



PRESS RELEASE

AUB and UNRWA Launch Survey on the Socioeconomic Status of Palestine Refugees in Lebanon

Beirut

3 June 2016

Today, the American University of Beirut (AUB), together with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), launched a “Survey on the Socioeconomic Status of Palestine Refugees in Lebanon, 2015”. This publication updates the original flagship report from 2010, with leading academic research and analysis by the AUB.

Commissioned by UNRWA, this survey was conducted in April 2015 across nearly 3,000 households of Palestine Refugees from Lebanon (PRL) and more than 1,000 households of Palestine Refugees from Syria in Lebanon (PRS).

This publication gives an in depth analysis of the living conditions and socio-economic status of all Palestine refugees living in Lebanon, with a special focus on the Palestine refugees from Syria who sought refuge in Lebanon in the past five years. It highlights the challenges they face particularly with respect to their poverty levels and access to employment.

Five years after the 2010 AUB socioeconomic survey, 65 per cent of Palestine refugees from Lebanon and some 90 percent of PRS live in poverty, including 9 per cent of the PRS living in extreme poverty and unable to meet even their most essential food requirements. Unemployment is comparatively of concern at 23.2 per cent for PRL and 52.5 per cent for PRS.

The launch of this groundbreaking study took place at the Maammari Auditorium of the Suliman Olayan School of Business on AUB campus and was attended by UN officials, representatives of the host country Lebanon, representatives of the Palestinian community in Lebanon, the donor community, international and local NGOs, members of academia and the media. The event included keynote presentations by Interim Associate Provost at AUB, Dr. Hala Muhtasib representing AUB President Dr. Fadlo R. Khuri; the United Nations Special Representative for Lebanon, Ms Sigrid Kaag; Director

of UNRWA Affairs in Lebanon, Mr. Matthias Schmale; the Palestinian Ambassador to Lebanon, Mr. Ashraf Dabbour; and the AUB lead author of the report Dr. Jad Chaaban.

This study would not have been possible without the generous funding provided from the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan/UNRWA Syria Emergency Appeal, the European Union, and UNICEF.

The full report and the executive summary can be found at www.unrwa.org.

For further details please contact UNRWA Communications and Public Information Office at + 961 1 830400/5 ext. 5314

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Background information

UNRWA is confronted with an increased demand for services resulting from a growth in the number of registered Palestine refugees, the extent of their vulnerability and their deepening poverty. UNRWA is funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions and financial support has been outpaced by the growth in needs. As a result, the UNRWA Programme Budget, which supports the delivery of core essential services, operates with a large shortfall, projected for 2016 to stand at US\$ 81 million. UNRWA emergency programmes and key projects, also operating with large shortfalls, are funded through separate funding portals.

UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and mandated to provide assistance and protection to some 5 million registered Palestine refugees. Its mission is to help Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank and the Gaza Strip achieve their full human development potential, pending a just and lasting solution to their plight. UNRWA services encompass education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, protection and microfinance.

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Note to Editors

About AUB

Founded in 1866, the American University of Beirut bases its educational philosophy, standards, and practices on the American liberal arts model of higher education. A teaching-centered research university, AUB has more than 700 full-time faculty members and a student body of about 8,500 students. AUB currently offers more than 130 programs leading to bachelor's, master's, MD, and PhD degrees. It provides medical education and training to students from throughout the region at its Medical Center that includes a full-service 420-bed hospital.

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