

Human Rights report on the situation of Syrian refugees in Beqaa-Lebanon

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Introduction:

The Syrian observer in Lebanon is studying the situation of human rights of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, supported by the Arab Human Rights Fund www.ahrfund.org and it is a one year project starting in January 2016. The number of Syrian refugees according to United Nations statistics is 400 thousand refugees, the focus in this report is on Saad Naiel area in Middle Beqaa.

Camps Situation:

236 tents in 8 different camps (about 1543 refugees) were observed, 230 children from these camps are in schools while 133 children are deprived of education for several reasons, such as , there are no schools, the long distance between camps and schools and the lack of awareness on the importance of education among people. An increase in the number of legally unsubscribed children and deprived of education and health care (about 86 children) was observed, in addition to 248 children under the age of six years.

Unregistered marriages were observed, out of 236 families there were 38 unregistered marriages. Some are scared to go to the Syrian Embassy to register them, and it may be that some Lebanese agencies do not register them, or they cannot afford the cost of 300,000 Lebanese liras (to be verified).

Another problem observed especially in big camps, were the fumes emitted from heaters. As a result of the lack in heating fuel and using unhealthy heating devices (metal cans), where people burn plastic and other flammable material; some illnesses were spread among kids because of toxic gas inside the tents.

The problem of workers' wages, especially among women who work in factories, where they are being mistreated and used because of long shifts and low wages , the shift is 12 hours with only a half hour break. The wages start from 6000 Lebanese liras to 12000 liras per day, most working girls and women do not have life insurance and are under the age of eighteen.

Some hospitals in the Beqaa are committing violations. We documented two deaths in a hospital due to deliberate medical inattentiveness on the part of the hospital cadre, who undermines refugees, aware of their inability to report the hospital hospices for several reasons like the issue of Lebanese residency papers.

A distribution of expired medications by an organization was also observed.

While the observer was working on the ground, the high commissioner of refugees' affairs Filippo Grandi visited one of the camps on 22/1/2016. The camp was suffering from several issues like pollution of the river, huge amounts of garbage and big unfenced holes filled with water. The township cleaned the river, the sewage system and fenced the holes near the camp which the high commissioner visited, and took him in a tour to a newly constructed camp where most service facilities were available like bathes, furnished floors and new tents. The township has already visited that camp several times and told the people what to say and how to act in front of the commissioner, threatening them of eviction if they did not follow instructions.

Violation cases:

1- (Hassan-j) 15 years old

The camp was raided in the early morning by the local Lebanese police. They went into Hassan's tent and dragged him along with his younger brother outside the tent. Their mother uselessly tried to mediate because they are young especially the younger brother who is 12 years old. Outside they hit Hassan on his face and cuffed his hands , after the mother begged them to let go of the younger one. Hassan and others were transported to the police station where he was beaten savagely on his eye, Hassan says "when I told one of the guards that my eye is hurting and I can no longer see, he hit me on the face and said: "(how about now, are you able to see?)". Hassan and the others remained in detention until dusk then they were released. Hassan said they did not ask for his papers to check if they were not expired, nor was he interrogated.

2- (Mohammed - A) 45 years old

The camp was raided at early morning. 19 people were arrested. Mohammed said: " The door was knocked and someone was yelling 'open the door fast'. When I opened he hit on my face and I fell on my back, then they dragged me outside, took me to the car and started to beat everyone. After that, they tied our hands, put black bags on our heads, and took us to the police station. When we were being let down to the jail, someone pushed me so I fell off the stairs and started to bleed". After they reached the cell, they began to beat them in spite of Mohammed's bleeding, the

beating went on until the evening then they were released without interrogation.

Recommendations:

Lebanese Ministry of internal affairs and townships:

Inspection on the agencies that raid the camps without legal arrest warrants, in addition to some other police stations in Beqaa where violations are taking place.

Lebanese Ministry of health:

Periodic inspection of hospitals, in the Beqaa, especially after reported violations against refugees.

UN High commissioner for refugees:

Periodic field visits and coordination with organizations that work for them in order to know the actual situation of refugees.

(This project is supported by the Arab Human Rights Fund www.ahrfund.org . The opinions and viewpoints in this report do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the Arab Human Rights Fund or its positions).