

Evictions in Beirut and Mount Lebanon: *rates and reasons*

Shelter assessment of urban settings examining security of tenure in the governorates of Beirut and Mount Lebanon

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2 Executive summary

As the Syria response enters its fourth year, Lebanon currently hosts the highest number of refugees per capita globally. There are currently over 1.1 million Syrian Refugees in Lebanon registered with UNHCR⁽¹⁾ roughly 24% of the pre-crisis population of Lebanon (4.5 million)⁽²⁾ While the response to date has largely targeted the North, Bekaa Valley, and the South, analysis of UNHCR's registration data shows that Beirut and Mount Lebanon is the governorate with the most rapid growth in registered refugee population. Most of this growth is focused in the urbanised area of greater Beirut. Moreover, UNICEF and UNHCR's mapping of registered refugees and host community vulnerability demonstrates that many of the most extremely vulnerable cadastres are in the Greater Beirut area⁽³⁾.

In a context where 81% of refugees pay rent for their accommodation, and on average 57% live in finished apartments and houses⁽⁴⁾ security of tenure and rates of evictions are of particular concern. One UNHCR figure put the estimate of the total rent paid by Syrian households at USD 74 million per month⁽⁵⁾ This, compounded with limited livelihood options and

additional costs for essential items and services, results in significant household expenditures. While information on evictions does exist, both anecdotal and quantifiable, at the time of this assessment there was limited information on security of tenure and rates of evictions in the rental market for finished apartments in Beirut and Mount Lebanon. The objectives of the assessment were: to better understand the situation amongst Syrian refugees renting finished apartments; to identify statistically relevant variables associated with security of tenure and evictions; and to contribute to the on-going dialogue on response options to urban environments.

The assessment teams conducted 668 household interviews in Bouchrieh, Borj Hammound, Choeifat, and Jiyeh. Orientated-discussions were selected to allow more qualitative data collection and allow the interviewee to provide broader and nuanced information. A list of variables (see section 6.1), were developed based on the secondary data review and conversations with key informants in order to identify the most relevant issues that correlate with tenure security. The variables used in the interviews were then weighed and analysed using the statistical approach, outlined in section 6.1. The eviction rate was estimated

(1) UNHCR Registration Trends for Syrian (as of 31 March 2014)

(2) World Bank figures; <http://data.worldbank.org/country/lebanon>

(3) Equity in Humanitarian Action - Reaching the Most Vulnerable Localities in Lebanon (UNICEF and UNHCR, August 2014)

(4) UNHCR Telephone Shelter Survey, March 2014

(5) A precarious existence: the shelter situation of refugees from Syria in neighbouring countries (NRC, June 2014)

from the past situations described by the refugee households. When describing their current situation, refugee households were also asked about the security of their tenure, their plan to move and whether they had previously been evicted. In the case of a positive response to the latter question, refugee households were asked to explain why.

Of the 668 households interviewed, the majority of which had been in Beirut and Mount Lebanon for over two years, 10.5% had left their dwelling since arriving in Lebanon. Of this 10.5%, 6.8% were forcibly evicted, which is comparable to the national refugee average of 6.6%. While rent burden and rent amount are both factors in tenure security and in evictions, this assessment looked to identify other relevant variables. The assessment found that evictions are associated with: the feeling of insecurity, the lack of host community acceptance, and lack of trust between the refugee and the host community. In other words, the most statistically relevant variable concerning eviction and move-out is the relationship with the host community. Of the households that moved voluntarily, their reasons given were largely all economic, such as: escalating rent; identifying a cheaper alternative; and livelihood opportunities elsewhere. The finding that 72% of interviewed households are in dispute with their landlords over rent suggests that while past eviction rates have been low, there is evidence to suggest that they may increase.

Furthering adding to the issue of rental disputes is the finding that very few households have formal lease agreements. In three of the four areas assessed, only 10% of households had formal tenancy agreements, such as a written lease contract, and as a result are more susceptible to exploitation over rent and eviction. Moreover, this assessment found that households that had formal lease agreements were significantly less likely to have been evicted in the past.

While the assessment showed that past and current eviction rates were low, this is offset by the large number of households in dispute with landlords over rental prices. The majority of humanitarian shelter assistance to date has targeted those living in the worst physical conditions, and understandably so. However, agencies must strengthen support to ensure that those renting apartments and receiving little assistance have a framework of support, so that they are not pushed

out into even lesser quality accommodation. Housing rehabilitation and emergency assistance addresses the needs of those living in sub-standard physical conditions; however many require support with rental agreements and rent transparency. In addition, a greater emphasis should be placed on host community projects in order to decrease already mounting tension as the response enters its fourth year. While supporting those most in need is a priority for the sector, of equal importance is ensuring that all households benefit from a transparent and fair rental market to ensure that all are able to exercise their right to adequate housing⁽⁶⁾.

Based on the findings from this assessment, recommendations for shelter and protection actors, for both programming and advocacy, include:

- Without acceptance from the host community, there can be no security of tenure for those affected by displacement. Shelter and Protection actors must support refugee households directly in parallel to initiatives aimed at increasing host community acceptance and understandings between refugee and host communities.
- Increase initiatives focusing on awareness raising and increasing understanding between homeowners and refugee households, such as support with rental agreements and collaborative dispute resolution, in order to strengthen security of tenure for refugee households.
- Empower local authorities to maintain adequate levels of services for both host communities and refugees. Community Support Projects (CSPs) should have both technical and social programming approaches.

2 Background

For over three years, local authorities, host communities, and humanitarian agencies in Lebanon have been supporting Syrian refugees fleeing the hostilities in Syria. There are currently over 1.1 million Syrian refugees in Lebanon, according to UNHCR⁽⁷⁾, which is roughly 24% of the pre-crisis population of Lebanon⁽⁸⁾. In addition to the Syrian caseload, the authorities, host-communities, and agencies are also supporting Lebanese returnees, Iraqi refugees, Palestinian refugees, and Palestinian Refugees from Syria (PRSS). The large influx of Syrian refugees into Lebanon has resulted in further saturation of the

(6) General Comment 4 adopted by the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 1991

(7) UNHCR Registration Trends for Syrian (as of 31 March 2014)

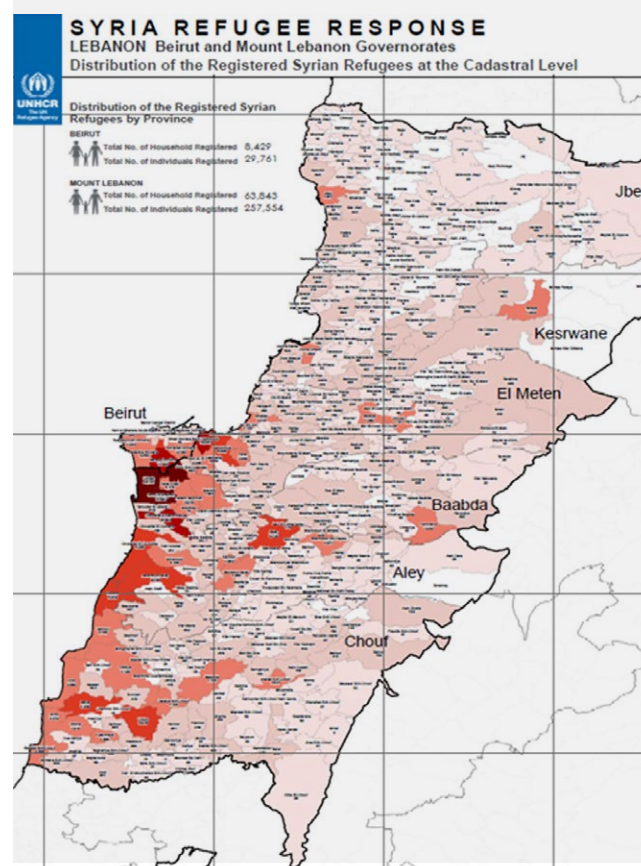
regular rental market. A recent market assessment concluded that the general lack of adequate and safe shelter supply has pushed many of the poorest Syrian and Lebanese households into sub-standard shelters⁽⁹⁾. UNHCR conducted a nation-wide survey in August 2013, which highlighted that 50.9% of Syrian refugees are considered vulnerable from a shelter perspective. UNHCR states 57% of registered refugees are living in apartments or houses where multiple households share a single apartment in most cases; 25% live in substandard housing units such as garages, worksites and unfinished houses; 15% live in informal settlements while 1.2% of refugees were found residing in collective shelters⁽¹⁰⁾.

The refugee population in Lebanon is continuing to increase. According to a recent report by UN-HABITAT, the large number of refugees in Lebanon is causing: further deterioration in living conditions, increasing the risk of eviction, increasing competition over resources and employment opportunities with the host community.⁽¹¹⁾ As adequate shelter becomes less available, there is a growing need to create more shelter space and rehabilitate sub-standard shelter, however this also means that refugees increasingly have to accept poor quality living conditions. Reports, including a recent one by Human Rights Watch⁽¹²⁾ indicate that refugees taking refuge in Lebanon are also becoming less welcome within some Lebanese host communities as the crisis enters its fourth year. Concerns relating to forced eviction are increasing. Inter-agency eviction coordination committees have been set up in field locations to track, monitor and prevent evictions if and when this is possible. Lebanese law mandates that rental and eviction procedures are regulated and need to follow court orders to be legal⁽¹³⁾. However, public knowledge on tenancy rights and laws regarding lease and occupancy is relatively limited within the effected population.

Adverse effects of the large per capita refugee population are obviously visible. These include, but are not limited to: (a) affordable housing is harder to find as rental prices continue to increase for refugees

and host community members⁽¹⁴⁾ (b) overburden of existing infrastructure systems and services which were already suffering from underinvestment prior to the refugee influx or didn't exist originally due to limited municipal financial resources⁽¹⁵⁾ and (c) competition over existing and limited employment opportunities creates serious tension between host community and refugee populations in addition to affecting daily rates of hired labourers⁽¹⁶⁾.

FIGURE 1: UNHCR DISTRIBUTION OF REGISTERED SYRIAN REFUGEES AT THE CADASTRAL LEVEL IN LEBANON (JUNE 2014)



(8) World Bank figures; <http://data.worldbank.org/country/lebanon>

(9) Development of a Framework for Multipurpose Cash Assistance to Improve Aid Effectiveness in Lebanon: Support to the Market Assessment and Monitoring Component (KDS, July 2014)

(10) U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees. 2014 Syria Regional Response Plan: Strategic Overview. December 2013. Available at: <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Syria-rrp6-full-report.pdf> (Lebanon Chapter; page 59)

(11) Housing, Land and Property (HLP) Issues in Lebanon - Implications of the Syrian Refugee Crisis (UN-Habitat & UNHCR, August 2014)

(12) <http://www.hrw.org/news/2014/09/30/lebanon-rising-violence-targets-syrian-refugees>

(13) Article 738 of the Lebanese penal code criminalises taking up residence in an unwarranted/ illegal manner (commonly referred to as 'squatting').

(14) Housing, Land and Property (HLP) Issues in Lebanon - Implications of the Syrian Refugee Crisis (UN-Habitat & UNHCR, August 2014)

(15) Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Strategy - Syrian Crisis Response, Lebanon (UNHCR & UNICEF Lebanon, February 2014)

(16) Scenarios - Where is Lebanon Heading Now (Syria Needs Analysis Project (SNAP), August 2014)

2.1 Terminology

Terminology used throughout this assessment refers to the definitions commonly understood in the context of the Syrian refugee response in Lebanon by agencies involved in this response.

- Security of tenure: is a multi-dimensional concept that is a key component of the right to adequate housing in accordance with international legal principles. Security of tenure refers to mechanisms to provide protection against the threat of eviction or forced eviction⁽¹⁷⁾.
- Rent burden: the proportion that rent represents of overall household expenditures.
- Eviction: The permanent or temporary removal of individuals, households and/or communities, against their will, from the homes and/or land, which they occupy⁽¹⁸⁾.
- Unlawful eviction: Also known as forced eviction refers to evictions that are not in accordance with the legal procedures required by Lebanese law⁽¹⁹⁾.
- Forced eviction: the permanent or temporary removal against their will of people from the homes or lands they occupy without the provision of and access to appropriate forms of legal or other protection⁽²⁰⁾.



(17) NRC, ICLA, HLP Pilot Assessment July 2014 page 5

(18) Ibid 8

(19) Ibid 8

(20) UN CESCR General Comment no. 7 Forced Eviction, Paragraph 3

3 Methodology and analytical tools

This assessment targets poorer urban areas of Beirut and Mount Lebanon with the following key defining characteristics: sub-standard living conditions, areas with a high concentration of refugees from Syria, disparity in social structure, composition and poor economic conditions. The target population addressed in this assessment was primarily displaced populations from Syria (e.g. Syrian refugees, Palestinian refugees from Syria, and Lebanese returnees) and also Lebanese households living in similar sub-standard conditions.

3.1 Objectives

The objectives of this assessment were to:

- Better understand the situation amongst Syrian refugees renting finished apartments;
- Identify statistically relevant variables associated with security of tenure and evictions; and to
- Contribute to the on-going dialogue on response options to urban environments.

3.2 Implementation

The primary data collection was undertaken during July and August 2014, and focused on specific municipal areas within Beirut and Mount Lebanon governorates. These areas were targeted based on a secondary data review that analysed specific common social, economic, geographical, urban and political factors.

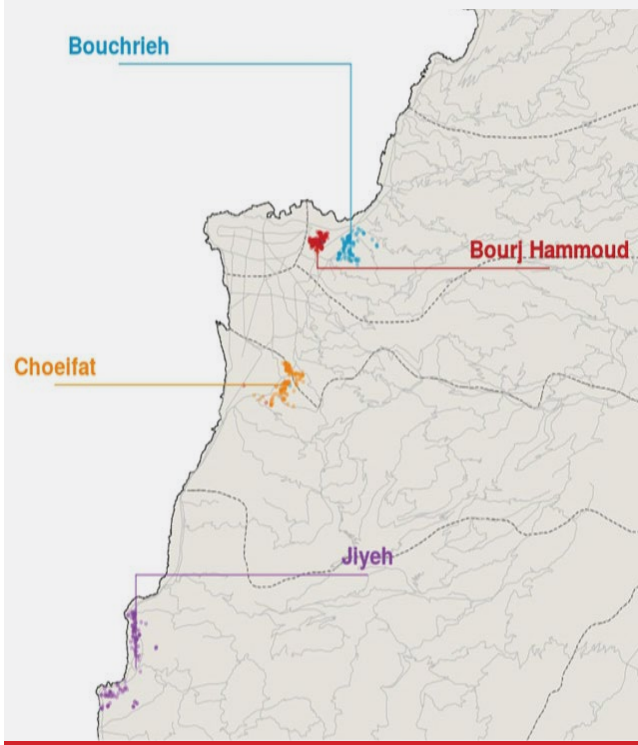
Table 1: Number of interviews per municipality

Municipality	Overall	Living in finished apartment and paying rent
Bouchrieh	131	92
Borj Hammoud	204	139
Choeifat	174	119
Jiyeh	159	75

Each geographic area was divided into four to six zones. For safety and security reasons, enumerators operated in the field in pairs. One enumerator from each pair was attributed to a specific zone and visited this area only. The second person was chosen randomly amongst the remaining enumerators in order to reduce the effect of individual interpretation in different geographic areas. To avoid clustering observations in time, areas were not covered during several days successively. The schedule during the five weeks was determined by randomly assigning days of the week to an area.

The municipalities originally selected were Bouchrieh, Borj Hammoud, Chiyah, Borj el Barajneh, Choeifat and Jiyeh. The municipalities of Chiyah and Borj el Barajneh were inaccessible for fieldwork due to security concerns for 7 consecutive weeks and therefore had to be excluded from the assessment. Fortunately, the area of Amrousiyyeh (north Choeifat) was accessible and displayed similar characteristics to the two excluded municipalities.

FIGURE 2: LOCATIONS OF NEIGHBOURHOODS VISITED TO IDENTIFY PARTICIPANTS



3.3 Key informant interviews

The goal for these interviews was to better understand the operational context, as well as to discuss the opportunities and constraints for supporting households residing in urban and urbanised areas of Beirut and Mount Lebanon, all through the perspective of the local authorities. Local authorities were one of the main sources of information in addition to UNHCR and other actors in the area whose experiences and input captured in the secondary data review, undertaken as part of this assessment. Key informant interviews with the following:

- Caza Mayors (*Qaem maqam* in Arabic). The Caza Mayor has administrative responsibility for an entire Caza. A Caza typically includes 30 to 70 municipalities. These interviews were conducted in the first instance as they provide a strategic view of the entire Caza. Caza Mayors were interviewed about the impact of the Syrian crisis on local authorities in their jurisdiction and identified the municipalities that had experienced the greatest impact of the crisis.
- NGOs. Interviews were conducted with local and international NGOs with previous and/or current programs active in the Beirut and Mt. Lebanon area. These interviews were conducted in order to highlight needs and gaps.
- Heads of municipalities in Beirut and Mt. Lebanon referred by Caza Mayors and UNHCR. Interviews were conducted with representatives from municipalities selected on the basis of a combination of: a) the priorities suggested by Caza mayors, b) municipalities where agencies indicated gaps and needs; and c) UNHCR registration distribution figures. A final list of municipalities that would be included in the assessment was developed on these grounds.
- Ministry of Social Affairs.
- Community leaders.

3.4 Household-level primary data collection

Interview technique

Interviews were conducted with 668 poor Syrian households to depict the living conditions of poor Syrian refugees in Beirut and Mount Lebanon. Orientated discussions were selected to allow more qualitative data collection and allow the interviewee to provide broader and more nuanced information. Fully-structured survey tools based on multiple choice questions were avoided as they are often limited and may cause interviewees to become anxious or grow tired of a long survey or answer as per their ideal self.

Interviewers started a discussion by asking refugee households to tell them their experiences since they had arrived in Lebanon, and especially in Beirut and Mount Lebanon. Orientated discussions encourage the respondent to tell their own personal story while enumerators orientate the discussion to make sure all questions and topics required by the study are touched on and answered. These topics were included in a checklist. This checklist was memorised by the enumerators before the fieldwork began. Enumerators were trained to only record key information and minimise the amount of note-taking. This approach was chosen in order to build a relation of trust with the refugee households. This facilitated the discussion of relevant but sensitive issues, such as local community and local authority acceptance. The method was pilot tested amongst Syrians in Lebanon before the study started.

Interview variables

A list of variables were developed based on the secondary data review and conversations with key informants in order to identify the most relevant issues that correlate with tenure security. These describe the living and socio-economic conditions (Table 4, in the annex) of refugee households from the poor Syrian population in Beirut and Mt. Lebanon. The status of each variable has been detailed.

The eviction rate amongst those interviewed was estimated from the past situations described by the refugee households. When describing their current situation, refugee households were also asked about the security of their tenure, their plan to move and whether they had previously been evicted. In the case of a positive response to the latter question, refugee households were asked to explain why.

Security, safety, and the descriptors for acceptance are ordinal variables. They have been converted into two-level factors for some analyses (accepted / non-accepted; safe / unsafe; secure / insecure).

Data collection

Once the interview was completed, enumerators filled out the answers of the questionnaire using a questionnaire operated by a hand-held mobile device or tablet (Mobenzi®⁽²¹⁾). Completed surveys were uploaded in real time to an online data-base that collates and organises the incoming information and records GPS locations, time and also identifies the enumerator or surveyor who entered the data.

3.5 Limitations

The scope of this assessment was dictated by the standard of validity and confidence targeted. The process of conducting this assessment encountered some limitations, including:

- Access to the originally selected municipalities (Chiyah, Borj el Barajneh, Ouzaii, Hadath and Naameh) was restricted due to the security situation in and around these areas, which limited access to these areas for the field team.
- The assessment focused on variables that were associated with security of tenure; other relevant, elements, such as livelihoods components, were excluded given the implications data collection and analysis.

(21) <http://www.mobenzi.com/researcher/home>

- The assessment indicates correlations among variables and explains how and why some variables are associated with each other and how/if they affect security of tenure. What it does not touch on are the coping mechanisms of these households as this stretches beyond the scope of this assessment's objective and there are other assessments and reports which explore this.

- Statistical modelling: because statistics is the science to analyse relationships taking into account data variability, there are no particular limitations here. Sampling is a trade-off between effort to acquire data and structure/properties of the data. Therefore, while there may be some limitations in the sample size and the accuracy of the data, statistical tests are an insurance that take into account sampling errors to draw conclusions.

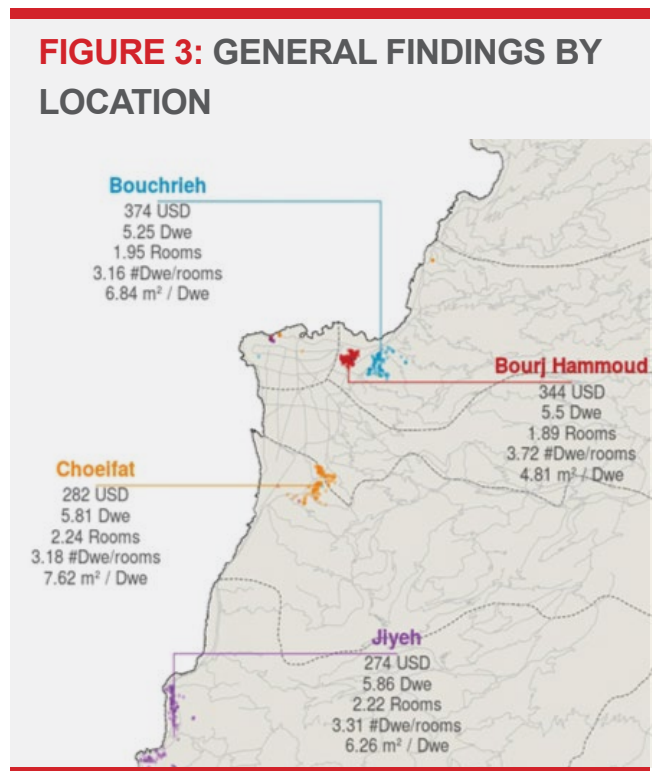
- Perception of security, trust and acceptance are based on perception by the household interviewed. They are therefore inherently subjective variables.

- The main limitation of this assessment concerns the subjectivity of the data collection method. Orientated discussions encourage trust and the discussion of nuanced information, however the recording of information can be highly dependent on the enumerator and their relationship with the interviewee. The enumerators are proxies describing the refugee's situations.

- Due to the interview method, we were not able to verify the household's information against UNHCR's existing datasets or any other sources. Therefore, there is a potential bias in information concerning rent, rent burden, etc.

4 Assessment Findings

Refugees in Beirut and Mount Lebanon pay higher rent, on average, than elsewhere in Lebanon. The mean rent for a finished housing unit in these governorates is USD \$348.66. This is noticeably higher than the mean rent for a finished housing unit in Lebanon overall, which stands at USD \$200⁽²²⁾. The difference can be attributed to this governorate having higher real estate values associated with more urban settings - this is more apparent in proximity to Beirut. Of the four areas selected to represent Beirut and Mt. Lebanon for the purposes of this assessment, Bouchriyeh registered the highest average rent cost/ month (USD \$374) while Jiyeh registered the lowest (USD \$274). Rent burden is on average 66% verses a national average of 24% of household expenditure⁽²³⁾.



(22) Latest Shelter Survey and VASyR 2014 cite \$200 USD / month as the average rent.

(23) Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees (VASyR) in Lebanon (WFP, 2014)

4.1 Majority live in finished apartments

On average, 71% of refugees in Beirut and Mt. Lebanon reside in finished apartments, as opposed to physically sub-standard forms of shelter (e.g. informal settlements, unfinished houses, converted garages, tents, etc.). This is compared to a national average of 57%.

Table 2: Distribution of refugee households in Beirut and Mount Lebanon by type of shelter

Shelter type	Bouchrieh	Bourj Hammoud	Choeifat	Jiyeh
Finished apartment	74%	71%	75%	63%
Unfinished apartment	2%	2%	2%	5%
Basement	13%	15%	7%	9%
Garage	10%	9%	13%	9%
Tent	0%	1%	2%	13%
Other	1%	2%	1%	1%

4.2 Past eviction rates are low

The assessment found that over 65% of interviewed refugees in Beirut and Mt. Lebanon have been in Lebanon for more than two years, and that only 10.5% of refugees interviewed had occupied a previous shelter since taking refuge in Lebanon – the majority had been in the same shelter. This 10.5% comprises 6.7% that had been forced to move unwillingly, and 3.8% that moved from their previous shelter willingly. For those that moved willingly, the data shows that the main reason for voluntarily leaving were: increase in rent or finding a cheaper home (30.2%), needing additional living for space due to the arrival of other members of the household (24.5%), finding a job elsewhere (11.3%), for security or safety reasons (11.3%) or to shorten the distance to facilities (3.8%). Despite the higher living costs, the majority of refugees interviewed in Beirut and Mount Lebanon have had relatively stable living situations, and low rates of forced eviction over the last few years; however, despite these low figures, tensions around rental arrangements are high, and outlined in the sections below.

FIGURE 4: Percentage of refugee households that have moved from a previous shelter in Lebanon

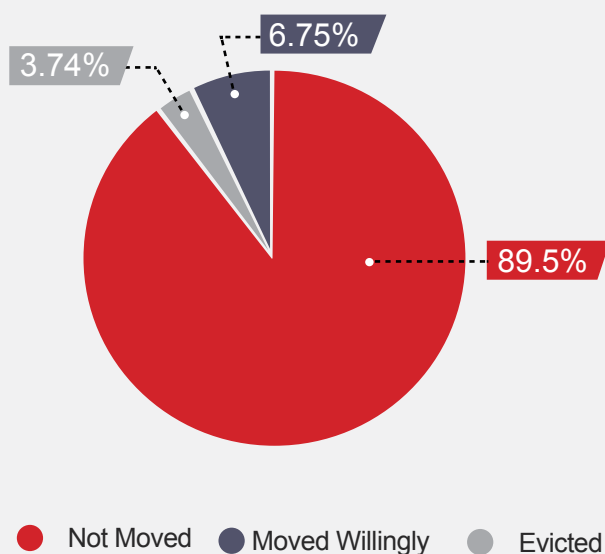
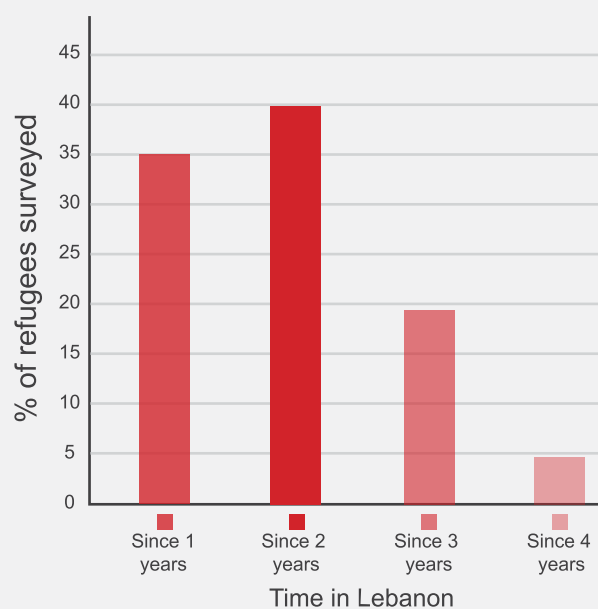


FIGURE 5: Duration of stay in Lebanon for refugee households interviewed



4.3 Many households in dispute over rent

Despite the low rates of eviction over the last few years, 72% of the 668 households interviewed are currently experiencing disputes with their landlord related to the rent. Within this group, 66% are in conflict because the rent has been increasing steadily, 18% because of overcrowding, and 7% because of the breach of rental agreement without further details provided by the owner. The remaining 9% declared conflict about the rent without giving any further details. Where households are in conflict with the landlord about rent, 38% of households stated that they will attempt to negotiate directly with the owner in order to delay the payment, while 37% plan to move from their current place. Of this 37%, most of these refugees will search for a more affordable house (74%), while the remaining 26% have no other choice but to seek out poorer quality accommodation. Based on the above, there would seem to be an opportunity to support said households with some form of dispute resolution and rental agreements to mitigate against rental increases and disputes over misunderstandings.

4.4 Lack of formal rental agreements

Almost all rental agreements for interviewed households were informal agreements that did not involve any form of contract. Available information overwhelmingly concerns informal agreement, thus preventing the explanation of eviction as a function of agreement type. Where households had been evicted, 98% did not have a formal lease agreement.

Table 3: Number of interviews per municipality

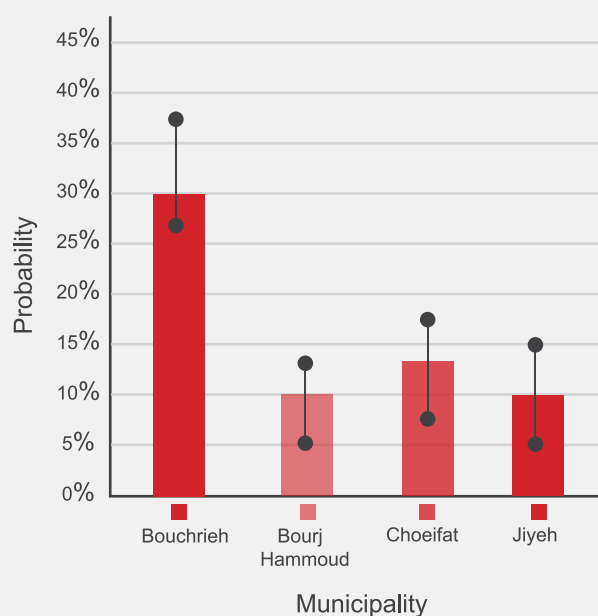
Type of lease agreement	Moved out willingly	Evicted
Formal	1	1
Informal	23	42

The variables observed - including rent, municipality, building type, number of dwellers, surface, surface per dweller, burden of the rent (except for the highest

burden range 75-100% of income), availability of utilities, cost of utilities and sharing of facilities – did not vary in their association with whether or not households were evicted. However, the feeling about the security of tenure displayed an association with this eviction/voluntary relocation.

At the time of this assessment, approximately 10% of interviewed households had a formal agreement with their landlords in all surveyed municipalities except in Bouchrieh, which was higher at 30%. Figure 6 illustrates the probability for beneficiaries to have a formal rental agreement sorted by municipality. The main columns indicate the mean probabilities; segments around the bars indicate the standard errors of the means.

FIGURE 6: The probability of having a formal lease agreement by municipality

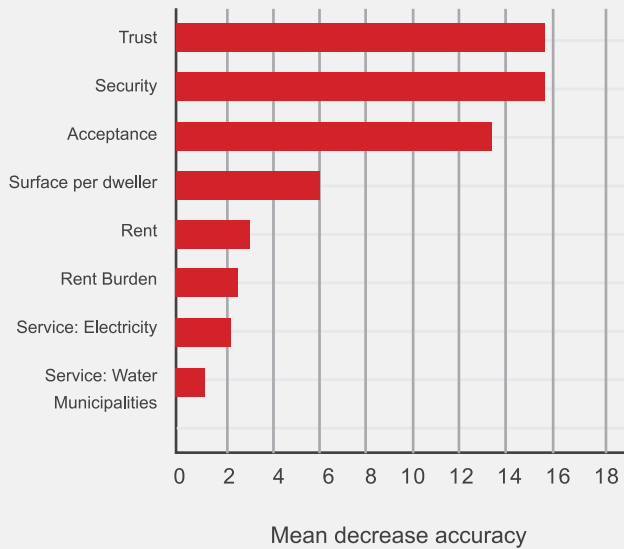


4.5 Reasons behind past evictions

While rent burden and rent amount are factors behind evictions, the assessment found that eviction is largely associated with: the absence of tenure security, the feeling of insecurity, the lack of host community acceptance, and lack of trust between the refugee and the host community. In other words, though the majority of refugees are experiencing disputes over

the rent, the assessment found that the statistically relevant reasons behind this are the perceived lack of host community acceptance and trust. This is an important finding as it reinforces that security of tenure requires a holistic approach to reduce tensions and further support security of tenure.

FIGURE 7: Relative impact of variables on tenure security for past situations



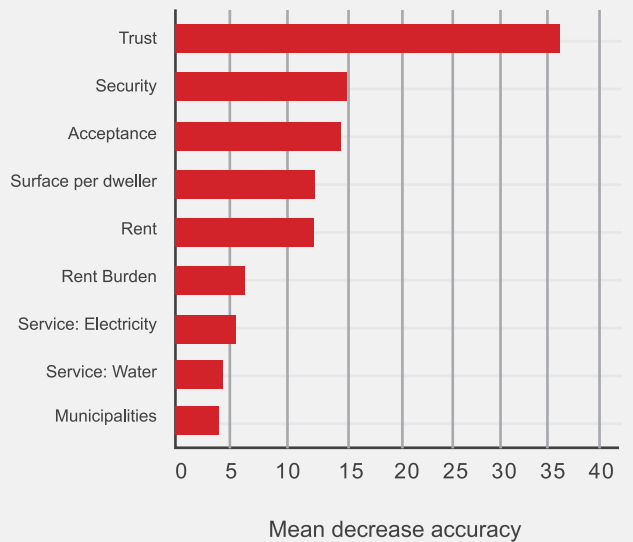
From the testimonies of past situations, the absence of tenure security is associated with the feeling of insecurity (i.e. risk of violence, abuse, conflict etc.), the lack of host community acceptance and trust between the refugee and the host community. These negative elements are demonstrated in the areas of Borj Hammoud and Bouchrieh. Conversely, the presence of security of tenure is associated with higher levels of acceptance and security, as is demonstrated in the area of Choeifat (see figure 11 in the annex).

4.6 Reasons behind current threats of eviction

Compared to shelters occupied in the past, ranking is unchanged when tenure security is explained with the same set of factors. Trust and acceptance from local community, together with the perception of security are the three main factors associated with fluctuations in tenure security. However, the trust factor is now

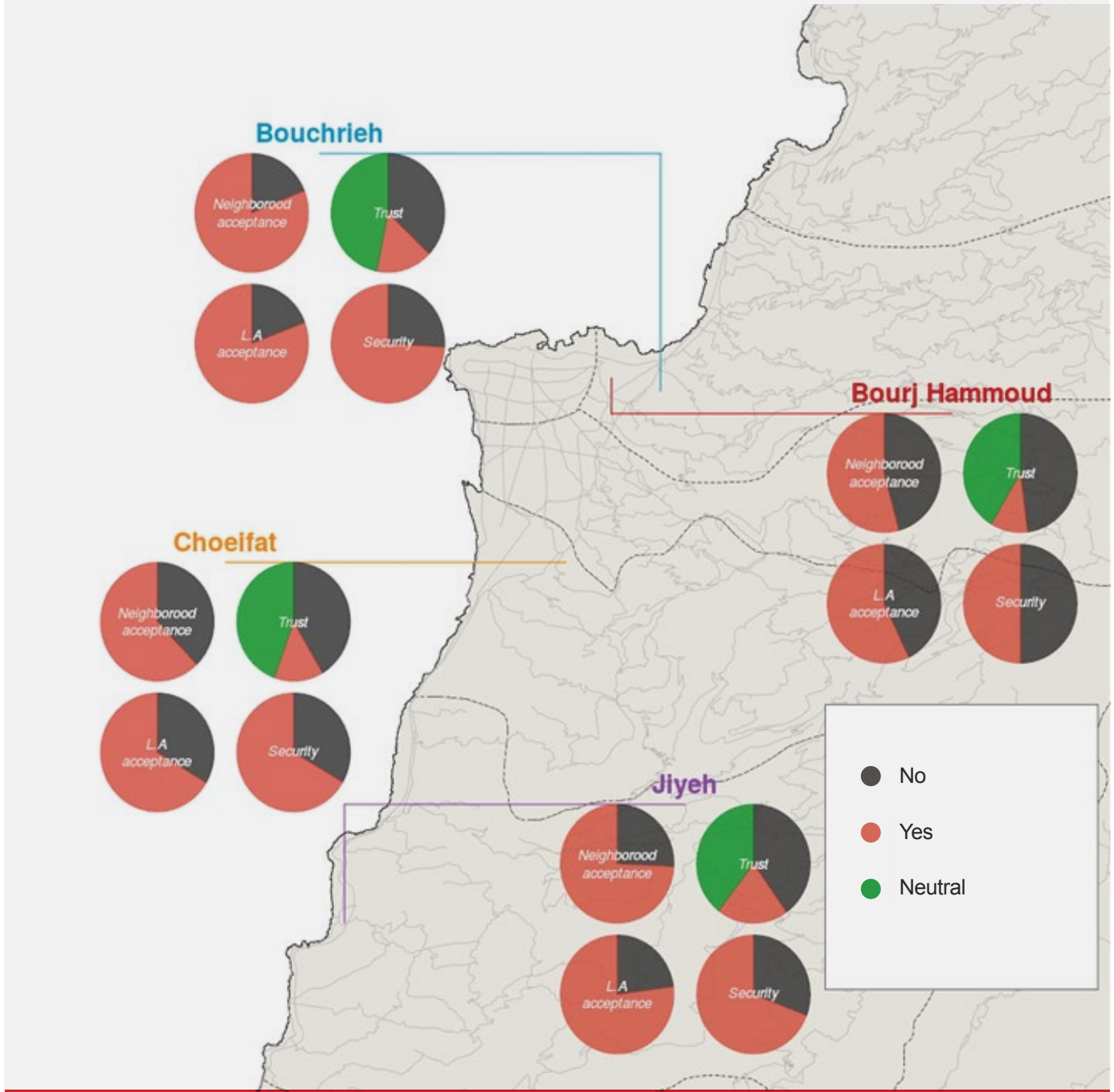
relatively more important than the two other. The surface per dweller and rent are intermediate while rent burden, prices for services and municipalities are again not closely associated with fluctuations in tenure security.

FIGURE 8: Relative impact of variables on tenure security for current situations



At the time of this assessment, the absence of tenure security is associated with the feeling of insecurity (i.e. risk of violence, abuse, conflict etc.), the lack of host community acceptance and trust between the refugee and the host community. These negative elements are demonstrated in the areas of Borj Hammoud. In contrast, security of tenure is associated with higher levels of acceptance and security, as demonstrated in the area of Jiyeh. High rent, high cost for electricity, high cost for water and high rent burden are associated with the areas of Bouchrieh. Choeifat is the opposite (see figure 12 in the annex).

FIGURE 9: Measuring levels of host community acceptance, trust, and security



4.7 Self-identified priorities for assistance are associated with rent and rent burden

When households were asked to identify priorities for assistance, the most frequent responses were: shelter rehabilitation, improved electricity supply, or improved water supply; however, the priority order depends on rent burden. For example, in Jiyeh:

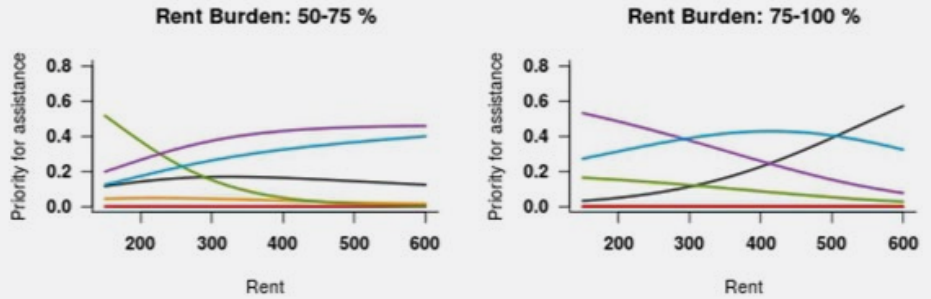
- Shelter rehabilitation is indicated as a priority for assistance for about 30% of the refugees with a rent burden of 50% to 75%.
- Refugees with a rent burden above 75% however indicated shelter rehabilitation as a priority in 80% when rent is low and 20% when rent is high.

Figure 10 illustrates the priority assistance of the refugee households per municipality and for two classes of rent burden, i.e. [50% - 75%] and [75% - 100%]. Each line indicates the probability to answer a given priority for assistance according to the rent.

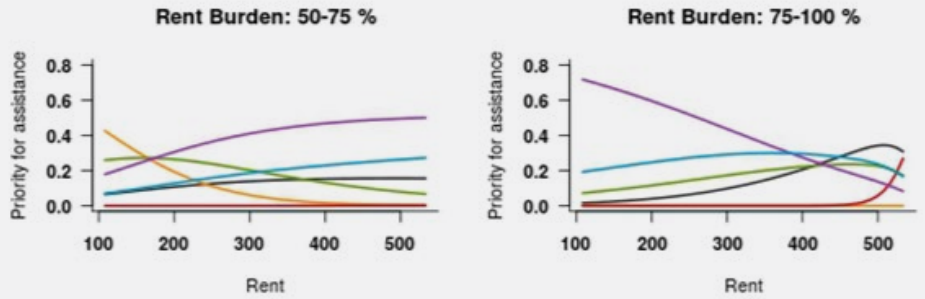
FIGURE 10: Probabilities for choices of priority for assistance of interviewed households

Bouchrieh

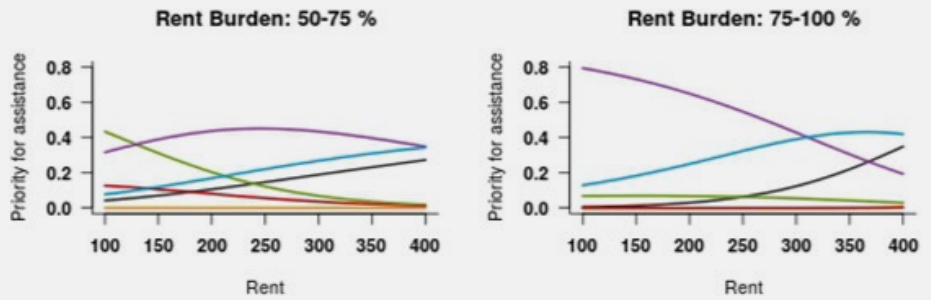
- Water supply*
- Shelter Rehabilitation*
- Sewage infrastructure*
- Road works*
- Public space*
- Electricity supply*



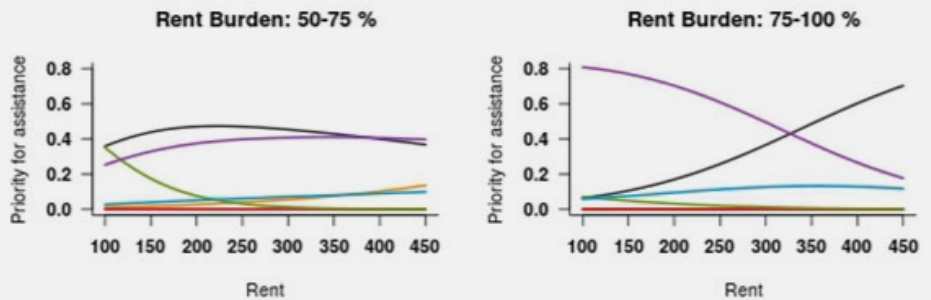
Bourj Hammoud



Choeifat



Jiyeh



5 Conclusion and recommendations

While there are considerable variations in relatively small geographic areas, the areas targeted by this assessment are characterised by significant concentrations of Syrian refugees and vulnerable Lebanese households living in crowded conditions in economically poor urban municipalities. The average household is paying monthly rents more than double the national average (USD 349 versus USD 200 per month). This, unsurprisingly, is associated with a much higher monthly rent burden than the national average. This substantial rent burden is likely to further limit household expenditures on essential items and services. As over 70% of interviewed households live in finished apartments, physical living conditions in urban areas of Beirut and Mount Lebanon are considered relatively acceptable when compared to the much larger concentrations of informal settlements, unfinished houses, and converted garages in other areas of Lebanon; however, that's not to say that interventions are not required.

Of the 668 households interviewed, the majority had been living in Beirut and Mount Lebanon for over two years and only 10.5% had changed dwelling since arriving in Lebanon. Of this 10.5%, 6.8% were forcibly evicted, which is comparable to the national refugee average of 6.6%. The households that were evicted were highly likely to: lack tenure security, report feelings of insecurity, and cite a lack of host community acceptance and trust between the refugee and the host community. Of the households that moved voluntarily, their reasons given were largely all economic, such as: escalating rent (35.7%); identifying a cheaper alternative (30.2%); and livelihood opportunities elsewhere (11.3%). These findings are reinforced by the fact that 72% of interviewed households are in dispute with their landlords over rent. This suggests that while past eviction rates have been low, there is evidence to suggest that they may increase.

In addition to rental disputes, the assessment

found that very few households have formal lease agreements. In three of the four areas assessed, only 10% of interviewed households had formal tenancy agreements, such as a written lease contract, and as a result are more susceptible to exploitation over rent and eviction. Bouchrieh was the exception with 30% having written lease agreements. Moreover, this assessment has found that households that had formal lease agreements were significantly less likely to have experienced eviction in the past.

Local communities in economically poor areas often suffer the same poor living conditions and limited security of tenure as the refugees they are hosting. Due attention must be paid to both groups by shelter actors if the aim is to reach those most in need, access refugees, and reduce tensions in the host communities. Both refugees and vulnerable Lebanese communities living in the urban areas of Beirut and Mount Lebanon consider the priority areas for agencies to be water and electricity infrastructure projects in addition to improved living conditions.

While rates of eviction in Mount Lebanon are relatively low, with the majority of households in finished apartments, there is a high rate of disputes over rent and security of tenure. The majority of humanitarian shelter assistance to date has targeted those living in the worst physical conditions, and understandably so. However, agencies must strengthen support to ensure that those renting apartments and receiving little assistance have a framework of support, so that they are not pushed out into even lesser quality accommodation. In other words, housing rehabilitation and emergency assistance addresses the needs of those living in sub-standard physical conditions; however many require support with rental agreements and rent transparency. In addition, greater emphasis should be placed on host community projects in order to decrease already mounting tension as the response enters its fourth year. While supporting those most in need is a priority for the sector, of equal importance is ensuring that all households benefit from a transparent and fair rental market to ensure that all are able to exercise their right to adequate housing⁽²⁴⁾

(24) General Comment 4 adopted by the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 1991

Based on the findings from this assessment, recommendations for shelter and protection actors, for both programming and advocacy, include:

- Without acceptance from the host community, there can be no security of tenure for those affected by displacement. Shelter and Protection actors must support refugee households directly in parallel to initiatives aimed at increasing host community acceptance and understandings between refugee and host communities.
- Increase initiatives focusing on awareness raising and increasing understanding between homeowners and refugee households, such as support with rental agreements and collaborative dispute resolution, in order to strengthen security of tenure for refugee households.
- Empower local authorities to maintain adequate levels of services for both host communities and refugees. Community Support Projects (CSPs) should have both technical and social programming approaches.

6 Annex

6.1 Data analysis and statistics

Statistical learning is a set of tools for understanding data. They can be classified as supervised and unsupervised.

A supervised tool involves building a statistical model for predicting, or estimating, an output based on one or more inputs. This approach to realise inferences loses power when the number of inputs, i.e. the number of independent variables, increases without a very large number of observations. These tools include the group of linear regression models (simple linear models, generalised linear models, multinomial models, Chi-square test belong to this group etc.). The output tests the hypothesis that the distribution of a variable has the same parameters estimations amongst groups, i.e. no significant differences, or not. For example if the rent values distribution among municipalities is the same or not, i.e. if there exist differences in mean rents.

Unsupervised tools provide a very powerful method to learn relationship and structure from data. While inferences have to be made more carefully as there is no supervising output, they can support very large number of inputs with a reasonable number of observations. These tools include multivariate analysis and machine learning techniques.

All analyses were performed with the R statistical programming language⁽²⁵⁾ Specific functions from packages lme4⁽²⁶⁾ ade4⁽²⁷⁾ e1071⁽²⁸⁾ and random Forest⁽²⁹⁾ were used to perform mixed-effects linear models, factorial analyses, support vector machine classification and random tree classification respectively.

Supervised statistical learning tools

Rent, cost of services, number of dwellers, surface per dwellers, availability of services and probability of sharing a toilet or bathroom was compared between the group of households that have been evicted and the group of non-evicted refugee households. These were analysed with general linear modelling methods, considering municipalities as a random factor. Gaussian, log, or logit-link function, were chosen according to the response variables.

Chi-square tests have been realised to test for the differences in building type and rent burden between these two groups.

Unsupervised statistical learning tools

Multivariate statistics is a form of statistics encompassing the simultaneous observation and analysis of more than one outcome variable. Factor analysis is a method used to describe variability among observed, correlated variables in terms of a potentially lower number of unobserved variables called factors. If both quantitative and qualitative variables had to be analysed concurrently, ordination methods⁽³⁰⁾ extending Hill and Smith method⁽³¹⁾ were used to predict the probability

(25) R Core Team. 2014. R: A language and environment for statistical computing. R Foundation for Statistical Computing, Vienna, Austria. URL <http://www.R-project.org/>.

(26) Douglas Bates, Martin Maechler, Ben Bolker and Steven Walker. 2014. lme4: Linear mixed-effects models using Eigen and S4. R package version 1.1-6

(27) Dray, S. and Dufour, A.B. and Chessel, D. 2007. The ade4 package-II: Two-table and K-table methods. R News. 7(2) pp 47-52.

(28) David Meyer, Evgenia Dimitriadou, Kurt Hornik, Andreas Weingessel and Friedrich Leisch. 2014. e1071: Misc Functions of the Department of Statistics (e1071), TU Wien. R package version 1.6-3.

(29) A. Liaw and M. Wiener. 2002. Classification and Regression by randomForest. R News 2(3), pp 18-22.

(30) Kiers, H. A. L. 1994. Simple structure in component analysis techniques for mixtures of qualitative and quantitative variables. Psychometrika, 56, pp 197-212.

for a refugee household to declare a tenure secure according to the rent, the price for services (water and electricity), the number of dwellers, the surface of the shelter, and the surface per dwellers. Rent and services have been scaled according to the mean and standard deviation of the municipalities the refugee household lives in. Support vector machines (SVM) are based on statistical learning theory and belong to the class of kernel based methods⁽³²⁾ The basic concept of SVMs is the transformation of input vectors into a higher dimensional feature space where a linear separation may be possible between the class members. In this feature space the support vector learning algorithm, maximises the distance between the class members of the training set in order to achieve a good generalisation.

The random forest classifier was developed by Leo Breiman and Adele Cutler⁽³³⁾ and consists of many decision trees. The algorithm combines Breiman's "bagging" idea⁽³⁴⁾ and Ho's "random subspace method"⁽³⁵⁾ to construct a collection of decision trees with controlled variations. A training set for a tree is constructed by choosing N samples with replacement from all N available training cases ("bootstrapping"). At each node a random subset of variables is used to determine the splitting decision. Finally the mode of all classes by the individual fully grown and non-pruned trees is returned. Random forest methods were used to determine the effect of trust feelings, security, and acceptance, surface per dweller, rent, rent burden, price for services (water and electricity) and area on the probability to declare tenure secure.



Riwa Maktabi

(31) Hill, M. O., and A. J. E. Smith. 1976. Principal component analysis of taxonomic data with multi-state discrete characters. *Taxon*, 25, pp 249-255.

(32) Vapnik V. 1995. *The Nature of Statistical Nature Theory*. Heidelberg. Springer.

(33) Leo Breiman. 2001. Random Forests. *Machine Learning*, 45(1) pp 5-32.

(34) Breiman L. 1996. Bagging predictors. *Machine Learning*. 24(2) 123-140.

(35) Ho, Tin, Kam. 1998. The Random Subspace Method for Constructing Decision Forests. *IEEE Trans on Pattern Analysis and Machine Intelligence*. 20(8). pp 832-844.

Table 4: List of variables describing living conditions and socio-economic conditions for the Syrian refugee population in Beirut and Mount Lebanon

Qualitative variables		Qualitative variables	
Description	Type	Description	Factor levels
Rent	numeric	Proportion of the income used to pay rent	< 25%] 25% - 50%]] 50% - 75%] >75%
Number of dwellers in household	integer	Type of agreement	Formal Informal
Number of dwellers in the shelter	integer	Administrator type	Realtor Landlord Other
Surface of the household	numeric	Rent & conflict	Breach of rental agreement Overcrowding Rent increase No conflict Other
Surface of the shelter	numeric	Building type	Finished apartment Unfinished apartment Basement Garage Tent Other
Number of rooms	integer	Trust the host community	Blind confidence Mutual confidence Trust some people No trust Afraid
Number of private toilets	integer	Acceptance by the neighborhood	Fully accepted Almost accepted Almost rejected Fully rejected
Number of shared toilets	integer	Acceptance by the local authorities	Fully accepted Almost accepted Almost rejected Fully rejected
Number of private bathrooms	integer	Safety of the area	Safe Almost safe Almost unsafe unsafe
Number of shared bathrooms	integer	Security within the shelter	Secure Almost secure Almost insecure insecure
Services: price of public water	numeric		
Services: overall price for any other source of water	numeric	Neighbourhood	
Services: price of public electricity	numeric		
Services: overall price for any other source of electricity	binary		
Security of tenure	binary		
Insulation	binary		
Shared Items	binary		

6.2 2-dimensional projections of variables associated with tenure security

FIGURE 11: 2-dimensional projection of variables associated with tenure security (previous shelter)

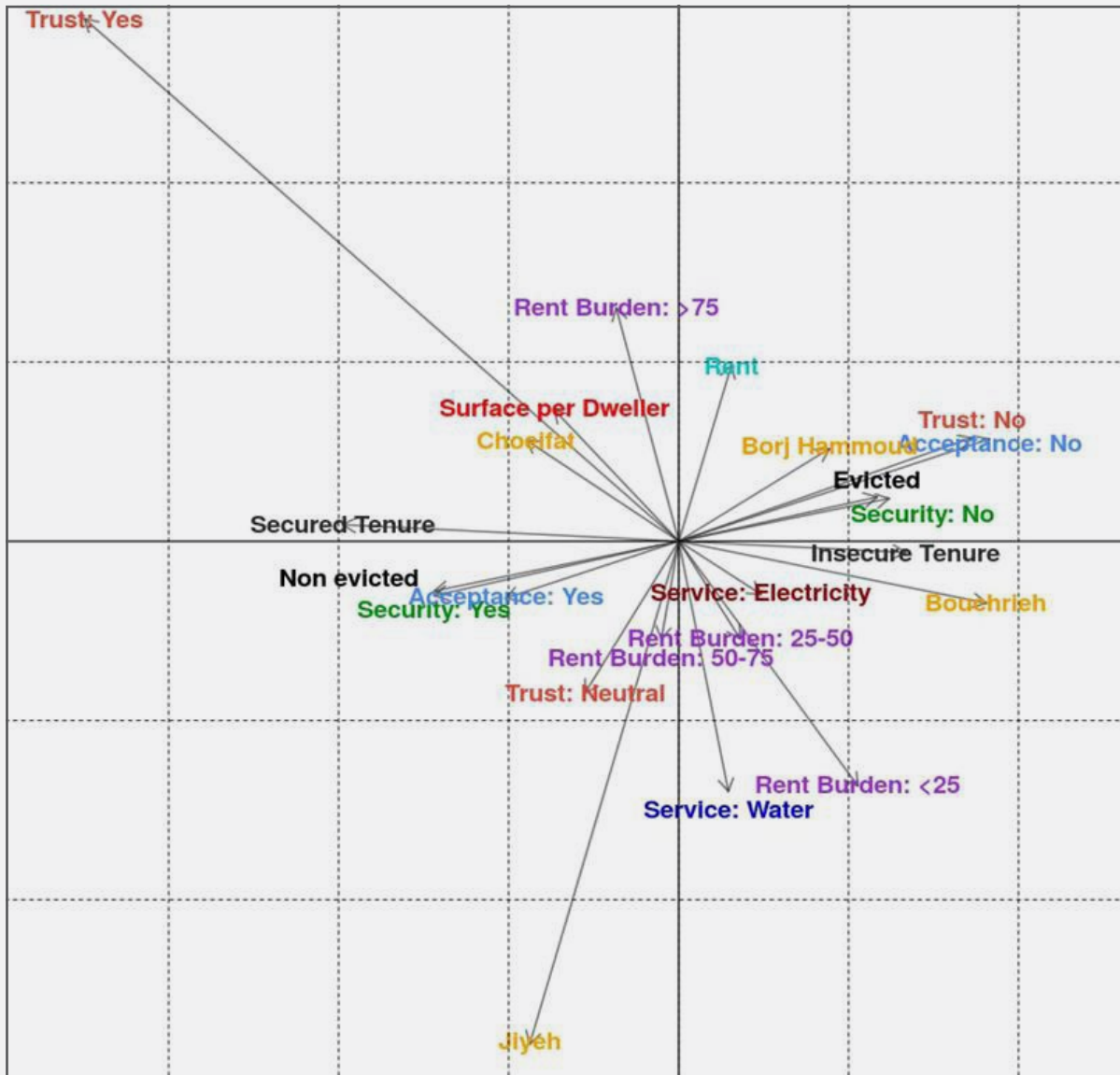


FIGURE 12: 2-dimensional projection of variables associated with tenure security (current shelter)

