

- The nature of poverty and inequality in Lebanon, including how poverty is or should be defined and measured, its prevalence, and its distribution.

Lebanon is experiencing the impact of multiple growth shocks, including a recent spike in COVID-19 cases and an explosion impact and consequences at all levels. These shocks reinforce the ongoing financial crisis that had already increased headcount poverty, exacerbated extreme poverty, and reduced the middle-income group

Nature of poverty in Lebanon is complex and with different layers and root causes. Its more than unemployment, poor living standards or a low income.

It has aspects of Social Poverty that includes different people groups that are undervalued and have few rights, such as Palestinian refugees and displaced Syrians, disabled persons, women, etc.

Children lack education is another aspect of poverty in Lebanon. According to UNICEF assessment<sup>1</sup>, 9% of families sent their child to work, 15% stopped their children's education. Lack of education also makes children more vulnerable to exploitation or abuse. Its to be noted that when education is not available, families get trapped in the cycle of poverty for generations.

Basic needs; person's basic needs can't be met if there is no steady employment and income

Health poverty is another aspect should be looking after because when a person is unhealthy it is difficult to hold down a job and develop positive relationships. Physical and emotional health is the basis for our ability to work, play and be in relationship with others.

Physical surroundings play a large role in a person's wellbeing. Environmental factors should include climate, housing options, land availability, water supply, insects that carry disease, water-born illnesses, weather, drought, and much more.

Household income per day; if a household lives with income of less than \$2.50 a day that means this level of poverty is the equal of slavery.

- The major challenges and most severe human rights-related problems confronting those living in poverty.

---

<sup>1</sup> UNICEF assessment on Lebanon: children's future in the line

The major challenges that Lebanon population encountering is the inflation and rising unemployment, which impacted on people ability, access to, and/or afford for even basic services. Lebanon is crippled by the impact of multiple shocks which have exhausted its economy and caused an unprecedented increase in its headcount poverty rate. Estimates reveal that more than 55% of the country's population is now trapped in poverty and struggling for bare necessities. In addition, jobs are increasingly hard to come by, particularly for youth, who, even before the crisis, were already more likely than others to be unemployed – 34% of the young people are unemployed.

- The impacts of poverty on economic, social and cultural rights, such as the rights to health, housing, food, education, and social security, as well as on civil and political rights.

The headcount poverty rate is jumped to more than 55% in May 2020. The corresponding increase in extreme poverty to more than 23%. This brings the total number of poor among the Lebanese population to 1.3 million and 2.7 million for the lower and the upper poverty lines, respectively.

The compounding crises affect every aspect of people and children's lives, including education, nutrition and mental health. According to the Child-Focused Rapid Assessment (CFRA)<sup>5</sup> conducted by UNICEF in April 2021, 8% of children in Lebanon are worse off than they were at the beginning of 2020. The rapid assessment revealed that over 30% of families had at least one child who skipped a meal or went to bed hungry in March 2021, and 77% of households said they did not have enough food or enough money to buy food. For Syrian households, the figure was a staggering 99%. In addition, one in five households did not have enough drinking water, and 60% had to buy food on credit or borrow money. 30% of children were not receiving the primary health care they needed, while 76% of households said they were affected by the massive increase in medication prices.

Palestine refugees were already among the most vulnerable and marginalized communities in Lebanon and deteriorating conditions added to their hardship. They remained barred from 39 professions and endured precarious legal status. As a result, Palestine refugees faced high rates of poverty and unemployment.

- The role of international financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank; the management of public finances;

and the role of the corporate sector, including commercial banks, in relation to poverty.

Privatizing public services imposed by the international financial institutions increased the costs of these services which couldn't afford by population, especially poor families and HH. At another level, lack of accountability and monitoring of these international institutions on the implementation and/or spending of the grants giving to governments contributed to increasing the corruption at all levels.

- The impacts of the Lebanese political and governance system on the capacity of the State to alleviate poverty without discrimination.

The Lebanese political and governance system is discriminatory, sectarian, un-democratic and blocking opportunities for changes and / or alleviating poverty. The system should be secular, democratic un-sectarian system.

- The potential of and challenges facing the existing social protection system to address poverty, inequality, and social exclusion, especially with a view to protecting informal and vulnerable workers, rural populations, migrants and refugees.

Discriminatory social protection law and system against women, refugees and migrants, lack of access to basic human rights, including access to work and jobs due to the discriminatory laws are the most challenges encountered by vulnerable groups.

- The social and economic impacts of COVID-19 on poor and low-income groups.

The pandemic worsened an already dire economic situation. In March, the government defaulted on its sovereign debt for the first time in the nation's history<sup>2</sup>. According to the World Bank, inflation hit 120% in August, severely affecting the ability of the local population to fulfil their basic food needs and increasing cases of malnutrition<sup>3</sup>. Overall, Lebanon's economy was projected to shrink by 25% in 2020 and amidst the unfolding crisis, the poverty rate rose from 28% in 2019 to 55% in 2020, with 23.2% of the population estimated to exist in conditions of extreme poverty<sup>4</sup>.

---

<sup>2</sup> Lebanon Economic Monitor, World Bank, Fall 2020, <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/474551606779642981/pdf/Lebanon-Economic-Monitor-The-Deliberate-Depression.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Page 3, "Call for action on Infant and Young Child Feeding and Nutrition in the response to the Beirut port explosion", Lebanon Nutrition Task Force, September 2020, [https://fscluster.org/sites/default/files/documents/lebanon\\_nutrition\\_taskforce\\_final.pdf](https://fscluster.org/sites/default/files/documents/lebanon_nutrition_taskforce_final.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Page 2, "Poverty in Lebanon: Solidarity is Vital to Address the Impact of Multiple Overlapping Shocks", ESCWA Policy Brief 15, 19 August 2020, [https://www.unescwa.org/sites/www.unescwa.org/files/20-00268\\_pb15\\_beirut-explosion-rising-poverty-en.pdf](https://www.unescwa.org/sites/www.unescwa.org/files/20-00268_pb15_beirut-explosion-rising-poverty-en.pdf)

- The role of fiscal spending, public finance management, and tax policy in relation to poverty.

The governmental fiscal spending and finance management played central role in increasing poverty. The whole fiscal and banking systems should be reformed, that includes reforming of tax policy and social benefits of people from their tax payments.

- Regions, districts, cities or municipalities in Lebanon that the Special Rapporteur should visit.
- Individuals and organisations the Special Rapporteur should meet with during his visit.

At international level; UNHCR, UNICEF, and UNRWA are INGOs that should be met

---