K4D | Knowledge, evidence and learning for development

Communication interventions supporting positive civic action in Lebanon

Dylan O'Driscoll
University of Manchester
05 March 2018

Questions

What communications or programmatic efforts are available to support positive civic action programmes in Lebanon? What is the media landscape for communication interventions?

Contents

1. Overview

Lebanon witnessed a vicious civil war between 1975 and 1990 in which tens of thousands of civilians were killed, injured, displaced, disappeared, or harmed in the violence. The Ta'if Agreement ended the war; however, by dividing power between the three main confessions it entrenched divides within society. Moreover, by creating an amnesty for crimes during the civil war, the past has never been fully addressed and tensions between communities remain beneath the surface (International Center for Transitional Justice, 2014). The protracted conflict in Syria has led to Lebanon taking in the most refugees per capita in the world with over 1.5 million in total.[1] Given that Lebanon itself is recovering from civil war and has prominent political divisions, bad public services and strained infrastructure, the large number of refugees has exacerbated these pre-existing issues and pushed a large number of Lebanese citizens into poverty. The history of occupation and exploitation of Lebanon by Syria has created animosity in large sections of the population, whilst close trade, religious and family connections have created strong ties with other sections of the Lebanese population, leading to a complex situation of intra and intercommunity tension.

This rapid review synthesises data from academic, policy and NGO sources on the role media can play in creating/easing tensions between refugees and the host community, and within the host community itself. Acknowledging the importance media can play in perceptions, and considering the confessional and political nature of the media, the review also maps the media/social media in Lebanon and highlights some successes in utilising media to ease tensions.

Key findings are as follows:

- Due to the Lebanese media being party-controlled or linked it has a political message and focuses on one confessional group, therefore it is often negative towards refugees and Lebanese citizens from other confessions, thus creating tensions.

- In a survey carried out in 2016 by UNHCR 29% of the Lebanese respondents highlighted that media has a strong impact on the perception of refugees. More than two thirds of the respondents acknowledged that discussions in the media trigger reactions against refugees, and that the Lebanese media reports negative stories about refugees (Alsharabati, 2017: 15-16).

- In a discourse analysis of Lebanese media conducted in February 2015, topics that can be perceived as viewing refugees in a negative light formed the majority of the reporting and also often had a negative tone. However, humanitarian stories about refugees were also reported, often in a positive tone (Sakada et al., 2015).

- In 2013 a UNDP-led pact, entitled "Journalists' Pact for Strengthening Civil Peace in Lebanon", was signed by 34 media institutions. The idea behind the pact was to create more ethics in Lebanese journalism, enhance neutrality, depoliticise reporting, increase accuracy, and create responsibility for reporting.

- In order to counteract the negative perception of refugees in the media, the UN and the Lebanese Information Ministry launched a joint media campaign in August 2017 aimed at

---

[1] https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/lebanon_syrian_crisis_en.pdf

improving relations and signed up a number of media outlets to provide more neutral reporting on refugees.

- The UNDP "Strengthening Civil Peace in Lebanon" project also produces joint news supplements, where journalists from different local media outlets come together to create less biased reporting, and report on social issues with the aim of bringing communities together.

- The American University of Beirut launched the #AUB4Refugees initiative in order to utilise social media to counter the negative and incorrect narrative, through using widely available figures in order to highlight the suffering of Syrian refugees, as well as the benefit they bring to Lebanon and the economy.

- Search for Common Ground in Lebanon designed a video game called "Cedaria: Blackout", which provides youths a platform to learn and practice how to mediate conflict. In workshops across Lebanon, gaming sessions were followed by discussions on how to relate the conflict resolution themes that come up in the game to the participant's own lives.

- Acknowledging the role TV dramas play in peoples' perceptions, Search for Common Ground is launching a TV mini series that will end just before the May 2018 elections. The mini-series will portray strong female characters in order to increase the populations' perception of the role women can play in politics.

- In Lebanon radio is popular in the morning, particularly 07:30-09:00, newspapers reach peak readership in the mid-morning, TV viewership's peak time is between 19:00-23:00, whilst Internet's peak time is between 23:00-00:00 (IPSOS, 2017: 18).

- The most widely viewed TV channels in Lebanon are LBCI (Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation, also known as LBC), MTV (Murr Television), and Al-Jadeed. These channels are also where the majority of Lebanese watch the evening news.

- 96% of Internet users in Lebanon use social media (IPSOS, 2017:22). Facebook is by far the most popular Social Media platform in Lebanon accounting for 64.26% of the market share over the last 12 months (up to February 2018). YouTube is second with 15.18%, and Twitter is third with 10.81% of the market share.[2] This highlights the potential of social media advertising for communicating positive civic action programmes in Lebanon.

- Although it is acknowledged in the literature that the media plays an important role in encouraging or alleviating conflict, there is little data available on how strategic communication can be utilised in order to alleviate tensions.

---

[2] http://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/lebanon/#monthly-201702-201801-bar
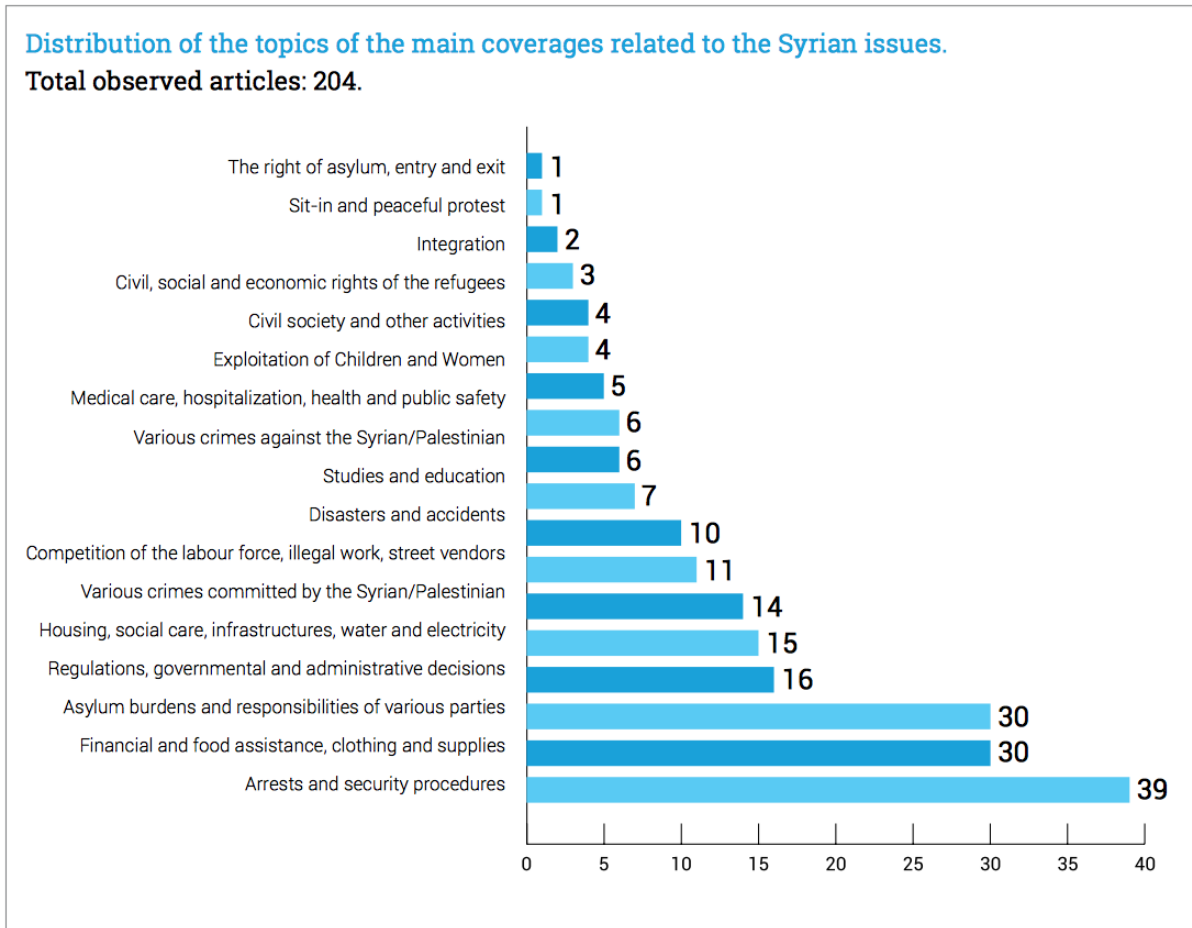
2. Media and Tensions/Conflict resolution

In a survey carried out in 2016 by UNHCR, 63% of the refugee population felt they were not welcome in Lebanon. Whereas, 27% of Lebanese surveyed considered their relationship with refugees to be good or very good. 50% of Syrian refugees surveyed also reported incidents with authorities or civilians, including harassment, insults, beating, eviction, and extortion. Media and storytelling has an impact on social relations and 40% of the Lebanese respondents said that they heard a lot of stories expressing hate against Syrian refugees. Most stories were heard in the street, among neighbours, and in the media (mainly TV). Only 29% of the Lebanese respondents highlighted that media has a strong impact on the perception of refugees, and 48% think that the impact is partial. More than two thirds of the respondents acknowledged that discussions in the media trigger reactions against refugees, and that the Lebanese media reports negative stories about refugees. On the other side of the spectrum, more than two thirds of the respondents said that humanitarian stories about refugees affect them, which can be utilised to change perceptions (Alsharabati, 2017: 15-16).

Sawssan Abou-Zahr, a Lebanese journalist, highlights the negative impact that reporting in Lebanon has on the perception of refugees, and how racism in the media is then transferred to the local population. For her, one of the main issues is the fact that media in Lebanon is party-controlled or party-linked and is thus not independent, and although online media outlets are more independent they lack the finances and skills to do in-depth professional reporting. Additionally, due to the nature of media ownership in Lebanon, refugees' voices are not heard through the media and Abou-Zahr argues that this would only be done if it was made financially rewarding through donors' funding.[3]

Sakada et al. (2015) carried out a discourse analysis of the Lebanese media (between 5 and 25 February, 2015) that signed the "Journalists' Pact for Strengthening Civil Peace in Lebanon" which was launched in June 2013. The aim of their study was to examine how racism towards refugees manifests itself in the media discourse, and what positions the media took on certain issues relating to refugees. Graph 1 highlights the topics relating to refugees covered by the print media during the analysis period. The topics that were covered the most by the media are those that can be perceived as negative, such as arrests or the burden that refugees place on the system, whilst more positive topics, such as peaceful protests or integration, received minimal attention.

---

[3] https://www.peaceinsight.org/blog/2017/08/refugees-and-media-lebanon/

Graph 1: Media Topics Relating to Syrian Refugees in Newspapers

Distribution of the topics of the main coverages related to the Syrian issues.
Total observed articles: 204.

| Topic	Value
The right of asylum, entry and exit	1
Sit-in and peaceful protest	1
Integration	2
Civil, social and economic rights of the refugees	3
Civil society and other activities	4
Exploitation of Children and Women	4
Medical care, hospitalization, health and public safety	5
Various crimes against the Syrian/Palestinian	6
Studies and education	6
Disasters and accidents	7
Competition of the labour force, illegal work, street vendors	10
Various crimes committed by the Syrian/Palestinian	11
Housing, social care, infrastructures, water and electricity	14
Regulations, governmental and administrative decisions	15
Asylum burdens and responsibilities of various parties	16
Financial and food assistance, clothing and supplies	30
Arrests and security procedures	30
	39

Source: Sakada et al., 2015: 9

Graph 2 examines the tone used by the print media reporters in their reporting on refugees in Lebanon: 27% of the articles had a negative tone, whilst 24% were positive and 49% neutral. What this does not take into account is the editorial decisions on what stories to report on and what not to report on, which is demonstrated in Graph 1 and highlights a more negative coverage of refugees, particularly when paired with the additional element that 27% of these stories had a perceived negative tone.

Graph 2: Tone of Reporting in Newspapers

The average general tone of the press coverages related to the Palestinian and Syrian issues. Total observed articles: 521.

24% Positive
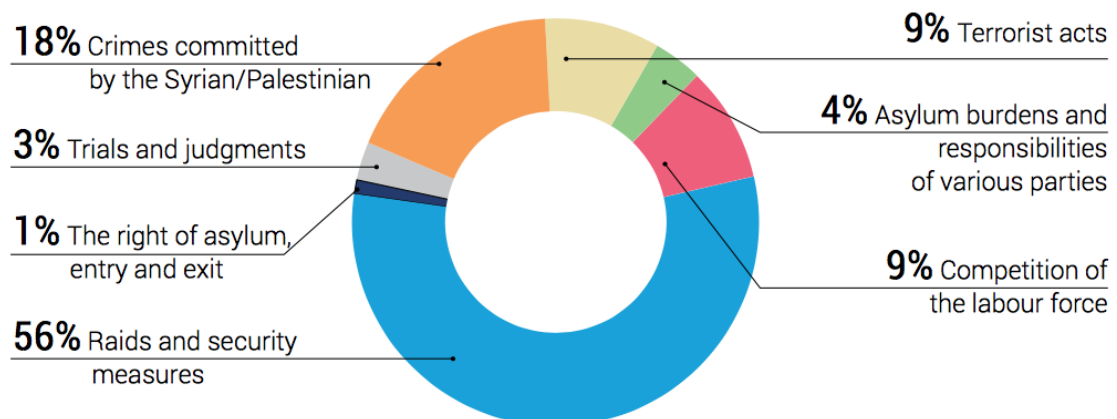27% Negative
49% Neutral
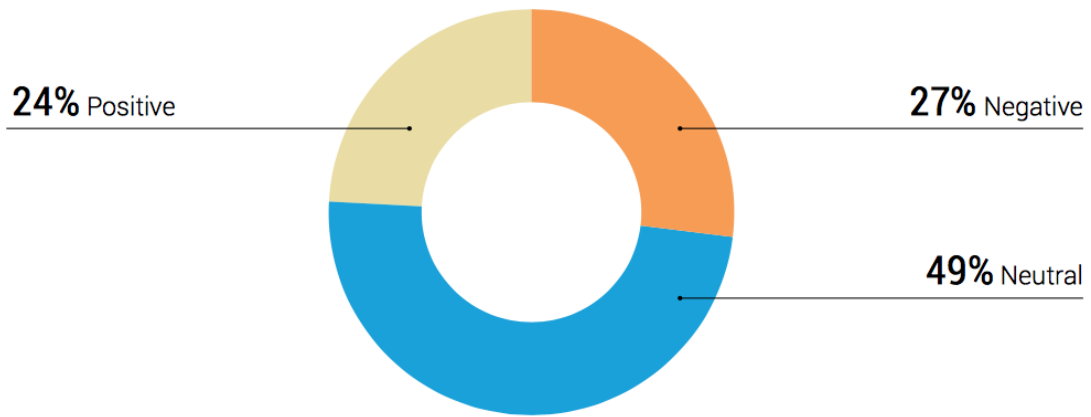
Source: Sakada et al., 2015: 11

The 27% negative tone articles are dominated by issues relating to security, as demonstrated in Graph 3, with 56% focusing on raids and security measures, 18% on crimes and 9% on terrorist acts – thus 83% of the negative tone article relate directly to security. It is also demonstrated in Graph 3 that the one article on the right to asylum during the analysis period actually took a negative tone.

**Graph 3: Focus of Articles with Negative Tone in Newspapers**

The main topics in the press coverage of the Syrian and Palestinian issues with a negative tone. Sample of 72 observed articles.

18% Crimes committed by the Syrian/Palestinian
3% Trials and judgments
1% The right of asylum, entry and exit
56% Raids and security measures
9% Terrorist acts
4% Asylum burdens and responsibilities of various parties
9% Competition of the labour force

Source: Sakada et al., 2015: 13

Graph 4 examines the tone used by the various newspapers when reporting on issues relating to refugees and security, which highlights only negative or neutral narratives are used.
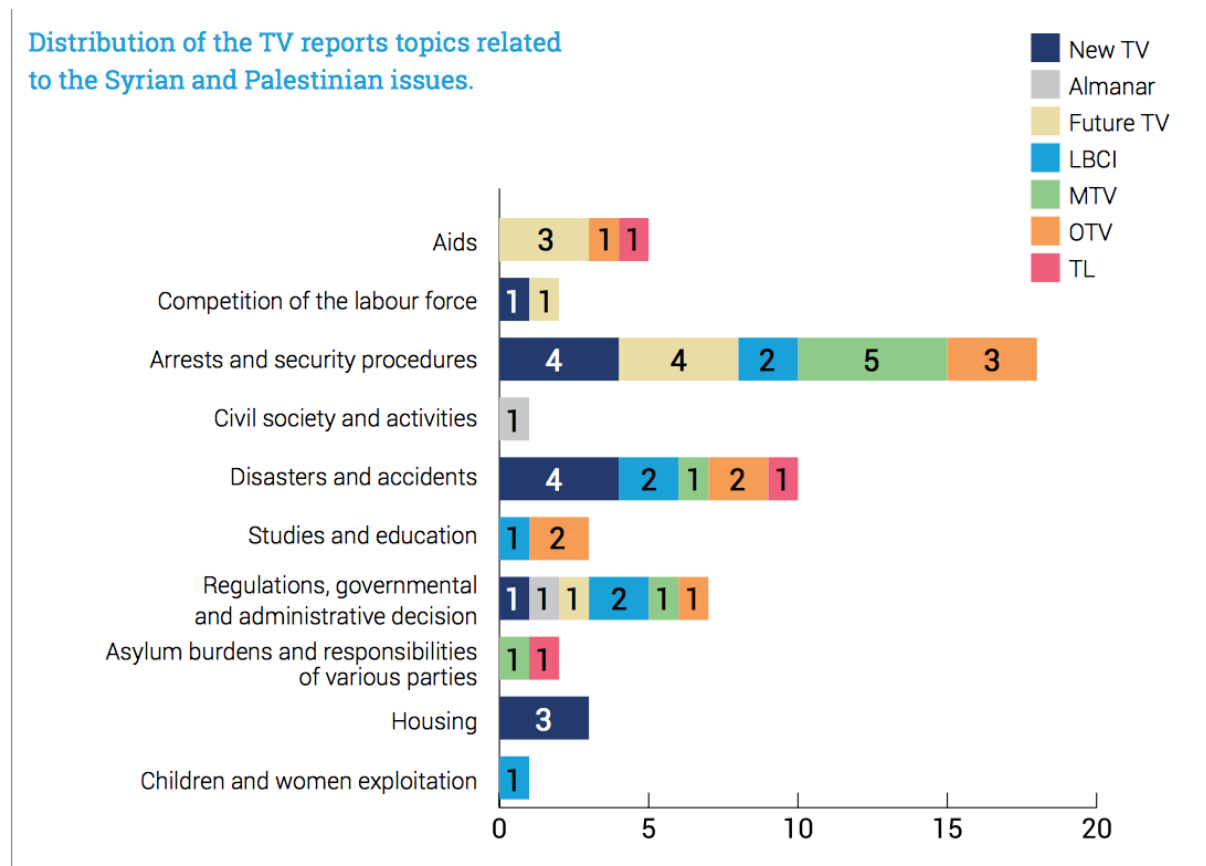
Graph 4: Tone of Articles on Security by Newspaper
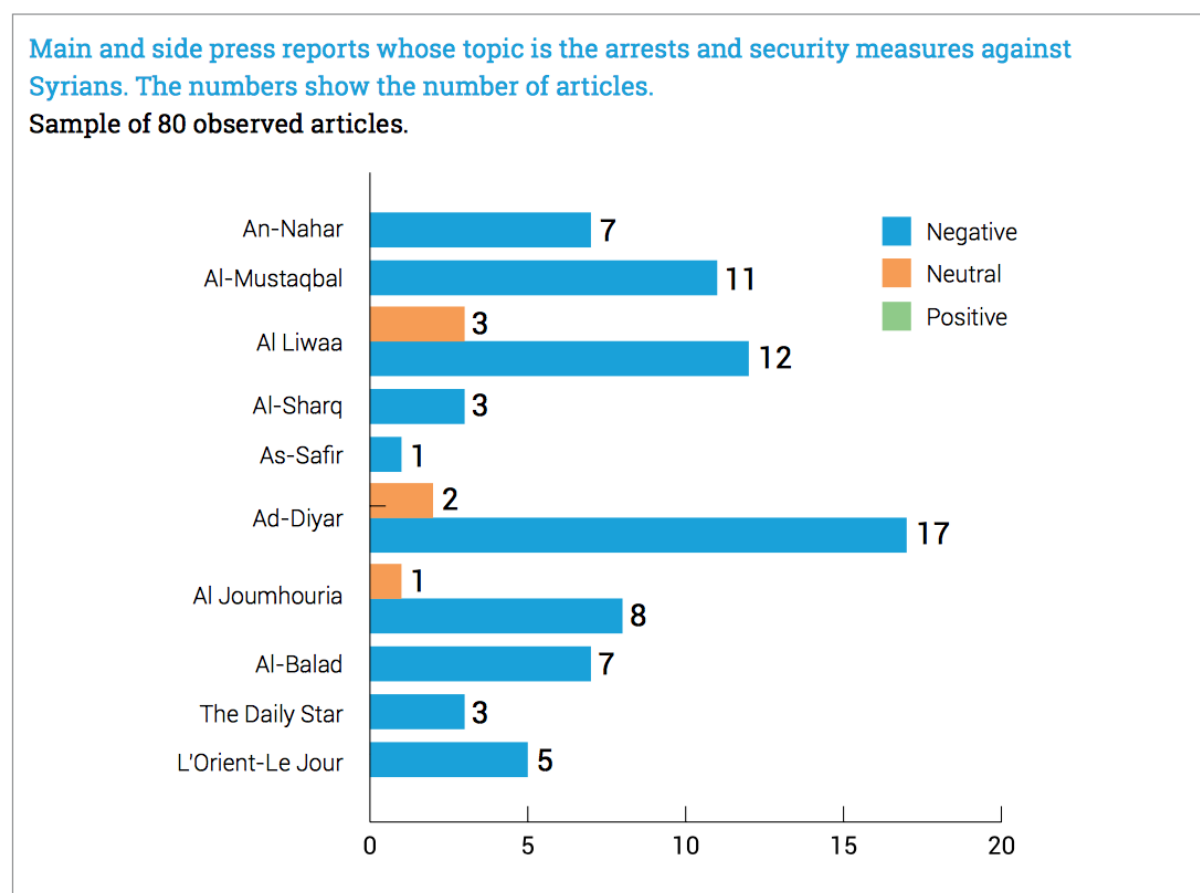
Source: Sakada et al., 2015: 13

Graph 5 illustrates the topics about refugees that are reported by individual TV channels. As is evident, security and arrests is the most widely reported topic, and Graphs 6 to 8 demonstrate that the tone of this reporting is usually perceived as negative. However, the second most widely reported topic is disasters and accidents, which Graphs 6 to 8 demonstrate that the tone in relation to refugees is perceived as positive. Moreover, it is important to highlight that in the earlier-mentioned 2016 UNHCR survey more than two thirds of the respondents acknowledged that humanitarian stories of this nature affect their perceptions (Alsharabati, 2017: 15-16).

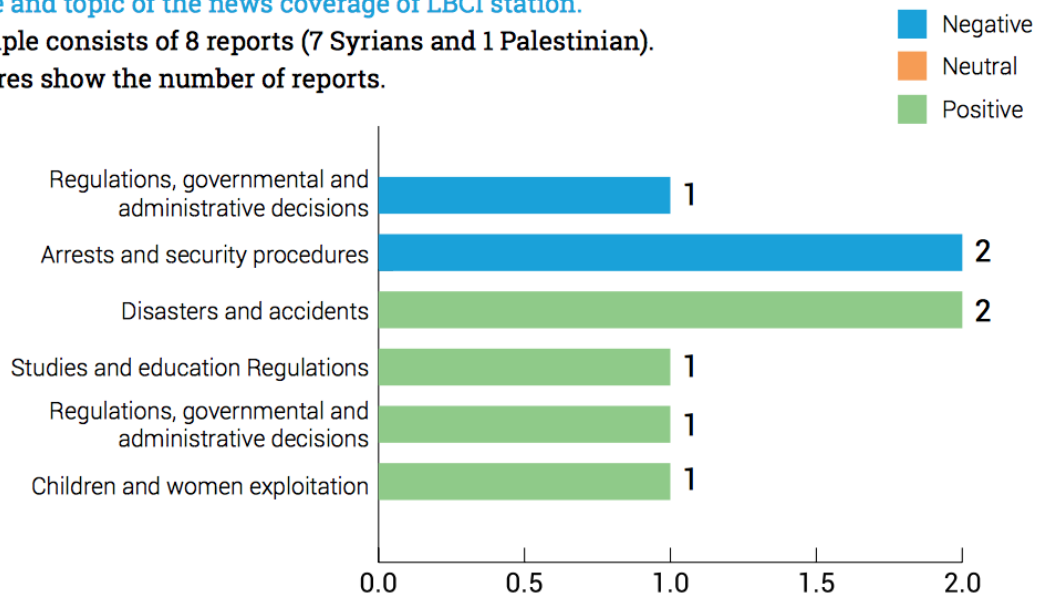**Graph 5: Topics on Refugees reported by TV Channels**

Distribution of the TV reports topics related to the Syrian and Palestinian issues.

Legend: New TV, Almanar, Future TV, LBCI, MTV, OTV, TL

Aids: 3, 1, 1
Competition of the labour force: 1, 1
Arrests and security procedures: 4, 4, 2, 5, 3
Civil society and activities: 1
Disasters and accidents: 4, 2, 1, 2, 1
Studies and education: 1, 2
Regulations, governmental and administrative decision: 1, 1, 1, 2, 1, 1
Asylum burdens and responsibilities of various parties: 1, 1
Housing: 3
Children and women exploitation: 1

Source: Sakada et al., 2015: 17

Graphs 6-8 demonstrate the perceived tone used when reporting on refugees by three TV channels in Lebanon.

Graph 6: Tone of Topics Reported by LBCI

The tone and topic of the news coverage of LBCI station.
The sample consists of 8 reports (7 Syrians and 1 Palestinian).
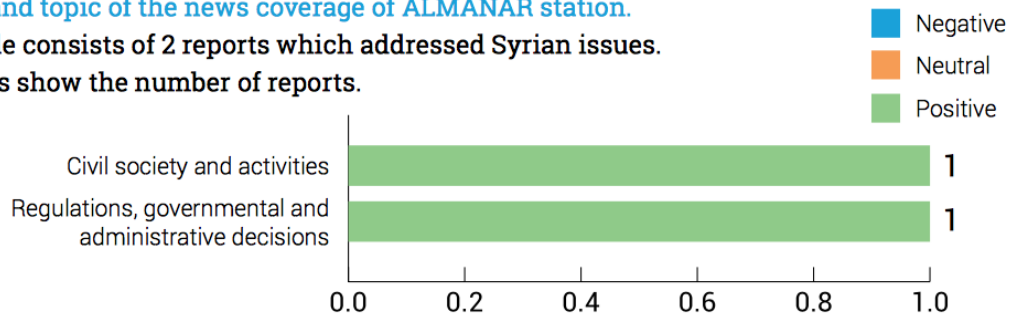The figures show the number of reports.

Legend: Negative, Neutral, Positive

Topic	Value
Regulations, governmental and administrative decisions (Negative)	1
Arrests and security procedures (Negative)	2
Disasters and accidents (Positive)	2
Studies and education Regulations (Positive)	1
Regulations, governmental and administrative decisions (Positive)	1
Children and women exploitation (Positive)	1

Source: Sakada et al., 2015: 19

Graph 7: Tone of Topics Reported by Al-Manar

The tone and topic of the news coverage of ALMANAR station.
The sample consists of 2 reports which addressed Syrian issues.
The figures show the number of reports.

Legend: Negative, Neutral, Positive

Topic	Value
Civil society and activities (Positive)	1
Regulations, governmental and administrative decisions (Positive)	1

Source: Sakada et al., 2015: 19

Graph 8: Tone of Topics Reported by MTV (Murr Television)

The tone and topic of the news coverage of MTV station.
The sample consists of 8 reports which addressed Syrian issues.
The figures show the number of reports.

Legend: Negative, Neutral, Positive

Topic	Number of reports
Arrests and security procedures	4 (Negative)
Disasters and accidents	1 (Positive)
Various crimes committed by the Syrian/Palestinian	1 (Negative)
Regulations, governmental and administrative decisions	1 (Positive)
Asylum burdens and responsibilities of various parties	1 (Negative)

Source: Sakada et al., 2015: 19

3. Communication Initiatives

UNDP

The UNDP "Strengthening Civil Peace in Lebanon" project, funded by the European Union, began a "Journalists' Pact for Strengthening Civil Peace in Lebanon project" due to the role the media can play in strengthening civil peace in Lebanon. The project took a long-term participatory approach, visiting the heads of every media institution in Lebanon and meeting to discuss the role of media and the contents of the Pact. The idea behind the Pact was to create more ethics in Lebanese journalism, enhance neutrality, depoliticise reporting, increase accuracy, and create responsibility for reporting. The final Pact was signed by 34 media institutions in 2013.[4]

However, perceptions of Syrian refuges have gradually worsened, and the media has played a significant role in this deterioration. Following the success of their earlier campaign in which many media outlets signed up to provide more neutral reporting on refugees, in August 2017 the UN and the Lebanese Information Ministry launched a joint media campaign under the slogan "I

---

[4] http://www.lb.undp.org/content/lebanon/en/home/library/crisis_prevention_and_recovery/Journalists-Pact-for-strengthening-Civil-Peace-in-Lebanon.html

Will Return to My Country and Invite You to Visit Me" with the aim of countering the negative impact the Lebanese media is having on relations between refugees and host communities.[5]

Another part of the UNDP "Strengthening Civil Peace in Lebanon" project is the production of joint news supplements. These supplements involve joint assignments of journalists from different local media outlets with the aim of being, and teaching the journalists to be, less biased. The supplements are published in Annahar, As-Safir, the Daily Star and L'Orient-Le Jour newspapers and are considered a success in conveying positive messages to both the host and refugee communities.[6]

Search for Common Ground

Search for Common Ground in Lebanon designed a video game called "Cedaria: Blackout" in order to provide the youth of Lebanon a platform to learn and practice how to mediate conflict, solve community problems collaboratively, and understand the perspectives of others. In the game, once peaceful clans have turned on each other and the players' conflict resolution and mitigation techniques determine the outcome. In 2016 and 2017, 42 workshops for around 500 participants all over Lebanon were carried out by eight young Lebanese and Syrian facilitators. Gaming sessions were followed by discussions on how to relate the conflict resolution themes that come up in the game to the participant's own lives. These initiatives proved especially successful with young women and youth from vulnerable backgrounds, such as Syrian refugees and Palestinians.[7]

Lebanese civil society has long been campaigning for a higher representation of women in politics, however, in the new electoral law (ratified June 16 2017) no quota for women's representation was included. Thus, it is left entirely up to the population, and the patriarchal political system, to decide the amount of women elected in the 2018 elections. In order to counter the lack of laws addressing the scarcity of women in Lebanese politics, Search for Common Ground and Abaad Resource Center for Gender Equality – funded by the British Embassy in Lebanon – have launched a gender-sensitive communications project. They have acknowledged the important role that the media plays in transforming social norms and see TV as being particularly influential in Lebanon. Therefore, they have created a range of programmes to strengthen the capacity of those working in, or training to work in, TV to produce gender sensitive programmes that will promote women's leadership in the political sphere. These include workshops on the use of drama for social change and gender concepts, and a competition for gender sensitive scripts for short films. An additional goal of the project is to increase belief of television audiences – and thus voters – in women's political leadership capacity; and in this respect the project is also launching a TV mini-series to be aired in Lebanon and end right before the May 2018 elections. In order to reach the objectives of this project, a baseline survey was carried out of the population. This survey revealed that Lebanese people were unsatisfied with the way women were portrayed in TV, and say the portrayal is superficial and lacking in

---

[5] http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2017/Aug-04/414962-media-campaign-seeks-to-defuse-tensions-between-syrian-refugees-and-lebanese.ashx

[6]

http://www.lb.undp.org/content/lebanon/en/home/operations/projects/crisis_prevention_and_recovery/strengthening-civil-peace-in-lebanon.html

[7] https://www.sfcg.org/cedariablackout/

demonstrating the everyday challenges that women face in Lebanon. It also demonstrated that the audience were interested in viewing dramas with strong female characters. These elements demonstrate the potential for the project, however conversations with industry professionals resulted in the recommendation that it should not be marketed as a women-empowerment series, but rather just an ordinary TV series, in order not to lose audience figures (Karlidag and Soukkarieh, 2018). Graph 9 demonstrates the perceived impact of dramas on social norms and public opinion from a baseline survey of 1026 people across Lebanon carried out between 28 November 2017 and 15 December 2017.

Graph 9: Perceived impact of Lebanese TV dramas on social norms and public opinion
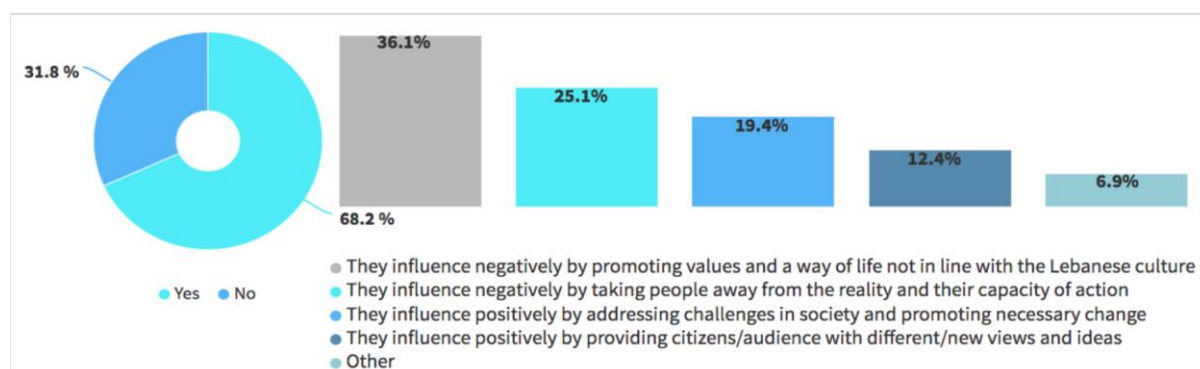
Source: Karlidag and Soukkarieh, 2018: 19

Media Association for Peace

In February 2018, The Media Association for Peace (MAP), in partnership with the Deutsche Welle Akademie (DWA), organised its 7th Annual Peace Journalism Workshop entitled "Conflict-sensitive Reporting" in Lebanon. The workshop included 15 participants working or looking to work in Lebanese media. The course's aim was to make participants think more about how they report on conflict, the ethics of reporting, and on the impact of the language they use. A second course was run with the same participants in order to train them how to train other reporters on conflict-sensitive reporting.[8]

American University of Beirut

. Naser Yassin from the American University of Beirut launched the #AUB4Refugees initiative in order to utilise social media to counter the negative and often factually incorrect narrative on refugees in Lebanon through facts and figures. This hashtag uses widely available figures in

---

[8] http://maplebanon.org/index.php/works/the-7th-annual-peace-journalism-workshop-conflict-sensitive-reporting-training-of-trainers/

order to highlight the suffering of Syrian refugees as well as the benefit they bring to Lebanon and the economy.[9]

4. Media in Lebanon

Trombetta (2018) argues that the Lebanese media landscape is an arena of political patronage and domestic and foreign influence peddling. Politicians account for up to a third of many media boards of directors, and due to the media being controlled by political parties it becomes a mouthpiece for political propaganda. Thus, the media reflects the limitations of the sectarian system and is more often than not identified with one of the main religious and political groups. Due to the current economic situation, a number of outlets have closed or been restructured; those that have been able to resist are often financed by large investors, linked to political-sectarian actors in the region. With the conflict in Syria exacerbating old fault lines in Lebanon, the media has played a part in pushing the rival political agendas and in demonising refugees (Trombetta, 2018). In a Policy Brief written by Beyond Reform & Development it is argued that 'rather than creating an issue-based accountability and participation culture, media outlets are the mouthpiece of political leaders and a powerful tool for sectarian incitement and polarization at the social, political, ideological, and socio-economic levels'.[10]

Dajani (2013) argues that due to the sectarian nature of Lebanon and its media, the media focuses on issues relevant to a particular religious sect rather than on those relevant to the larger Lebanese society. Additionally, he argues that due to the small population size and the proliferation of media outlets, it is not a financially viable industry and thus media is backed by financiers, often connected to political parties, with their own aims and agenda. As a result of these dynamics the Lebanese media often reports opinion rather than facts, which in turn has a negative impact when reporting on refugees as the reporting is connected to political goals and is not necessarily factually accurate. Moreover, there are also open acknowledgments of bribes in how issues are reported in newspapers, which is connected to the financial unviability of the market where external revenue is needed in order to keep media outlets running. For Dajani (2013:8): 'Lebanon's media problem is not an issue of censorship or the lack of a free media environment. Rather, the fundamental problem of mass media in Lebanon is its distorted understanding of the meaning of freedom in which private interests are excessively protected in the name of freedom and take priority over social responsibility'. Dajani takes real issue in the way news is reported, calling newspapers 'viewspapers' and arguing that news anchors interpret and explain the news rather than reporting it.[11]

---

[9] https://www.peaceinsight.org/blog/2017/08/refugees-and-media-lebanon/

[10] http://www.databank.com.lb/docs/Media%20in%20Lebanon%20Towards%20Enhancing%20Freedom%20of%20Expression%202012.pdf

[11] http://www.alsharq.de/2014/mashreq/libanon/viewspapers-nabil-dajani-lebanons-media-landscape/

As argued by Sawssan Abou-Zahr, the political dynamics, discussed-above, of Lebanon's media enhances conflict, both within Lebanese communities and with refugees. The sectarian and often racist reporting is transferred onto the population, thus creating tension.[12]

Television networks and print media (newspapers) are known to have varying political stances:

TV networks

LBCI (Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation International) was established by Lebanese Forces (a Christian-nationalist militia) in 1985, however it was passed into private ownership in 1991. Although officially LBCI is not politically linked, it is perceived as being pro-March 14 Alliance.[13] LBCI is also financed through Saudi financers, including Prince al-Waleed Bin Talal.

MTV (Murr Television) was founded by the Greek Orthodox Christian Gabriel El Murr, who remains chairperson, in 1991. It too is not officially politically linked, but is perceived to favour the March 14 Alliance.

Al-Manar was established in 1991 and is a Hezbollah-affiliated channel that favours the March 8 Alliance.

Future TV was founded by Rafik Hariri in 1993 and is affiliated with the Future Movement (FM), which is a member of the March 14 Alliance. Its target audience is Lebanon's Sunni community.

NBN (National Broadcasting Network) was founded in 1996 is an Amal-affiliated channel connected to the March 8 Alliance.

Al-Jadeed was originally founded by the Lebanese communist party before closing and then being officially re-launched in 2001 by businessman Tahsin Khayyat (Trombetti, 2018).

Print Media

Annahar was founded in 1933 with a moderate-right, anti-Syria stance. The newspaper is favours the March 14 Alliance. The newspaper also has an online version called *Naharnet* which publishes in Arabic and English.

Al-Mustaqbal was launched in 1995 by the Hariri family and thus has strong connections to the Future Movement (led by Saad Hariri) and the March 14 Alliance; it is also seen to be pro-Saudi Arabia.

Al-Akhbar was originally founded in 1938, but re-launched in 2006. It is considered a liberal paper, critical of all groups and has a strong history of publishing on and championing women's and LGBT rights. However, it also openly supports Hezbollah.

Al-Anwar was established in 1959 and is considered to be independent and centrist.

---

[12] https://www.peaceinsight.org/blog/2017/08/refugees-and-media-lebanon/

[13] A coalition of anti-Syria political parties led by Saad Hariri.

Al-Balad was founded in 2003. It is a commercial newspaper printed in tabloid format that promotes aggressive and controversial campaigns, focusing on political, social, and cultural issues often in sensationalistic terms.

Al-Diyar was founded in 1988 and is edited by prominent Lebanese journalist and retired army officer Charles Ayoub. It is politically aligned with Hezbollah and the Syrian regime.

The Daily Star is an English-language paper that was established in 1952. It is currently connected to the Hariri family and is the only Lebanon-based, English-language daily. Since its Hariri connections in 2010, the Daily Star has begun to favour the FM.

L'Orient-Le Jour was founded in 1970, and is a French-language newspaper with a traditionally anti-Syria stance (Trombetti, 2018).

Viewership

Graph 10 below demonstrates the peak viewing times in Lebanon for various media sources. Radio is popular in Lebanon in the morning, particularly 07:30-09:00. Newspapers reach peak readership in the mid-morning. Peak time for TV viewership is between 19:00-23:00, whilst Internet's peak time is between 23:00-00:00.

Graph 10: Peak Viewing Times
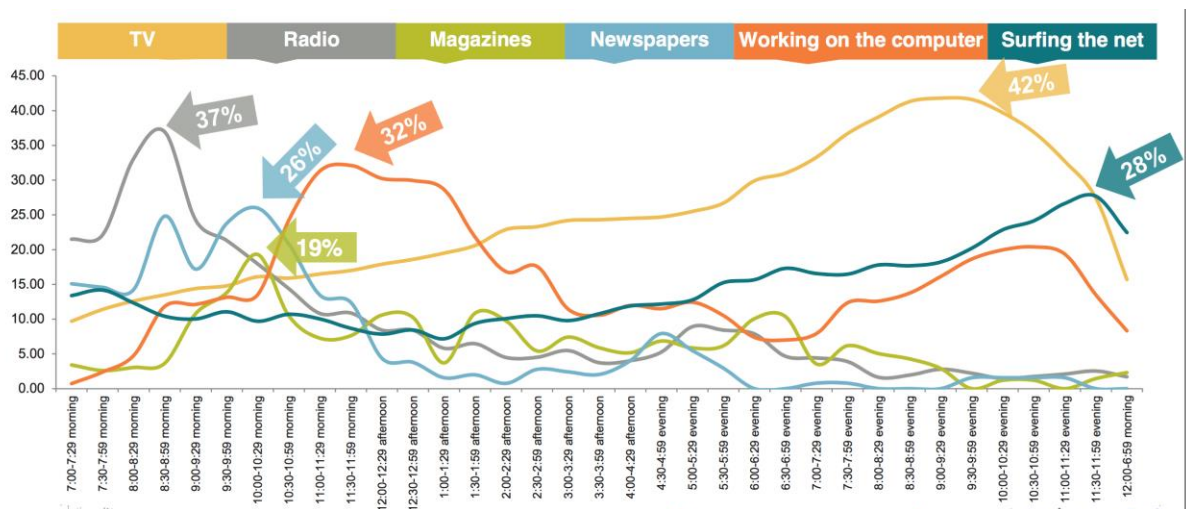
Source: IPSOS, 2017: 18

Graph 11 highlights the most popular TV channels by age[14] and gender, this demonstrates that young people do not watch the traditional Lebanese channels and mainly watch satellite TV.

Graph 11: Profiling of Daily TV Viewership
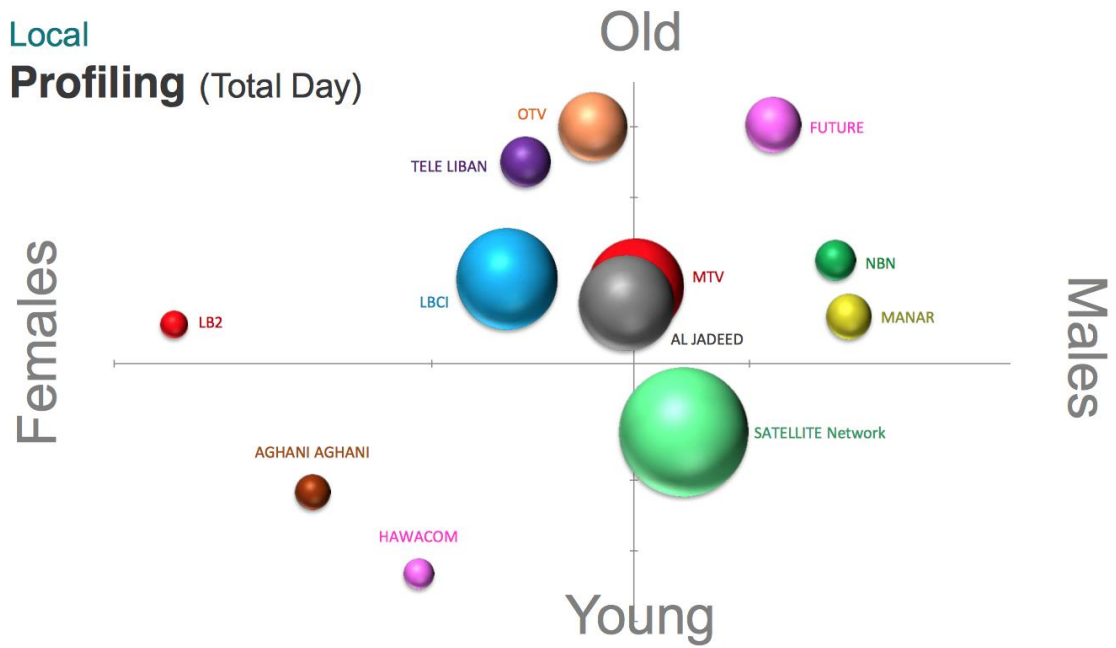
Source: IPSOS, 2017: 28

---

[14] IPSOS does not highlight what they define as old or young.

Graph 12 highlights the most popular TV channels during peak time by age[15] and gender.
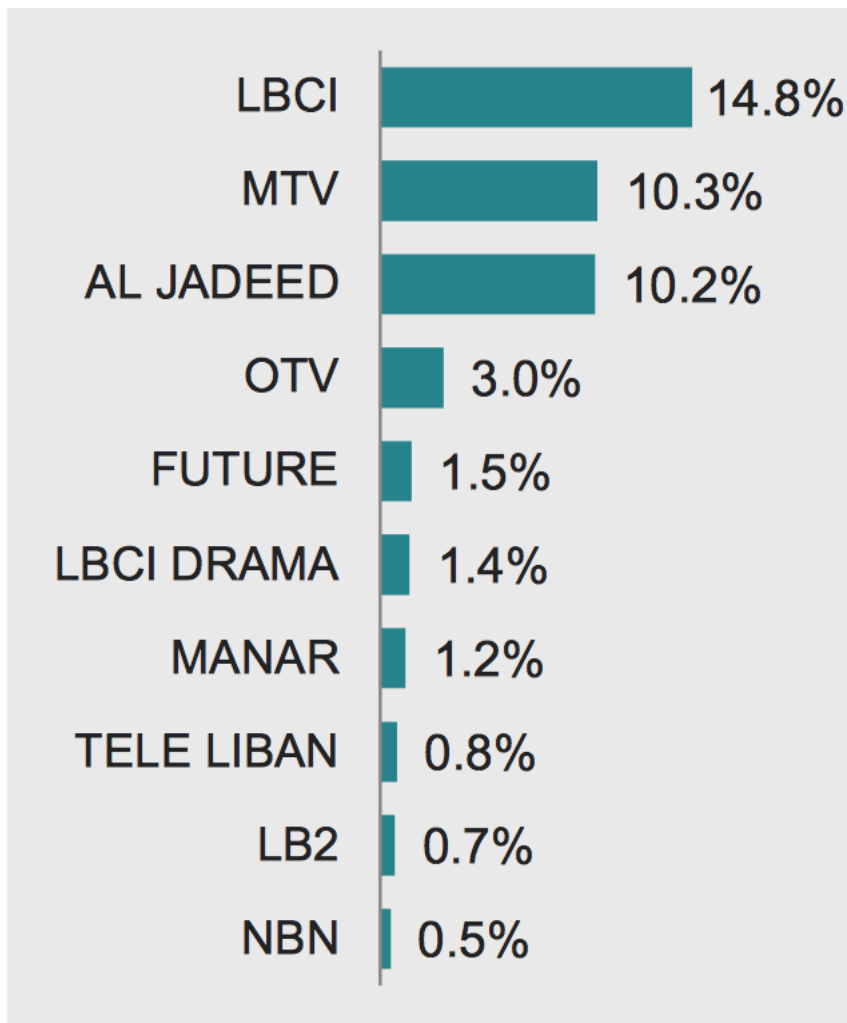
Graph 12: Profiling of Peak Time (19:00-23:00) TV Viewership
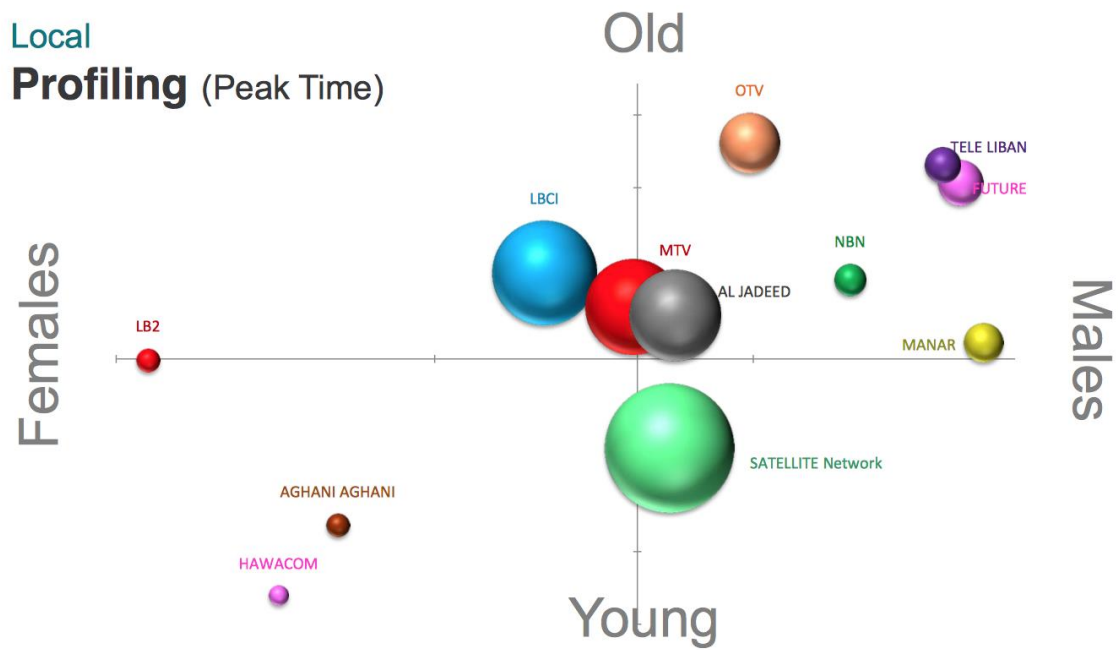
Source: IPSOS, 2017: 29

---

[15] IPSOS does not highlight what they define as old or young.

Graph 13 below highlights the share of the audience of each of the main channels in Lebanon according to IPSOS' survey. LBCI is the most popular channel with 14.8% of the viewership closely followed by MTV with 10.3%, and Al-Jadeed with 10.2% of the viewership.

Graph 13: Share of the Audience 2016

Channel	Share
LBCI	14.8%
MTV	10.3%
AL JADEED	10.2%
OTV	3.0%
FUTURE	1.5%
LBCI DRAMA	1.4%
MANAR	1.2%
TELE LIBAN	0.8%
LB2	0.7%
NBN	0.5%

Source: IPSOS, 2017: 35

The evening news is a popular time to report on refugees and Graph 14 below highlights the viewership (with many people viewing more than one channel). LBCI remains the most popular channel with 52% of people watching its evening news, however, Al-Jadeed's evening news overtakes MTV in viewership with 46% and 36% respectively.

Graph 14: Evening News Viewers
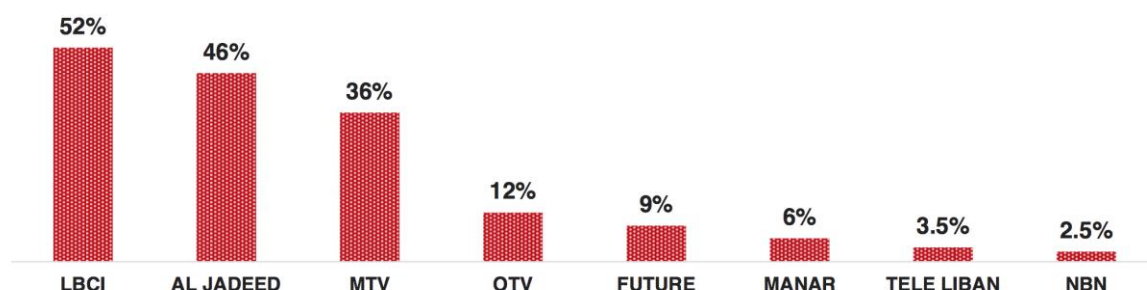
Source: IPSOS, 2017:43

A baseline survey of 1026 people across Lebanon carried out between 28 November 2017 and 15 December 2017 by Search for Common Ground on the viewership of LBCI and Al-Jadeed demonstrated the following on the audience:

Viewership:	Al-Jadeed: 57.7 %	LBCI: 53.3%	Both: 30.5%
Gender:	48.4% of LBCI's and 47.8% of Al-Jadeed's viewers are female		
Age:	Close to 60% of LBCI's and Al-Jadeed's viewers are in the age groups 30-45 or 45+. The younger age groups of 18-20 and 21-30 each represent roughly 20% of the viewers of both channels.		
Political Affiliation:	Close to 47% of both LBCI's and Al-Jadeed's viewers stated that they do not have a political affiliation. The Amal Movement, Free Patriotic Movement (FPM) and FM were the three most frequently mentioned political parties by the viewers of Al-Jadeed, when asked about their political affiliation. In the case of LBCI, the three main viewer groups include the supporters of FPM, FM and Lebanese Forces		
Education:	Between 27-31% of the viewers of these two channels have no education or have an education below secondary level. Roughly 25% of the viewers have a secondary education, and between 36-39% have a university education.		
Urban/rural:	Among rural survey participants, 50% confirmed watching Al-Jadeed and 67% confirmed watching LBCI. In the urban areas, 59% watch Al-Jadeed and 52% watch LBCI.		

Source: Karlidag and Soukkarieh, 2018:34
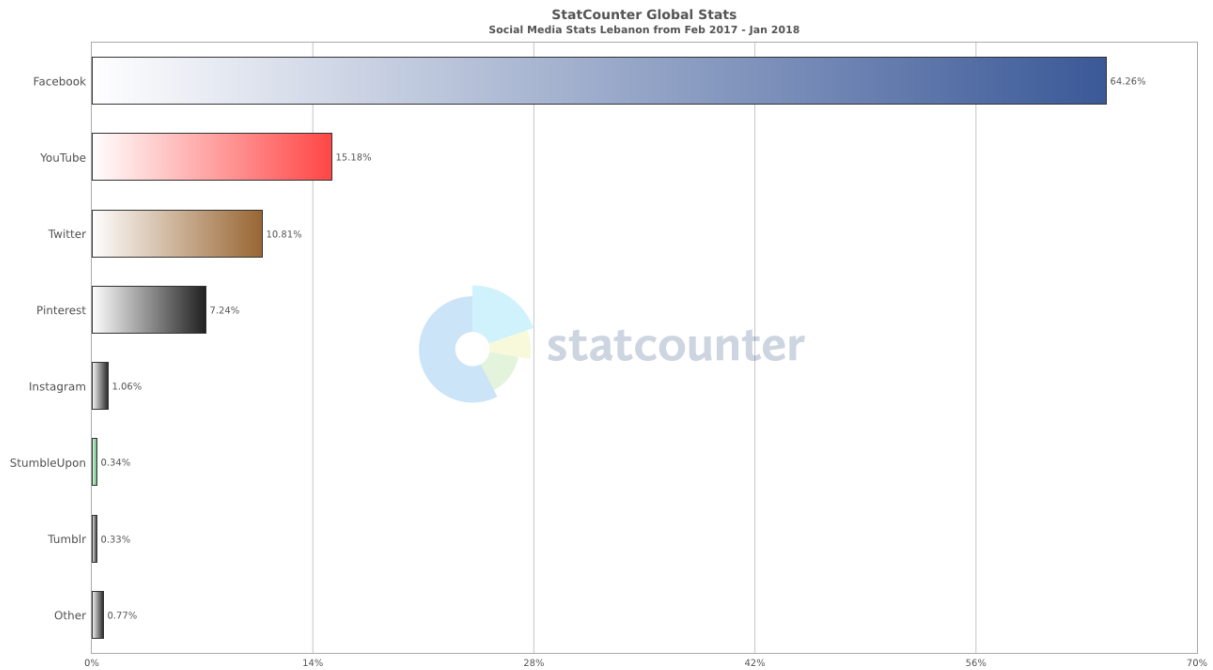
5. Social Media in Lebanon

96% of Internet users in Lebanon use social media (IPSOS, 2017:22). As demonstrated in Graph 15 and Graph 16 Facebook is by far the most popular social media platform in Lebanon, accounting for 64.26% of the market share over the last 12 months. YouTube is second with 15.18%, and Twitter is third with 10.81% of the market share.

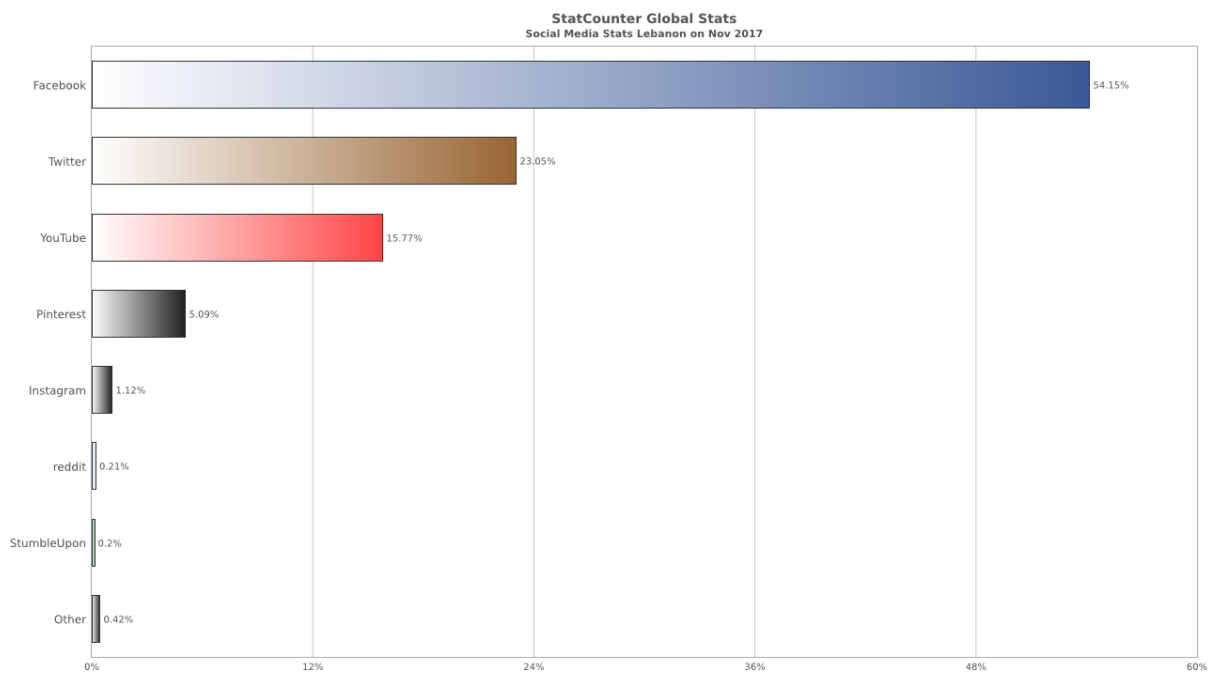**Graph 15: Monthly Social Media Share in Lebanon**

Source: http://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/lebanon/#monthly-201702-201801
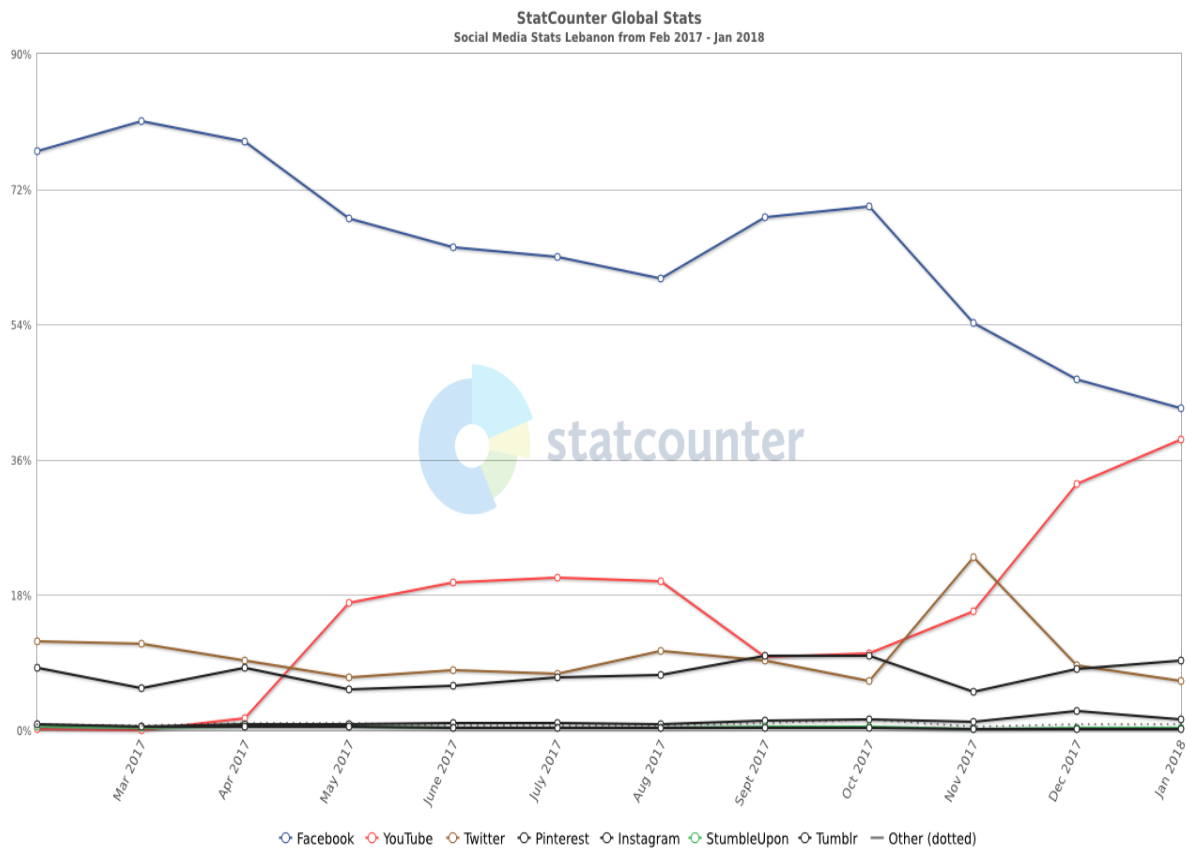
Graph 16: Social Media Market Share February 2017 – January 2018

StatCounter Global Stats
Social Media Stats Lebanon from Feb 2017 - Jan 2018

Facebook	64.26%
YouTube	15.18%
Twitter	10.81%
Pinterest	7.24%
Instagram	1.06%
StumbleUpon	0.34%
Tumblr	0.33%
Other	0.77%

Source: http://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/lebanon/#monthly-201702-201801-bar

Interestingly, in November 2017 (Graph 17), Twitter had a surge of use with it taking 23.05% of the market share, highlighting the potential of this platform in Lebanon:

Graph 17: Social Media Market Share November 2017

StatCounter Global Stats
Social Media Stats Lebanon on Nov 2017

Facebook	54.15%
Twitter	23.05%
YouTube	15.77%
Pinterest	5.09%
Instagram	1.12%
reddit	0.21%
StumbleUpon	0.2%
Other	0.42%

Source: http://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/lebanon/#monthly-201711-201711-bar

Similarly, in December 2017 (Graph 18), YouTube took 32.7% of the market share, and in January 2018 (Graph 19) it took 38.66% of the market share, highlighting the potential of YouTube advertising:

Graph 18: Social Media Market Share December 2017

Source: http://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/lebanon/#monthly-201712-201712-bar
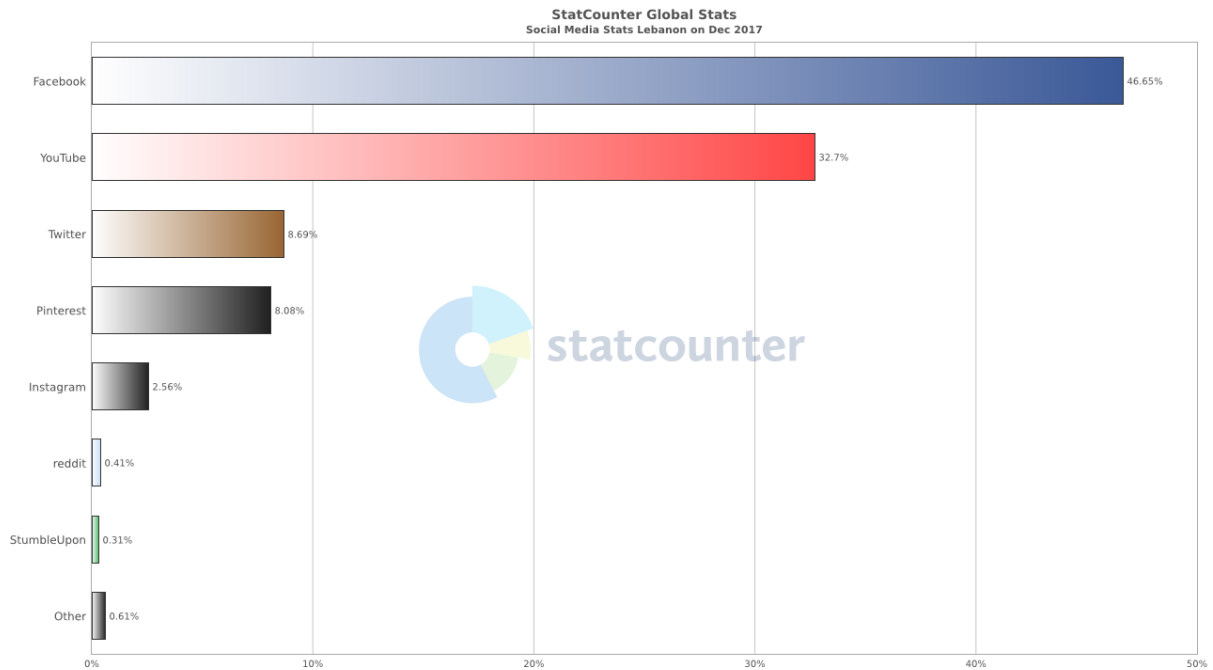
Graph 19: Social Media Market Share January 2018

Source: http://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/lebanon/#monthly-201801-201801-bar
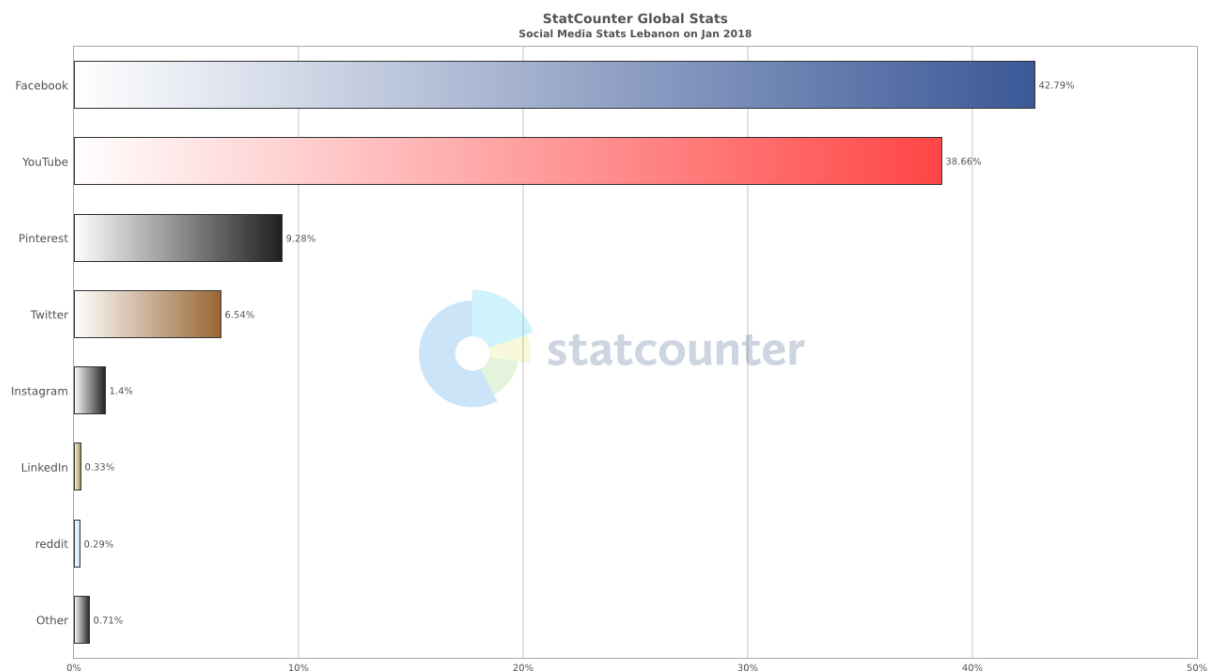
6. References

Alsharabati C. (2017). *Syrian Refugees in Lebanon: Resilience Amidst Security Measures and Safety Concerns*. Saint Joseph University. http://www.isp.usj.edu.lb/pdf/LR%20-%20SYRIAN%20REFUGEES%20IN%20LEBANON%20BETWEEN%20RESILIENCE%20AND%20VULNERABILITY.pdf

Betts, A., Ali, A., & Memişoğlu, F. (2017). *Local Politics and the Syrian Refugee Crisis: Exploring Responses in Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan*. Oxford Refugee Studies Centre. https://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/publications/local-politics-and-the-syrian-refugee-crisis-exploring-responses-in-turkey-lebanon-and-jordan

Dajani, N. (2013). The myth of media freedom in Lebanon. *Arab Media and Society*, 18, 1-9. http://www.databank.com.lb/docs/The%20Myth%20of%20Media%20Freedom%20in%20Lebanon%202013.pdf

International Center for Transitional Justice (2014). *Confronting the Legacy of Political Violence in Lebanon: An Agenda for Change.* http://ictj.org/sites/default/files/ICTJ-Lebanon-Recommendations-2014-ENG.pdf

IPSOS (2017). *TAM Lebanon 2016 Results.* https://www.ipsos.com/sites/default/files/2017-02/TAM_Presentation_2017.pdf

Karlidag, M. and Soukkarieh, B. (2018). Gender Sensitive Public Communication project. Search for Common Ground Report. https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/20180124-Search-Baseline-Gender-Sensitive-Public-Communication-Project-Final-External.pdf

Kelley, N. (2017). Responding to a refugee influx: lessons from Lebanon. *Journal on Migration & Human Security*, 5, 82. http://jmhs.cmsny.org/index.php/jmhs/article/view/75

Mercy Corps (2013). *Things fall apart: Political, economic and social instability in Lebanon*. Mercy Corps. https://www.mercycorps.org/sites/default/files/MC%20Lebanon%20LivelihoodConflict_Assesment_%20Full%20Report%200913.pdf

Mercy Corps (2015). *Stabilization & Resilience in Protracted, Politically-induced Emergencies: A Case Study Exploration of Lebanon*. Mercy Corps. https://www.mercycorps.org/sites/default/files/Mercy%20Corps_Stabilization%20%26%20Resilience%20Study.pdf

Sakada, G., Nader, J. & Mikhael, T. (2015). *Monitoring Racism in the Lebanese Media. The Representation of the "Syrian" and the "Palestinian" in the News Coverage*. UNDP Report. http://www.maharat-news.com/Temp/Attachments/6e546361-c10b-448c-b019-19490547bc99.pdf

UNHCR (2015). *Refugee Response in Lebanon: Briefing Documents*. UNHCR Lebanon. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2014_2019/documents/droi/dv/95_finalbriefingkit_/95_finalbriefingkit_en.pdf

USAID (2015). *USAID/Lebanon Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) December 2014 – December 2019*. USAID Report. https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1883/Lebanon_CDCS_2014-2019.pdf

Key websites

- UNHCR Lebanon - http://www.unhcr.org/lb/
- Mercy Corps Lebanon - https://www.mercycorps.org/countries/lebanon
- Civil Society Knowledge Centre - http://civilsociety-centre.org
- UNDP Lebanon - http://www.lb.undp.org/content/lebanon/en/home.html
- Stat Counter - http://gs.statcounter.com

Suggested citation

O'Driscoll, D. (2018). *Communication interventions supporting positive civic action in Lebanon.* K4D Helpdesk. Brighton, UK: Institute of Development Studies.

About this report