) by gender and age groups (n=4,866)

	15-	20-	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70+	All 15+
Men	25.9	50.8	58.0	63.7	56.4	63.6	61.0	46.5	43.8	40.4	44.1	37.7	48.5
Women	1.6	4.0	9.6	10.5	14.8	15.6	6.0	3.6	5.1	7.3	12.2	10.1	7.7
All	14.3	27.4	33.8	36.5	34.7	38.4	33.8	26.5	26.8	23.4	28.2	22.0	28.2

Table for Figure 5.7 Self-assessed general health by sex (n=4,867). Percent of persons aged 15 years and above

	Sex		
	Men	Women	All
Very good	26.5	23.4	24.9
Good	45.8	46.3	46.1
Fair	19.3	22.1	20.7
Bad or very bad	8.4	8.2	8.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
n	2 114	2 753	4 867

Table for Figure 5.8 Labour force participation rates for men and women with and without severe chronic health problems by age groups (n=16,946)

	Age groups						
	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+
Men, no severe chronic illness	48.7	84.1	96.3	96.6	86.8	40.8	23.9
Men, severe chronic illness	20.8	46.5	67.7	64.9	57.5	28.2	12.3
Women, no severe chronic illness	9.4	27.2	32.1	28.4	13.1	4.5	3.1
Women, severe chronic illness	4.3	25.6	14.9	17.8	8.9	3.2	0.4

Table for Figure 5.9 Place of visit for pregnancy check-ups. Percent of pregnancies during the past 5 years by type of health facility (some have visited more than one type) (n=3,364)

At home	0.4
PRCS hospital	0.9
Government hospital	1.0
Government health center	1.0
PRCS clinic	1.1
Private hospital	2.1
MCH health center	6.1
Pregnancy clinic	21.5
Private doctor	27.6
UNRWA clinic	68.8

Table for Figure 5.10 Deliveries during the past 5 years by place of delivery (n=3,364)

Home	22.2
PRCS hospital	11.0
Government hospital	32.4
Private hospital	29.9
Other place	4.6

Table for Figure 5.11 Place of delivery. Percent of deliveries during the past 5 years by region (n=3,364)

	Region					
	Urban Damascus	Rural Damascus	North	West	South	Total
Government hospital	26.4	48.5	5.7	17.3	53.5	32.4
Private hospital	45.2	17.8	20.8	22.5	16.4	29.9
Home	9.1	29.4	39.0	33.5	28.8	22.2
PRCS hospital	18.6	1.9	0.6	26.2	0.0	11.0
Other place	0.8	2.3	33.9	0.5	1.4	4.6

Table for Figure 5.12 Prevalence of acute illness (including injury) among persons 5 years and over during the past two weeks by various background factors (n=23,484). Percent

Gender	Age groups										Education			
	Male	Female	5-9	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+	Secondary or higher	Preparatory	Elementary	Less than elementary
	6.2	7.0	4.5	4.1	5.4	7.9	9.6	9.8	13.3	15.5	4.6	5.5	7.0	7.6

...continuing

Yearly household income					Chronic illness	
High	Upper middle	Middle	Lower middle	Low	No severe chronic illness	Has severe chronic illness
4.3	6.4	6.8	6.5	10.4	5.4	23.2

Table for Figure 5.13 Percentage of persons aged 5+ receiving consultation from UNRWA following acute illness by gender and age; percentage of those who sought consultation (n=1,151)

Place consulted	Male				Female				All persons 5+
	5-14 years	15-29 years	30-44 years	45+ years	5-14 years	15-29 years	30-44 years	45+ years	
PRCS hospital	7.3	2.2	2.9	5.5	4.9	4.5	5.3	4.3	4.5
Private hospital	6.6	7.1	6.4	7.9	2.3	2.6	4.1	4.7	5.2
Government hospital	9.7	16.8	11.4	14.2	7.9	8.5	7.2	7.6	10.3
Private clinic	33.9	47.0	52.2	46.4	35.7	57.7	47.5	46.1	46.7
UNRWA clinic	31.6	16.3	12.4	12.5	40.3	24.8	23.8	27.0	23.0
Other	10.9	10.6	14.7	13.5	8.9	1.9	12.2	10.3	10.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
n	99	133	142	157	106	154	149	211	1 151

Table for Figure 5.14 Percentage of medical insurance holders by various determinants: gender; household income; education and employment of household head; age; and place of residence (n=26,820)

Gender	Female	6.0
	Male	7.5
Yearly household income	Low	2.7
	Lower middle	4.9
	Middle	6.8
	Upper middle	7.3
	High	10.3
Educational attainment of head	Less than basic	3.9
	Basic	4.7
	Secondary	5.8
	Secondary +	13.1
Labour force status of head	Outside labour force	2.5
	In labour force	8.0
Age groups	0-9	5.7
	10-19	6.1
	20-29	5.9
	30-39	9.1
	40-49	10.8
	50-59	10.4
	60-69	2.6
	70+	2.6
Region	South	4.2
	West	4.3
	Damascus rural	6.5
	Damascus urban	6.8
	North	12.4

Table for Figure 5.15 Percentage of adult (aged 15+) labour force members with medical insurance by sector of employment (n=7,588). Industrial classification - main groups according to ISIC88

Agriculture and fishing	Manufacturing and mining	Construction, electricity and gas	Trade, hotels, restaurants	Transport, storage, communication
1.9	8.3	2.4	3.4	3.9
n 223	1 261	1 119	1 153	389
Financial intermediation and real estate	Public administration	Education, health and social work	Community, social services and other	Total
7.1	28.1	20.8	8.1	10.8
n 180	1 058	1 148	1 057	7 588

Chapter 6

Table for Figure 6.1 Household type by background factors. Percent of households (n=4,487)

		Lone	Nuclear, couple	Nuclear, single parent	Extended	Total
Household income	High income	0.4	74.4	7.4	17.9	100.0
	Middle income	1.0	77.8	7.7	13.6	100.0
	Low income	9.4	68.9	12.8	9.0	100.0
Sex of household head	Male headed household	1.2	84.9	1.4	12.5	100.0
	Female headed household	19.1	0.2	61.0	19.7	100.0
Age of household head	Head 60 years or more	9.8	40.8	14.6	34.8	100.0
	Head 35-59 years	1.3	82.4	8.8	7.5	100.0
	Head 25-34 years	2.0	92.5	3.6	1.9	100.0
	Head 24 years or less	6.3	69.3	4.9	19.5	100.0
Type of living area	Gathering	4.1	74.1	8.6	13.2	100.0
	Outskirts of camps	2.9	76.7	10.6	9.7	100.0
	Inside camps	3.6	73.4	9.3	13.8	100.0

Table for Figure 6.2 Percent of households with any family living nearby

Syria, camps and gatherings	95.5
Lebanon, camps and gatherings	87.5
Jordan, camps	80.0

Table for Figure 6.3 Percent of households having relatives living nearby, by type of husband and wife's relatives (n=4,887)

	Husband's relatives	Wife's relatives
Grandparents	4.6	6.4
Parents	51.0	42.2
Uncles/aunts father's side	37.4	35.1
Uncles/aunts mother's side	36.6	35.6
Brothers	73.2	54.1
Sisters	69.1	57.6

Table for Figure 6.4 Percent of households with complex and dense local family networks by household income, sex and age of household head, and type of living area.

Type of living area	Camp	50.8
	Gathering	38.0
Age of household head	24 years and younger	59.8
	25-34 years	75.4
	35-59 years	53.7
	60 years and older	21.4
Sex of household head	Male	53.8
	Female	21.6
Household income	1st income quintile (lowest)	41.9
	2nd income quintile	53.6
	3rd income quintile	53.2
	4th income quintile	51.2
	5th income quintile (highest)	47.9

Table for Figure 6.5 Proportion of adults (aged 15+) who report that women should be responsible for choosing their own marriage partner. By sex and education.

	Less than elementary	Elementary	Preparatory	Secondary	Post-secondary degree
Men	70	78.5	84.3	84.2	80.7
Women	82.2	83.9	89.4	85.2	85.1

Table for Figure 6.6 Most appropriate age for women's marriage considered by women.

By age and education. Percent.

	Less than elementary	Elementary	Preparatory	Secondary	Post-secondary degree
Younger than 16 years	11.0	3.7	2.7	0.9	0.0
16-18 years	36.9	34.7	25.0	18.1	15.9
19-21 years	41.8	52.4	56.2	57.8	50.3
Older than 21 years	10.3	9.3	16.2	23.1	33.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table for Figure 6.7 Most appropriate age for women's marriage considered by men.

By age and education. Percent.

	Less than elementary	Elementary	Preparatory	Secondary	Post-secondary degree
Younger than 16 years	15.2	6.6	3.1	2.0	1.4
16-18 years	43.7	43.4	35.1	36.8	25.6
19-21 years	35.6	39.0	47.9	41.3	45.2
Older than 21 years	5.4	11.0	13.9	20.0	27.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table for Figure 6.8 Preference for child's marriage partner's kinship affiliation.

Percent of persons (n=4,874).

Father's brother	6.7
Other first cousin	1.6
Second cousin	0.1
Other inside of hamula	3.9
Outside of hamula	38.0
No preference	49.7
Total	100.0

Table for Figure 6.9 Percent of women with marriages to a first or second cousin, by educational attainment of woman (n=1,267).

Less than elementary	31.3
Elementary	32.5
Preparatory	31.3
Secondary	28.4
Post-secondary degree	18.2

Table for Figure 6.10 Givers, takers and exchangers of help (n=4,881).

	Giver	Taker	Giver and taker
Financial, within family	17.1	13.4	10.4
Non-financial, within family	16.5	6.4	8.1
Financial, with friends	9.5	2.8	5.3
Non-financial, with friends	9.8	3.0	3.4

Table for Figure 6.11 Giving, receiving and exchanging financial help within the family by age (n=4,878).

	Age of persons					
	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Exchange financial help	9.4	12.6	11.7	10.6	9.5	5.1
Give financial help	11.9	21.1	21.8	22.4	15.5	11.1
Receive financial help	13.5	11.4	13.3	10.0	13.4	27.7

Table for Figure 6.12 Frequency of visits past two weeks with family by type of relative.

Percent of married persons with family type "relevant"

	Father's side	Mother's side	Spouse's father's side	Spouse's mother's side
No visits	32.1	38.8	35.6	47.2
1-5 visits	48.7	44.3	46.2	37.9
More than 5 visits	4.0	4.6	3.7	4.7
Daily visits	15.2	12.2	14.4	10.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Chapter 7

Table for Figure 7.1 Crude labour force indicators by sex. Percent of total population.

	Employed	Unemployed	Outside labour force	Below 15 years
Male	43.5	3.2	15.9	37.4
Female	11.4	1.9	50.8	35.9
All	27.6	2.6	33.2	36.6

Table for Figure 7.2 Labour force participation by location, sex and region. Percent.

	Syria		Lebanon			Jordan			WBGS		
	Camp	Non-camp	Camp	Non-camp	Non-refugee*	Camp	Non-camp	Non-refugee**	Camp	Non-camp	Non-refugee
Men	74.9	73.5	70.4	67.1	77.3	69.0	71.1	72.2	66.8	71	72.7
Women	20.8	24.1	16.4	18.1	21.7	12.9	13.8	16.3	9	12.1	13.7

* The figures for non-refugees in Lebanon refers to the population aged 15-65 years. Camp and non-camp refugees are reported to on the basis of population 15 years and above for comparison across regions. When using the 15-65 of age population, labour force rates are 74 (camp) and 71 (non-camp) percent among men and 18 (camp) and 19 (non-camp) among women compared to 77 and 22 percent respectively among men and women in the national Lebanese population.

** "Non-refugee Jordan" refers to non-Palestinian Jordanians (Fafo 1996).

Sources: Fafo 1996, 1999, 2000, 2001; CAS 1998; PCBS 2000.

Table for Figure 7.3 Labour force participation in population aged 15 years and above by age-groups.

Percent (n=8,065).

	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65 - 69	70 +
Men	48.0	77.6	90.0	93.9	95.3	94.4	90.6	88.5	74.3	44.9	27.8	19.4
Women	9.3	24.8	30.3	33.6	28.8	28.8	25.7	15.6	9.1	4.2	3.9	1.6
All	29.0	51.8	60.5	62.7	60.8	61.8	59.3	53.5	40.6	24.6	15.9	9.3
n	906	1 359	1 278	1 183	1 030	809	564	380	290	138	73	55

Table for Figure 7.4 Labour force participation by sex, education and age-groups.

Percent of persons aged 15+ (n = 7,578).*

		Age in 10-year groups					
		15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Male	Elementary or less	81.9	93.4	92.7	85.5	58.5	25.5
	Preparatory or higher	82.2	94.3	97.1	93.9	66.1	32.5
	Elementary or less	17.5	15.5	13.6	10.9	4.6	0.8
Female	Preparatory or higher	32.2	43.6	42.8	41.0	12.8	-
All		53.9	62.8	61.9	60.8	42.5	20.7
n		2 067	2 388	1 777	905	367	74

* Individuals currently enrolled in school are excluded.

Chapter 8

Table for Figure 8.1 Composition of household income (in Syrian pounds per year), by income deciles (n=4,887).

	Lowest									Highest	All households
	10%	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th		
Wage income	5 815	23 965	34 721	45 246	54 343	64 018	79 459	95 524	123 981	172 261	70 086
Self-employment income	4 753	9 114	9 929	14 242	15 255	24 715	23 417	31 686	37 075	96 911	26 723
Transfers	10 635	9 106	9 955	7 733	10 098	6 676	10 433	12 615	12 657	17 624	10 770
Property income	341	314	604	764	1 017	1 422	2 906	2 265	6 634	17 226	3 353
Other income	487	447	1 048	994	2 051	1 626	1 930	2 533	4 885	16 401	3 241
Total annual income	22 031	42 946	56 258	68 979	82 765	98 456	118 145	144 624	185 232	320 422	114 173

Table for Figure 8.2 Average household income level (in Syrian pounds per year) and income composition by main source of income (n=4,887).

	Wage (n=3,061)	Self-employment (n=1,016)	Transfers (n=637)	Property or other income (n=173)	All households (n=4,887)
Wage	103 820	13 096	6 512	36 211	70 086
Self-employment income	6 162	103 794	2 129	25 569	26 723
Transfers	4 899	4 734	50 463	7 890	10 770
Property or other income	3 014	4 446	1 595	100 090	6 594
Annual total income	117 896	126 070	60 700	169 760	114 173

Table for Figure 8.3 Cumulative percent of households ranked by annual household income, camps (and gatherings) in Syria, Jordan and Lebanon (n=4,887).

	Lebanon camps & gatherings	Jordan camps	Syria camps and gatherings
Lowest 10%	0.9	1.4	1.8
2nd	3.4	4.5	5.8
3rd	7.7	9.4	10.7
4th	11.9	15.2	16.7
5th	20.5	22.3	24.0
6th	28.9	30.5	32.2
7th	39.1	40.4	42.9
8th	51.3	51.3	55.8
9th	68.2	67.3	71.9
Highest 10%	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table for Figure 8.4 Percent of households reporting lack of food or money for food in the past month by poverty status (n= 4,885).

Not poor (n=3,788)	Poor (n=1,097)	Ultra-poor (n=245)	All households (n=4,885)
17	45	56	24

Table for Figure 8.5 Ways of coping with food shortage by poverty status.

Percent of households with reported food shortage (n= 4,885).

	Poor	Non-poor
Eat lower quality food	77	66
Buy food on credit	35	26
Help from outside of the households	17	11
Limit the consumption of adults	24	14
Fewer daily meals	27	19
No food some days	4	3

Table for Figure 8.6 Ability to raise SYP 5,000 by poverty status. Percent of households.

	Ultra-poor (n=245)	Poor (n=1,097)	Non-poor (n=3,788)	All households (n=4,885)
Yes, with savings	4	2	17	13
Yes, with help from others	31	41	51	48
No	65	57	33	38
Total	100	100	100	100

Table for Figure 8.7 Incidence of saving forms by poverty status. Percent of households.

	Ultra-poor (n=245)	Poor (n=1,097)	Non-poor (n=3,788)	All households (n=4,885)
Bank account	1	1	5	4
Gold or jewellery	6	9	21	18
Informal jamiyya	6	9	23	20
Total	100	100	100	100

List of abbreviations

GAPAR	General Authority for Palestine Arab Refugees (in Syria)
GFR	General Fertility Rate
GNI	Gross National income
ILO	International Labour Office
LIPRIL	Survey of Living Conditions of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon
LIPRIS	Survey of Living Conditions of Palestinian Refugees in Syria
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (UNICEF)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Natural Resources, Damascus
PPP	Purchasing Power Parities
PRCS	Palestinian Red Crescent Society
SHC	Special Hardship Case (UNRWA)
SYP	Syrian Pounds (52 SYP = 1 USD)
TFR	Total Fertility Rate
U5MR	Under-Five (Child) Mortality Rate
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees
USD	United States Dollar (1 USD = 52 SYP)
WBGS	West Bank and Gaza Strip

Palestinian Refugees in Syria

Making use of a multiplicity of objective (and a few subjective) statistical indicators, this report provides the first-ever comprehensive picture of the living conditions of the Palestinian refugee community in Syria. Areas of focus are health, education, housing, employment and income. Key demographic features are also presented, and certain aspects of the refugees' social networks are described.

The report builds on data extracted from interviews with almost 5,000 families at 65 different locations, including 13 refugee camps. Fieldwork was implemented by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Natural Resources (PCBS), Damascus, in collaboration with Fafo. The Norwegian Government funded the study.



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