

The Dom People and their Children in Lebanon

A Child Protection Assessment

Terre des hommes is the leading Swiss organisation for child relief. Founded in 1960, Terre des hommes helps to build a better future for disadvantaged children and their communities, with an innovative approach and practical, sustainable solutions. Active in more than 30 countries, Tdh develops and implements field projects to allow a better daily life for over 1.4 million children and their close relatives, particularly in the domains of health care and protection. This engagement is financed by individual and institutional support, of which 85% flows directly into the programs of Tdh.





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Foreword

Beginning to see an invisible community

Even if you haven't heard of the "Dom" people before, it's probable that you have come across them. You might have caught a glimpse of them from a distance, while driving along a main highway. You may have wondered momentarily about the people who are living in those make-shift shacks, made of corrugated iron, wood and plastic sheeting. Or you might have met them closer up, possibly even locked gazes or exchanged a word or two, but this would only be after having been approached by a young girl or a boy begging for money or adamant to clean the windscreen of your car.

What's sure is that most people in Lebanon have heard about the Dom, yet they remain perplexed by the term because it is not the one used in everyday language. They know the Dom as "Nawar", a word with condescending and derogatory connotations in Arabic. This word conditions interactions between Dom and non-Dom throughout the Middle East, and prevents many people from looking beyond the surface of the poverty that Dom live in. It forecloses acknowledgement of the Dom as a people with history, culture and traditions. It allows people to remain blind to their needs.

This report seeks to challenge such collective blindness and looks at the Dom people through humanitarian lenses. The research that informs the content of this report is the *first of its kind*, not only in Lebanon, but throughout the Arab region. More specifically, it examines the needs of Dom children. In doing so, it fills a major gap in the Lebanese research landscape by inquiring about one of the most vulnerable and marginalised communities in the country.

Beyond merely garnering acknowledgement of the Dom as an ethnic minority group, this report provides a basis for formulating informed, evidence-based responses to their needs. Although the research covered significant ground, it is only a first step in learning about the Dom and the authors hope that it will encourage others to deepen their interest and understanding of the Dom through further inquiries.

On this note, there is reason for caution: given there is little previous experience in government or NGO programming with Dom communities in the region. It is important that any inquiry into or intervention with the Dom communities is guided by the principle of "do no harm". This would entail, for example, ensuring that interventions in Dom communities neither attempt to change the culturally specific social structures of the community nor foster a relationship of dependency. Rather, they should seek to create space for Doms' own voices to be heard in decisions that affect their communities and cultivate the capacities of Dom community members to become agents in sustaining processes of change.

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Executive Summary

Terre des hommes Foundation, Lebanon (Tdh), in partnership with Insan Association, carried out a child protection needs assessment in a number of Dom communities of Lebanon from April to November 2010. The general objective of the research was to identify the child protection needs of Dom children and devise appropriate ways to respond. In doing so, the assessment identified potential protection actors for Dom children and attempted to locate the gaps in the protective environment². The research was carried out in four geographical areas: Bekaa, Beirut, Saida and Tyre, with over 95% of household surveys taking place in the latter three areas.

The first of its kind, this study employed both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods in order to generate base-line data about the Dom in Lebanon. Considering the assessment did not cover all regions of Lebanon, the findings cannot claim to be representative of the country's entire Dom population. However, the findings are considered representative of the populations in Beirut, Saida and Tyre where 37% of the estimated number of families participated in household surveys.

The assessment employed an action-oriented, participatory research methodology, in which the perceptions of stakeholders and community members were actively sought as a means of informing future programming in Dom communities. Moreover, it was conducted according to the ethical principles of child protection, whereby the best interests of the child take precedents over research objectives.

Summary of key findings

The Dom are an ethnic minority group who live in many countries of the Middle East, including Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Turkey and Iraq. Linguistic theorists have identified close links between the Dom's language, Domari, and the Punjabi dialect of Hindi. They assert that the Dom are descendents of a group of itinerant performers from north-western India who migrated eastwards between the 3rd and 10th centuries A.D.

Prior to this assessment, no reliable estimates of the total number of Dom living in Lebanon' were available. By mapping the locations of Dom communities in both rural and urban areas and using survey data to generate average household sized per region, the research estimates that there are approximately 3,112 Dom living in the catchment area of the research.

In general, Dom communities are either isolated from major dwellings or located near poor, marginalised areas, for example Palestinian refugee camps. Over 72% of those who participated in the research hold Lebanese citizenship, owing to the Lebanese naturalization law passed in 1994. Naturalisation has changed their migration habits, with 87% of the sample now reporting a sedentary lifestyle. It has also increased Dom access to public services, such as education and health. Nonetheless, the study found that 68% of school-age children in Dom communities have never been to school.

The conventional model of social organisation amongst the Dom is family-based and tribal, whereby the family constituted the primary social unit and several families can belong to one tribe presided over by a Sheikh. In recent years, however, the presence and authority of Sheikhs has declined, leaving decision-making roles to the most senior man in the family. Contrary to popular perceptions about the Dom, both men and women are involved in income-generating activities, with women reporting to work less than men.

Some 44% of the Dom in the sample over the age of I4 years are not working. Of those who are working, most are engaged in unskilled labour. Overall monthly family income levels amongst the Dom in the research sample were extremely low: 47% of family members in Beirut live on less than \$1 per day, 35%

in Saida and 31% in Tyre. Over 76% of respondents reported family income levels of less than LBP500,000 (~USD 333) per month, which is equal to the minimum wage for a single person in Lebanon. Amongst the Lebanese population, 19% of families are subsisting on this amount.

Protection risks and needs of Dom children

The Dom are a community that face multiple vulnerabilities. These in turn engender a host of concerns for children in these communities, namely:

- Extreme poverty
- · No legal basis for residence and fear of being expelled from homes
- Rudimentary shelters
- Inadequate water and sanitation infrastructure
- Increased health risks and poor nutrition
- · Low educational attainment
- · Lack of safe places to play for children
- Children without identification documents
- · High incidence of physical violence and neglect
- · Social marginalisation and discrimination by majority groups
- · Early marriage and motherhood
- · Dangerous and exploitative forms of children's work
- Children in conflict with the law
- · Girls involved in or at risk of becoming involved in commercial sexual exploitation
- · Internal and cross-border trafficking of girls for the purposes of dancing and sexual exploitation

Recommendations

Given that Dom children face a wide range of needs and risks, ranging from health and education issues to a host of protection concerns, efforts to meet these needs should be exerted by actors at all levels. At the level of the community, existing social structures such as the diwan³ and informal women's gatherings can be strengthened so that community leaders may take a more active role in the protection of their children.

Since many Dom have Lebanese nationality, they are entitled to access services but the extent of this access is limited due to lack of awareness within the community and discriminatory attitudes outside. Therefore, it is equally important to engage national and local governmental structures, for example the Ministry of Social Affairs and the local Social Development Centres, as key actors in ensuring Dom children's rights to services, identity and protection.

It is also essential for local and international NGO actors to network and engage in partnerships, so that the necessary expertise and resources are mobilized in order to meet the needs of the Dom and their children⁴.





1.1 Context

Through their respective programs in different areas of Lebanon, Terre des hommes Foundation, Lausanne (Tdh) and Insan Association, Beirut (Insan) distinguished a particular group of children working in the streets, either begging, selling small goods (chewing gum, lottery tickets) or cleaning shoes. After preliminary inquiry, Tdh and Insan identified these children as coming from two separate ethnic groups known as Dom and Turkmen.

Although exhibiting key differences in terms of language, nationality and culture, children from these two groups seemed to share similar characteristics, such as work on the street and limited access to formal services. Tdh and Insan decided to conduct a child protection needs assessment covering both groups; however, as the Turkmen families migrate frequently between Lebanon and Syria, the research team turned its focus solely on the Dom as a viable object of inquiry.

The general objective of the research is to examine the needs of Dom children, particularly with respect to their rights to protection and other services, and devise appropriate ways to respond. Little qualitative and even less quantitative research has been conducted about the Dom as an ethnic minority group in Lebanon; therefore the current research presents a general snapshot of data relevant to the situation facing Dom in Lebanon. Moreover, the study is rooted in a sociological profile; offering a backdrop against which to identify protection needs of Dom children and to propose appropriate interventions.

1.2 Scope and methodology

Tdh/Insan adopt an "action oriented" approach to field-based research that translates the findings into timely and appropriate programme responses per identified needs. The approach aims to "identify the most urgent problems and the most effective ways to intervene, and to check the impact of projects and programmes.⁵" It is also **participatory**: the opinions and perspectives of children and adults in the target communities are actively sought using a variety of variety of data collection tools. Finally it is informed by ethical principles of child protection, whereby the best interests of the child take priority over the research objectives and are interwoven into all aspects.

If during the process the researcher becomes aware of a child in need of protection and/or assistance, "the best interest of the child" takes precedent over the desired outcomes of the research. In this way, the research minimizes risks to children and if a request is made for assistance or the researcher recognizes a risk, the appropriate resource agencies will be activated to assist the child when possible. All persons involved in the research have signed either Tdh's or Insan's child protection policies and were thus mandated to respond to high-risk child protection cases discovered in the course of the assessment.

The research was also guided by the following ethical rules/considerations:

- The outcomes and conclusions of the research must be correct, trustworthy, cross checked and open to scrutiny without embarrassment to Tdh and Insan.
- The researcher must respect the privacy of the persons met.
- · The researcher must consider the level of vulnerability and protection status of the research targets and adapt their questions and attitude accordingly.
- The research will be as "child led" as possible, utilizing child participatory techniques. Children's opinions will be actively listened to and encouraged.
- Children's right to privacy and confidentiality will be upheld to the highest level.

Research questions

The overarching questions that direct this research

What needs and risks do children in the Dom community face, particularly regarding the right to protection?

How are these needs and risks currently addressed and where are the gaps?

Subsidiary questions include:

- What are the sociological premises that inform normative expectations of children and adults in the community?
- What informal child protection mechanisms exist within the community?
- To what extent does the community have access to formal child protection mechanisms outside the community?

Data collection tools

Preliminary attempts to locate information about the Dom in Lebanon proved largely unfruitful⁶. Realising this was the first time an assessment of this nature was being conducted about this group, Tdh and Insan researchers decided to use both qualitative and quantitative research methods to gather vital base-line data about the Dom while leaving room for community members to voice their perceptions and stories.

The qualitative research tools used for the assessment included semi-structured interviews with stakeholders and community members, focus group discussions (FGDs) with parents and children and participant observation surveys. Field researchers were also encouraged to keep research diaries to note important events, particular cases and their own thoughts throughout the research process. Meanwhile, quantitative data was collected using household surveys⁷.

Sampling methods

For the qualitative aspects of the assessment, researchers used both opportunistic sampling and snowball sampling methods. Opportunistic sampling involves taking advantage of meeting people during research to involve them as research participants; while snowball sampling entails selecting people by starting with one participant and asking for suggestions about, and introductions to, other people who might be interested in taking part in the research. While conducting the household surveys, researchers attempted to achieve the widest coverage possible in the time available?

Chronology of assessment

Conducted over a seven-month period, from mid-April to mid-November 2010, the assessment proceeded in 5 phases:

- Phase I: desk review of existing literature, including studies about the target communities, as well as reports on children living in similar conditions, such as street children or children in Gypsy communities in Europe. Researchers also mapped the locations of Dom communities throughout Lebanon.
- Phase II: semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders from outside the communities, including local governance actors, private and public service providers (schools, hospitals) and local NGOs; and building trust with key members of the Dom community through a series of field visits and informal group interviews.
- Phase III: in-depth data collection within Dom communities using qualitative and quantitative data collection tools, including individual interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs) with children and adults and household surveys.
- Phase IV: analysis of qualitative findings, and data entry and data analysis of quantitative information with the support of UNICEF. Feedback to Dom communities on key findings and recommendations.
- Phase V: preparation of the report.

Site selection

The mapping exercise indicated that Dom communities existed in all areas of Lebanon. Based on resources available for the assessment, the research team selected four geographical regions as locations for conducting the assessment, encompassing II individual sites ¹⁰.

- Beirut: Hayy el Gharbe, Horsh Sabra.
- Saida: Zahrani, Msayleh, Baysiriyeh, Wadi Zeina, Ketermaya, Ain el Hilweh.
- Tyre: Qasmiyeh, Borj el Chimali.
- The Bekaa: Deir Zeinoun.

Summary of research activities

Researchers collected qualitative data as follows:

- 40 persons from local governance, international and national NGOs and health practitioners participated in 27 stakeholder interviews.
- 50 Dom adults took part in 12 semi-structured individual and informal group interviews.
- 53 Dom children (22 girls, 31 boys) and 40 of their parents participated in 12 FGDs.
- 206 household surveys covered a population of I.161 Dom individuals.

The total number of people who directly participated in the research cannot be obtained by adding these figures, as some community members who participated in the qualitative interviews and discussions

were also respondents in the surveys. Table I indicates the breakdown of numbers of participants according to each research activity and region.

Table 1: Qualitative research activities according to region

Region	# Stakeholder interview participants	# Community member interview participants	# FGD Participants (adults & children)	Totals
Beirut	П	12	31 (4 girls, 9 boys, 9 mothers, 9 fathers)	54
Saida	6	5	39 (10 girls, 10 boys, 9 mothers, 10 fathers)	50
Tyre	8	0	21 (8 girls, 10 boys, 3 fathers)	29
Bekaa	15	33	0	48
Totals	40	50	91	181 "

Validity of sample

Because the assessment was not conducted in all Dom communities in Lebanon, the findings cannot be taken as representing all Dom in Lebanon. The research team did, however, manage to achieve significant coverage of the estimated population in three out of four of the research regions (Beirut, Saida and Tyre), in some sites reaching over 90% of the estimated population 12. In Beirut, Saida and Tyre, 199 Dom households were surveyed, comprising 1,120 individuals, which constitutes 37% of the estimated population in the research areas. The findings, therefore, can be considered representative of the Dom population in these three focus regions.

Table 2: Quantitative research activities according to region and site

Region	Site	# HH Surveys	Estimated total of Dom residences 13	Percentage of coverage at site	
Beirut	Hayy el Gharbe Horsh (Sabra)	40 15	150 150	27% 10%	
Saida	Zahrani Msayleh Bayssiriyeh Ketermaya Wadi Zeina Ein el Hilweh	26 21 10 9 15 24	28 23 16 10 50 60	93% 91% 63% 90% 30% 40%	
Tyre	Qasmiyeh Borj el Chimali + surroundings	16 23	18 30	89% 77%	
Sub-total of three focus regions		199	535	37%	
Bekaa: additional surveys in Deir Zeinoun A+B		7	40	18%	
Total re	esearch coverage	206	575	36%	

1.3 Limitations of the study

In general, researchers were well-received by Dom community members during their fieldwork, particularly as relationships of trust developed with study participants during Phase 2 semi-structured and informal group interviews. While conducting household surveys in the Bekaa Valley, however, researchers faced hostile attitudes from Dom community members who accused the team of being journalists or government agents. At one point, the researchers were threatened to leave the site. This severely limited researchers' ability to conduct surveys and FGDs in the Bekaa, causing Tdh and Insan to discontinue Phase 3 data collection in Bekaa. Consequently, quantitative data gathered in the Bekaa is not included in the statistical analysis of this report 14.

Researchers also encountered obstacles in engaging with and gathering information from Dom community members. For example, community members often did not respect scheduled meetings. Consequently, researchers had to be flexible during the fieldwork and willing to return more than once to a given site in order to carry out the activities. It was also very difficult get an accurate estimation of the size of each site. After realising that many estimates given by community members were inaccurate or inflated, the research team physically counted the numbers of houses in the research sites.

In general, gathering accurate data about the Dom in Lebanon was difficult because of the lack of reliable reference information and previous research about the population.

1.4 Key concepts and definitions

Child

The definition of a child, as used in this report, is based on Article I of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which defines a child as someone below the age of 18, unless the national law applicable to the person states otherwise. The terms child, adolescent and youth are all used in this report to refer to persons under 18 years of age.

Child protection

For the purposes of this report, child protection is defined as work which aims to:

"prevent, respond to, and resolve the abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence experienced by children in all settings. 15"

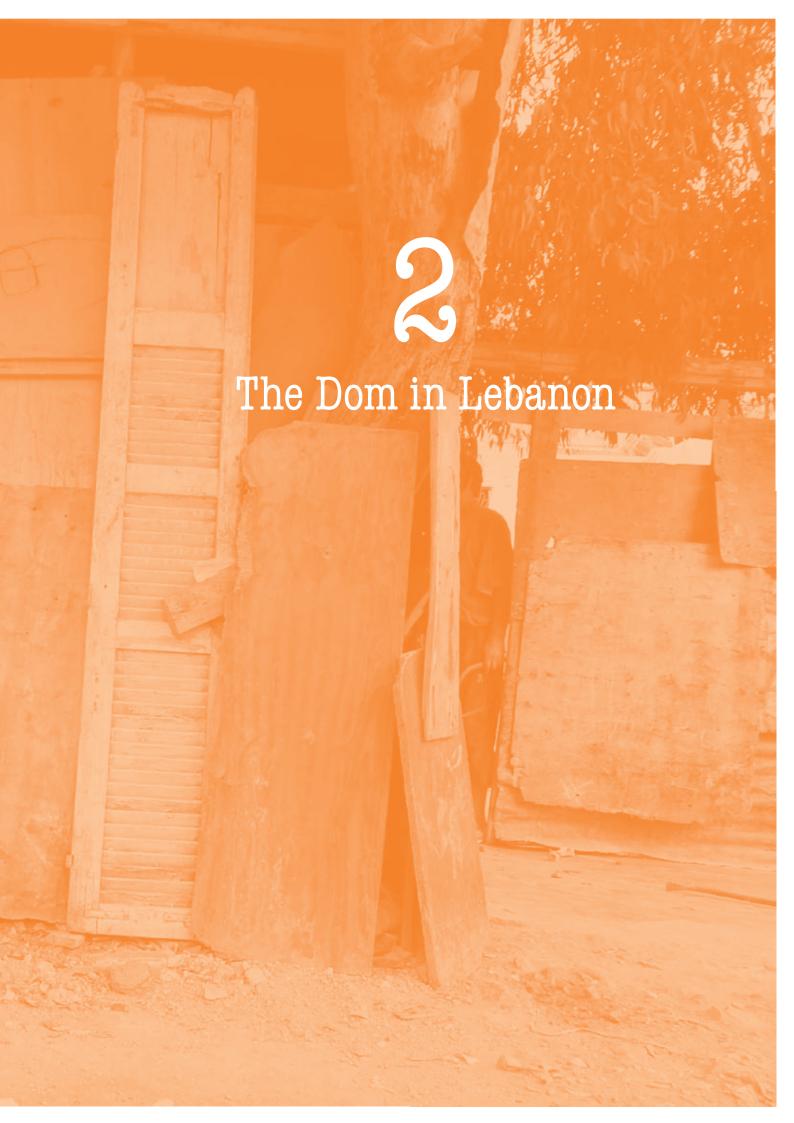
For this needs assessment, the UNCRC provides the overarching framework for identifying and analysing the extent to which Dom children enjoy or are denied the comprehensive spectrum of their rights, including the right to health, education, equality and protection. Given the specific in-country expertise of Tdh and Insan in Lebanon, particular attention was given to the issue of protection, which serves as a cross-cutting lens through which all needs and risks facing Dom children are viewed.

Tdh/Insan's approach to protection coincides with the position of other key leaders in the field of child protection. UNICEF, for example, acknowledges that "it is not effective to address protection as a separate and stand-alone issue. Given the relationships between child protection and other areas, it is valuable to consider the protection aspects of any issue being considered. 16"

For Tdh, the four main pillars of child protection are:

- It is rights-based: all children are entitled to protection as laid out in the UNCRC.
- It is primarily a state responsibility: only where and when a state cannot meet its responsibility to protect is Tdh charged with enabling the provision of humanitarian action by impartial organisations
- It is delivered in accordance with the humanitarian principles of non-discrimination and respect for all human beings.
- It empowers people to be actors in their own protection: even in cases of humanitarian crises and within a weak state, communities have their own child protection and coping mechanisms. Children, however, often do not benefit from them. Intervention should always take into account the community's own coping mechanisms and seek to ensure that they are available and connected to children ¹⁷.





2.1 Origins

The Dom are an ethnic minority group present in many countries of the Middle East, including Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Turkey and Iraq. Similar to the Roma, or "Gypsies" of Europe, they are thought to be descendents of a group of itinerant performers who originated in India and who travelled westwards through Persia in several waves of migration from as early as the 3rd century AD 18. This theory was developed by linguists who traced the roots of Domari, the language of the Dom people, back to Hindi 19.

"The origin of the Gypsy can be traced back to 18th century India, where links between the dialects of Romany and Punjabi have been discovered... It is largely believed that the Doms left India in several migratory waves, beginning in the 3rd century and lasting until the 10th century. 20"

Contrary to popular misconceptions, the Dom are distinct from the Bedouin, the descendants of nomadic tribes from the Arabian Peninsula. According to anthropologist Giovanni Bocci, "the fundamental difference between Gypsy-like and peripatetic groups on one side and Bedouin and pastoralists on the other is that the latter make a living through the management of animal flocks 21". Outsiders often have difficulties distinguishing one community from the other because traditionally they are both itinerant groups and they tend to live in similar types of housing. Although the two groups exhibit similar sociological characteristics, such as: marginalisation, social isolation and suspicion of outsiders, what distinguishes them also fosters different needs.

The Story of Zier Salem, Klayb and Jassass

During the first stage of the assessment, researchers approached members of Dom communities to ask them about their origins. Though many Dom articulated the link between Domari and Hindi, none of them explicitly stated that historically they came from India. Instead, the most predominant narrative of Dom history given by the Dom was based on a folk tale set in pre-Islamic times in the Arabian desert, describing tribal wars between two clans, Zier Salem and Jassas.

According to Bocci: "This legend revolves around the feud between two tribes in the Arabic peninsula: the Bani Rabi'a, led by Klayb, and the Bani Murra, led by Jassas. Jassas killed Klayb, and as a result Klayb's son (or brother) Zeir Salem killed Jassas and exiled his clan, the Bani Murra, ordering them to seek a nomadic way of life 22". The Dom interviewed during the research claimed that they were descendants of the Bani Murra tribe who had been condemned to a nomadic existence²³.

This story has popular resonance in Dom communities. Researchers listened to many different versions with unique details. Though it is not considered historically accurate, it is important to acknowledge that the legend constitutes a common narrative of selfhood that is shared by many Dom in Lebanon, regardless of region, which indicates a certain consciousness of belonging to a single overarching group²⁴.

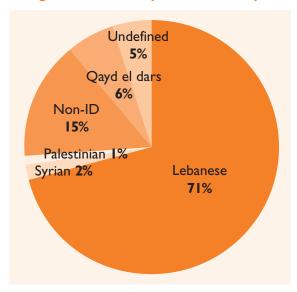
2.2 Nationality and migration

Nationality

Seventy-two percent of the Dom accessed through household questionnaires held Lebanese nationality. The majority of these reported that this was a result of the Lebanese naturalisation law passed by presidential decree 5247 on 20/6/1994. Only 1.5% were Syrian, most living in the Bekaa valley and migrating regularly between Lebanon and Syria.

Over one-fifth of Dom covered by the surveys, some 21%, reported not having any citizenship. Of these, 6% fall under the category of "qayd el dars", meaning that they have applied for Lebanese citizenship but have not yet received approval. Those with "qayd el dars" have been issued a document by the Lebanese government which entitles them to certain rights, including residency in Lebanon, travel between Lebanon and Syria and some government services 25. The remaining 15% are living without official identification documents (non-ID).

Figure 1: Nationality of Dom in sample



Migration

In some countries of the region, the Dom have maintained their semi-nomadic lifestyle. This is not true, however, for most of the Dom in Lebanon. The majority of Dom surveyed during the research, 87% lead sedentary lives, with only 13% reporting any sort of regular migration.

Some members of the community noted that the transition toward sedentary ways was a direct consequence of Dom being granted Lebanese nationality. Among respondents living in Beirut and southern Lebanon, only 15% reported regular migration.

A Dom family from Palestine

Abu Issa Al Mustafa is the head of the Al Mustafa family, a part of the Thaylat tribe. He was born in Palestine in the early 20th century, where his family lived a nomadic life and earned a living through begging and as itinerant agriculture labourers. In Palestine, they used to move from place to place, never staying more than 5 days. The last pace they were in Palestine was Acre, where they left in 1948 and came to Lebanon. They never had Palestinian ID and are not recognised as Palestinian by UNRWA: Abu Issa's son tried to get an UNRWA ID but was refused²⁶.

2.3 Demographic information

2.3.1 Population size in the target area

Prior to the assessment, no reliable data regarding the size of the Dom population in Lebanon was available. Early on, the team of researchers attempted to map the locations of the different Dom communities in Lebanon and estimate their number of inhabitants.

Over three days and with the assistance of local residents, the team conducted a nation-wide mapping of Dom communities and identified various sites in five regions: Beirut, Saida, Tyre, Bekaa and Northern Lebanon. During this exercise, estimates about the number of houses in per site were derived from stakeholders and, in certain instances, community leaders. Upon deeper observation such estimates were revealed to be inflated. In Saida and Tyre, the initial estimates recorded during the mapping phase were scaled down after a physical count.

In Beirut, however, the dense, urban nature of the sites made it impossible to count the number of Dom houses. In this region, therefore, researchers based their estimates on interviews with key stakeholders in the area, namely the NGO Al Tahaddi.

Overall, in light of the difficulties involved in and for lack of time and resources, the researchers decided to refrain from giving a definitive estimation of Dom population in all of Lebanon.

The research was, however, able to generate reliable estimates about the size of the population in the target area. Survey data reveals an average of 5.6 persons per Dom household, compared to 4.2 amongst the Lebanese population²⁷ and 4.5 amongst the Palestinian population²⁸. Regional disparities were identified, with the average household size of the sample in Beirut measuring 6.1; with 5.8 in Tyre and 5.3 in Saida. **Therefore, the estimated size of the Dom population in Beirut and south Lebanon is 3,112.**

Table 3: Estimated size of Dom population in Beirut and southern Lebanon

Region	Estimated number of homes	Average household size ²⁹	Estimated size of Dom population
Beirut	300	6.15	1,844
Saida	187	5.30	990
Tyre	48	5.79	278
Total	535	N/A	3,112

Table 4: Estimated size of Dom population in Beirut and southern Lebanon by site

Region	Average household size in region ³⁰	Site	Estimated total of Dom residences	Estimated number of inhabitants
Beirut	6,15	Hayy el Gharbe Horsh (Sabra)	150 150	922 922
Saida	5,30	Zahrani Msayleh Bayssiriyeh Ketermaya Wadi Zeina Ein el Hilweh	28 23 16 10 50 60	148 122 85 53 265 317
Tyre	5,79	Qasmiyeh Borj el Chimali + surroundings	18 30	104 174
Total			535	3112

2.3.2 Age and gender

Overall, Dom are a young population: 50% of the population reached in the survey is under the age of 14, compared with 25.8% among the Lebanese population³¹. Among Palestinians, 50% of the population are under the age of 25³². while almost 90% of the sample is under the age of 35, compared to 59.6% among the Lebanese population³³.

The total number of Dom children in the sample is 646, amounting to 58% of the surveyed population.

Of the 1,120 Dom individuals covered in 199 household surveys, 54.3% were males and 46.7% were females.



Figure 2: Age distribution by gender of Dom in sample

2.4 Geographical characteristics of Dom communities

The Dom communities identified in the research fall into two categories: those located in urban or semiurban areas and those located in more isolated, rural settings. In both cases, however, Dom communities exhibit rudimentary housing conditions³⁴.

"There is not much mixing between the Dom and other groups. They tend to live clumped together, in one area." – Staff member, Al Tahaddi, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut

Dom living in rural areas tend to be isolated, living far away from other ethnic or national groups. In contrast, those living in more urban areas are often found within or on the fringes of other socially and economically disadvantaged communities. Almost half of the research sites, five out of 11, are situated in or next to Palestinian refugee camps or gatherings. This highlights the extent to which the Dom are often considered to be among the most disenfranchised communities in Lebanon, whereby they are peripheral even to other marginalised communities (refugees). Similarly, Dom living in rural areas become marginalised by virtue of their physical isolation from other communities.

The presence of other ethnic or national groups near to Dom communities may exacerbate the pressures of social and economic discrimination, which will be discussed further in Chapter Three.

Table 5: Profile of research sites

Region	Site	Estimated # of Dom householde	Urban/rural ³⁵	Presence of other groups
Beirut	Horsh (Sabra) Hayy el Gharbe	150 150	Urban Urban	Palestinians, Lebanese Palestinians, Lebanese, Syrian migrant workers
Saida	Zahrani Msayleh Bayssiriyeh Ketermaya Wadi Zeina Ein el Hilweh	28 23 16 10 50 60	Rural Rural Rural Rural Urban Urban	Bedouin None None Lebanese Lebanese, Palestinians Palestinians
Tyre	Qasmiyeh Borj el Chimali + surroundings	18 30	Rural Urban	Palestinians Palestinians, Lebanese
Bekaa	Deir Zeinoun A+B	40	Urban	Lebanese, Bedouin

2.5 Social characteristics of Dom communities

The Dom in Lebanon are far from a homogenous group. As indicated above, the geographical characteristics of a given Dom communities seem to influence social relations between Dom and other groups. At the same time, the research revealed that geography can also impact the levels of social cohesion within the Dom.

The conventional model of social organisation amongst the Dom is family-based and tribal, whereby the family constituted the primary social unit and several families could belong to a single tribe³⁶. In theory, tribes were presided over by a chief, or sheikh, but the presence and the authority of the sheikh has declined in recent years.

"Each family is responsible for itself, the father is responsible for the family. If a daughter gets married, her husband is responsible for her body but her father is responsible for her blood." - Dom father, Deir Zeinoun, Bekaa³⁷

When asked about the Dom governance structures, the most common answer was that "each family fends for itself". In practice, this translates into the most senior man in the family bearing the authority over the family and relations with other families. Within a Dom community, the same men then assume the role of decision-makers, and take part in the diwan.

The diwan

The diwan is type of community gathering that bears both political and social significance in Dom societies. The meetings are a platform for decisions taking, conflict resolution, festival celebration and welcoming relatives home from travel. During a diwan, participating members (mostly men) are invited to the host's residence where they sit in a rectangular shape, often with the most senior members seated together along the shorter end so that they are most visible.

Aside from the discussion, a core element to the diwan is the sharing of coffee, prepared and presented in a unique way that constitutes a social ritual particular to the Dom. Many Dom prefer un-roasted, "green" coffee beans to the standard

roasted kind known for its strong bitter taste³⁸. The host is responsible for preparing coffee for his guests, which means grinding the beans by hand with a pestle and mortar. In the past, the sound of the coffee grinding was a sign of diwan preparation. Using a long-spouted Arabian cafertiere, the host then mixes the ground beans with water and boils the coffee over coals.

As guests arrive and sit down at the diwan, a younger member of the host's family will present them with a round cup, into which a small amount of coffee is poured and offered to the guest. Once the guest has drunk the coffee, they can request more by making a circular movement with the cup in their hand, or instead pass the cup to the host's helper, who will then pass the same cup onto the next guest to arrive and repeat the process.

Despite the presence of informal governance structures, levels of social cohesion in Dom communities vary significantly. One factor that effects social cohesion is the location and urban or rural character of a gathering. For example, larger gatherings in urban settings tend to be characterised by a lack of central internal governance structures due to the existence of multiple and varying social units: families, tribes, and other ethnic, national or religious groups (including Palestinians). These communities tend to be more fragmented, with families relying less on neighbours for support. In contrast, smaller, rural and more isolated communities are often composed of a single family, which increases community cohesion.

Because of the discrimination that the Dom as an ethnic minority group face, their social networks and sources of support are largely confined within their own communities. However, because levels of social cohesion are impacted by geography and vary from one Dom community to another, the extent to which such networks are effective in providing support to Dom adults and children varies from site to site³⁹.

2.6 Access to services

It was widely reported that the Dom presently access more services than in previous generations. Such access, however, hinges on citizenship: those Dom that have Lebanese nationality are increasingly able to access subsidized public services, while those without

"Having nationality has enabled them to work and own property, and to get out of their cage." – Wafa Al Baba, Deputy General Director, Islamic Welfare Association, Beirut⁴⁰

The acquisition of Lebanese nationality has significantly affected the Dom way of life. As discussed above, they have exchanged their traditional itinerant lifestyle in favour of sedentarisation. Meanwhile, having Lebanese nationality has had a positive impact on the Dom's ability to access government services, which is particularly visible when comparing the lives of the younger generations, those born after 1994, to those of their parents and grandparents.

77% of the Dom population surveyed reported never having attended school, compared to 10.3% of the Lebanese population

2.6.1 Education

"All the children go to school now, but in my generation, we didn't. Our parents didn't register us, I don't know why." – Dom woman, 18 years old, Baysiriyeh, Saida⁴¹

In many Dom communities, there is a clear generation gap with respect to education, whereby those children born after the passing of the 1994 nationality law are the first group to access formal education in their communities. Overall, school attendance rates amongst the Dom are staggeringly low: 77% of the population surveyed aged 4 and above reported never having attended school, compared to between 9% and 10.3% of the Lebanese⁴² and 10.2% of Palestinians⁴³.

It is notable that within the entire sample of 1,110 individuals, not a single person was reported as having enrolled in university.

Table 6: Educational attainment of Dom compared to Lebanese 44

Percentage	Never enrolled /Illiterate	Pre-primary	Primary	Secondary ⁴⁵	University
Dom	77	2.7	18.1	1.2	0
Lebanese	9	8.8	28.6	37.8	15.4

"Ten years ago, our family used to be afraid of enrolling children in school. We were afraid we would be arrested, or be refused because people think we are afraid of science. Now, we are trying to enroll our children in school, although there are difficulties. We would like to improve our situation, to not be considered as "Nawar".

— Dom man, Bar Elias, Bekaa⁴⁶

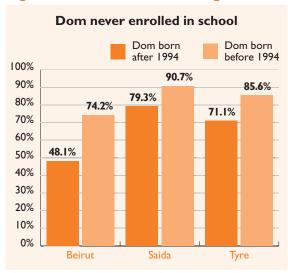
The impact of naturalisation can clearly be seen when rates of school attendance are compared between generations, using 1994 as a benchmark. Amongst those who were born before 1994 (aged 16 years and over) 85% reported never having been to school⁴⁷. Regionally trends for the same age category show

that 74% of Dom in Beirut, 91% in Saida and 86% in Tyre have never attended school.

In contrast, Dom who were born after 1994 (aged 16 or under at the time of this study) are more likely to have attended school than those born before 1994. Amongst children eligible to attend school (4-16 years of age), 68% reported never having entered a classroom. Regionally, Beirut recorded fared better than the South, with 48.1% of under-16s out of school, compared to 79.3% in Saida and 71.1% in Tyre.

Figure 3 illustrates the differences in school attendance by generation and region.

Figure 3: Trends of Dom accessing education



Although the rates of school attendance for under-16s are still very low, the table clearly illustrates that those who were born since the possibility of acquiring Lebanese nationality fare far better in terms of school attendance. Moreover, using the benchmark of those born before and after 1994 indicates that access to education amongst the Dom is much more than a question of a "generation gap" of the type seen

amongst Lebanese, in which a sharp increase of those who have never attended school occurs amongst those aged 50 and older⁴⁸.

In terms of gender, some interesting findings emerged: out of all the females in the sample, 81% had never attended school, compared to 73.6% of males. Yet at the same time, out of the overall sample of those who had not attended school, 48.7% were females and 51.3% were males. This discrepancy can be explained by the fact that there were more males in the sample than females (53.3% compared to 46.7%) Therefore, the surveys indicate that overall, females are less likely to attend school than males.

2.6.2 Healthcare

"We have benefited from government hospitals, that is where our children have gotten vaccinated." - Dom mother, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut⁴⁹

Respondents also reported that Lebanese nationality has enabled the Dom to access public health services. Almost two thirds (63.6%) of household surveys found that Dom go to government hospitals, while 27.2% seek treatment at public clinics and 13% at private doctors 50.

10.2% Other 1.5% Syria/abroad 1% Community member 17% Private doctor Public clinic 27.2% 63.6% Government hospitals 0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% Percent of cases

Figure 4: Sources of medical treatment for Dom in sample

The extent to which Dom access governmental medical services is also identifiable in the shift in places where Dom women give birth. Some stakeholders reported that home birthing was something the Dom did because of their traditions:

"Regardless of the services that are offered to them, the Nawar like to give birth at home. Even those with Lebanese ID don't go to government hospitals because they don't like hospitals. They are used to giving birth on the floor, it's their custom. Even if you offer them

a table, they prefer to give birth on the floor." - A midwife from Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut

Members of Dom communities, however, explained things differently:

"Giving birth at home is a thing of the past. Now, most women go to hospitals." – Dom man, FGD Baysiriyeh, Saida

During FGDs, Dom women and men reported that birthing in Dom communities mostly occurs either with specialized mid-wives or in government hospitals. The fee for a standard delivery at a government hospital is approximately 500,000 LBP⁵¹, compared to 900,000 LBP⁵² in a private hospital. These prices increase if the woman needs a caesarian procedure. Dom women who hold Lebanese citizenship can also be entitled to receive subsidized hospitalization during childbirth, in which case the Ministry of Health would cover between 90% and 95% of costs. This coincides with reports from women in the Dom community who reported they paid 40,000-50,000 LBP⁵³ for delivering in a government hospital. Conversely, those Dom women who did not have Lebanese nationality reported that they could not access hospitals to give birth because of the high costs, and therefore went to specialised mid-wives. But, given the choice, they preferred to use government hospitals.

2.7 Income generating activities

"Why do the women beg? Why don't they just get a job?" - Employee, Bar Elias Municipality, Bekaa

"We are poor because we don't own property here and we can't get jobs because we haven't been educated. But the new generations are going to school since getting nationality." — Dom grandmother, Borj el Shimali, Tyre

Traditionally, the Dom have engaged in types of work that befit their itinerant lifestyles, such as entertainers, craftsmen and informal dentists (see box below). Today some of the more traditional types of work, such as making wooden sieves, drums and rababe 54, seem to be in decline while others are still practiced. Meanwhile, community members often spoke about how working as singers and dancers during Lebanese wedding parties ("zaffe") was popular amongst adolescent boys and young men. Similarly, cases of Dom adolescent girls working as dancers were often mentioned 55.

Informal dentistry amongst the Dom

In his doctoral thesis on a group of Syrian Dom in the Bekaa valley, anthropologist Giovanni Bocci identified that many members of the community worked as informal dentists. This work involves the production and selling of dental services, including fixing false teeth and dentures, to the local population. Bochi argues that the socio-economic and health-related characteristics of the Bekaa valley make it a

particularly lucrative market for such services: alongside lack of financial resources and poor awareness about dental hygiene, residents in the Bekaa have the lowest concentration of formal dental professionals in Lebanon. Moreover, he describes the difference between "formal" and "informal" dental work not in terms of training; rather it is according to the nature of this training: "Dom dentists also undertake a process of training in order to acquire the necessary skills [...] Whereas professional dentists are trained in specific institutions, such as universities and dental schools, the Dom receive their training within the family, the community or in other non-institutional contexts 56". Bochi concludes that "dentistry constituted a form of 'Dom work' endowed with a social and symbolic value, being associated with travelling practices and with a process of learning occurring within the community. 57"

As the Dom in Lebanon cease to engage in more traditional types of work in favor of employment in the contemporary economic arena, low rates of education amongst the Dom create a lack of competitive advantage needed to succeed in the labour market. 56% of Dom respondents over the age of 14 are working 58. Interestingly, this is higher than amongst the Palestinian population, in which only 37% of the same age group are working 59. Of those Dom who are working, the majority are engaged in unskilled labour, such as in agriculture, selling produce or household items, and casual labour.

Table 7: Types of work of Dom in sample (children and adults)

Type of work	Percentage of sample
Casual labour	25.3
Factory work	2.5
Carpenter	3.1
Dentist	0.6
Horse grooming	3.9
Cleaning	19.7
Singing	0.3
Dancing	0.3
Begging	3.1
Other	14.7
Agriculture	3.1
Mechanic	1.4
Metal worker	2.5
Electrician	1.4
Waiter \ waitress	1.7
Bus \ taxi driver	2.5
Peddler	3.6
Vegetable seller	3.9
Municipality Employee	6.7

2.7.1 Women's work

Only one-quarter of the women covered by the surveys, 25.1%, indicated that they were involved in some sort of income-generating activity. The most frequent form of work amongst women was cleaning, with 14.1% of women in the sample engaged in this type of work. Other forms of work reported by women were begging, fruit-picking, and peddling goods.

Even though the overall number of women working is low, it is considerably high in the context of Arab societies in which men are traditionally the breadwinners. One stakeholder reported that Dom women's involvement in income-generating activities was often a source of conflict between couples because the man's authority and pride as provider were compromised:

"For the Gypsies, the women work and this does have an impact on power relations in the family. For example, F, the cleaning lady at Al Tahaddi, is the breadwinner, and this creates conflict with her husband." – Staff member, Al Tahaddi, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut⁶⁰

One particularly sensitive area of women's income generation is their involvement in sex work. It was common for stakeholders to report that Dom women were "known" for working as "prostitutes". Unsurprisingly, due to the hidden and taboo nature of the subject, no Dom community members reported they were involved in sex work. Researchers, however, through field-based observations, are led to suspect that some Dom women are involved in sex work.

Yet it is important to draw a line between, on one hand, acknowledging that Dom women are involved in sex work and, on the other hand, resorting to the negative stereotypes that claim that all Dom women are "prostitutes", or they are culturally predisposed to this work. This research was unable to determine the specific reasons why Dom women become involved in sex work. These reasons are doubtlessly linked to factors that push women of any ethnic, cultural and national background to become involved in such work: poverty, marginalization, discrimination, to name a few. Therefore, this research makes reference to Dom women in sex work alongside an acknowledgement that these women face extremely precarious economic and social conditions that render them particularly vulnerable to involvement in this work.

2.8 Family income

Overall monthly family income levels amongst the Dom in the research sample were low: over 75% of respondents reported family income levels of less than 500,000 LBP, compared to 18.7% amongst the

Lebanese population⁶¹. Again, regional differences were identified, with 63.8% of families in Beirut earning less than 500,000 compared to 77% in the Tyre area and 81.2% in the Saida area.

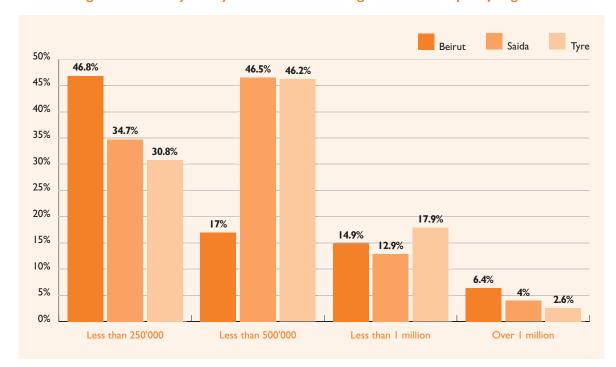
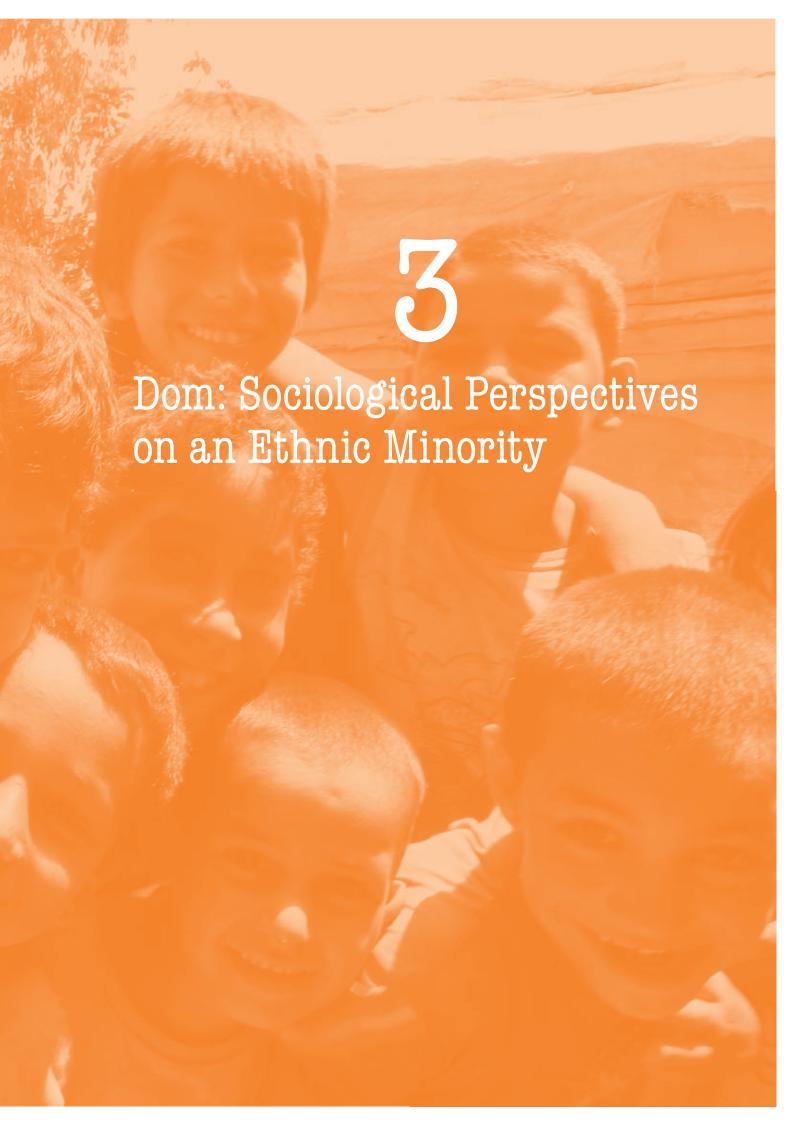


Figure 5: Monthly family income levels amongst Dom in sample by region 62

Such low income levels, which exist as a consequence of low education rates and the high percentage of Dom who are not working and/or engaged in low-paid casual labour, confirm that poverty is widespread amongst the Dom. In turn, this has a direct and detrimental impact on the health, living conditions and psychological wellbeing.

When analysing why the Dom live in such difficult circumstances, some stakeholders did not to speak about poverty. Instead, they attributed the poor conditions in which the Dom live to a "lifestyle choice", in which the Dom chose to live that way because that was their "nature". The following chapter will deal with this claim and others related to how the Dom, as an ethnic minority group, are perceived of by other "majority" groups, and how this influences their own self-perception.





In order to better situate the Dom as an ethnic minority group in Lebanon, the research also sought to view the community through a sociological lens. By adopting two key theories in sociological thought, namely labeling theory and stratification theory, this chapter examines how Dom are perceived by non-Dom, and, in turn, how they perceive themselves.

3.1 "Nawar": constructing and sustaining a category of deviance

Similar to ethnic minority communities around the world, the Dom in Lebanon face discrimination from other groups in the country. Throughout the research, stakeholders articulated numerous examples of prejudiced and stereotyped attitudes about the Dom. One author went as far as claiming that "the Dom are perhaps the most despised people in the Arab world.63"

"The nouri is the last in society." - Bedouin man, Bekaa⁶⁴

An essential background for identifying the protection needs of Dom children is to understand how the Dom are seen as the most inferior group in Lebanon. One of the ways this occurs is through Dom being labeled as "Nawar". Labelling theory, in the sociological discipline, outlines how particular groups in a society are identified as "deviant" because their behaviours and values do not adhere to "social norms" of the wider community. Deviance does not only pertain to criminal acts, but also to "a range of behaviours that are evaluated as deviant and accordingly [are] subjected to social control by individuals, groups and organizations. 65"

Even though labeling theory has its limitations, the model works well to explain how some ethnic groups, such as the Dom in Lebanon, are labeled as deviant by the wider community because their behaviours and values do not adhere to social norms, which in turn exacerbates their marginalisation and stigmatization.

Because the Dom live in dirty conditions, have a history of itinerancy and engage in begging and prostitution, they are labeled as deviant.

Social groups, particularly those in a position of power, are often the ones that decide on the kinds of activities and beliefs that are considered "normal" and "abnormal" in a given context. As one sociologist

states: "social groups create deviance by making the rules whose infraction constitutes deviance, and by applying those rules to particular people and labeling them as outsiders 66". Any custom or idea that falls outside of these social "norms" is deemed to be deviant.

Traditionally itinerant communities have been branded as deviant groups. One historian explains that since the fifteenth century, Gypsy groups have been criminalized and persecuted "as much for their cultural and ethnic identity as for their alleged deviant behaviour⁶⁷". The strongest marker of such behaviour is a refusal to adhere to social and political norms of sedentarisation, meaning not only that Gypsy groups in Europe fell outside the control of the state apparatus, but also they could not be taxed. Deviance then came to be attributed to other aspects of the Gypsy lifestyle, from the types of clothes they wore to the economic and social activities they engaged in. A similar stigma is also attached the Bedouin communities, who are traditional Arab nomads with their own distinctive culture who predominantly live in rural areas and work as casual, seasonal labourers, for example in agriculture 68.

"The Nawar are defined by certain characteristics: bad housing, begging, neglect, marginalisation and poverty." Employee, Handicap Union, Bar Elias, Bekaa⁶⁹

The Dom are seen as not conforming to social norms because they live in dirty conditions, have a history of itinerancy, engage in begging and are rumoured to work as prostitutes. Therefore, they are labeled as deviant by the wider community.

"The Nawar have no social level. They are not educated and do not engage with others. They look modern, they wear the same clothes as you and me. But when you speak to them you realise that they are still back in the old times." - Chief of Paediatric Unit, Sibline Government Hospital, Saida 70

One of the ways the stigma of deviance is perpetuated against the Dom in Arab societies is through the use of the "Nawar" label. This word, loosely translated as "Gypsy", has very derogatory connotations in Arabic. Derivatives of the word "Nawar", such as the adjective "nouri" and the verb "titnawaran" are used as insults in Arabic to evoke selfishness, stinginess, dirtiness and chaos. Bochi also noted this in his anthropological study: "Nawar and nouri were symbolic markers of a particular type of behaviour [...] The comparison with the Nawar evoked an image of disorder (fawda), characterised by social interactions which were perceived as uncommon, frantic and even crazy. "I"

The following statement from a Palestinian employee of a local NGO that works with the Dom, Al Tahaddi, clearly illustrates how prejudices against the Dom are deep-seated and persist in the minds of people even despite their own efforts to challenge it:

"Before I started working here, when I would sit with my family and we saw a dirty child we used to say 'ooh, look at the nouri!" But now, with the NGO we have tried to improve that, to connect with them. My family still makes jokes that I work with the Nawar. After 12 years of working here, I have grown to like them. But if I am outside in a restaurant sitting with one, I feel embarrassed. If someone I know sees me, they will ask what I am doing sitting with a Nouri. But it is my job. 72"

By referring to the Dom as "Nawar" the Dom's existence as marginal and "other" in the social fabric of Lebanese society is perpetuated. Accordingly, the term "Nawar" can be interpreted as a label that functions to inscribe deviance on the Dom, illustrating

how racial and social labeling plays a fundamental role in creating and sustaining stereotypical classifications of underprivileged groups.

A particularly concerning consequence of labelling and marginalization is that it prevents the Dom community from enjoying full citizenship rights. In all nations, citizenship rights are either extended to or retracted from different societal groupings as one of the main mechanisms of social inclusion or exclusion. Political theorist T.H. Marshall argues that "one of the core principles of democracy and equality is that all citizens should have equal access to fulfillment, not just of their basic needs but to the range of practices and the standard of living which are regarded as the norm for the nation."

Marshall distinguishes between three types of citizenship: civic, political and social. Civic citizenship expresses the idea of access to basic freedoms such as the right to vote and freedom of speech and assembly. Political citizenship refers to individuals accessing and being involved in political decision-making, such as the right to hold political office and to influence the political processes of the nation. Social citizenship refers to the idea that all citizens should be able to live according to the "norms" of the broader community and implies the existence of a welfare net to help the economically and socially disadvantaged at times of need. These three axes of citizenship all pertain to the Dom communities but they are not encouraged or facilitated to benefit from them. Even though many Dom do have Lebanese citizenship, their marginalized and deviant status restricts their access and participation in this fundamental social principle enjoyed by the mainstream Lebanese community.

3.2 Perceptions of the wider population

3.2.1 Stereotypes

Alongside the reiteration of the term "Nawar", the research identified several stereotypes about the Dom's behaviour and assumed cultural practices. Through their successive repetition by members of the majority society, these stereotypes are taken as factual, thereby serving to construct the Dom as a socially inferior and deviant group.

Stereotype: Dom are not really Lebanese, even if they have the nationality

To a certain extent, some stakeholders consider that naturalised Dom live a "more civilized life" by sending their children to school, seeking work and trading their tents for more permanent shelters⁷⁴. However, they are still not perceived of as fully belonging to Lebanese society.

"Even those with Lebanese ID will bury their dead in Syria." - Laboratory Technician, Palestinian Red Crescent, Bar Elias, Bekaa

Many stakeholders described the Dom as outsiders despite the fact having Lebanese nationality. This fits in with Sara Ahmed's concept of "strangers" being posited as people who do not belong or are out of place⁷⁵.

One stakeholder, as mentioned in the quote above, chose to illustrate the Dom's status as strangers by claiming that their allegiances lie with Syria not Lebanon, which is why they are assumed to bury their dead there. Interviews with Lebanese Dom discredited this claim: the Dom who reside in Lebanon bury their dead in local Muslim cemeteries. Such discussions illustrate how groups are "excluded from forms of belonging and identity, particularly within the contexts of nationhood.76"

Stereotype: Men don't work, only the women and children work

"They have four, five ,six, seven children, which is in their interests because having more kids means that they will bring more money." - Popular Committee member, Shatila Camp, Beirut⁷⁷

"The men marry 3-4 wives, have 15 children and then send the children to beg." - General Physician, Palestinian Red Crescent, Bar Elias, Bekaa⁷⁸

A recurring assertion made by members Lebanese and Palestinians about the Dom is that Dom men do not work, preferring to idle around all day while they send their wives and children to work, usually begging in the streets or working as prostitutes.

The previous chapter noted the high rates of unemployment amongst the Dom. However, only 25% of women in the sample were working compared with 50% of men. Moreover, out of the total amount of people who weren't working, more were males than females (43.3% compared to 56.7%). With respect to children, 77.4% of Dom children in the survey samples were reported not to be working, although it is possible that children's begging was under-reported by parents⁷⁹.

The data from the surveys indicates that more Dom men are engaged in income-generating activities than women, which contradicts the stereotype expressed by so many stakeholders. The attitudes of non-Dom towards Dom work are no doubt also informed by the types of work that Dom women do, such as begging, cleaning and dancing, which are seen as shameful. One NGO worker in Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut, described that the relationship between Dom women and Lebanese Shia women as no more than "employeremployee", whereby the former cleaned the houses of the latter⁸⁰.

Stereotype: Dom women are sexually availably and shameless

"Nawar women are distinguished by their beautiful hair, and some girls have beautiful voices. Their girls are beautiful. The only ones that don't work as prostitutes are the ugly ones." - Popular Committee member, Qasmiyeh, Tyre

Dom women seem to face a double discrimination by non-Dom in Lebanon: not only are they posited as all the negative aspects associated with "Nawar", but they are also branded as representing all that is unacceptable for women in Arab societies. Where the established ideals of femininity for Arab women include privacy, modesty and shame, the "Nawarriya" (female "Nawar") is perceives to be "easy", sexually available and shameless.

Bochi explains the sexual objectification of Dom women as linked to the types of work that they do, namely begging and dancing, which place the female body in the public eye. Consequently: "the image of the Nawariyya being available for casual sex fell within the categories of 'ayb' [shameful] and 'haram' [forbidden] and clashed with ideas of proper female behaviour.81"

Stereotype: the Dom live the way they do out of choice, not necessity

"The Nawar don't want empowerment, they want money from NGOs. They chose to live the way they do. For example, they would spend \$20,000 on a car but only \$7,000 on a house. A few years ago, they used to make this sort of money dealing guns and smuggling from Syria. But now, I don't know." - Director, Bridges of Love, Beirut⁸²

"One Nawar man had four wives all working in prostitution. With the money they earned, he built himself a big house: 400 metres squared, 3 floors. But he still would sleep outside in a tent in the garden!" - Popular Committee member, Qasmiyeh, Tyre⁸³

Many stakeholders interviewed during the research claimed that the Dom had more money than they admitted or showed. When asked about the source of such funds, interviewees would list illicit activities, which further fit the deviant perception of the Dom as criminals. Claiming that the Dom are dishonest about their earnings is also a way of constructing them as liars, as illustrated by the quote below:

"Don't listen to them. They don't really live like this [in tin and cardboard shacks]. In Syria, they all have castles." – Lebanese teenager, Deir Zeinoun, Bekaa

Implicit in such accusations are that the Dom could financially afford better living conditions but chose to live in squalor because that is part of their "culture". It follows from such a view that the Dom are responsible for living the way they do, and therefore that they bear primary responsibility for changing this.

"The Nawar don't want to integrate, and you will always find them with the poor and vulnerable." – Member of Popular Committee, Borj el Shimali Camp, Tyre⁸⁴

"The Nawar need to change their ways in order for them to improve their living conditions and be able to integrate into society. However, the Nawar do not want to change." – Employee, Lebanese Handicap Union, Bar Elias, Bekaa⁸⁵

"It is necessary for them to change in order for their situation to improve. But they don't think about improvement, they only think about money." — Interview, Palestinian man, Saadnayel, Bekaa⁸⁶

The consensus among stakeholders was that the main factor leading to the difficulties faced by the Dom is their identity as "Nawar", and the lifestyle that comes with it. All stakeholders said that the Dom needed to change the way they live in order to "progress", "develop" or improve their standards of living. Across the board, stakeholders were very unwilling to recognise any structural factors that could be causes for the difficult social and economic realities in which the Dom live.

3.2.2 "Lebanese", "Nawar" or "Dom"?

Many non-Dom stakeholders thought of "being Nawar" as something which was mutually exclusive from "being Lebanese". The reasoning behind this was that once the Dom were granted citizenship, they lost an aspect of their stateless status, which,

in the eyes of stakeholders, was one key marker of "Nawar" identity. Several Dom who participated in the research, however, did not feel that there was a tension between Dom as an ethnic identity and being Lebanese or Syrian as a national identity.

For many stakeholders, it was difficult to perceive "being Dom" as separate from "being Nawar": Dom who do not conform to the preconceived negative ideas associated with "Nawar" were denied the right to an ethnic identity as "Dom".

"We do not have Nawar children here. You cannot say that these families are Nawar. They have Lebanese IDs, they live in normal houses. Their parents don't force them to work in the streets or steal. They are like any other poor Lebanese family." — Staff member, Saida Orphan Welfare Association⁸⁷

Stakeholders perceive "Nawar" identity as something defined by deviant behaviour and practices. They do not recognize "being Dom" in terms of belonging to an ethnic minority group with a language, culture and history. Consequently, perceptions of the Dom by majority communities are polarised: either the Dom are "Nawar" above all else, viewed as fundamentally different, irreversibly "other"; or they are just another group of poor Lebanese. There seems to be no room for a middle ground in which the ethnic specificity of Dom communities can be recognized and, at the same time, their right to belong in Lebanese society asserted.

"I know a guy that works in agriculture, who has relationships with people from other communities. I felt that he had understanding. I didn't feel like he was Nawar." — Laboratory Technician, Palestinian Red Crescent, Bar Elias, Bekaa⁸⁸

The perception of the Dom by majority groups is so resoundingly negative, there seems to be no room for recognition of the Dom as an ethnic group in positive terms. The host of negative connotations attached to the word "Nawar" creates a fixed social expectation of the Dom, to such an extent that there is no "being Dom" without "being Nawar". Dom who do not conform to the negative preconceived ideas associated with "Nawar" are denied the right to an ethnic identity as "Dom".

3.3 Dom perception of self

Following an analysis of how Dom are perceived by other groups in Lebanon, it is equally important to consider how they think of themselves. On this note, stratification theory is a useful tool for analysis. Stratification theory pertains to the idea of a hierarchical social order whereby how people view themselves in relation to others is influenced by their own position in the social structure and in particular by the social setting in which they are located at the time89. This section will look at how the Dom's perception of themselves emerges out of an internalization of their subordinate status in Lebanese society.

"To be Dom means to be poor. If you stop being poor, you can no longer be Dom." - Dom woman, Hayy el Gharbe 90

"You can be rich and be Dom, you can have a castle and still be Dom." - Dom woman, Hayy el Gharbe91

Contrary to the opinions given by Lebanese and Palestinians, there seems to be no consensus amongst those people who self-define as "Dom" regarding what "being Dom" actually means.

As discussed in the previous chapter, there is some sort of broad narrative amongst the Dom indicating common history and origins, namely, the story of Zier Salem and Jassas. The language Domari is also taken as a marker of cultural identity. But apart from those, there seems to be no definitive practice that is considered de facto Dom.

"It is possible to combine integration into Lebanese society with being Dom. But integration is more important." - Dom man, Baysiriyeh, Saida

"We don't live a complete life, [we know] that we live like dogs." - Dom woman, Deir Zeinoun, Bekaa Valley⁹²

One group of women suggested that being Dom was linked to the clothes you wore, and that if you stopped wearing the long, colourful abayas then you would cease being Dom. In another incident, researchers inquired about the practice of the diwan, and whether or not that could be considered as a classic example of Dom culture. But the men in the

discussion maintained that other groups, like the Bedouin, also held diwans, and therefore that these could not be defined as something exclusively "Dom".

"The world is advancing, why would I want to stay Dom?" – Dom man, Baysiriyeh⁹³

"They understand how other people perceive of them. They will say 'I'm Nawar, I know I'm at the bottom'. They have internalised their subordinate status." -Doctor, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut94

Unfortunately, the majority of Dom who participated in the research seen to have internalised the stereotypes and prejudices that have been constructed about them by the majority communities. These have come to constitute self-described Dom identity, whereby when Dom adults and children were asked about "what is means to be Dom", they responded by listing the same negative characteristics expressed by Lebanese and Palestinians. Very rarely did researchers come across a Dom who gave an alternative, positive narrative or perception of "being Dom" or "Dom-ness". Rather, Dom appear to accept their lot with a passive shame, as illustrated in the story below:

"I was walking through the neighbourhood with a Nawar boy. A Lebanese boy came past us and said to me 'why are you walking with this Nawar'. And the boy I was walking with just turned his head in a short of shame. He didn't react in any defensive way or challenge the Lebanese boy. He just accepted it." - Doctor, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut95

The lack of self-ascribed positive attributes of Dom identity means that many Dom have no pride for their identity. This translates into a desire to move away from "being Dom": in order to avoid prejudices, many Dom favour increased integration into mainstream society by adopting the language of the country they live in 96. Dom adults expressed that they do not want their children to face similar discrimination that they have faced due to their identity, and therefore they do not pass on those behaviours and traditions that would mark children out as being Dom.

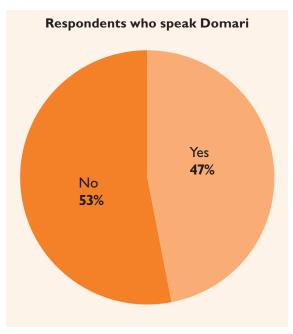
"I learned Domari from my family, but this generation is just better off getting an education." - Dom man, Baysiriyeh 97

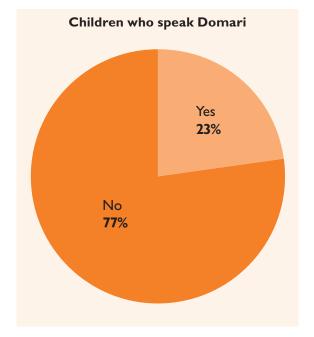
"We don't want our children to speak Domari because we have progressed." – Dom man, 27, Hayy el Gharbe98

A key trend that indicates the shift away from markers of Dom identity is the increasing tendency among parents choosing *not* to teach their children how to speak Domari. Domari is linked to a rejected

identity, and is therefore seen as an undesirable trait to foster in children. Of the sample surveyed during the research, amongst respondents to the survey (adults), those who didn't speak Domari only slightly outnumbered those who did, 53% compared to 47%. However, amongst Dom children, over three-quarters of the sample, 77%, did not speak Domari.

Figures 6 and 7: Percentage of sample who speak Domari





"We have tried to do as much as we can to make sure they don't live like us." – Dom woman, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut⁹⁹

The decision by Dom parents to not teach their children Domari can be perceived of as a protection mechanism through which Dom parents hope to shield their children from the discrimination they themselves have faced because of their ethnic identity. Another protection mechanism identified during the research was the tendency of youth choosing to describe themselves as "Lebanese" or "Palestinian" instead of Dom, thereby explicitly attempting to adopt an alternative identity in an effort to avoid discrimination.

"We would change our lifestyle and live in houses. We would do anything to get out of this joura (hole)." – Dom woman, Baysiriyeh 100

The voices from members of the Dom community expressed above indicate that, far from the prevailing perceptions amongst Lebanese and Palestinians, the Dom in Lebanon are not clinging to some "traditional" identity. By the same token, they are eager to achieve a better standard of living, even if this means rejecting aspects of their own culture. Above all else, the Dom that participated in the assessment articulated a strong desire to move away from the stigma that constitutes them as a debased "other" in Lebanon, and make steps towards achieving assimilation and acceptance in Lebanese society.





Against the background of the Dom's social and economic situation in Lebanon, the Tdh/Insan assessment identified the following needs of and risks faced by Dom children.

4.1 Extreme povery

"My husband brings home 850,000 LL per month. But that is not enough for us and our 3 children. Sometimes, we have to take loans from the local shop." - Dom woman, 32, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut

As seen Section 2, family income levels amongst the Dom in the research sample were very low: over 76% of respondents reported family income levels of less than 500,000 LBP compared with 18.7% amongst the Lebanese population 101. Of greater concern was the high proportion of families living in extreme poverty by both international and Lebanese standards.

For example, in Beirut, 46.8% of respondents reported household income of less than 250,000 LBP¹⁰² per month. With an average family size of 6.1, this means that each person is subsisting on 41,000 LBP¹⁰³ per month, amounting to 1,350 LBP, or \$0.91 per day. This is less than the international poverty line set by the World Bank at U.S. \$1.25/person/day¹⁰⁴.

Similarly, 34.7% of Dom living in Saida and 30.8% of Dom in Tyre, are subsisting on U.S. \$1.06 and \$0.96 per person per day respectively.

Over 76% of the Dom sample are living below the lower poverty line in Lebanon, compared to 8% amongst the wider Lebanese population 101 and 6.6% amongst Palestinians.

These figures are particularly alarming given that the lower poverty line for the Lebanese population is set at U.S. \$2.6/person/day 106, and for the Palestinians at \$2.17/person/day107. Taking those figures as a benchmark, over 76% of the Dom sample are living below the lower poverty line in Lebanon, compared to 8% amongst the wider Lebanese population 108 and 6.6% amongst Palestinians 109.

Table 8: Percentage of Dom in sample living under extreme poverty line (within households where total income is U.S. \$333.3 or less)

	Average number of people in household	Amount/person /month (US \$)	Amount/ person /day (US \$)	% of households living in this income bracket
Beirut	6.2	53.8	1.8	63.8
Saida	5.3	62.9	2.1	81.4
Tyre	5.8	57.5	1.9	76.9

"Adults get sick of not making enough money to feed their children." – Dom father, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut

Poverty in and of itself is not a child protection concern. However, families living in poor situation are far more vulnerable to suffer from protectionrelated concerns, as lack of financial resources can directly impact a child's ability to access quality health and education services. It can also exacerbate social tensions, whether within the family or the larger social unit, and therefore puts children at risk of encountering situations of violence, neglect and/or being forced into exploitative and dangerous child labour practices to support their vulnerable families.

4.2 Lack of legal basis for residence

"If I had my project, I would buy the land so we can live on it without worrying." – Boy, Qasmiyeh, Tyre¹¹⁰

Many Dom children and adults who participated in the FGDs spoke about a fear of being thrown off the land they were currently living on. Data collected during the surveys indicated that over two-thirds of the sample were living on land owned by other people, mostly third parties or the State or municipality, often illegally. The vast majority of respondents, 81%, reported that they did not pay rent.

For many Dom, the fear of eviction stems from previous experience. Most Dom over the age of 20 have memories of being moved from plot to plot by Lebanese authorities. This pattern changed after the 1994 naturalisation law, and several Dom reported that since acquiring citizenship, they have been able to live one place uninterrupted by the police.

"Before we had nationality, the state used to move us around more, but now they let us be." – Dom grandmother, 53, Tyre

However, for other Dom the threat of expulsion still looms heavily. One man in Qasmiyeh told researchers that the community there is facing an eviction order from the court, but that they did not know what stage the process had reached and when, if ever, it would be enacted 112.

Case study: The eviction of Dom from Borj el Shimali camp

During the course of the research, an entire Dom community (40 households) was evicted from their place of residence, within the limits of Borj el Shimali Palestinian camp, near Tyre.

In 2008 the Borj el Shimali Popular Committee, the governing authority, decided to forcefully remove the Dom living within the camp. Committee members explained to Tdh/Insan the reasons behind this decision:

"The Nawar children don't go to school and spend all day on the streets. When Palestinian children

would see them, they would not want to go to school either. They were a bad influence on our children. 113"

Committee members also expressed their anger concerning incidents of Dom women arrested for prostitution telling police that they were from Borj el Shimali. For the Popular Committee, this caused problems both in terms of their relationship with the Lebanese Police and regarding the reputation of camp residents on the whole.

In the two years following the eviction, a small number of Dom moved back along fringes of Borj el Shimali while others settled in surrounding areas; such as a gravel depot and across the street from the camp. In September 2010, the Popular Committee again forced the Dom residents to leave the camp. Their motive was reiterated by one Committee member: "I do not want to live next to sex workers."

At the same time, Committee members also reported that their decision was being met with resistance from some Palestinian camp residents, who condemned the Dom's eviction both on humanitarian grounds and in terms of personal interest 115.

Despite inklings of public discontent, the Popular Committee went ahead with their plan, and many Dom families were forced out of the camp, some to the same gravel depot. where the previous wave of Dom evacuees settled. At the time of writing this report, only a handful of families remained in the camp, biding their time until they faced eviction once again.

Because Dom communities are based on land that is not theirs they have little awareness of and even less involvement in legal decisions that directly affect them. Many expressed constant fear of authorities showing up on their doorstep and forcing them to move. This situation creates an anxiety that permeates the family unit, with consequences on Dom children.

4.3 Absence of official identification documents

Some 15.9% of Dom accessed through the household surveys do not possess identification documents (non-ID), while a further 5.7% reported being in a situation of "gayd ed dars", in which their application for nationality is under study 116. Combining these two figures indicates that over one-fifth of Dom surveyed have no form of valid identification.

Case: Non-ID Dom children who are entitled to Lebanese nationality

Faiza, from Syria, lives in Hayy el Gharbe with her husband and two boys aged 4 and 2. Her husband is Lebanese and she has official marriage papers. However, her children are yet to receive official paperwork due to administrative processing. She admitted not actively following up because of uncertainty about the process. Researchers attempted to give her advice, to outline the steps she needed to take, but she expressed reluctance to start the process 117.

"If you're Lebanese, you can get subsidised access to government hospitals. But not if you have qayd el dars."

- Dom man, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut

Of particular concern, however, are several cases of Dom children without identification documents whose parents are Lebanese citizens. Parents cited lack of birth certificates issued to children born at home or in midwives' residencies and difficulty with local registration offices as factors that discourage them from following up,

Low rates of education and high illiteracy rates among parents could also be factors that discourage parents from pursuing the administrative process on behalf of their children. For example, a family was identified in Keyermaya in which both the mother and the father had Lebanese citizenship while none of their three children were registered. The young mother was completely illiterate and did not know her own age or those of her children.

4.4 Rudimentary shelters

"If I had my project, I'd build houses, or fix them up with concrete and stone." - Boy, 9 years old, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut¹¹⁸



Dom house, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut

The vast majority of Dom families live in make-shift shelters built out of scrap materials, including corrugated iron wood, cardboard and plastic sheeting. 77% of households have roofs made of corrugated iron, wood or cardboard, while 76% of households have walls made out of the same materials. Such percentages are particularly high, when compared with shelters amongst the Palestinian population, in which 8% of households live in shelters where the roof and/or walls are made from corrugated iron, wood or asbestos 119.

While most houses (83%) have concrete flooring, some shelters exhibit severe structural damage, including holes in the roof and external walls. These houses are often not fully protected from elements such as harsh sun in summer and heavy rain in winter; and as a consequence, Dom children are vulnerable to seasonal illnesses.

Description of a Dom home

"The living conditions in these homes are very rudimentary. The house is made out of wooden palates covered by tarpaulin and zinc. Earthen floors are covered by transparent sheets of plastic. In S's house, there was no furniture, no table or chairs, except for a small old television on a box. Several mattresses were stacked against one of the walls. S's wife made tea using a gas burner, which we drank sitting on the floor."

Excerpt from research diary, 24/6/10, Siqque, Ain el Hilweh, Saida

Table 9: Percentage of Dom shelters according to material of roof and walls 120

Type of material	Roof	Walls
Corrugated iron	53.4%	42.4%
Wood	36.4%	36.1%
Cardboard	16.5%	10.7%
Concrete	9.2%	24.9%

Community attitudes towards their housing situation are overwhelmingly negative; adults in all six FGDs expressed a desire for better shelter. Children echoed their parents' aspirations in five out of seven FDGs, stating that improving their houses was a priority. In fact, fixing houses was the most the commonly-cited need by children.

In addition to the risk of illness, the fragile or poor shelter situation within Dom communities expose children to household dangers and injury.

"I had a daughter who died when she was 14 because she was electrocuted." – Dom man, 40, Hayy el Gharbe. Beirut¹²¹

The rudimentary conditions of shelters led to children reporting a host of dangers inside homes, including electrocution and burns. Out of all of the dangers listed by children during the FGDs, electrocution received the most frequent mention. In a FGD amongst boys in Beirut, all nine participants had been electrocuted. In a FGD in Zahrani, four of nine boys also said they had been electrocuted.

The dire shelter situation in Dom communities was confirmed by Première Urgence (PU) staff following a series of visits to Dom communities. In the conclusion of their field report, PU states: "All the sites present the criteria of Highly Urgent Shelter Needs: at least two main defaults in structure, weatherproofing or hygiene. 122"

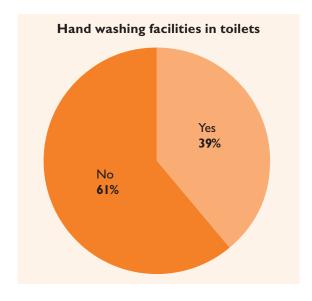
4.5 Inadequate water and sanitation infrastructure

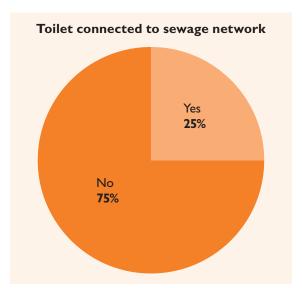
Over one-third of the research sample reported having running water in the home. Meanwhile a little over half (51%) reported having to purchase drinking water, thereby considerably adding to the family's expenses.

"You can see the environment we live in: the water, the electricity, the houses. The conditions are difficult." – Dom man, Baysiriyeh 123

While approximately half the sample reported having toilets inside the home, 73% of these are not connected to a sewage network. While most are pit latrines, 10% report "outside" waste disposal. Of particular concern is that 61% of Dom toilets to not include hand-washing facilities.

Figures 8 and 9: Percentage of Dom households where toilets have hand washing facilities in toilets and are connected to sewage network





In an effort to generate precise data on the water and sanitation situation in Dom communities, Tdh and Insan requested technical support from PU, an internationally recognized water and shelter specialist, to evaluate the quality of the drinking water at some Dom gatherings. In two out of three sites, PU's water analysis registered varying degrees of fecal contamination due to improper drainage of black waters.

Excerpts from Première Urgence field report

"Zahrani, Saida

Despite the insecurity of the construction, hygiene seems quite well maintained inside the shelters. Each house have a separated bathroom and toilet, usually a simple room with a concrete slab and hole, sometimes faience Arabic toilets, with direct evacuation to a cesspit. The kitchen is usually a very simple room, with no sink, no water tap, sometimes a simple hole in a corner for water evacuation.

There is water supply network to some shelters only and people collect water from a wild connection on the electric plant water network. The supply point is inside vegetation, not protected, close to the muddy ground and very likely to be contaminated: a water sample shows a low quantity of fecal contamination. There is no sewage system and all waste water and

sewage go directly into the small creek crossing the land, directly into the sea. The hygiene awareness level seems quite low regarding the evacuation of black waters, though the cleanliness of the shelters is very correct and the small cattle management around the houses is also quite proper on this aspect.

Msayleh, Saida

The watsan situation seems better [than in Zahrani]: water is supplied by an illegal connection on a municipality pipe and provides correct water, from a collective tap. No contamination was registered at this point. Waste waters are evacuated directly down the hill.

Qasmiyeh, Tyre

The shelters are connected illegally and though the population seems to trust its quality, a high level of contamination was noticed.

Conclusion

All the sites present the criteria of Highly Urgent Shelter Needs: at least two main defaults in structure, weatherproofing or hygiene. Water and sanitation are also problematic, especially the sewage issue."

4.6 Health concerns

Poor water and sanitation conditions in Dom communities have a direct impact on the health of community members, particularly children.

4.6.1 Health problems caused by poor shelter and unsanitary environments

Researchers found a consensus amongst medical professionals that the majority of health problems faced by the Dom were consequences of poor living conditions and other environmental factors, such as living in proximity to garbage dumps or polluted rivers. These environmental risk factors exacerbate health problems during change of seasons. Winter's cold leads to pulmonary infections; summer's heat means more frequent electricity cuts that lead to food spoilage, and therefore increased cases of food poisoning and gastroenteritis ¹²⁴.

"Our children get sick from the dirty surroundings. In the summer, they suffer form the sun and heat, and in the winter form the cold." – Mother, 33 Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut

According to several doctors who treat the Dom, the illnesses faced by Dom children are not very different to other communities with socio-economic problems and limited access to services. These include upper respiratory infections; diabetes; chronic ear infections; problems related to physical labour (musculoskeletal problems); diseases transmitted due to close living quarters (i.e. scabies) ¹²⁵. Other diseases include congenital diseases and blood diseases, which are common due to marriage within the family unit ¹²⁶.

4.6.2 Health problems caused by lack of parental awareness regarding prevention and follow-up

Another factor that medical professionals identified as contributing to Dom children's illnesses was the lack of awareness amongst parents about the measures required to prevent illnesses or to follow-up on treatment.

"The most common illnesses found among Nawar children are gastroenteritis and pneumonia. But these are not uncommon in other children as well. The major difference among Dom children is that the cause of their sickness is often parental neglect." – Chief of Paediatrics Unit, Sibline Government Hospital, Saida 127

"The after-effects of broken limbs are worse because the community does not follow up on injuries. For example, they will not do physio-therapy, and if you write a prescription, they do not buy it." – Doctor, Palestinian Red Crescent, Bar Elias, Bekaa 128

Many members of Dom communities expressed reduced awareness of infectious diseases as linked to basic sanitation. For example, the bulk of the field research took place in August and September, when Lebanon was in the midst of a severe heat wave and a country-wide outbreak of conjunctivitis. During this period, many families visited by researchers had members suffering from severe conjunctivitis, and often people would ask the researchers how they had gotten the disease and how it could be treated. Meanwhile, severe lack of awareness contributes to the misinformation about the cause of illnesses: one woman in her fifties stated that the conjunctivitis outbreak was the consequence of foreign armies testing biological weapons in Lebanon.

The story of Khadija: case of medical complication (malnutrition) and death due to lack of parental awareness, improper follow-up, financial hardship and prejudice

While filling out surveys in the small, isolated Dom community near Ketermaya, Saida, researchers came across 10-month old Khadija. Lying limp against her mother's breast, they were alarmed by Khadija's emaciated appearance and listless expression.

Khadija's parents said that the girl had been ill since birth and at five days old, she had had a colostomy, They explained that the Doctor had told them that when she was eight months, they should return her to the hospital so that she could have another operation, the second of the three that were required to treat her problem. But the family was afraid of bringing her back for the second operation because they had been told that it would cost 3 million LBP (\$2,000), an astronomical amount for a family of 9 who live on the father's earnings of 500,000 LBP (\$333) per month as a casual labourer.

In accordance with Tdh/Insan's research principles which mandated researchers to respond to any high-risk protection cases uncovered during the research, the team immediately contacted the girl's doctor, Dr. G. Within 36 hours, Khadija was admitted to the Saida Government hospital to receive emergency feeding for her malnutrition: when she entered the hospital she weighed just 3.5 kgs, a mere third of what an average baby her age should weigh.

Over the next month, the research team kept close contact with Khadija's family and Dr. G through telephone calls and personal visits. The prognosis was that she needed to get her body weight up to at least 7kgs before she could undergo the next operation. After a few days, her parents were instructed to feed her with vitamin-enriched formula she was released from the hospital, only to return a week later because of severe vomiting. This time, Khadija underwent a blood transfusion.

Again, after 10 days, she was released from hospital, and her parents were given the same instructions to feed her and increase her weight. Upon both releases, the parents were constantly preoccupied with how they would be able to pay the hospital fees. Being a Lebanese citizen, 85% of Khadija's hospitalisation costs were covered by the Ministry of Health. The remaining amount, however, represented a sizeable sum for the family, and more than once the father contacted local NGOs to assist with the costs. (The Hariri Foundation offered support.)

On Friday, 29 October 2010, Khadija was admitted to hospital for the third time due to vomiting and breathing problems. After a few hours in intensive care, Khadija passed away in the hospital.

A week later, researchers interviewed the Doctor in charge of Khadija at the Saida government Hospital, Dr. L, to inquire about the care of death. "Khadija died of dehydration", said Dr. L. "Her mother is stupid, so stupid! She has no idea how to take care of a child [...] The Nawar have no awareness, they are not educated, health is not important to them. They are known for this: a Nawar is a Nawar."

The story of Khadija is a poignant illustration of the various structural and circumstantial factors at play in the process of dealing with children's illnesses in Dom communities: an initial medical condition is exacerbated by lack of parental awareness; follow-up is not sought because of financial hardship; public services providers display discriminatory attitudes which, in turn, negatively influences the family's willingness to seek future services.

While Khadija's story highlights the challenges and obstacles facing Dom children, it also alludes to ways that these can be overcome: raising awareness amongst Dom parents about health-related issues; providing financial support to families in hardship while tackling the root causes of poverty; identifying and addressing prejudiced attitudes amongst service providers. By learning from Khadija's story, it is possible to ensure that Dom children receive the care and protection they need from all parties.

4.6.3 Maternal health

Birthing and pre-natal care

As discussed in the previous chapter, since being granted Lebanese citizenship, Dom women increasingly opt for giving birth in hospitals instead of at home. Nevertheless, home birthing still occurs in Dom communities, particularly among those without Lebanese ID. Dom women reported that in the majority of cases of home birthing, midwives are present. Nevertheless, there are a series of risks associated with home birthing, as one midwife explains:

"They don't know what the risks are. If they have low blood pressure, then they are in danger of haemorrhaging). They are unaware of the possibility of this. They are at risk of the child arriving legs first, or of having the chord wrapped around its neck. Sometimes, the effects of these are only identifiable later in the child's life." – Staff member, Al Tahaddi dispensary, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut¹²⁹

Additionally, ante-natal care is practically non-existant amongst Dom women. This means that women may not be aware of dangers to the child during pregnancy, including low blood pressure, sun stroke, malnutrition, and smoking. Moreover, lack of pre-natal care increases the probability of complications during birth because the mother will not be aware of any underlying conditions that could impact on the labour. It also increases the probability of premature birth, which, according to one midwife, is common amongst the Dom ¹³⁰.

Due to the size of the research sample, it was impossible to generate any data about infant or maternal mortality rates. It is acknowledged, however, that incidents of home birthing in the absence of a skilled health professional, combined with general lack of awareness about health-related issues and an absence of prenatal and post-natalcare, create conditions of vulnerability for new mothers and newborns that, at their most severe, cause death [3].

Sexual and reproductive health

Abortion occurs, both desired and undesired. For the former, they go to the pharmacy and buy well known pills, "Sitotech", which are intended for stomach pain. For latter, there are many reasons, for example if there is a health problem with the mother that is left untreated.

"People have wrong thoughts about things like pap smear tests and checking for breast lumps because they are ignorant about these things. Men are afraid of intrauterine devices (IUD), but we try to make them understand that it is not dangerous for them." — Staff member, Al Tahaddi dispensary¹³²

Similar to children's health issues mentioned above, limited awareness is also a source of concern in terms of sexual health. As happens in many other societies, prevailing social gender ideals and expectations seem to influence people's attitudes towards contraception. Dr. Dahan of Al Tahaddi Medical Center in Beirut reported that Dom men were "too embarrassed" to use condoms, therefore placing the responsibility of contraception on the woman 133. At the same time, there is a lack of awareness about sexually transmitted infections (STIs), which leads to community members focusing solely on contraception and not taking STIs into consideration.

4.6.4 Micronutritional defficiency

As discussed in above, the prevalence of large families and low incomes in Dom communities means that resources are sparse in the family unit, particularly concerning food. On several occasions, respondents reported not having enough money to purchase enough food for their children, particularly in families where mothers did not have enough milk to feed her infants and were obliged to resort to formula feeding.

"Our children have food, but sometimes we cannot give them as much as we want to." – Father, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut

"Sometimes our children sleep without eating." – Mother, Horsh (Sabra), Beirut

In order to feed many mouths on a tight budget, many Dom parents resort to cheap food that can satisfy hunger but has limited nutritional value ¹³⁴. Similar to other communities in the region, the Dom eat their main meal in the late afternoon, usually a dish of rice and, if available, meat. Yet the rest of the time, Dom children were observed eating "junk-food": ice-cream, crisps, flavoured nuts and sugary carbonated drinks. From observations, Dom children's diets are lacking in fresh fruit and vegetables that provide the vitamins and minerals necessary to ensure healthy growth.

Though the BMI of children was measured as part of the household surveys, the samples per age group were too small to allow for statistical analysis. The issue of poor diets, however, came up in several interviews with stakeholders and community members, with one doctor citing that a common concern amongst Dom populations was anaemia caused by iron deficiency 135. Moreover, researchers observed

amongst the Dom stunted growth among adolescents and children, which is a consequence of micronutrient deficiency.

Other consequences of improper nutrition are less visible, such as the risk of resulting in poor cognitive and psychomotor development amongst children 136.

4.7 Low educational attainment

"Before, the Dom didn't care about education. But now, education is everything. We have become more open." - Man, FGD Baysiriyeh, Saida

School attendance amongst Dom children is staggeringly low. Despite the fact that access to education has improved for younger generations born since the aforementioned law of 1994, the vast majority, 68% of school aged children in the research had never attended school.

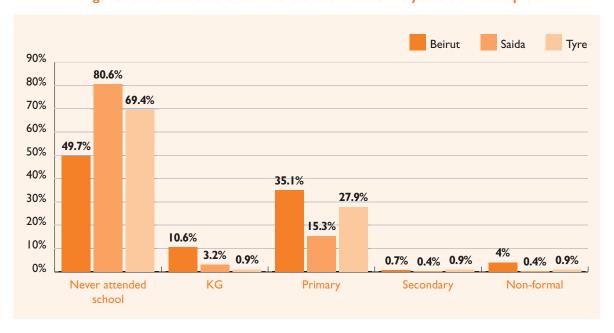


Figure 10: Educational attainment of Dom under 18 years old in sample

Such low rates of educational attainment have been identified in similar populations, for example the Roma of Europe. For example, UNICEF notes that in one Eastern European country, a 1992 study found that only half of Roma children aged 7 to 10 attended school on a regular basis and one third had never attended or had dropped out 137.

From a child's perspective, discrimination is an important reason why Dom children do not go to school.

4.7.1 Reasons for not attending school

"Learning is very difficult here. Some parents do not know how to read and write, and those that do don't take the time and effort to teach their children." — Doctor, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut 138

When researchers asked Dom parents to give the reasons why their children were not attending or not remaining in school, 78% of respondents stated that school fees were the main barrier to education.

while almost one-third of respondents claimed that it was because parents did not encourage their children. Moreover, 18% said that distance to schools had a negative impact on children's education and 10% said that children were not registered because they are non-ID¹³⁹.

"We need more schools. Many children here don't go to school because they don't have the money." – Dom boy, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut 140

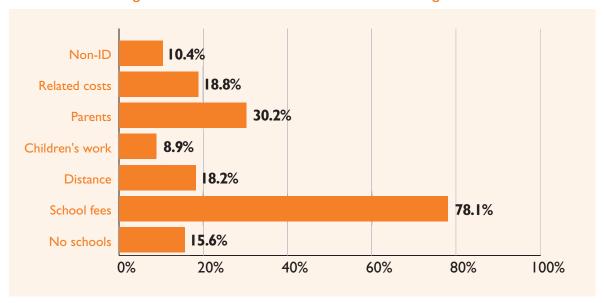


Figure II: Reasons for Dom children not attending school

"I don't like going to school because fellah (non Dom) boys hit me when the teacher is out of the classroom." – Dom boy, Zahrani, Saida¹⁴¹

Interestingly, Dom parents did not mention discrimination by other students as an obstacle to their children's schooling, but this was cited by some children. During FGDs with boys in Qasmiyeh and Zahrani, participants said that they did not like school because they were hit by their peers while the teacher was out of the room, and the problem was never addressed. Therefore, from a child's perspective, discrimination is an important reason why Dom children so not go to school.

"We know that getting an education means they will get better jobs and improve their situation. Education is the foundation." – Dom man, Baysiriyeh, Saida

Despite the very low rates of school attendance, education was constantly mentioned as a top priority by both children and adults. In all the FGDs with parents, education was a topic of conversation, and children in five out of seven FGDs also cited it as a priority. Similarly, when survey respondents were asked to list the main needs of children in their communities, 68% cited education; making it the most commonly cited need.

While there is much work to be done to improve schooling in Dom communities, most Dom consider education as a top priority and will strive for their children to access the classroom.

4.8 Limited access to safe play spaces

Apart from facing barriers to education, Dom children are limited in their access to safe forms of recreation and play.

"Sometimes we play on the street but we are scared of the cars. It would be nice to have a better place to play." - Dom girl, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut 142

"The Children here have a distorted childhood. They do manage to play and have fun with simple things like marbles, but they don't have toys because this is not a priority for the family." - Staff member, Al Tahaddi Dispensary, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut 143

Young children are often left to play in the spaces surround their homes, which contain a host of risks. In communities that were near a river or canal, children enjoyed swimming or playing in the water, even if it was contaminated. In Deir Zeinoun in the Bekaa, the children were fond of playing in a nearby river that was polluted with garbage and sewage from urban areas upstream. In urban areas, other dangers were present: nearby alleys were often cramped and littered with debris such as glass.

Communities' proximity to main roads was often raised by Dom parents as a risk that their children faced. One of the main concerns amongst children who participated in FGDs was the fear of getting hit by cars; a well-founded fear considering that one doctor

claimed that car accidents were one of the main causes of death amongst Dom children in his area 144.

Often, young children play unsupervised, which often results in them playing dangerously or violently. On several occasions during the assessment, researchers observed children playing with fire-crackers and matches, or using sticks and stones to hit each other. Such observations were confirmed by Dom children themselves, many of whom said that they were often scared of hurting themselves while playing, either on debris in the area or because of other children's aggression.

"The youth here have problems with cigarettes, hashish and pills." - Dom mother, Beirut

"Some youth get into problems with the police because they carry knives and drink. Their hearts are good, but their conditions have made them bad." - Dom father, Beirut 145

For adolescents, the lack of engaging and constructive recreational opportunities means that youth are more likely to become involved in delinquent behaviour, including stealing or drug use. A handful of parents openly mentioned that drug use amongst adolescents was a problem in their community.

4.9 High incidence of violence and neglect

Throughout the assessment, researchers witnessed many incidents of violent behaviour by Dom parents and children, as well as a predominance of negligent attitudes on behalf of parents regarding their children's daily safety and well-being.

4.9.1 Violence

"We see lots of violence towards children, whether in the form of hitting or rough treatment. Sometimes this is extreme, with the child suffering broken bones or teeth." - Doctor, Hayy el Gharbe 146

Violent behaviour is common in Dom communities. Ranging from mild slapping to aggressive outbursts of kicking and shoving, such violence occurs between parents and children and between children. Incidents of violence between adults were also reported, often due to conflicts between tribes and families, which sometimes result in death 147.

"Domestic violence is a problem in this community. Many children come to school with bruises." - Staff member, Al Tahaddi, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut

"Sometimes we have to hit our children to make them go to school." - Dom mother, Qasmiyeh, Tyre 148

Researchers observed Dom parents behaving violently towards their own and other children. Often, this was seen as a form of discipline whereby physical violence was used to punish; for example if a child refused to go to school.

Case: Dom adult encouraging violent behaviour in a child

"After we had finished with the children's FGDs, we gave out boxes of juice to the participants and were packing the material into the Tdh/Insan car. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw a young boy, aged 8 or 9 years, aggressively throw a box of juice at another boy, who ran away. Then the boy who had run away returned with an adult man, who I presumed was his father. The man approached the first boy who had thrown the juice, grabbed his hands and held them up over his head so he could not move. Then he started shouting at the second boy: "Hit him! Hit him!" The second boy obeyed the instructions, and violently struck the immobilised child. Eventually, the child managed to wriggle out of the man's grasp and scampered away, ducking down behind the car. The man angrily picked up rocks and threw them in his direction, although the boy managed to dodge them as they bounced off the car door."

Excerpt from researcher's diary, Qasmiyeh, Tyre, 02/09/2010

"To be happy, we need to have people that don't hit each other." – Dom boy, Zahrani 149

"A lot of children here are injured by other children, they throw rocks at each other." – Father, Zahrani, Saida 150

Child-to-child violence is also frequent; Dom children were observed playing together roughly or aggressively. As often happens when children are victims of violent behaviour from adults, they reproduce such violence with their peers, thereby perpetuating a cycle of violence which persists from generation to generation. One stakeholder also reported that self-harm, in the form of cutting, amongst adolescents, particularly boys, was also identified, which is another manifestation of the endemic nature of violence in Dom communities.

4.9.2 Neglect

In the context of large families with many children, most of whom are not enrolled in school and therefore spend all day playing in or around the community, Dom parents did not seem to pay much attention to the types of games or the places where their children

were playing. Though parents often voices concern about their children playing near main roads for fear that they are hit by cars, no system of monitoring children's whereabouts was observed.

Case: Dom mother's neglectful treatment of an infant

"During this discussion, one of the women was breast-feeding her daughter, When she stood up abruptly, the young baby fell to the ground and started crying. Then the woman started shouting at Khadira, the 16 year-old, to take care of her."

Excerpt from researcher's diary, Deir Zeinoun, 05/07/2010

When researchers inquired about the existence of informal childcare networks in the community (to ensure that children were looked after while parents were at work), participants admitted that no such networks were in place, and children were often left alone without parental supervision. Both stakeholders and community members recognised that lack of supervision makes children particularly vulnerable to accidents, such as falling off balconies or being electrocuted.

Another indicator of parental neglect was that many Dom children had an unkempt appearance, indicating low levels of personal hygiene. Children were often observed with dirt on their faces, hands and feet, sometimes wearing soiled, ripped clothing and without shoes.

To a certain extent, parental neglect is a consequence of lack of awareness, particularly regarding personal hygiene. It can also be due to a lack of financial resources: when asked what the needs of their children were, 36% of the sample replied that their children needed adequate clothing, which they were unable to afford.

4.10 Social marginalisation and discrimination

As illustrated in previous chapters, the Dom live in communities that are physically marginalised, which is both a cause and effect of their marginalisation in the social sphere. Certain groups in Lebanon, namely Lebanese and Palestinians, harbour extremely negative views of the Dom which are fuelled by prejudices and stereotypes about the Dom community. These views have lead to the Dom living in a state of social exclusion. In turn, such exclusion makes it very difficult for Dom to begin to integrate into society by accessing services or participating in broader civic life.

There is no awareness in Lebanese society about how individuals' own prejudiced speech is part and parcel of a public discourse that discriminates against the Dom.

4.10.1 Discriminative attitudes amongst stakeholders

"Children face discrimination at school, at work and in the street. People say 'Anta Nouri' (You are a Gypsy)" - Dom community leader, Bar Elias, Bekaa

The previous chapter indicated that the stereotypes that exist about the Dom are pervasive in Lebanese society. The vast majority of stakeholders, many of them service providers, openly expressed prejudiced opinions about the Dom, in which the Dom were posited as de facto inferior or deviant. Discrimination was also evident in that the actions of a Dom individual were taken to be symptomatic of the entire group.

Interestingly, stakeholders did not seem to think that there was anything wrong with speaking about the Dom in such negative terms. Prejudices about the Dom were articulated openly, uncritically, unapologetically. Manifestly, discrimination against the Dom is so deeply entrenched in Lebanese and Palestinian mentalities that it is not even recognised as discrimination.

The following conversation between a researcher and a stakeholder is a case in point.

- Researcher: "What are the priorities in terms of health for the Dom?"
- Respondent: "The biggest problem is the Nawar's lack of awareness about health issues. They are uneducated and health is not important to them, they are known for this. A Nawar is a Nawar."
- Researcher: "Do you think that this community faces discrimination by service providers?"
- Respondent: "No, not at all."

This conversation illustrates how the Dom are not only perceived of as being ignorant by nature, but that such a perception is not even considered to be prejudiced. It became clear that amongst the majority of people in Lebanese society, there is no awareness about the extent to which their own speech is part and parcel of a public discourse that discriminates against the Dom.

Throughout the research, only a handful of stakeholders acknowledged that discriminatory attitudes were present amongst service providers. A notable example was a group of health professionals in the municipality clinic of Bar Elias, in the Bekaa Valley:

"There was a point when people from the Nawar community did not feel comfortable seeking services because they were not treated. A negative perception of the Nawar community (and the Bedouins) was present among employees and the wider population. Therefore, we ran awareness sessions with employees about the importance of treating people from the Nawar community with respect." - Doctor, Bar Elias Municipality Health Centre, Bekaa 151

4.10.2 Dom children's experiences of discrimination

It was common for Dom parents and children to express feelings of rejection and marginalisation, which were the result of experiencing discrimination in the form of physical and verbal abuse.

"Palestinian children hit Dom children." – Dom father, Qasmiyeh, Tyre 152

"Our children don't play with Lebanese children because they hit our children when they go up to the shops." — Dom mother, Baysiriyeh, Saida 153

During a FGD with boys in Zahrani, Saida, participants mentioned that they were afraid of people throwing rocks at them when they were outside their community, saying that this is something that happens often to them. Similarly, as mentioned above, Dom children report experiencing discrimination at school when other children hit them or call them names. Verbal abuse was also widely reported by Dom participants, both adults and children.

"When we go outside the community, some people say dirty things and harass us" – Dom teenage girl, Qasmiyeh, Tyre

The fact that Dom children face discrimination is unsurprising, particularly given that they bear certain characteristics identified by the Committee on the Rights of the Child and UNICEF as grounds for discrimination, namely: ethnic origin, minority status (including Roma children/gypsies/travellers), children working in the streets and begging ¹⁵⁴.

One indicator of the extent to which Dom children experience discrimination is whether or not they play with non-Dom. Only Dom 49% of Dom parents said their children played with non-Dom.

The two main reasons given for this were geographical isolation, whereby there were no other children present in the community to play with, and animosity between Dom and non-Dom children. Statistics disaggregated by region partly confirm these perceptions. In some urban areas, Dom parents were more likely to respond that their children did play with non-Dom, with 61% in Hayy el Gharbe (Beirut) 64% in Wadi Zeina (Saida) and 87% in Ain el Hilweh (Saida) all stating that their children did play with non-Dom. Likewise, respondents living in remote and isolated communities tended to say that their children did not play with non-Dom: 71.4% in Msayleh, 87.4% in Ketermaya and 90% in Baysiriyeh (Saida).

Geographical location of the community is not the sole factor which impacts on social interaction between Dom and non-Dom. 86% of Dom respondents living in Borj el Shimali Palestinian refugee camp, a semi-urban area of Tyre, reported that their children did not play with Palestinian children. This is not surprising, as relationships between Dom and Palestinians in this site have been problematic for years, characterised by a series of expulsions of Dom from the camp by Palestinian authorities ¹⁵⁵. Reciprocally, 64% of respondents from Zahrani, a more rural site in Saida, claimed that their children did play with non-Dom.

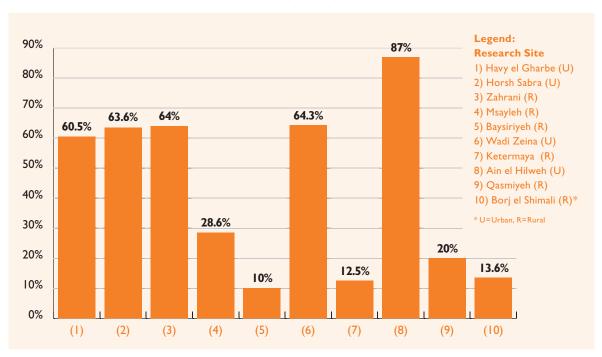


Figure 12: Percentage of Dom children reported playing with non-Dom by research site

Less overt feelings of discrimination were also expressed. Girls in Zahrani, Saida, said that sometimes they felt discriminated against when they went to clean in other people's houses, because in the past people had been accused of stealing. A handful of respondents claimed that they felt discriminated against by the government:

"I have tried to go to NGOs. They say, 'go away, you are a Nawariyya' [...] As much as you speak to the

government, they won't help us because they think we are 'Nawar' and that we won't change." - Dom mother, Msyaleh, Saida 156

In some ways, such feelings resonate with what anthropologist Scott Philips calls "the expectation of discrimination 157". As discussed in Chapter 3, these attitudes reveal the extent to which the Dom have internalised the negative views of themselves, and expect to be treated badly by other groups.

4.11 Early marriage and parenthood

Different rights frameworks define early marriage in different ways. For UNICEF, early marriage is defined as the marriage of children or adolescents below the age of 18158. Meanwhile, the Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages of 1964, which Lebanon has neither signed nor ratified, recommends "no less than 15 years" as appropriate age for marriage.

There is no law regulating the minimum age for marriage in Lebanon. All legal stipulations about marriage exist within Personal Status Law, which varies amongst religious groups 159. For example, amongst Sunni and Shiite groups, the minimum age at which a marriage licence can be issued is 17 for boys and 9 for girls, while amongst Greek Orthodox it is 17 for boys and 15 for girls and amongst Druze it is 16 for boys and 15 for girls. Considering that most Dom are Sunni Muslims, Dom girls can legally be married from the age of 9.

The issue of early marriage in Lebanon is a source of concern for the last concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, which noted that:

"The Committee is worried by the widespread practice of early marriage and the related consequence of high child mortality rates and the negative impact on the health of girls bearing children at an early age. 160"

Indeed, many cases of early marriage for girls and boys were identified during the assessment, mostly involving 15-17 year olds. A handful of extreme cases were also identified, involving girls as young as 11. Although no statistical data about age of marriage was collected, early marriage appears to be the norm in Dom communities, with adults explaining that marrying young was part of Dom traditions.

One consequence of early marriage is limited awareness about sexual and reproductive health.

"I got married when I was 15. The Dom marry young." - Mother, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut 161

4.11.1 Marriage in Dom communities

Both stakeholders and Dom adults reported that marriage in Dom communities mostly takes place within the Dom social unit, with marriage between Dom and non-Dom said to be permissible but very rare. It was common practice for a Dom girl to marry a Dom boy from a different region or even country, in which case the girl leaves her family's home and goes to live in the groom's community. Several marriages between Lebanese and Syrian Dom were also identified during the research.

Marriage in Dom communities follows along similar lines of conventional marriage practice in the Arab region, whereby the families of the future bride and groom have a central role and a bride price, or dowry, is involved. The family of the groom approaches the family of the bride to negotiate the dowry price and once that it agreed, the local Sheikh is summoned to perform the katbeh kitab, the marriage contract.

"In the end, it's the girl who agrees to the marriage because she's the one who gets married, not the family. But the father also has to agree." - Dom girl, 16, Qasmiyeh, Tyre 162

The extent to which the future groom and bride have a say in their marriage is unclear. Some members of Dom communities reported their opinions are sought, and if one is in disagreement then the marriage will not take place.

Yet other incidents of marriage observed in the Dom context hinted that this was not always the case. If a boy or girl was reluctant to marry, they were put under pressure from their families to agree, often leading to conflict within the family. In one particular case, a 19-year old Dom was being pressured by his family to get married but he did not want to. This let to severe problems between him and his father, to the point that the young man would leave his home for days on end and stay with his cousins in another Dom community. After several months, the youth went with his father and mother to Syria, where he married a 15-year old girl. A few weeks later, when researchers saw him and his family back in Lebanon, the father reported that his son was having difficulty adjusting to married life and was treating his wife with rejection.

4.11.2 Consequences of early marriage

Early marriage has many negative consequences, many of which were identified in Dom communities. One such effect, particularly when it occurs before one or both persons in the couple have reached sexual maturity, is the lack of awareness about sexual and reproductive health issues. An example of such limited awareness is that it is commonplace for the mother of the bride to be directly involved in the couple's first sexual encounter on the wedding night. After the marriage ceremony, the couple go into the groom's home with the bride's mother, who then "gives instructions" about intercourse. The mother of the bride is also responsible for proving her daughter's virginity, which she does by showing blood-stained sheets to the community the morning after the wedding 163.

"I was 13 when I got married and had my first child. Now I'm 35 and I have 13 children." – Dom mother, Baysiriyeh, Saida 164 In turn, limited awareness about sexual and reproductive health results in reduced use of contraception, and therefore the increased likelihood of women bearing many children. This occurs alongside the fact that early marriage extends a woman's reproductive cycle, directly contributing to large family sizes ¹⁶⁵. Indeed, data gathered during the research indicated that high proportion of families with many members: 10% of the families with whom the surveys were conducted had 10 or more members.

Case: Early marriage between Dom girl and boy

"I met S at the intersection in Saida. Sitting on the curb next to a girl I knew from previous visits, she held a plump baby boy aged 6 months old. When I inquired about the boy, she said it was her third child, to which I responded by saying how young she looked. S told me that she was 18 years old. She was married when she was 11 to a boy 3 years her senior and gave birth to her first child when she was 13."

"I didn't want to get married," said S. "I liked living at home with my parents. Now that I am married, I have my children to take care of. My husband works as a vegetable seller and brings home 10,000 LPB (\$6.6), which is not enough for me to feed the family. I wish I didn't have to come out to work, but we need the money."

Excerpt from researcher's diary, Saida, 11/11/10.

Another consequence of early marriage is that girls and boys are unable to continue education because of pressure to provide for family. In leaving the classroom, they lose options for well-paid employment, which perpetuates their cycle of poverty.

4.12 Dangerous and exploitative forms of child labour 166

The research gathered a wealth of information regarding the scale and characteristics of children's work in the Dom communities thanks to direct queries about the actual types of work of household members and more general questions about the types of work children in the community engage in. Moreover, both parents and children gave textured accounts of Dom children's work during FGDs.

According to the surveys, 19.4% of the under-18 Dom population in the sample are working. Of those children, almost a quarter (23.7%) cited working in casual labour, such as day labourers in construction. Cleaning was the second most common type of work (15.8%). Only 15.8% of working children were engaged in skilled labour, work which requires former training, while the remaining 84% were engaged in unskilled labour.

Table 10: Types of work of Dom children in sample

Type of work (unskilled)	% of working children	Type of work (skilled)	% of working children				
Casual labour	23.7	Carpenter	4.7				
Factory work	3.2	Horse grooming	3.2				
Cleaning	15.8	Mechanic	4.7				
Begging	6.8	Metal worker	3.2				
Agriculture	2.1						
Waiter/Watress	1.1						
Peddler	4.7						
Vegetable seller	1.1						
Municipality employee	5.8						
Various other	21.6						

When asked about types of work performed by Dom, over 50% of Dom adults cited begging and street work, such as selling chewing gum. This stands in contrast to the 6.8% of parents that reported that their children beg. The difference in data may be due to the fact that many parents did not want to tell researchers that their children beg. Therefore, it is assumed that children's begging was under-reported in direct questioning. Instead, respondents were willing to say that other children in the community begged, which enabled them to speak about begging in the community without having to admit to bearing responsibility for it.

4.12.1 Begging and street work

The research confirmed that Dom children are engaged in begging and other forms of street work, such as shining shoes and selling chewing gum. How such begging happens, and why it happens, are less clear.

"When you speak to a young beggar child, you feel like he has memorised a course. Their profession is organized." - Mayor, Bar Elias Municipality, Bekaa

"Once in Hamra, I saw a few children who attend the Al Tahaddi school begging. They said 'Please don't tell Miss Catherine!'" - Doctor, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut 167

On one hand, stakeholders were quick to point out that begging amongst the Dom was a highly organised activity characterised by the transport of children to a certain area by someone having control over them, the same person to whom their earnings would be handed over. Some even argued that children with disabilities were used in order to get more money, although this was never observed by researchers 168.

Most of the begging observed by researchers, however, was not as organised as stakeholders claimed. Dom children observed begging in Beirut, Saida and Tyre use public transport in order to travel to the begging location and were not taken to a site by an individual. Even in these situations, however, older siblings tended to accompany younger children as a means of looking after them.

Many children beg on Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. These days were identified as being the most "profitable", namely because Friday is the main day for Muslims to go the mosque and over the weekend there are generally more people out in public places.

"Unmet material needs leads to school dropout, work and street begging." – Dom father, Qasmiyeh, Tyre 169

Getting to the bottom of why Dom children beg was a more complicated matter, and like many other issues that affect this community, there is no single, simple answer. As mentioned above, most parents did not openly admit that their children begged. A handful of women in various locations did, however, admit that they or their children did beg, saying that they had no other choice because they did not have enough money to sustain the household.

"My husband sends my son to shine shoes on the street. I don't want him to, but my husband insists. When my husband is away, I tell my son that he doesn't have to go and that he can stay at home." — Dom mother, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut¹⁷⁰

During the FGDs with young children, none openly admitted that they begged, and therefore this issue was not systematically addressed across all FGDs. After developing a relationship of trust with the children involved, researchers did, however, have the opportunity to speak with Dom children while they were begging on the street and ask why they were involved in such work. Some children confirmed what a handful of mothers had said, that their parents sent them to beg in order to contribute financially to the household.

"The money I earn? I keep it to take care of my own costs. I buy myself eye-liner, go to the salon. I choose to go to work [beg] to have money for myself, I don't want to always have to ask my parents." – Dom girl, 16, Qasmiyeh, Tyre 171

"The children that earn money give some to their parents and keep the rest. They buy food, cigarettes." – Mayor, Bar Elias Municipality, Bekaa 172

Older children, however, claimed that the reason that they beg was to earn money in order to buy personal items for themselves. They explained that they were seeking some sort of financial independence, in that they did not want to burden their parents with requests so preferred to go out and make money themselves. But with limited formal education or informal skills, their only options are begging and other street work selling chewing gum or flowers.

The fact that many Dom children have been observed and reported begging means that these children can fit into the category of Children in Street Situations (CSS). The notion of CSS is used by Tdh in order to avoid the label of "street children": Tdh does not see the "street child" as the problem, but the situation which causes the child to find him/herself on the street '173'. CSS are "children for whom the street has become their 'subjective world' that is shaped by the interpersonal relationships this child has basically established in the street 174". Conceptualising Dom children involved in begging as CSS can assist in devising effective responses to their needs.

4.12.2 Other types of work

Cleaning

When girls reach sexual maturity, it is far less acceptable for them to them to work in the streets begging, so they often go to clean other people's houses.

Jockey

"We start teaching our sons to be jockeys from the age of 12." – Father, 33, Hayy el Gharbe

Working with horses was cited by stakeholders and community members as a type of "Dom work", one that was passed from father to son. This occurred particularly in Beirut, where weekly horse races are held at the hippodrome, and the horses used in these events are sheltered in stables in the Ard Jayloul area, a five-minute walk from the Dom community in Hayy el Gharbe.

The Dom men who reported working in the stables were responsible for grooming and exercising the horses, which they were observed doing on several occasions in areas near Hayy el Gharbe. During conversations, several said that they had begun their work when they were young because their small size and light weight made them good candidates for jockeys.

Once they became too heavy to ride the horses in competition, they stayed on working in grooming, and eventually sought to teach their own children the trade.

Dancing

Similar to reports about children's begging in Dom communities, parents and adults were willing to admit that girls were working as dancers, mostly abroad. However, when it came to speaking about their own children's work, very few parents openly admitted that their daughters were involved in dancing 175.

4.12.3 Risks faced at work

"When a child stays 8 hours in the street, what can't happen? They are vulnerable to everything: falling, getting run over, and getting electrocuted. Girls can get raped." - Al Tahaddi employee, Beirut 176

When asked about the risks that children were exposed to in these types of work, 62% of Dom adults stated that children risked physical injuries; harassment (35%) and arrest (25%).

"My 8 year old son worked in a car mechanics shop. One day, he was under a car that was suspended on a jack. The jack broke and the car fell on top of his head. He died of his injuries in the hospital 2 days later." -Dom father, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut 177

"A small proportion of Dom children die from diseases however, most are killed by cars whilst begging on the international highway. We recorded 4 such deaths in June 2010." - Doctor, Bar Elias Municipality, Bekaa.

These issues were echoed by Dom children who spoke about their work experiences. In the Bekaa, children who begged said that they faced verbal and physical abuse by shop owners, behaviour that was observed by researchers in that area. They also spoke about their fear of getting hit by cars, something that stakeholders confirmed was a frequent cause of death for Dom children in the Bekaa 178. Meanwhile, girls from Qasmiyeh spoke about how they were often harassed while on the street, mostly by men requesting sexual services 179.

4.13 Children in conflict with the law

There are several contextual factors that increase children's vulnerability of coming into conflict with the law, including poverty, lack of education, unemployment, migration, lack of parental supervision, violence, abuse and exploitation 180. Given that Dom children often confront many of these issues simultaneously, it is unsurprising that that they are also likely to come into conflict with law enforcement bodies.

"About one year ago, I was begging and got arrested. The police kept me for hours, then released me with a fine of 70,000 LL. Now I work cleaning houses because I'm afraid." - Dom mother, 17, Ketermaya, Saida 181

Most reports of Dom children coming into conflict with the law involved the child begging or working in the street. There seems to be, however, a tension within Lebanese law regarding children found begging. On one hand, the Lebanese Penal Code criminalizes begging and vagabonding, which is the basis upon which these

children can be arrested. On the other hand, according to Article 25 of Law 422 182, begging and vagabonding are defined as situations which "endanger" the child. Article 26 stipulates that child found in these conditions can be sentenced "for the juvenile's interest" to either non-custodial measures (protection or supervised freedom) or custodial measures (rehabilitation). Consequently, child beggars lie in a sort of legal limbo: on one hand they are considered as "juveniles at risk" and entitled to protective measures; yet on the other hand they are still considered to be committing a crime and, therefore, are liable to punishment.

In turn, this legal ambiguity means that Dom children arrested for begging and working on the street can face arbitrary treatment by law enforcement personnel, which puts them at further risk. Children and families reported punishments ranging from incarceration, fines and short term detention followed by being released far from their homes.

"Last year, my 17 year old son was arrested by the municipality police for shining shoes in Nabatiyeh. It was 10 o'clock at night. Four hours later, the police released him in the woods outside of Nabatiyeh and he had to walk all the way back home [to Msayleh]." — Dom mother, Msayleh 183

According to Law 422, the legal instrument that provides protection for children in conflict with the law,

a child who is arrested for begging or working on the street should be referred to a social worker who will help them through the process of being charged ¹⁸⁴. Afterwards, the child should be referred to any one of the rehabilitation centres for children. This process, however, is not always followed, and children arrested for begging and working on the street face arbitrary treatment by law enforcement personnel, which can often put them at further risk.

4.14 Girls involved in or at risk of becoming involved in commercial sexual exploitation

In its Third National Report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Lebanese Government acknowledged that sexual abuse and exploitation of children remain taboo subjects in the Lebanese society ¹⁸⁵. While there are no official statistics on the numbers of children working, or forced to work, in the commercial sex industry, a recent study conducted by the Soins Infirmiers et Development Commuantaire (SIDC) revealed some interesting quantitative data about female sex workers across Lebanon. Of the sample of female sex workers accessed during the SIDC research, 9.4% started their work when they were under 15 years old and 42.2% started their work between 16 and 20 years old ¹⁸⁶.

Researchers believe that several factors in Dom girls' environment put them at risk of becoming involved in CSE. Such factors can be classified as "push" factors and "pull" factors.

"Push" factors make children vulnerable to involvement in CSE. In the case of Dom girls, these include:

- Children of current or former sex workers.
- Children who perform "adult roles" in the home, such as acting as the primary source of income for the family or the primary care giver to younger siblings.
- Children who suffer from discrimination due to their ethnic identity.
- · Children who drop out from school.
- Children who work, particularly in the street 187.

At the same time, Dom girls encounter a number of "pull" factors. Reasons why children are drawn into and remain in CSE include:

- · Access to "easy" money.
- Escape from abusive parents, siblings, neighbours and/or communities.
- · Access to a lifestyle beyond their means.
- Receipt of gifts and opportunities they could not expect in their family circumstances.
- Opportunity to travel and get away and out of their current situation.
- Bonding with other children from similar social circumstances who share the same abusive experiences.

Similar to cases of adult Dom women involved in sex work, researchers did not directly connect with Dom girls who are victims of commercial sexual exploitation (CSE). Nevertheless, Tdh is aware of cases of Dom girls being victims of CSE. This was established through Tdh's case work with a 14 year-old Palestinian girl victim of CSE who informed researchers that she used to work on the Cornishe in Tyre in search of clients with two Dom girls, aged 16 and 17, who were also involved in CSE. The girls formed a friendship through their work experiences, exchanging tips about contraception and how to handle difficult male clients.

Taken together, the vulnerability factors and the testimony point towards the need to acknowledge that CSE is a protection concern and risk for Dom girls.

4.15 Internal and cross-border trafficking of girls for the purposes of dancing and sexual exploitation

The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, otherwise known as the "Palermo Protocol", is the key international instrument on the issue of trafficking. Article 3 c) of the Protocol defines trafficking of children as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation includes prostitution, other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery and practices similar to slavery, servitude or removal of organs.

Both stakeholders and community members alike reported that Dom girls and women were known to work as dancers, both inside and outside Lebanon. It was commonly reported that those who engaged in this sort of work did so in locations that were far removed from their own communities, hence they were said to travel to different regions of Lebanon or to other countries in the Middle East, such as Syria and the United Arab Emirates.

"They are famous for their dancing. There is a television station which shows them dancing, 'Ghenwa'. Sometimes, they go to the Gulf." - Popular Committee member, Qasmiyeh, Tyre 188

"Girls work as dancers from age 17 in Jounieh and Tripoli. They risk getting harassed by their clients." - Dom father, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut 189

Case: Girl dancers and a family of performers from a Dom community in Saida

During a survey in a site in Saida, a twentyyear old man reported that three of his sisters worked as dancers. The eldest one was 19 and divorced; the other two were 17 and 15. Their mother had worked as a dancer when she was their age, and therefore has a role in organising it. The respondent said his sisters go to dance abroad in Syria and UAE, usually travelling with their father, who is a leader in a band, their cousin, who plays musical instruments and sings, and some other family members who are also entertainers.

One stakeholder from Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut, an employee of Al Tahaddi who had lived in the area for most of her life, reported that she often spoke to women who had travelled to Syria to dance, or who had sent their daughters there. She said that some girls are as young as 13 when to Damascus, to dance in the quarters of Maqassef or Barzeh, in venues that resemble cabarets. She reported that the market is affected by seasons and holidays: high demand in summer, low demand during Ramadan, and that the father will receive money by signing a contract, which determines the length of his daughter's stay in Syria (usually between one and six months). "The father is responsible because he signs the contract", she said. "I've heard that they can get \$300 per night. I don't believe that they can get this sort of money without something else."

Researchers also received first hand reports from a member of the Dom community who had first hand experience with Dom girls dancing. After establishing a relationship of trust with the contact, he informed them that he had just returned from a trip to the UAE, where he had worked as a security guard for girls who dance and gave detailed information about the workings of the trade.

Case: Working as a security guard for girls who dance

F. told us that some girls between 16 and 21 years of age find work as dancers in "casinos" where they can earn \$100 per night, averaging \$3000 per month. According to F, if a girl is a good dancer and she has a good "number" (grade), she can make up to \$7000 per month. F's duty is protect these girls if they get arrested, to protect them from assault and make sure they get their money from clients. After working hours, the girls can go out with who they want, go to restaurant, go out "and who knows after that." His duty is to know who they are with and where they are so that, if needed, he can protect them. F. also reported that Dom children as young as 3 years and up to 16 years were sent to countries in the region (Saudi Arabia, Oman, the UAE) in order to beg.

A recurring aspect of reports about Dom girls' dancing was that working as a dancer was not only restricted to the girls' performance, but that it entailed making oneself sexually available for clients after hours. Therefore, a link was drawn between girls working as dancers and working as prostitutes.

"You know it doesn't stop on dancing because no man wants to just sit and watch a girl dance." – Dom man, Bar Elias. Bekaa 190

The research suggests, therefore, that Dom children, mainly girls but potentially boys as well, are at risk of being trafficked. Unfortunately, due to the highly secretive and even taboo nature of the topic, further details about the processes behind the selection, recruitment and actual experiences of Dom girls involved in this phenomenon could be gathered. Further research on such issues, therefore, needs to be conducted.





5.1 Protective mechanisms within Dom communities

In general, Dom children reported feeling safer within their community than outside, indicating that the community is a core source of protection. However, the extent to which the community can be an effective source of protection often depends on the levels of social cohesion present in a given location. As mentioned in Chapter 2.5, the degree of social cohesion amongst the Dom varies from site to site because it is influenced by such factors as the urban /rural character of a site and the presence of other national or ethnic groups.

"If we are afraid, we go to uncle Abu Kayyed, because he loves us and we feel safe with him." - Dom boy, Zahrani, Saida 191

In some sites, for example in the Saida area, there is a strong sense of belonging to a social unit where members expressed willingness to assist each other in times of need. Tending to consist of one family, these sites are characterised by the presence of a leader who is recognised by all the community as both a figure of authority and a source of support.

One positive impact of community cohesion on child protection was identified in Hayy el Gharbe (Beirut) where, during a FGD, mothers spoke about mutually supportive breastfeeding. If a woman did not have enough milk to feed her baby, one of her friends would breastfeed in her place 192. One woman spoke about feeding her neighbour's son: "Now we tell the boys: you are brothers because you spent many months feeding from the same chest 193". Whether this type of support was widespread amongst the Dom or if this was a one-off case was difficult to assess. During surveys, for example, many women who had infants reported needing to purchase formula if their breast milk didn't suffice.

Other sites, however, exhibited lesser degrees of social cohesion. Despite the example of breastfeeding mentioned above, Dom communities in Beirut emerged as far more fragmented than in certain sites in Saida, for example Zahrani and Baysiriyeh, with residents often voicing negative opinions about other Dom in the area.

"The Dom here in the Horsh don't communicate with the Dom in Hayy el Gharbe very much." - Dom man, Horsh Sabra, Beirut 194

For example, often when researchers would ask Dom community members about controversial jobs such as begging and dancing, many respondents would admit that yes, these types of work do exist in the community, "but not here among us". Rather, they would say that such things happen "down there", alluding to another area of the site, or "among the Syrian Dom." Such opinions confirmed that the Dom are not a homogenous group and that practices of "othering" happen even within the Dom social unit, whereby inter-Dom differentiation is made according to nationality, family and place of residence.

"Neighbours only help each other if it's very serious. Otherwise, everyone takes care of themselves because we all face the same conditions and difficulties." - Dom mother, Msayleh, Saida 195

These attitudes indicate that the overarching notion of belonging to a Dom group does not automatically translate into an ethic of community solidarity or support. Consequently, researchers often perceived feelings of social isolation among respondents. Many claimed that in times of need, they depended only on themselves.

"When I'm with my family, I feel the greatest happiness." - Dom boy, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut 196

Despite considerable fragmentation in larger urban sites, researchers identified some active social networks. These were mainly along Dom family lines, rather than based in a notion of community. Participants were twice as likely to report seeking support from family members than neighbours. The family unit, therefore, emerged as the principal source of support.

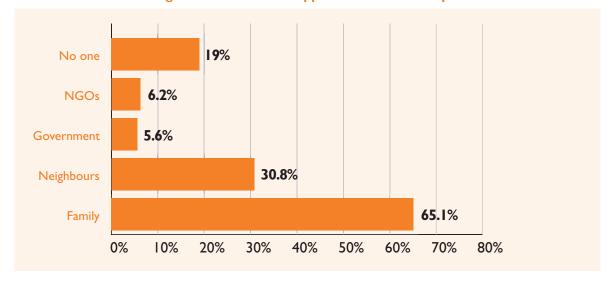


Figure 13: Sources of support for Dom in sample

"I want to be a dentist. Like my father, he can teach me." – Dom boy, Zahrani, Saida 197

"Sometimes, the boys and their fathers work together, which is a form of 'unstructured learning'." – Doctor, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut 198

When asked about whom they went to when they felt afraid or in danger, Dom children mentioned family members first. Moreover, children identified family members as sources of information and skills, with several boys reporting that they would

like to work in the same profession as their fathers because they could teach them. Some Dom women also spoke about how it was common for a son to follow in his father's footsteps in terms of work, because certain skills, such as making and playing musical instruments and working as a jockey in horse races, were commonly passed from father to son. Dom parents, therefore, emerged as playing a key role in compensating for their children's limited access to formal education by being sources of community-based knowledge and informal learning.

5.2 Gaps in the protective environment within Dom communities

"Sometimes, my father hits me." - Boy, Qasmiyeh 199

Dom children expressed feeling safe both within their community and their family unit. Unfortunately, high rates of domestic violence were reported throughout the research, which indicates that the family can also harbour risks for Dom children. Domestic violence, however, is perceived as secondary by the Dom when compared to other types of violence stemming from discrimination in the wider society. 200

Similarly, while it is important to acknowledge how Dom families are sources of protection for their children, the family's role of placing Dom children in risky situations cannot be glossed over. For example, with respect to the practice of begging amongst Dom children, family members both perpetuate the issue and,

at the same time, are active in mitigating the dangers involved. On one hand, as discussed in Chapter 4.12, family members often pressure their children to go and make money in order to contribute to household expenses. On the other hand, researchers observed that when young children beg in the streets, it is common for older siblings to accompany them in order to look after them and make sure they avoid traffic accidents and abuse from surrounding people.

The research illustrates that, while the family unit is a definite source of support within the Dom community, certain issues remain to be resolved in order for Dom family members to be able to play a fully protective role in the lives of their children.

5.3 Protective mechanisms surrounding Dom communities

5.3.1 Legal instruments: Law 422

Law 422 provides protection to children in conflict with the law. It stipulated that children are entitled to have access to a social worker if they are arrested, a service provided by the Union de la Protection de L'Enfance au Liban (UPEL). Under this law, children are also entitled to legal protection if they are "threatened" in the following circumstances:

- "I) If he was found in an environment exposing him to exploitation, threatening his health, safety, ethics or conditions of raising him.
- 2) If he was exposed to sexual abuse or physical violence exceeding the limits of what is allowed by custom as a manner of harmless disciplining.
- 3) If he was found begging or homeless.²⁰¹"

If a child is threatened in a manner outlined by the law, a complaint or report can be submitted to the court. Law 422 also requires that a social worker be present to support the child during all the stages of the investigation and legal proceedings. It also provides for treatment and socio-educational care to be available for children who experience interpersonal violence²⁰².

Gaps in the protective potential of Law 422

The interpretation and practical application of Law n° 422 seems to pose some notable challenges. According to Save the Children Sweden, these include a lack of awareness among the victims and the key duty bearers about the available protection measures and the appropriate procedures ²⁰³. Moreover, children who beg or work on the streets are considered to be involved in a criminal activity and hence perceived as being in conflict with the law. This contributes to a "vicious circle of deviance and oppression" in that it is likely for children who are branded and treated as criminals, to become criminals²⁰⁴.

5.3.2 Lebanese government services

As illustrated in previous chapters, Dom with Lebanese citizenship are entitled to benefit from the services provided by the Lebanese State. Two national actors emerge as key duty bearers: the Ministry of Health (MoH) and the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA). The former is responsible for subsidizing medical costs for Lebanese Dom: the MoH covers between 75% and 90% of hospitalization costs for Lebanese citizens. This financial support was identified as very valuable to the Dom, particularly when it came to birthing²⁰⁵.

"We don't go to families, families come to us." – Adnan Nasr Eddine, SDC Bureau Chief, MoSA²⁰⁶

Through its local offices, the Social Development Centres (SDCs), MoSA refers Lebanese Dom children to education services provided by local NGOs. There are three ways in which a child can be identified by SDCs, the most common being through a "talab riaya ijtimaiya", or a request for social care. In these cases, parents approach their local SDC and complete a request form, following which a social worker visits the family and assesses the living situation the child. On the basis of this evaluation, the SDC decides whether or not the child is eligible for financial coverage under MoSA. The other two ways that a child can come to the attention of SDCs are either by referral through the court system (if the child is in conflict with the law), or through the recommendation of any state or civil society actor, from police officers to NGO employees²⁰⁷.

Gaps in the protective environment provided by the Lebanese government

"The government should look after us. They come here during the elections saying that they want to help. But after we vote, they don't do anything." - Dom man, 48, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut

Despite their undeniable value to Dom communities, pitfalls exist in capacities of state services to adequately protect Dom children. The most obvious obstacle is that public services are only available to children who have Lebanese nationality, which is highly problematic given that over one-fifth of the Dom identified in the research sample were effectively non-ID. This situation exists contrary to the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Lebanon is a signatory, which mandates that the Lebanese state offer protection to all children within the country, regardless of nationality.

With respect to health, subsidized access to hospitalization did not mean that all health-related costs are supported: for the most part, the costs of follow-up treatment and medications are not covered by the MoH. Considering that many Dom families are living below the international poverty line, these costs are often too much to bear, resulting in a lack of follow-up²⁰⁸.

In turn, although MoSA expressed its interest in working with Dom children, at the time of the research it didn't have the capacity to undertake outreach that would identify at risk children and refer them to the necessary services. According to Law 686/1998, education is compulsory up to the age of 12. However, due to practical limitations of reaching out-of-school children, they don't benefit from the national education system.

These specific gaps in the protective environment, combined with a host of structural hurdles, including lack of parental awareness about entitlements or procedures and discriminatory attitudes on the behalf of service providers, mean that Dom children cannot always access the services they need²⁰⁹.

5.3.3 NGOs

"Sometimes, some NGOs help us, like the Hariri Foundation or Islamic groups, but only if they remember."

– Dom father, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut

The research identified only a handful of local NGOs who count Dom children among their beneficiaries. These consist of NGOs who work with the most disadvantaged echelons in Lebanese society, including orphans and working refugee children.

Dom children were identified as benefiting from the services of several Associations that cater to vulnerable and needy children, including the Social Welfare Institutions – Dar Al Aytam Al Islamiyya, which has educational centres all over Lebanon. Dom children were also reported attending an Islamic Orphanage in the Bekaa, Dar al Hanan, and the Saida Generations School under the Saida Orphan Welfare Society. These two institutions serve more as boarding schools, where children are eligible to be admitted even if both parents are living, they merely need to be referred through MoSA and/or local NGOs. Children attend these schools for free, where they reside during the week and on weekends can go back to stay with their families.

Other NGOs that count Dom children as their beneficiaries are the Palestinian Red Cresscent,

Arc en Ciel, and Al Tadamun wal Tanmiyeh, whose programmes focus on health, persons with disabilities and working children respectively²¹⁰.

The NGO House of Hope receives Dom children who have been arrested for begging or working on the streets. Following a court order, such children are taken to the House of Hope, aims at rehabilitating children involved in delinquent behaviour. To that end, they are offered a range of services, including psychological, social, educational, vocational and leisure activities and health services.

Only one NGO was identified that focused its work specifically on Dom children, a small local NGO called Al Tahaddi. Al Tahaddi started its work in the mid-1990's in Hayy el Gharbe, on the fringes of Shatila refugee camp, when its founding members Agnes Sanders and Catherine Mourtada began distributing medicine in the neighbourhood following an outbreak of conjunctivitis. Sixteen years later, it currently operates a school that teaches a specialised four-year curriculum to students aged 8 and above. As the vast majority of children who register at Al Tahaddi's school are illiterate upon enrolment, the school favours interactive, visual and artistic learning methods to enhance their students cognitive abilities. Once they finish the four years, Al Tahaddi can fund them to attend other schools in the area, or orient them towards vocational training. This year, 96 children are registered at the school.

"People sometimes refer to our school as the 'Nawar' school." – Staff member, Al Tahaddi, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut

Al Tahaddi also runs a dispensary in the neighbourhood. As it is located between the Dom area of Hayy el Gharbe on one side and an area inhabited by poor Lebanese Shia on the other, both groups approach the dispensary to make use of its services. These include medical consultations with a doctor, subsidized medications, advice and support sessions with a midwife, different forms of contraception (the pill, injections and IUDs) referrals to other service providers (orphanages), discussion sessions on health-related topics and after school study groups for children. The dispensary handles an average of 12 to 17 patients a day who see the doctor, in addition to other beneficiaries who receive services form the nurses (changing bandages, check-ups for new-born babies, etc) and who attend awareness raising classes.

Gaps in the protective NGO environment

The principle gap in terms of NGO programmatic involvement with the Dom is that very few NGOs are working with them in the first place. Moreover, many NGO services do not cater to the needs of Dom children as belonging to a specific ethnic group, but are extended as part of programmes intended to reach the most vulnerable children. In general, there is a clear need to develop specific responses to the multiple needs faced by Dom children.

"The Nawar children who come to House of Hope are difficult to deal with; they hardly ever stay more than 3 days. One tried to escape by jumping off the 3rd floor." - Director, House of Hope, Beirut²¹¹

As a place where children are sent by court order and which deprives them of their freedom, the House of Hope's centre has gained an unfavourable reputation amongst the Dom communities, according to Jean Eter, the organisation's director. Eter reported specific difficulties when a Dom child is brought to the centre. In many cases, community members follow the child and try to secure his/her release by using threats. The experience illustrates how measures to forcibly remove Dom children from their community are met with hostility, and therefore do not constitute an effective model for intervening with Dom children.

After working with the Dom for thirteen years, Catherine Mourtada of Al Tahaddi had experienced difficulties and success stories. She agreed to share her experiences in this report, in order to give a glimpse of what it is like working in Dom communities, the potential obstacles that can be encountered and potential ways of overcoming them.

Al Tahaddi's best practices and lessons learned for working with the Dom

"As the name of our organisation, 'Al Tahaddi', suggests, working with a community like the Dom has its fair share of challenges. Extreme poverty has taken a hard toll on them, causing high illiteracy rates, low hygiene levels, and a host of contagious or preventable diseases. Coupled with a cramped living environment, these have resulted in social problems such as violence, delinquency, abuses of all kinds, and addictions. At the same time, Dom children suffer from internalised social rejection, and if asked, describe themselves the way people label them: dirty, filthy, lazy beggars, bare foot walkers, robbers and losers. Thus low self esteem is a major issue in the community.

Our priority, therefore, is to provide services that could meet the community's immediate needs for health and education while improving their attitudes towards themselves and their life potential. We believe that it's only through education that Dom children will be able to get themselves out of their situation, acquire a more positive image of themselves, and be motivated to achieve better futures.

During our work over the past 13 years, we have encountered several obstacles, and we have also developed some strategies for overcoming them.

Obstacle: Social rejection

Strategy: Non-judgmental approach

Because of the discrimination they suffer from, Dom children and parents need services that not only meet their needs but are delivered in a way that is respectful. In order to achieve this, we adopt a non-judgmental approach, and employees are trained properly so that they refrain from displaying attitudes of superiority when they work with the Dom.

For us teachers, outsiders, the challenge is getting to understand the culture and the habits of the Dom without judging them. Our world view is not theirs but it doesn't mean one is better than the other. We try to avoid lecturing parents and children, and not ask the usual 'Why do you have so many children?' question, because this doesn't help. It's more useful to introduce the children and their parents to healty ways of eating, sleeping, organizing the day, and relating to each other as part of the program of the Education Center or the awareness and public health sessions of the Health Center.

People who work with the Dom should have an open spirit, one that enables looking past the poverty to engage them on a human level. Working with the Dom doesn't only mean teaching them or treating them, it means visiting their homes, sitting with them and accepting to drink coffee with them together, answering their questions and listening to their concerns as well as sharing yours on any life issue.

Obstacle: Lack of structure in lifestyle

Strategy: Strict rules and engagement of family in processes

Working with the Dom means working with a group of people that has a different way of structuring their life than we have. At the beginning, we tried to impose our rules and our ways and felt that they were not compliant enough or ungrateful. Then we learned to soften our rules and for example accept that children would from time to time miss school to attend in the middle of the week the engagement of a relative and the next week his/her wedding!

Nevertheless it is vital to establish rules. Children and adults need to understand what is acceptable and unacceptable if they want to benefit from certain services. For example, when we first opened the dispensary, it was the first time that services free-of-charge were being offered in the community. People would fight each other to get through the door! We [Al Tahaddi staff] were spending more time trying to know who came first than curing people. So we got rid of the drop-in model and set a system that required people to take an appointment. They would get a number so that they knew they had to wait their turn. Of course, we still accepted emergency cases. But by setting a structure we really improved our own ability to deliver services.

Similarly, at the Tahaddi Education Center we had problems with drop out. In order to solve this, we set some strict rules: if children are repeatedly absent, or if their families travel and take the children with them, we do not allow the child to continue at the school, nor do we allow them to register in the next year. We realise that this is a very tough policy since it is often not the child will to leave the Center.

But we have stuck to this rule and, over the years, dropout rates in our school have decreased. We have always made sure to explain to the rule and the rationale behind it as they register their child and when they're about to take their child out: we have children on waiting lists who couldn't enter the program and it's just too bad when a child leaves after 3 months and has taken the place of a child that might have been more faithful. Parents realise their own responsibility in advancing their children's education and as a result, parents and children have begun to consider school not as something on the side, but as a very important part of their lives.

Slowly, people in the community began to see that putting a child to school did change the life of the family that had to become more structured: wake up and sleep at a certain time, provide a breakfast (a decent one because the teachers at school wouldn't allow chips and biscuits but insist on the children having a sandwich with cheese or labneh for example), keep the uniform clean, care for belongings and come to regular meetings. Going to school with books and a bag like other children made parents and children less hopeless and more proud.

Encouraging people to take responsibility for their own well-being is a far more effective way of working than trying to do everything for them just because they are poor and marginalised. In our work, we have the challenge of trying providing assistance while avoiding making the community dependent on us. You have to find a balance between wanting to help them and providing them with the structure to help themselves.

Obstacle: Incidents of inter-family and tribal violence Strategy: Fostering conflict-resolution mechanisms and providing safe, neutral spaces

There are also some challenges within the Dom community that cannot be solved by a simple formula. Violence between families and tribes is one such problem, caused by anything from the elopement of a young couple without parental consent to verbal insults. These conflicts can escalate swiftly: knives speak quickly, cutters that teenagers often use against themselves scarifying their arms, are turned against each others, hunting guns or sometimes more dangerous weapons can be used, occasionally resulting in death. Mothers and children are also the victims of these conflicts, as the entire family has to leave in a hurry for fear of retaliation.

Last year, such an outburst of violence caused the men to flee one neighbourhood. The children enrolled at Al Tahaddi pleaded with their families not to go because they had school and were preparing for Mothers' Day. In the end, the women and children did not flee but bravely stayed. At our Mothers' Day event, we feared that nobody would come as a lot of mothers were officially enemies in the conflict. But the playground slowly filled up with silent mothers: women so rarely celebrated for their courage and endless care for their children and families. As they were offered flowers at the end of the party by their own children, tears rolled down the cheeks of more than one of them.

The possibility of inter-family or inter-tribal violence creates a precarious situation that has affected our work in the past and may well do in the future. In general, we try to raise awareness about anger management and ways of responding to outside or domestic violence. The challenge is big and we often feel powerless. In both the Health and Education centers, we just keep trying to provide a safe space for those who seek it.

Obstacle: Lack of cognitive capacities in children of schooling age Strategy: Develop a specialized curriculum that responds to Dom children's needs

For most children who come to Tahaddi Education Center, it is their first encounter with a structured learning environment. Consequently, their cognitive abilities are not as well-developed as other children of their age who have been exposed to formal schooling or a more privileged home environment. Since the Center cares for the children aged 8 and over excluded from the education system for economical and social reasons, our curriculum has been specially designed to meet their needs in a creative way.

It is our belief that, by continuous commitment to the principles of respect, inclusion and non-jugement, we at Tahaddi Education Centre can achieve our goal of becoming a model for social integration where marginalized youngsters will gain the necessary knowledge, skills and values to break poverty's vicious circle."

Catherine Mourtada Director of the Tahaddi Education Center





From the long list of child protection concerns listed above, it is clear that the Dom are a population that faces multiple vulnerabilities. The sources of such vulnerabilities are also multifaceted, rooted in a combination of discrimination on behalf of the majority communities, low rates of education among Dom parents, limited employment opportunities, low income, large family sizes and general lack of awareness about health, education and protection related issues.

Many Dom children have the right to certain services, but access to these does not materialise. To tackle this issue, action is needed both at the level of the community, in terms of raising awareness of services that Dom with Lebanese nationality are entitled to, and at the level of service providers, where acknowledgement and acceptance of Dom as an ethnic minority should be promoted.

6.1 General recommendations

The list below are general recommendations to meet the needs of children in Dom communities. Considering that, more often than not, addressing such issues requires collaboration amongst various state, non-state and community-based actors, the recommendations are organises according to issue rather than being directed towards specific actors. Many of the recommendations are based on the articles of the UNCRC, in the recognition that this document is "the main strategic lever to advocate the respect and protection of children, and through this, the promotion of a society where social integration implies access to basic services.²¹²"

- I. Advocate for recognition of the Dom as an ethnic minority group in Lebanon and the right of Dom children to enjoy their own culture and identity.
- 2. Afford Dom families the necessary protection, assistance and awareness so that they can fully assume their responsibilities within their communities and better provide for and protect their children, particularly with respect to hygiene, nutrition and education.
- 3. Support all actors surrounding Dom communities, including governmental, non-governmental, and community-based groups, in mobilising sufficient resources in order to take proactive roles in promoting the rights of Dom children, particularly with respect to health, education and protection.

- 4. Combat the discrimination and intolerance expressed towards the Dom by sensitizing stakeholders about the misconceptions surrounding the Dom in Lebanon and promoting an "awareness of prejudice" among service providers.
- 5. Lobby the media, government actors, local and international NGOs to ensure that the name used officially for Dom communities is the name by which they wish to be known.
- 6. Advocate for the decriminalisation of children's street work and begging.
- 7. Encourage the development of safe places for Dom children to play.
- 8. Promote the organisation of community harmonization activities with Dom and Non Dom that promote mutual acceptance.
- 9. Conduct further research about Dom children involved in prostitution and dancing, particularly those vulnerable to cross-border trafficking for such purposes.

6.2 Suggested intervention approach

The following recommendations are more specifically geared towards possible approaches for beginning child-focused interventions in Dom communities. The added value of these recommendations is that they have already been shared with members of certain Dom communities, who have given their positive feedback. As strategies that have been approved by certain communities, the likelihood of their being effective in implementation is increased. Moreover, they are rooted in the principle of "do no harm", whereby the roles and voices of Dom community members in actions related to their community are actively promoted.

- Encourage participation of traditional community gatherings, particularly the diwan and womens' groups, in informal child protection mechanisms through awareness raising and capacity building.
- Support government actors, particularly SDCs, in implementing child protection systems that identify and refer vulnerable Dom children in need of social, educational and health-related services through family visits and outreach work to connect with the community.
- Actively seek the opinions of Dom community members to inform the content of awarenessraising activities to be conducted amongst non-Dom service providers and stakeholders.

- 4. Conduct community-based awareness raising activities in order to promote preventative health and healthy lifestyle choices on such issues as mother and child health, nutrition and hygiene.
- Identify ways to approach and engage Dom youth effectively as protection actors in their communities
- Improve employment prospects of Dom youth through referrals to available training programmes and/or apprenticeship schemes.
- Organize recreational and other intra-community activities to improve psychosocial well-being among Dom children.
- Advocate toward municipalities, local NGOs, CBOs and INGOs, and donors for improved shelter and WASH infrastructures in Dom communities.
- 9. Promote the development of specialised remedial or "catch-up" education services for Dom children.
- 10. Support Dom children in conflict with the law to access proper channels of law enforcement thanks to awareness among police, courts, Ministry of Social Affairs and civil society actors about the needs of Dom children in street situations.



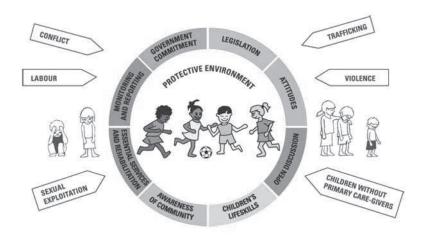


Annex 1: List of tables, figures and text boxes

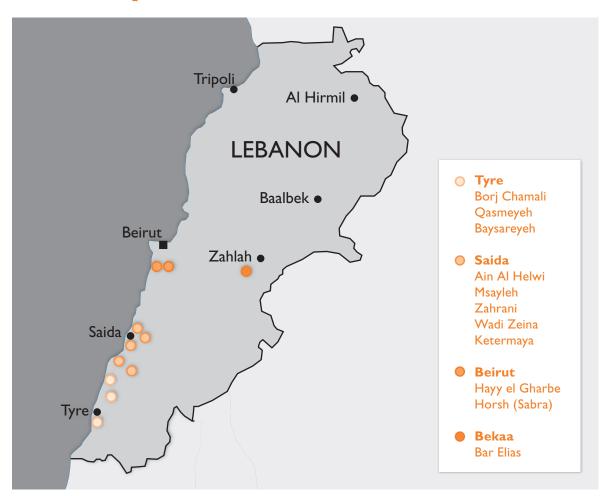
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Annex 3: Map of research sites



Annex 4: Matrix of NGOs who provide services to Dom children

Actor	Location	Key Services
Terre des hommes Lausanne	Beirut, Saida and Tyre	Tdh has started a pilot project (2011) using outreach social work and case management practices, focusing on the child protection risks of securing birth certificates, teenage parents, children with life threatening illnesses or malnutrition, children out of school and children facing abuse or exploitation. Tdh is also building and bridging community resources with the Dom through raising awareness and advocating the rights of the Dom people with Lebanese Government social services. These include the Social Development Centres, schools, hospitals and I/NGO and CBO networks. Tdh is committed to working with Dom communities across Lebanon in the coming years with local partners.
Al Tahaddi	Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut	Al Tahaddi school: specialised 4-year curriculum to children aged 8 and above; referral to other scholastic institutions or vocational training centres. Enrolment free of charge. Al Tahaddi dispensary: medical consultations; subsidized medicine; midwife services; contraceptives (the pill, injections or IUDs); health-related awareness sessions for mothers; after school study groups for children.
Dar Al Hanan	Ghazze, Western Bekaa	Orphanage that provides social, psychological, medical and educational services. The school provides primary and intermediary education till grade 9, afterwards children are transferred to a high school. Links with the Lebanese International University. Accepts children aged 5 and above, through referral or direct contact with families. Current enrolment: 500 children.
Social Welfare Institutions – Dar AI Aytam AI Islamiyya	Throughout Lebanon	 Schools for boarding and day-students. Schools for children with special needs. VTC. Artistic centre. Non-formal education centre. Services for children and mothers: "garderie" for mothers who work a lot. It teaches them mothering skills. Centre for women's empowerment. Dar Al Aytam Al Islamiyya accepts all children with identification papers, regarless of nationality: 7-8% of beneficiaries are non-Lebanese (Palestinian, Syrian). Those without ID are only accepted as day students. All services are free of charge. Beneficiaries can either approach the centres directly and request services, or access through referral (NGOs or MOSA). Current number of beneficiaries exceeds I1,000 children.

Actor	Location	Key Services
Saida Orphan Welfare Society	Saida	 The Saida Generations School: from nursery to 6th grade, boarding and day-students, both free of change. Boarding children referred through MOSA Social Development Centres. 2009-2010 enrolment was 600 children, 200 of which were boarding. Also runs summer school for remedial classes. Vocational training centre. 2009-2010 enrolment was 80 students. 2 sections for children with special needs: one for deaf children (50 students in 2009-2010) and the second for children with mental disabilities (30 students in 2009-2010).
Al Tadamun wal Tanmiyeh	Ein el Hilweh, Saida	Project entitled "New Beginning": targets working children from Ein el Hilweh camp who work as garbage collectors. Provides educational and recreational services to 175 working children regardless of nationality (Palestinian, Syrian, Lebanese). Also involves non-working children in recreational activities to promote interaction.
House of Hope	Al Kahali	Juvenile rehabilitation centre. Children referred through judge's decision in juvenile court. Services include: psychological, social, educational, vocational and leisure activities and health. Parents may visit with permission from court. Average of 300 children attend the centre each year.

Annexe 5: Household survey

NB: Before completing this survey, the Guidelines should be read.

Identification information								
Survey code:	r code:				Name of assessor:			
Date:		Region:				Time started:		
		Site:				Time fini	shed:	
I. Key informa	nt info	ormation						
I.I Gender:	M [) F		1.2 F	ositio	n/role:		
1.3 Number of p	eople	living in the	same home a	as you:				
Relationship to key informant	Age	Gender	Height (cm)	Weight (kg)	Na	tionality	Education level	Profession
		□ M □	=					
		□ M □ I	=					
		□ M □ I	=					
		□ M □	=					
		□ M □ I	=					
		□ M □	=					
		□ M □	=					
		□ M □ I	=					
		□ M □ I	=					
		□ M □	=					
I.4 Do you have any children that are married and living outside the house? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ No ☐ Self yes, how old was he she when she got married?								
2. Family sociological profile								
2.I Does your family migrate? □ Yes □ No								
2.1 If yes: 2.1.1 Where do you go?								
2.2 Do you speak Domari? ☐ Yes ☐ No 2.3 Do your children speak Domari? ☐ Yes ☐ No								

3. Shelter								
3.1 Who owns the land you live on? Family/Municipality /Other	3.2 Do you pay □ Yes □ No If yes, how much		3.3 What is the family's monthly income?					
3.4 When was the shelter constructed?								
3.5 Observation What are the materials of the following structures:								
3.5.1 External walls? Mud/earth Wood Stone Cardboard Zinc Concrete Plastic Other (specify)								
3.6 How many rooms are in your	home?	3.7 Do you have a separate kitchen? ☐ Yes ☐ No						
3.8 Where is your main source of	electricity?	3.9 How many hours a day do you have electricity?						
3.10 Do you have lighting at night?	□ Yes □ No	3.11 Do you pay for electricity? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, how much per month?						
4. Water, sanitation and hygie	ne (WASH)							
4.1 Where is the main water source located? 4.2 Is the water safe to drink? □ Yes □ No 4.2.1 If no, where do you get drinking water?								
4.3 Do you have running water in ☐ Yes ☐ No	your home?	4.4 Do you pay for water? Yes No If yes, how much per month?						
4.4 Where are the toilets located	?	4.5 Are these: □ communal? □ private?						
4.6 Are there separate toilets for women and girls? ☐ Yes ☐ No	4.7 Do the toile: ☐ Yes ☐ No	ts have locks?	4.8 Do the toilets have handwashing facilities? ☐ Yes ☐ No					
4.9 Is the toilet connected to a sewage network? \Box Yes \Box No 4.9.1 If no, where does the sewage go?								

5. Health							
5.1 What are the most prevalent/common health concerns among:							
5.1.1 Adults?	5.1.2 Children?						
5.2 What was the last illness you had?							
5.3 What was the last illness one of your children h	ad?						
5.4 If you or a member of your family gets sick, whe Government hospital Clinic Private doct Other (specify)							
5.5 Where do most women give birth?	5.6 If birth is at home, are midwives used? ☐ Yes ☐ No						
☐ Clinics ☐ At home ☐ Other	5.7 Have women in this community died during childbirth? Yes No If yes, how many in the past year?						
	5.8 Have any children under the age of I died? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, how many in the past year?						
6. Education							
6.1 What educational services exist in this commun	ity?						
6.1.1 Primary Yes Name: Locat	ion:						
If no, where is the nearest one? Name:	Location: Distance:						
6.1.2 Secondary Yes Name: Location							
If no, where is the nearest one? Name:	Location: Distance:						
6.1.3 Non-formal (literacy classes) Yes Name: Location:							
If no, where is the nearest one? Name: Location: Distance:							
6.2 What proportion of children go to school? Majority Minority Don't know							
6.3 What prevents children from attending school? (Tick all that apply) No schools Distance to the school School fees Language/Curriculum Not enough teachers Work							

7. Child labour								
7.1 What sorts of work do the children do?								
	Mostly boys	Mostly girls	Equal boys / girls	Under 12 years old	12-18 years old	Average # hours /week	Distance from home	Transport
a) Cleaning other people's houses								
b) Market/trade								
c) Agriculture								
d) Workshop								
e) Street work /begging								
f) Transport								
g) Entertainment (music, singing and dancing)								
h) Other (specify)								
7.2 What risks do children face at work (specify the letter of the job in 7.1)? □ Harassment □ Arrest □ Injury □ Other health issues □ Missing school □ Staying up late □ Clients □ Other (specify								
7.3 What jobs are more dangerous than others?								
7.4 How are children protected from dangers at work?								
7.5 What are the effects on the family if a child stops working?								

8. Child protection concerns							
8.1 If children are not working, what do they do during the day?							
8.2 Where do children play? 8.3 Do your children play with non-Dom? ☐ Yes ☐ No							
8.4 What areas in this location are: 8.4.1 safest for children?							
8.5 Have any children been in 8.5.1 If yes, who, when, why?	conflict with pol	ice?	□ Yes □	No			
8.6 Have there ever been case	es of children:						
	Estimated total number			Gender break- down (if available)	Age breakdown (if available)		
8.6.1 Killed by violence or accident	□ Yes □ No						
8.6.2 Died of disease	□ Yes □ No						
8.6.3 Seriously injured	□ Yes □ No						
8.6.4 Missing or abducted	□ Yes □ No						
8.6.5 Physically abused	□ Yes □ No						
8.6.6 Sexually abused	□ Yes □ No						
8.6.7 Detained	□ Yes □ No						
8.6.8 Deported	□ Yes □ No						
8.7 Are there children without access to: 8.7.1 Food □ Yes □ No							
8.8 If you need any of the above items (food, water, shelter), who do you go to for help? □ Family □ Neighbours □ Government □ NGOs □ Other (specify)							
8.9 In your opinion, what are the main needs of children in this community?							
8.10 What should be done to address these?							
8.11 Who should do this?							

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http://www.right-to-education.org/country-node/453/country-minimum (accessed 23 January 2011)

Notes

- ¹ Equivalent to "Gypsy" in English.
- ² Developed by UNICEF, the protective environment is the framework used by Tdh in order to visualise how a child can become vulnerable to risks and which actors need to be engaged in order to limit such risks. See Annex 2.
- ³ See Chapter 2.5 for a detailed description of the diwan in Dom communities.
- ⁴ See Chapter 6 for full list of recommendations.
- ⁵ Regional Working Group on Child Labour (2002:13).
- ⁶ The literature review identified only one text that specifically focused on the Dom in Lebanon, a doctoral thesis by Giovanni Bochi (2007). Apart from this, a web-page featuring information about the Dom in Lebanon was located on the website of the Dom Research Centre.
- ⁷ See Annex 4 for the household survey used during the assessment.
- ⁸ Regional Working Group on Child Labour (2002:73).
- 9 See Table 2 p.14.
- ¹⁰ See map in Annex 3 for map of site locations and Chapter 2.3 ad 2.4 for demographic and geographic characteristics of sites.
- "Care was taken to insure that those who participated in individual interviews did not participate in FGDs, so as to ensure that individuals were not being counted twice.
- 12 See Table 2 p.14.
- ¹³ For information of how the total number of Dom households was estimated, see Chapter 2.3 "Demographic information".
- 14 Researchers conducted seven household surveys and no FGDs in the Bekaa. Unlike Dom communities in Beirut and South Lebanon, many Dom in the Bekaa have Syrian nationality and regularly move between Syria and Lebanon. Being outside of their country, they could feel more vulnerable and hence treat outsiders with suspicion as a protection mechanism. Moreover, NGO activity in Syria is far more restricted than in Lebanon and community members may be less accustomed to humanitarian actors.
- ¹⁵ Save the Children Alliance, 2007, p.7.
- ¹⁶ UNICEF and Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2004, p.20.
- ¹⁷ Adapted from Terre des homes, 2008, p.16.
- ¹⁸ The Domari Society of Jerusalem, http://www.wix.com/domarisociety/domari-society-website
- 19 "Domari is an endangered, archaic Indo-Aryan language spoken in the Middle East by populations who refer to themselves as Dom or Qurbati, and are usually called by the Arabs Nawar. It is part of the phenomenon of Indo-Aryan diaspora languages spoken by peripatetic groups (so-called 'Gypsies')." Matras, (forthcoming:1).
- ²⁰ The Domari Society of Jerusalem, http://www.wix.com/domarisociety/domari-society-website
- ²¹ Bochi, 2007, p.20.
- ²² Bocci, 2007 p.85
- 23 See also the Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature: "Arab gypsies have seen the origin of their wanderings in Zir's order to Jassas' defeated people to scatter with no fixed abode" (Meisami and Starkey, 1998, p. 825).
- ²⁴ Interestingly, one anthropologist, Giovanni Bochi, identified two groups within the Dom communities: the Dom and the Pardom. He claims that the Dom tend to have Syrian nationality and engage in work as itinerant dentists, while the Pardom have Lebanese nationality and work as beggars. (Bochi, 2007, p.95). This differentiation, however, did not come about in the current research. All of the participants self-identified as Dom, and hence throughout the report they will be referred to as such.
- ²⁵ A third category of non-ID status was identified: "Maqtoum el qayd", meaning that the individual did at one point have Lebanese citizenship but that this has been suspended because the family has not officially registered itself for several generations. Only a handful of respondents fell into this category.

- ²⁶ Interview, 16 June 2010.
- ²⁷ Central Administration of Statistics, 2007, p.25.
- ²⁸ AUB, 2010, p.24.
- ²⁹ Calculated from the household surveys.
- ³⁰ For Beirut, Saida and Tyre, the average household size emerged from the data gathered form the surveys. The research did not, however, generate data about the Bekaa or Northern Lebanon. Therefore, the estimated household size in these two regions was calculated as an average of the other 3 regions, and is only used here as an indicative figure.
- ³¹ CIA World Factbook. https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/le.html (accessed 15 January 2011).
- 32 AUB-UNRWA, 2010, p.24.
- $^{\rm 33}$ Central Administration of Statistics, 2007, p.131.
- 34 See Chapter 4.4 for more details about shelter in Dom communities.
- ³⁵ In this context, urban is defined by the site's proximity to other densely populated areas.
- ³⁶ See also Bochi, 2007 p.89.
- ³⁷ Interview 15 June 2010.
- ³⁸ In Arabic, this coffee is known as "ahwe murra", literally translated as "bitter coffee".
- ³⁹ The issue of social cohesion and community support will be dealt with in more detail in Chapter 5.1.
- ⁴⁰ Individual interview, 14 July 2010.
- ⁴¹ Survey conducted 13 September 2010.
- ⁴² Central Administration for Statistics, 2007, p.208 and p.225.
- ⁴³ AUB, 2010, p.38.
- ⁴⁴ Central Administration for Statistics, 2007, p.225.
- ⁴⁵ For the purposes of comparison, both the "Intermediate" and "Secondary" levels of CAS statistics are contained in this column.
- 46 Group interview, 15 June 2010.
- ⁴⁷ As a basis for comparison, 10.2% of Palestinians over the age of 15 have never been to school. The average age of this group, however, is 60 years old, making them significantly older than the Dom sample in the study.
- ⁴⁸ Of the Lebanese not enrolled in school, 60.9% are over the age of 50. CAS, 2007, p.210.
- $^{\rm 49}$ Focus group discussion with Dom mothers, 7 October 2010.
- ⁵⁰ The percentages here exceed 100% because the question was multiple-answer.
- 51 Approximately \$333.
- 52 Approximately \$600.
- ⁵³ Between \$27 and \$33.
- ⁵⁴ A musical instrument.
- ⁵⁵ See Chapter Three (P) for more information on dancing amongst Dom girls.
- ⁵⁶ Bochi, 2007 p.118.
- ⁵⁷ Bochi, 2007, p.52. The assessment identified only two Dom working as dentists, with both cases documented in the surveys. Both cases were, however, located in the Bekaa, and researchers believe that if more surveys had been conducted in the Bekaa, more cases of Dom dentists would have been identified.

- ⁵⁸ According to the Lebanon Labour Code, Law No.536 (24/7/1996), Article 22, 14 is the legal age of employment. See http://www.right-to-education.org/country-node/453/country-minimum (accessed 15 January 2011).
- ⁵⁹ AUB-UNRWA, 2010, p.7.
- 60 Individual interview, 10 June 2010.
- ⁶¹ Equal to \$333, which is the minimum wage for one person in Lebanon.
- ⁶² All monetary values are in Lebanese Lira (LBP), with 1,500 LBP equal to \$1 US.
- 63 Williams, 2006, p.207.
- ⁶⁴ Individual interview, , 16 June 2010.
- 65 Anleu, 2006, p.9.
- 66 Becker, quoted in van Krieken et al., 2006, p.522.
- 67 Donovan, 1992 p.330.
- 68 Although the extent to which the majority of Dom currently living in Lebanon fit under the term "Gypsy" is debatable, mainly because they are no longer itinerant, the fact that they are an ethnic minority with historical links to an itinerant lifestyle is enough to earn them the stigma commonly associated with Gypsy groups.
- 69 Individual interview, 5 July 2010.
- ⁷⁰ Individual interview, 17 July 2010.
- ⁷¹ Bocci, 2007, p.61.
- ⁷² Employee of Al Tahaddi. Interview 2 June 2010.
- ⁷³ Marshall in van Krieken et al., 2000, p. 251.
- ⁷⁴ Individual interview, Palestinian Red Crescent employee, Bar Elias, Bekaa Valley. 5 July 2010.
- ⁷⁵ Ahmed, 2000 p.21.
- ⁷⁶ Dicken quoted in Ahmed, 2000 p.5.
- ⁷⁷ Individual interview, 28 May 2010.
- ⁷⁸ Individual interview, 6 July 2010.
- ⁷⁹ See Section 4.12 for further discussion on this topic.
- 80 Interview, Programme Health Manager, Al Tahaddi. 10 June 2010.
- 81 Bochi, 2007, p.67.
- 82 Interview, 8 July 2010.
- 83 Group interview, 11 June 2010.
- 84 Group interview, 12 June 2010.
- 85 Group interview, 5 July 2010.
- 86 Individual interview, 6 June 2010.
- ⁸⁷ Individual interview, 29 July 2010.
- 88 Individual interview, 17 July 2010.
- 89 Cannadine cited in Bottero (2005).

- 90 FGD with Dom mothers, 7 October 2010.
- 91 FGD with Dom mothers, 7 October 2010.
- 92 Group interview with Dom women, 7 July 2010.
- 93 FGD with Dom fathers, 14 September 2010.
- ⁹⁴ Individual interview, 9 June 2010.
- 95 Individual interview, 9 June 2010.
- ⁹⁶ Similarly, Williams (2000a) also mentions that Dom seek integration by adopting the religious practices of their surroundings, whether Islamic or Christian.
- 97 FGD with Dom fathers, 14 September 2010.
- 98 Conversation during survey conducted 29 August 2010.
- ⁹⁹ Focus group discussion with Dom mothers, 7 October 2010.
- ¹⁰⁰ Focus group discussion with Dom mothers, 14 September 2010.
- ¹⁰¹ Equal to \$333, which is the minimum wage for one person in Lebanon. See CAS, 2007, p.314.
- 102 Equals approximately \$166.
- 103 Equals approximately \$27.3.
- ¹⁰⁴ World Bank website, http://econ.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTDEC/EXTRESEARCH/0,,contentMDK:22510787~pagePK:64165 401~piPK:64165026~theSitePK:469382,00.html
- ¹⁰⁵ UNDP, 2008, p.11.
- 106 UNDP, 2008, p.11.
- ¹⁰⁷ AUB, 2010, p.25.
- ¹⁰⁸ UNDP, 2008, p.11.
- ¹⁰⁹ AUB, 2010, p.25.
- 110 FGD, 2 September 2010.
- ¹¹¹ Discussion during survey, 2 September 2010.
- ¹¹² Discussion during field visit with Premiere Urgence, 27 September 2010.
- ¹¹³ Interview, 2 June 2010.
- 114 Interview, 28 October 2010.
- $^{\rm II5}$ For example, some Palestinians employ the Dom as cheap labourers.
- ¹¹⁶ See Chapter Two 2.2 for more information about the meaning of "qayd el dars".
- ¹¹⁷ Individual interview, Dom woman, Hayy el Gharbe 5 August 2010.
- ¹¹⁸ Focus group discussion with boys, Hayy el Gharbe. 29 September 2010.
- 119 AUB, 2010, p.xiv.
- ¹²⁰ The sum of percentages in this table exceeds 100 because the question was multiple-answer.
- ¹²¹ Conversation during a survey conducted 26 August 2010.
- ¹²² Première Urgence Lebanon, Field Assessment Report. September 2010.

- ¹²³ Focus group discussion with fathers, Baysiriyeh. 14 September 2010.
- ¹²⁴ Individual interview, Doctor, Palestinian Red Crescent, Bar Elias. 5 July 2010.
- ¹²⁵ Individual interview, Doctor, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut, 9 June 2010.
- ¹²⁶ Individual interview, Doctor, Saida 12 October 2010.
- ¹²⁷ Individual interview, 17 July 2010.
- ¹²⁸ Individual Interview, 5 July 2010.
- 129 Individual interview, 8 June 2010.
- ¹³⁰ Individual interview, 8 June 2010.
- ¹³¹ UNDP, 2008, p.45.
- 132 Individual interview, 8 June 2010.
- 133 Individual interview, 9 June 2010.
- ¹³⁴ Individual interview, Doctor, Hayy el Gharbe. 9 June 2010.
- ¹³⁵ Individual interview, Doctor, Saida, 12 October 2010.
- ¹³⁶ AUB, 2010, р.47.
- ¹³⁷ UNICEF, 2004, p.16.
- 138 Individual interview, 9 June 2010.
- ¹³⁹ The percentages here exceed 100% because the question was multiple-answer.
- 140 FGD with boys, 29 September 2010.
- ¹⁴¹ FGD, 6 September 2010.
- 142 FDG, 29 September 2010.
- ¹⁴³ Individual interview, Hayy el Gharbe, Beirut, 10 June 2010.
- ¹⁴⁴ Individual interview, Doctor, Palestinian Red Crescent, Bar Elias. 5 July 2010.
- ¹⁴⁵ Conversation during survey conducted 30 August 2010.
- 146 Individual interview, 9 June 2010.
- ¹⁴⁷ One such conflict occurred between two families in Hayy el Gharbe in April 2010, just before the beginning of the research.
- ¹⁴⁸ Discussion during a survey, 1 September 2010.
- ¹⁴⁹ FGD, 6 September 2010.
- ¹⁵⁰ Conversation during a survey, 5 September 2010.
- 151 Group interview, 6 July 2010.
- ¹⁵² FGD with fathers, 27 September 2010.
- 153 Discussion during a survey, 8 September 2010.
- 154 Link provided by Right to Education.org http://www.right-to-education.org/node/583#other_groups (accessed 23 January 2011).
- ¹⁵⁵ See text box "Case: eviction of the Dom in Borj el Shimali", Chapter 4.2.
- ¹⁵⁶ Discussion during a survey, 7 September 2010.

- ¹⁵⁷ Panel discussion given by Scott Philips during the WOCMES conference, Barcelona. 22 August 2010.
- 158 UNICEF, 2001, p.2.
- 159 See Right to Education.org http://www.right-to-education.org/country-node/453/country-minimum (accessed 23 Jan 2011).
- 160 Committee on the Rights of the Child, 1996. http://www.lnf.org.lb/child/concob.html (accessed 23 January 2011).
- ¹⁶¹ FGD with Dom mothers, 3 October 2010.
- ¹⁶² FGD with teenage girls, Qasmiyeh, 27 September 2010.
- ¹⁶³ FGD teenage girls, Qasmiyeh, 27 September 2010.
- ¹⁶⁴ Discussion during a survey, 8 September 2010.
- 165 UNICEF, 2001, p.2.
- ¹⁶⁶ Exploitation in this sense refers to the use of children for someone else's advantage, gratification or profit often resulting in unjust, cruel and harmful treatment of the child. These activities are to the detriment of the child's physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development. Save the Children Alliance, 2007, p.4.
- ¹⁶⁷ Personal interview, 9 June 2010.
- ¹⁶⁸ On the contrary, children and adults with disabilities seemed to be "hidden" from the public eye.
- ¹⁶⁹ FGD with fathers, 27 September 2010.
- ¹⁷⁰ Individual interview, 2 November 2010.
- ¹⁷¹ FGD with teenage girls, Qasmiyeh, 27 September 2010.
- ¹⁷² Individual interview, 15 June 2010.
- 173 Tdh, 2010 p.8.
- ¹⁷⁴ Ibid.
- 175 This issue will be dealt with in more detail in paragraph N below.
- ¹⁷⁶ Interview, 2 June 2010.
- ¹⁷⁷ Conversation during survey, 18 August 2010.
- ¹⁷⁸ Group interview with children, 5 June 2010.
- ¹⁷⁹ FGD with teenage girls, Qasmiyeh, 29 September 2010.
- ¹⁸⁰ Terre des hommes, no date, p.8.
- ¹⁸¹ Conversation during a survey, 14 September 2010.
- 182 Law 422 of 2002 is the legal instrument that provides protection for children in conflict with the law. For more details, see Section Five.
- ¹⁸³ Conversation during a survey, 8 September 2010.
- ¹⁸⁴ See Chapter 5.3.1 for more details on Law 422.
- ¹⁸⁵ The Higher Council for Childhood (2004): 205-206.
- ¹⁸⁶ PowerPoint presentation given by SIDC. Sin el Fil, 11 March 2010. The SIDC data was gathered under an HIV/AIDS focused project. Therefore, members in the sample were classified into three categories: men who have sex with men, intravenous drug users and female sex workers. What is unclear is whether or not the men who have sex with men category included those who engaged in this on a commercial basis, and therefore whether the statistics included male sex workers.
- ¹⁸⁷ For more factors which increase children's vulnerability to commercial sexual exploitation, see ECPAT, 2008 pp.25-29.

- ¹⁸⁸ Group interview, 11 June 2010.
- ¹⁸⁹ Conversation during survey, 18 August 2010.
- 190 Interview, 15 June 2010.
- ¹⁹¹ FGD with boys, 6 September 2010.
- 192 In Islam, the Qur'an (verse 4:23) states that children who have regularly been breastfed by the same woman are considered siblings, and consequently not allowed to marry each other. See Sheikh and Ahmad, 2006 p.165.
- 193 FGD with mothers, 3 October 2010.
- 194 FGD with fathers, 21 September 2010.
- ¹⁹⁵ Conversation during a survey, 8 September 2010.
- 196 FGD with boys, 29 September 2010.
- 197 FGD with boys, 6 September 2010.
- ¹⁹⁸ Individual interview, 9 June 2010.
- ¹⁹⁹ FGD with boys, 2 September 2010.
- ²⁰⁰ See Chapter 4.10 for more details about Dom children's experiences of discrimination.
- ²⁰¹ Law No. 422/2002, Article 25. From the website of UPEL (Union pour la protection de l'enfance au Liban) http://www.upel.org/about.htm (accessed 19 February 2010).
- ²⁰² Save the Children Sweden (2008): 65.
- ²⁰³ Save the Children Sweden (2008): 66.
- ²⁰⁴ Terre des hommes (2005:6).
- 205 See Chapter 4.6.3 for more details about trends in birthing amongst the Dom.
- ²⁰⁶ Individual interview, 12 November 2010.
- ²⁰⁷ Individual interview, Adnan Nasr Eddine, SDC Bureau Chief, Ministry of Social Affairs. 12 November 2010.
- ²⁰⁸ See Chapter 4.6.2 for more details about lack of medical follow-up in Dom communities.
- ²⁰⁹ For more on this point, see Chapter 4.10.
- ²¹⁰ See Annex 4 for a Matrix of NGOs who provide services to Dom children.
- ²¹¹ Individual interview, 30 June 2010.
- ²¹² Terre des hommes (2005:13).
- ²¹³ UNICEF in Terre des hommes (2008a).

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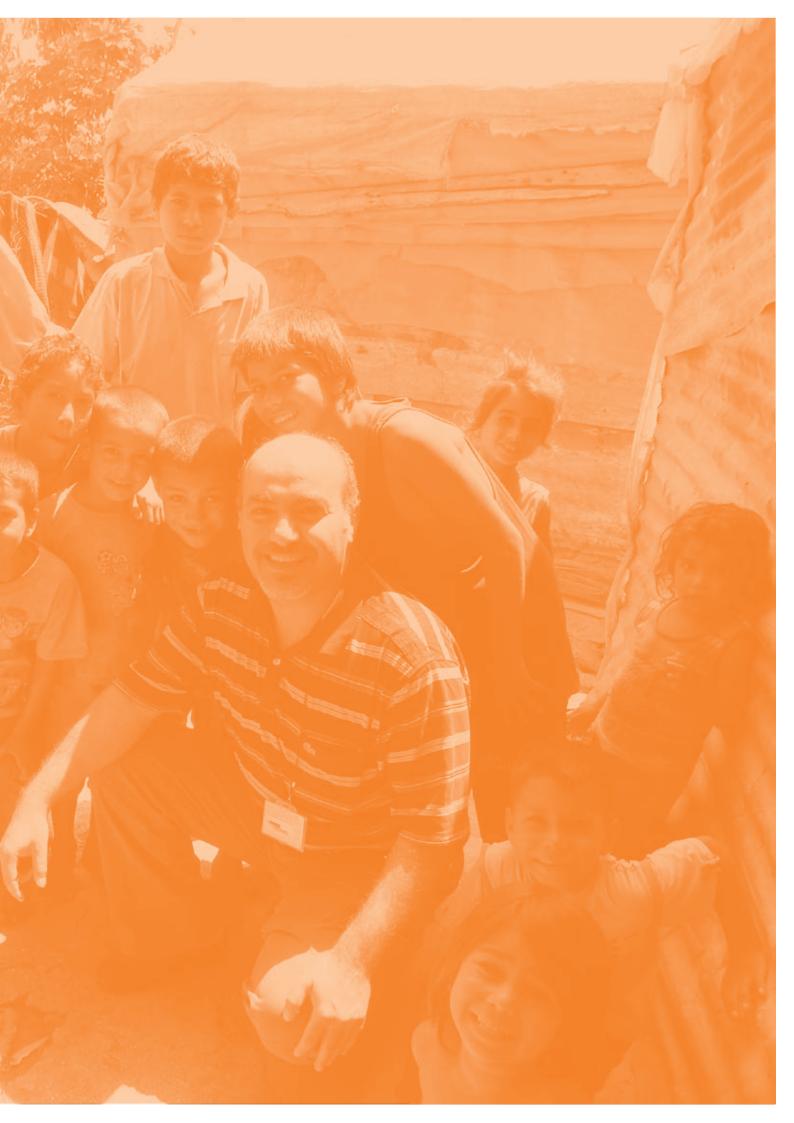
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