

## **Palestinian refugees and ‘Lebanese exceptionalism’: The place of UNRWA since 1950**

ANNE IRFAN

### **Abstract:**

*The situation of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon reflects the country’s broader exceptionalism in the Middle East. The Palestinian population of Lebanon can be distinguished from their counterparts elsewhere in both political and socio-economic terms, as they are generally poorer, less integrated and more disenfranchised. This article argues that UNRWA, the UN Agency for Palestinian refugees, is emblematic of the latter’s exceptional situation in Lebanon, as it has taken on a distinctive role in the country. To explicate this, the article first looks at the factors that have fuelled and shaped the Palestinians’ particular vulnerabilities in Lebanon. It then examines what this has meant for UNRWA, demonstrating how the Agency’s work in Lebanon reflects the particularities of the Palestinians’ situation there. Finally, the article concludes by considering the broader significance of this set-up for protracted refugee crises in the Middle East.*

The state of Lebanon has long been exceptional in the Middle East. It is a weak state with a democratic political system, no official religion, and significant regional and communal variation. As the most religiously diverse country in the region, its state structures are defined by a confessional system that denotes political and economic power on the basis of sect. Like Jordan, Lebanon’s population includes a significant proportion of refugees; unlike Jordan, it is a weak state that has been party to both external conflict and civil war in recent decades. Yet it has withstood these internal tensions and avoided the recent turmoil of many of its neighbours, thus combining insecurity with resilience.

This ‘Lebanese exceptionalism’ is reinforced by the country’s particular significance within modern Palestinian history. Since the Nakba, the fates of Lebanon and the Palestinians have been closely interlinked. It was one of the primary Arab states to host a large Palestinian refugee population in the late 1940s, with the Palestinians quickly coming to comprise about one-tenth of the Lebanese population.<sup>1</sup> This was especially significant in a tiny fledgling state that had gained independence only five years before the Nakba. Along with Jordan and Syria, Lebanon has hosted the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) since it began operations in 1950.<sup>2</sup> Yet in subsequent decades Lebanon arguably became more closely entwined with the Palestinian struggle than either of the other Arab host states.

In particular, the weakness of the Lebanese central government meant that the country became a major base for the Palestinian nationalist movement during the *thawra* of 1969-82. Indeed Shafiq al-Hout, a leading official in the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), said specifically that they chose to base themselves there because the country was a ‘garden without a fence’.<sup>3</sup> In 1969, the Lebanese government signed the Cairo Agreement, giving the PLO a unique and unprecedented degree of autonomy

in the country's refugee camps.<sup>4</sup> Lebanon remained the headquarters of the PLO and the centre of the Palestinian *thawra* until the Israeli invasion routed the former from the country in 1982.<sup>5</sup> Yet the ensuing establishment of Hizbollah meant that Lebanon remained a major field of conflict against Israel in the later 20<sup>th</sup> century and early 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>6</sup> Finally, the last six years have seen Lebanon once again host a large influx of Palestinian refugees, this time fleeing the ongoing conflict in neighbouring Syria.<sup>7</sup>

All of this has lent a uniqueness to the situation of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. In the years of the *thawra*, they enjoyed an unusual level of autonomy in their camps, as the structures of a Palestinian para-state were established. Since 1982, their situation has deteriorated drastically, as the camps have lost their once considerable power and the refugees have been left marginalised and vulnerable. The weak and fragmented nature of the Lebanese state, combined with the tensions of its confessional system and the recent impact of the Syrian crisis, serve to further destabilise the situation and jeopardise the place of the Palestinian refugees.<sup>8</sup> As a result, UNRWA's work has become increasingly important, perhaps more so in Lebanon than anywhere else in the region. Its function in the country is indicative of Lebanon's aforementioned distinctiveness, both in general and with specific regard to the Palestinians.

### *Palestinian vulnerability in Lebanon*

Numerous indicators point to the exceptionally difficult position of Palestinians in Lebanon today. Tellingly, it is the only host state where the majority of registered Palestinian refugees continue to live in camps.<sup>9</sup> While many Palestinians elsewhere were able to improve their positions and move out of the camps in the later twentieth century, the situation in Lebanon was the opposite; the proportion of Palestinian refugees living in camps actually *increased* in the decades after the Nakba.<sup>10</sup> The outcome can be observed today: in 2014 UNRWA reported that 53% of registered Palestinian refugees in Lebanon reside in camps, compared to around 25% in the West Bank, 18% in Jordan, and approximately 30% in pre-war Syria.<sup>11</sup> Such statistics indicate an unusually high level of deprivation, and indeed UNRWA has also reported that Lebanon is the site of the highest rate of abject poverty among Palestinian refugees - higher even than Gaza.<sup>12</sup>

What such indicators cannot tell us is *why* this is the case. It is on the surface inexplicable that the situation in Lebanon should be worse than that in Gaza, when the latter has been suffering under an Israeli blockade since 2007,<sup>13</sup> and has been the target of three major military offensives in that time.<sup>14</sup> By contrast, Lebanon, despite the major upheaval and turmoil of its fifteen-year civil war, has remained relatively calm over the last decade, certainly in comparison to many of its regional neighbours. How, then, is this high rate of Palestinian poverty to be explained?

The answer lies in Lebanese law. As it currently stands, Palestinians in the country are denied a number of basic civil rights. They are barred from owning property, accessing social services, and working in syndicated professions.<sup>15</sup> The rationale for this is grounded in the principle of reciprocity - in 2001 for instance, the Lebanese parliament adopted an amendment prohibiting the acquisition of property by 'any person not a citizen of a recognised state'.<sup>16</sup> This automatically excluded the Palestinians

on the grounds that they have no state in which they can reciprocally provide rights to Lebanese visitors. However, the full explanation for the existence of these laws is more complicated. They are driven by the goal of maintaining and reinforcing the Palestinians' separateness, for fear that their integration and eventual naturalisation in Lebanon would fundamentally alter the country's delicately-balanced confessional system.<sup>17</sup> The *de jure* discrimination is facilitated by general anti-Palestinian feeling in Lebanese society, where many blame the Palestinians for the outbreak of the civil war.<sup>18</sup>

Such prohibitions have resulted in a two-tiered system whereby Palestinians cannot easily participate in the structures of Lebanese society. This context is crucial for understanding their aforementioned poverty, which is the predictable outcome of such marginalisation. The refugees' professional exclusion has been particularly devastating, resulting in unemployment of more than 50% among the working-age Palestinian population.<sup>19</sup> Such circumstances have in turn impacted the state of the refugee camps, home to more than half the country's Palestinian population. Conditions in the camps, considered among the worst in the region, are characterised by major overcrowding, inadequate sewage systems and decaying infrastructure that all cause serious health risks.<sup>20</sup> The resulting situation constitutes the most extreme manifestation of the Palestinian refugees' vulnerability.<sup>21</sup> Unfortunately, the impact of the Syrian refugee crisis means that there is no sign of it improving in the near future.<sup>22</sup>

### *The place of UNRWA*

There is a considerable body of scholarship on the particular vulnerability of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, and their historical trajectory there.<sup>23</sup> However, the implications of this set-up for UNRWA is the subject of far fewer studies. This dearth lies at odds with the Agency's long-term presence in the country, and its consistently important role among the Palestinian refugees. Its response to the distinctive Palestinian situation in Lebanon is thus worthy of greater examination.

Having been created the year after the Nakba, UNRWA has been entwined with the Palestinians' exile almost from the beginning. It provided relief services in the camps that developed into large-scale health and education programmes; it also issued formal documentation and identification to registered Palestinian refugees across its areas of operation. By providing such services, UNRWA became a quasi-government for the Palestinian refugees, whom it was exclusively mandated to serve. Nowhere was this more acute than in Lebanon, where the refugees' vulnerability was so extreme that UNRWA's quasi-governmental role became especially pronounced. As the Agency was compelled to take on additional responsibilities in Lebanon, its work became emblematic of the refugees' exceptional disadvantage there.

UNRWA's adaptation to Lebanon's specificities is not a new or recent development, but rather one with numerous historical precedents. When the Lebanese government signed the Cairo Agreement with the PLO in 1969, UNRWA was compelled to break from its usual arrangements with the host states and navigate the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon as semi-autonomous spaces. The usual *modus operandi*, whereby UNRWA implemented its services in cooperation with the host state, thus

became complicated by the rise of the PLO as an alternate *de facto* 'host government'. Thirteen years later, UNRWA had to adapt again when the PLO's power base collapsed, and the Agency was left as the closest thing the refugees had to a government and advocate.

The PLO's departure from Lebanon also precipitated a further adaptation of UNRWA's work, as it formally expanded its mandate for the first time. Since its early days, the Agency had provided services to those who had lived in Palestine from 1946-48, who had lost both home and livelihood during the Nakba, and who had sought refuge in one of UNRWA's fields of operation. Eligibility was also extended to patrilineal descendants.<sup>24</sup> This criteria caused considerable controversy, as it excluded significant numbers of people who still considered themselves Palestinian refugees<sup>25</sup> - something the Agency itself acknowledged.<sup>26</sup> Yet there was no move to change it until the Sabra-Shatila massacre of 1982, after which the UN General Assembly mandated UNRWA to expand its services for the first time to unregistered Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.<sup>27</sup> That this change focussed on Lebanon is telling, as it constituted a formal recognition of the acute vulnerability of Palestinians there. Once again, the particularities of the Lebanese situation had brought about a shift in UNRWA's norms.

In recent years, much of UNRWA's work in Lebanon has been driven by the impact of intensified institutional discrimination against Palestinians, juxtaposed with the Lebanese state's detachment from both the refugees and their camps. This has created an authority vacuum in the camps, which are distinguished from the surrounding areas not only by checkpoints but also by political and socio-economic differentiation. Of all the host states, it is Lebanon where the Palestinian refugees are the least integrated, and the camps are most obviously demarcated as separate spaces – sociologist Sari Hanafi writes that the Palestinian camps in Lebanon are mostly 'closed', while those in Jordan and pre-war Syria tend to be 'open'.<sup>28</sup> This separateness has created a greater need for relief among Palestinians in Lebanon, which in turn places additional pressures on UNRWA.

Specifically, the withdrawal of the state, and the resulting absence of any social safety net for Palestinian refugees, means that the majority depend heavily on UNRWA for schooling, healthcare, shelter and sanitation.<sup>29</sup> UNRWA has responded by expanding some of its services in Lebanon, carrying out functions that would usually be the domain of the state. It provides four extra grades of education for Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, to compensate for their lack of access to state schools.<sup>30</sup> Its responsibility for the refugees' protection has also taken on a particular importance in Lebanon, in keeping with the aforementioned expansion of its mandate there in 1982.<sup>31</sup> The fact that UNRWA has been compelled to take on additional responsibilities in Lebanon is demonstrative of the Palestinians' particular marginalisation and vulnerability there. One former UNRWA employee in Lebanon has spoken of an 'implicit consensus' within the Agency that it is the worst host state in which to be a Palestinian refugee.<sup>32</sup>

However, UNRWA's limited resources, and the restrictions of its mandate, have meant that it cannot take on the role of the state in Lebanon entirely. It does not, for example, provide policing or security services in the camps.<sup>33</sup> Instead, internal security

affairs are run by ‘popular committees’, first set up in the *thanra* period and comprised of various nationalist organisations.<sup>34</sup> To implement its services, UNRWA must navigate the complex internal relations of the popular committees, which administer the other elements of the state’s role in the camps. Recent years have seen increasing popular dissatisfaction with the committees, as camp residents have taken to the streets to protest their corruption and incompetence.<sup>35</sup> UNRWA has sought to stay out of the internal dynamics, emphasising that it is not responsible for security in the camps, and does not ‘own’ or administer them as spaces.<sup>36</sup> Despite this, the refugees have also frequently protested against cuts in the Agency’s services, seeing it as shirking its responsibilities.<sup>37</sup>

The Palestinians’ exceptional vulnerability in Lebanon has also had financial implications for UNRWA, fuelling its already-critical fiscal crisis. Entirely reliant on voluntary donations, UNRWA has been underfunded for decades, with its budget insufficient to meet the rising needs of the growing Palestinian refugee population.<sup>38</sup> The last decade has seen particular strain on its resources, as the Agency has struggled to meet the increased need generated by the impact of the Gaza blockade and the Syrian war.<sup>39</sup> The particular need for its programmes in Lebanon adds another factor to the crisis. As a result, Agency services have faced a demonstrative squeeze. UNRWA’s education and healthcare programmes in Lebanon are now severely underfunded; its 74 schools in the country cannot meet the needs of the increasingly young Palestinian population there, while its health clinics are vastly underfunded and see one doctor treating an average of 117 patients a day.<sup>40</sup> In recent years, the influx of more than a million refugees from Syria has added further pressure to an already unsustainable situation, which is now near breaking point.<sup>41</sup> Lebanon’s Palestinian population is accordingly facing the impact of a regional emergency, alongside underlying structural disadvantage and deprivation.

### *Conclusion*

Lebanon’s unique circumstances have generated exceptional conditions for the Palestinian refugees who live there, and the UN Agency responsible for their welfare. While it is in many ways distinctive, this does not mean that the case of the Palestinians in Lebanon should be disregarded when considering responses to protracted refugee crises. Instead, their situation can provide some valuable lessons, which are especially pertinent as both the Middle East and the wider world face the biggest refugee crisis since the Second World War.<sup>42</sup>

The vast majority of Palestinians who became refugees in 1948 thought that their exile would be temporary, and expected to return home quickly. Lebanon, like the other Arab host states, received them with this same understanding, and the camps were originally constructed on this basis. Of course, the reality has proven tragically different, as the Palestinians remain stateless and dispossessed 70 years later, with successive generations born in the camps. It is their long-term statelessness, and the denial of their right of return, that lie at the core of the Palestinians’ plight today. The situation they face in Lebanon is in many ways demonstrative of the problems that arise when an exiled

community is left in limbo and their plight remains unresolved, with supposedly temporary solutions stretching into decades.

Just as the Palestinian refugees initially expected their exile to be brief, so UNRWA was created with the assumption that its work would be short-lived. In fact it has retained an officially temporary status, with the UN renewing its mandate every 4-5 years.<sup>43</sup> The reasons for this paradoxically long-term temporary status are political and largely self-evident; making UNRWA's mandate permanent would deny the possibility that the Palestinian refugee crisis will ever be resolved. However, the temporary set-up is also problematic in its own right, meaning that UNRWA cannot make long-term plans, and is compelled to be consistently reactive rather than strategic. These problems are worsened by its reliance on voluntary donations, which has resulted in a serious long-term deficit and major service cuts. Indeed, the impossible financial situation that UNRWA now faces in Lebanon is indicative of the long-term unsustainability of its work.

The Palestinian refugee crisis is not the only one that has belied original expectations of being short-lived. However, as the Palestinians enter their 70<sup>th</sup> year of dispossession, their case remains the longest-lasting refugee crisis in modern history, with some of the worst consequences seen in Lebanon today. Yet the lessons to be taken from this are nothing if not complex. While it would be easy to place the blame for the Palestinians' plight in Lebanon at the feet of the Lebanese state and UNRWA, the reality is more complicated. UNRWA is entirely dependent on voluntary donations, meaning that it simply cannot provide the necessary services if its donors do not supply the required funding. Lebanon, meanwhile, is a post-war state currently hosting the largest number of refugees in the world, relative to its population. As it struggles to cope with a situation whereby 1 in 4 of its residents is now a refugee, the solution cannot be simply to call on Lebanon to do more.<sup>44</sup>

The obvious conclusion is that neither Lebanon nor UNRWA are receiving the support they need to deal effectively with a large-scale protracted refugee crisis. Their current problems suggest that a more integrated and comprehensive international response to regional crises is badly needed, in order to ensure that the responsibility is evenly shared. As Lebanon and its regional neighbours continue to receive thousands of refugees from the ongoing Syrian conflict, it is undeniable that the historical and contemporary struggles of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon contain particularly important lessons for both the region and the world today.

---

<sup>1</sup> Sayigh R (1994) *Too Many Enemies: The Palestinian Experience in Lebanon*, London, Zed Books: 18.

<sup>2</sup> UNRWA webpage: <https://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work> [accessed 15 July 2017].

<sup>3</sup> Al-Hout S (2011) *My Life in the PLO: The Inside Story of the Palestinian Struggle*, London, Pluto Press: 103.

<sup>4</sup> For the full text of the Cairo Agreement see: *Al-Nabab*, 20 April 1970, Orient-Institut Beirut [OIB].

<sup>5</sup> For more on the *thawra* see: Sayigh R (1977) 'The Palestinian Identity Among Camp Residents', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 6:3, 3-22; Jabber F (1973) 'The Arab Regimes and the Palestinian Revolution, 1967-71', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 2:2, 79-101; Franjeh S (1972) 'How Revolutionary Is the Palestinian Resistance? A Marxist Interpretation', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 1:2, 52-60; Sayigh Y (1997) *Armed Struggle and the Search for State: The Palestinian National Movement*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, Part II; Meier D (2014) 'The Palestinian *Fiday'i* as an Icon of Transnational Struggle: The Lebanese Experience', *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 41:3, 322-334; Nabulsi K and A.R. Takriti (2016) 'The Palestinian Revolution' <http://learnpalestine.politics.ox.ac.uk> [accessed 15 July 2017].

- <sup>6</sup> On Hizbollah's war with Israel see: Norton A (2007) *Hezbollah*, Princeton, Princeton University Press; Hirst D (1999) 'South Lebanon: The War that never ends', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 28:3, 5-18; Khalili L (2007) "Standing with my Brother": Hizbollah, Palestinians and the Limits of Solidarity', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 49:2, 276-303.
- <sup>7</sup> On Palestinian refugees from Syria in Lebanon see: UNRWA, PRS in Lebanon, <https://www.unrwa.org/prs-lebanon> [accessed 15 July 2017]; UNHCR (February 2016) 'The Situation of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon', <http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/56cc95484.pdf> [accessed 15 July 2017]; Medical Aid for Palestinians (2016), "If I Die, Bury Me in Palestine": How the world is failing Palestinian refugees from Syria', [https://www.map.org.uk/downloads/map-prs-report-\(compressed\).pdf](https://www.map.org.uk/downloads/map-prs-report-(compressed).pdf) [accessed 15 July 2017]; Irfan A (2016) 'The Palestinian Precedent and the Syrian Refugee Crisis', [http://www.yourmiddleeast.com/culture/the-palestinian-precedent-and-the-syrian-refugee-crisis\\_44193](http://www.yourmiddleeast.com/culture/the-palestinian-precedent-and-the-syrian-refugee-crisis_44193) [accessed 15 July 2017].
- <sup>8</sup> Sayigh R (2007) *The Palestinians: From Peasants to Revolutionaries*, London, Zed Books, 135.
- <sup>9</sup> UNRWA webpage: <http://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/lebanon> [accessed 15 July 2017].
- <sup>10</sup> Sfeir J (2010) 'Palestinians in Lebanon: The Birth of the "Enemy Within"' in Khalidi M A (ed.) *Manifestations of Identity: The Lived Reality of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon*, Beirut, Institute for Palestine Studies, 16.
- <sup>11</sup> These date-stamped figures are provided on UNRWA's website. See UNRWA webpages: <http://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/lebanon>; <http://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/jordan>; <http://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/west-bank>; <https://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/syria> [all pages last accessed 15 July 2017].
- <sup>12</sup> UNRWA webpage: <http://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/lebanon> [accessed 15 July 2017].
- <sup>13</sup> UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 'Gaza Blockade', <https://www.ochaopt.org/theme/gaza-blockade> [accessed 15 July 2017]; Tareq Baconi, 'How Israel's 10-Year Blockade Brought Gaza to the Brink of Collapse', <https://www.thenation.com/article/how-israels-10-year-blockade-brought-gaza-to-the-brink-of-collapse/> [accessed 15 July 2017].
- <sup>14</sup> Pappé I and N Chomsky (2011) *Gaza in Crisis: Reflections on Israel's war against the Palestinians*, London, Penguin; Blumenthal M (2014) 'Politicide in Gaza: How Israel's Right won the war', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 44:1, 14-28; Amnesty International, "Singapore or Darfur": The Escalating Ferocity of the Gaza Wars', <http://www.amnesty.org.il/en/the-escalating-ferocity-of-the-gaza-wars/> [accessed 15 July 2017].
- <sup>15</sup> Purkiss J (2014) 'The Palestinians of Lebanon; a life of curtailed rights and limited opportunities', <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/articles/middle-east/15436-the-palestinians-of-lebanon-a-life-of-curtailed-rights-and-limited-opportunities> [accessed 15 July 2016].
- <sup>16</sup> Judith Miller and David Samuels (2009), 'No way home: The tragedy of the Palestinian diaspora', <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/no-way-home-the-tragedy-of-the-palestinian-diaspora-1806790.html> [accessed 15 July 2016].
- <sup>17</sup> Hanafi S 'Palestinian Refugee Camps in Lebanon: Laboratory of Indocile Identity Formation', in Khalidi, *Manifestations of Identity*, 48, 58.
- <sup>18</sup> For discussion of the actions of the PLO during the Lebanese Civil War, see: Khalidi R (1986) *Under Siege: PLO Decision-Making During the 1982 War*, New York, Columbia University Press. On anti-Palestinian feeling in Lebanese society, see: Sayigh R (1994) *Too Many Enemies: The Palestinian Experience in Lebanon*, London, Zed Books; Sukarieh M (2009), 'Speaking Palestinian: An Interview with Rosemary Sayigh', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 38:4, 28; Sfeir J (2010) 'Palestinians in Lebanon', 13-31.
- <sup>19</sup> ANERA (2012) 'Palestinian refugees in Lebanon', <http://www.anera.org/wpcontent/uploads/2013/03/LEBRefugeeReport.pdf> [accessed 15 July 2017].
- <sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>21</sup> For more detail on the uniqueness of Lebanon see: Brynen R (1989) 'PLO Policy in Lebanon: Legacies and Lessons', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 18:2, 48-70.
- <sup>22</sup> Elias al-Araj (2016) 'How the war on Syria left its mark on Lebanon's economy' <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/business/2016/05/lebanon-syria-war-economy-repercussions-banking-sector.html> [accessed 15 July 2017].
- <sup>23</sup> Examples of such scholarship include: Peteet J (2010) *Landscape of Hope and Despair: Palestinian refugee camps*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press; Roberts R (2010) *Palestinians in Lebanon: Refugees Living with Long-Term Displacement*, New York, I.B. Tauris; Sayigh R (1993) *Too Many Enemies: The Palestinian Experience in Lebanon*, London, Zed Books; Rougier B (2007) *Everyday Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam among Palestinians in Lebanon*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press; Khalidi M A (2010), *Manifestations of Identity: The Lived Reality of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon*, Beirut, Institute for Palestine Studies.
- <sup>24</sup> UNRWA webpage: <https://www.unrwa.org/palestine-refugees> [accessed 15 July 2017]
- <sup>25</sup> Farah R (2003) 'The Marginalization of Palestinian Refugees', in Steiner N, M Gibney & G Loescher (ed.s) *Problems of Protection: The UNHCR, Refugees, and Human Rights*, 163-164.
- <sup>26</sup> Kennedy H (1950) 'Interim Report of the Director of UNRWA', A/1451/Rev.1,

- 
- <https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/0/EC8DE7912121FCE5052565B1006B5152> [accessed 18 July 2017].
- <sup>27</sup> Bartholomeusz L (2010) 'The Mandate of UNRWA at Sixty', *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 28:2-3, 452-474. See also: Rydbeck O (1982) 'Report of the Commissioner-General of UNRWA', A/37/13, <https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/1ce874ab1832a53e852570bb006dfaf6/1cc2c2b2d7d2c07985256864005c68a9?OpenDocument> [accessed 18 July 2017].
- <sup>28</sup> Hanafi S (2010) 'Palestinian Refugee Camps in Lebanon', 48, 58.
- <sup>29</sup> ANERA (2012) 'Palestinian refugees in Lebanon', <http://www.nera.org/wpcontent/uploads/2013/03/LEBRefugeeReport.pdf> [accessed 15 July 2017].
- <sup>30</sup> UNRWA webpage: <https://www.unrwa.org/activity/education-lebanon> [accessed 16 July 2017].
- <sup>31</sup> UNRWA webpage: <https://www.unrwa.org/activity/protection-lebanon> [accessed 16 July 2017].
- <sup>32</sup> Kelly N (2014) 'Palestinian refugees, Lebanon and UNRWA: some personal reflections', <http://www.caabu.org/news/news/palestinian-refugees-lebanon-and-unrwa-some-personal-reflections-blog-post-nathaniel-kelly> [accessed 16 July 2017].
- <sup>33</sup> UNRWA webpage: <http://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/lebanon> [accessed 15 July 2017].
- <sup>34</sup> Tuastad D (2012) '(Un)popular Committees. The Crisis of Representation within Palestinian refugee camps', <http://www.hf.uio.no/ikos/english/research/projects/new-middle-east/publications/2012/report-2012-2-tuastad.pdf> [accessed 16 July 2017].
- <sup>35</sup> Sogge E (2015) "'You stink too': Palestinian camp dwellers in Lebanon challenge the popular committees", <https://newmeast.wordpress.com/2015/12/01/you-stink-too-palestinian-camp-dwellers-in-lebanon-challenge-the-popular-committees/> [accessed 16 July 2017].
- <sup>36</sup> UNRWA webpage: <https://www.unrwa.org/palestine-refugees> [accessed 15 July 2017].
- <sup>37</sup> See for example: Lebanese National News Agency (2015) 'Palestinian refugees in Tyre protest UNRWA decision to postpone school year', <http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/48079/nna-leb.gov.lb/en> [accessed 16 July 2017]; Armstrong M (2016) 'Palestinians protest against UNRWA cuts in Lebanon', <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2016/02/palestinians-protest-unrwa-cuts-lebanon-160223151011960.html> [accessed 16 July 2017]; Ashly J (2016), 'Palestinians in Lebanon continue protests over UNRWA's health care cuts', <https://www.maannnews.com/Content.aspx?id=771419> [accessed 16 July 2017].
- <sup>38</sup> UNRWA webpage: <https://www.unrwa.org/who-we-are/frequently-asked-questions> [accessed 16 July 2017].
- <sup>39</sup> In 2016 UNRWA reported a deficit of \$74m. See: Krähenbühl P (2016) 'Report of the Commissioner-General of UNRWA', A/71/13, <https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/0/BA2978B5A0B323678525803500533FF9> [accessed 16 July 2017].
- <sup>40</sup> ANERA (2012) 'Palestinian refugees in Lebanon', <http://www.nera.org/wpcontent/uploads/2013/03/LEBRefugeeReport.pdf> [accessed 15 July 2017].
- <sup>41</sup> European Commission (2017) 'Lebanon: Syria crisis', [https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/lebanon\\_syrian\\_crisis\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/lebanon_syrian_crisis_en.pdf) [accessed 16 July 2017].
- <sup>42</sup> Arar R, L Hintz and K Norman (2016), 'The real refugee crisis is in the Middle East, not Europe', [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/05/14/the-real-refugee-crisis-is-in-the-middle-east-not-europe/?utm\\_term=.11a11403d10c](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/05/14/the-real-refugee-crisis-is-in-the-middle-east-not-europe/?utm_term=.11a11403d10c) [accessed 16 July 2017]; UN (2015), 'Syria conflict at 5 years: the biggest refugee and displacement crisis of our time demands a huge surge in solidarity', <http://www.unhcr.org/afr/news/press/2016/3/56e6e3249/syria-conflict-5-years-biggest-refugee-displacement-crisis-time-demands.html> [accessed 16 July 2017].
- <sup>43</sup> UNRWA webpage: <https://www.unrwa.org/who-we-are/frequently-asked-questions> [accessed 16 July 2017].
- <sup>44</sup> Irfan A (2016) 'The Palestinian Precedent and the Syrian Refugee Crisis', [http://www.yourmiddleeast.com/culture/the-palestinian-precedent-and-the-syrian-refugee-crisis\\_44193](http://www.yourmiddleeast.com/culture/the-palestinian-precedent-and-the-syrian-refugee-crisis_44193) [accessed 15 July 2017].