The role of Community Based Organizations

in preparing and responding to crisis in Lebanon

a qualitative study

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Abstract

This study explores the role of community-based organizations in preparing for and responding to crisis in Lebanon. While there has been considerable work conducted on preparedness, responsiveness and recovery to crisis in Lebanon, there has been little work so far that focuses on measuring and assessing the capacities, expertise, strengths and weaknesses of local CBOS in preparing and responding to crises. Managers and decisions makers from nine different organizations were interviewed on the overall expertise gained in past conflicts since the civil war as well as their current level of preparedness and responsiveness to contemporary and future crisis. They were also interviewed on their perceived role of INGOs, the state and the community in facilitating or hindering the process of crisis management. The following main recommendations were generated from the analysis of the transcripts: a) A more inclusive, integrated and activated role for the CBOs in the national disaster risk strategy and the national response plan; b) capitalizing and building on the experiences and capacities of CBOs by producing a local form of preparedness and responsiveness to crisis; c) reinforcing and empowering the community's own forms of local preparedness and responsive to crises.

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1. Introduction

"This study offers a qualitative analysis of the role of community based organizations (CBO) in preparing and responding to crises in Lebanon. It aims at exploring, through qualitative data, the different expertise CBOs in Lebanon possess in terms of responding to crises, as well as their level of preparedness for future emergencies. It does so in relation to what has been conducted so far in terms of disaster and crisis risk management in Lebanon. Furthermore, this study offers insights into how CBOs perceive the role of International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs), the Lebanese state (in all its levels from municipalities to ministries) and the local community in facilitating or hindering the process of preparing and responding to crises and conflicts. While most of the work conducted so far on disaster management has mainly been on the level of state institutions, this study attempts to fill the gap between governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations in terms of crisis management by providing a qualitative description of CBOs' work in emergencies and conflicts. There has been very little work so far that focuses on measuring and assessing the capacities and expertise of local CBOS in preparing and responding to emergencies.

The process of managing and governing a crisis can be categorized following three distinct phases of interventions: a) preparing for the crisis, b) responding when the crisis occurs, and c) recovering in its aftermath[1]. This study focused on the first two phases, investigating the preparedness and responsiveness level of CBOs in Lebanon, knowing that in a site constantly anticipating conflicts like Lebanon, the recovery phase in the aftermath of a crisis can also be thought of as part of being prepared for future potential ones.

Moreover, humanitarian definitions of emergencies normally categorize them in a man-made/nature-made binary, where the former usually constitutes war and political conflict and the latter disasters like hurricanes and earthquakes etc. This categorical binary however, and the different forms of preparedness and responsiveness that accompany it, has been critiqued in recent years, with disasters like Hurricane Katrina, the Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami and the Haitian earthquake clearly showing that disasters can also be man-made, their impact and scale occurring due to institutional and systematic neglect, violence and colonialism[2].

This study focuses solely on political conflict and war as they have been recurrent in Lebanon since the civil war. However, the expertise acquired by CBOs, as well as the challenges and problems face, can easily be applied to a disaster scenario.

1 Interview with Fadi Abilmona, UNDP, June 2015.

2 For more on these critiques see for example Craig Calhoun, "The idea of emergency: Humanitarian action and global (dis)order", In *Contemporary states of emergency*, (eds.) Didier Fassin and Mariella Pandolfi, 29-59, New York, Zone Books, 2010; Didier Fassin, "Desiring for exception: managing disaster victims", In *Humanitarian Reason: A moral history of the present* (eds), pp.181-200, 2012.

Box 1: Glimpse of the last crises in Lebanon

Crisis	Year
Palestinian Refugee Crisis	1948-1963
Lebanese Civil War	1975-1990
Israeli Invasion of Lebanon	1982
Operations Grapes of Wrath	1996
July War	2006
Nahr Al Bared crisis	2007
Syrian Refugee Crisis	2012- ongoing

The next section discusses the methodological framework of the study, exemplified in the methods, instruments used, procedure, sampling and analysis. Section Three provides an overall description of the researched CBOs in terms of their organizational nature, sectoral expertise and services provided. Section Four sets the context of the study by providing an overview of the policies, programs, manuals and trainings done so far in terms of preparedness and responsiveness to crisis, by international humanitarian agencies and organizations. Section Five presents an analytical description of the data acquired from CBOs concerning: the expertise related to preparedness and responsiveness acquired in the field; the CBO level of preparedness and responsiveness, the perceived role of INGO, the state and the community in facilitating or hindering crisis preparedness and responsiveness and the problems and challenges faced. Section Six provides recommendations for humanitarian work. The last section summarizes the findings and sets the limitations of the study, as well as goals for future research.

2. Methodology

Two separate questionnaires were designed to generate data. The first questionnaire[3] targeted Local CBOs, while the second one targeted international agencies and organizations[4].

A questions sheet was also designed in parallel with the CBO questionnaire, to generate multiple questions for each theme or topic that the questionnaire was covering. The interviewer was trained on how to administer the questionnaire and how to use the questions sheet to probe CBO representatives during interviews, in order to produce as much thick qualitative data as possible.

Ten Community-Based organizations (CBOs) were identified for the study. They were selected based on their rootedness in the community they service, the long-term commitment to social service in Lebanon and the community-based nature of their services. We contacted the CBOs selected and we were able to set appointments for nine of them. The description of the CBOs and the programs they implemented during crises and in their aftermaths are detailed in Table 1 below. Semi-structured interviews based on the questionnaire we designed were conducted with the decision makers of these CBOs, whenever possible. A description of the interview's goals and aim was provided and consent was administered orally through a written script specifying that the interview will be recorded.

The rationale behind interviewing high-level managers of CBOs pertained to three reasons: first, they were the most likely CBO members to be acquainted with a historical and thick knowledge of the overall programs and services provided by the organization during conflict and post-conflict situation. Second, high level CBO managers make executive decision about the changing nature of the organization when facing times of crises and what this entails in terms of collaboration with the community, other CBOs, INGOS and the state. Third, CBO decision makers are the ones who are the most aware of the shifting and changing policies on crises and conflicts. For that, they represented a targeted pool of participants for this study's inquiries. Each interview lasted up to one hour.

Another three interviews were conducted with representatives from international humanitarian agencies and organizations, for the purpose of generating information on the international humanitarian understanding of local preparedness and responsiveness, and the available preparedness and responsiveness strategies, plans, programs and trainings programs conducted in Lebanon[5]. Moreover, an interview was conducted on the work done so far in drafting the role of CBOs within existing disaster management strategies and plans.

3 Appendix A.

4 Appendix B.

5 Appendix B.

Transcripts of interviews were analyzed based on thematic qualitative analysis[6]. Transcripts were coded based on common themes, ideas and topics that emerged across the transcripts, while also highlighting aberrant themes raised in the interviews.

6 Greg S Guest, Kathleen M. MacQueen, Emily E. Namey, *Applied Thematic Analysis*, Sage Publications Inc, 2012.

3. Overview of studied CBOs

Box 2: General description of the studied CBOs

Name of CBO	Current Sectoral Expertise	Overall Programs Implemented in Crises	Year CBO was Founded
Amel Association	Development, Health; Human Rights & protection; Migrant workers refugees; Women status & issues	Setting and running hospitals; Running mobile clinics; Focusing on medical needs while integrating developmental services; Food and non-food aid distribution; Psychosocial support	1979
Beit Atfal Al Soumoud (National Institution of Social Care and Vocational Training)	Socioeconomic support and empowerment of families; Development health; Education; Social and cultural development	Food and non-food aid distribution; Advocating for solidarity movements outside; Psychological and mental Health services; Sustaining families affected by war and violence	1976
Imam Sadr Foundation	Education; Health; Women empowerment; Local capacity building	Mobile Clinics; mental health support; Food and non-food aid distribution Orphan support program	1963

Name of CBO	Current Sectoral Expertise	Overall Programs Implemented in Crises	Year CBO was Founded
Lebanese Red Cross- (sociomedical department)	Advocacy & awareness; Health relief services; Training and capacity building	Mobile clinics Food and no food aid distribution; Psychosocial support; Needs assessment	1945
Mada Association	Development	Supporting coop-eratives during conflict and war; Integrating new populations and communities in need into already established services; Dialogue; Conflict resolution; Support the creation of local committees to face potential crises	2000
Makassed Communal Health Bureau	Education; Health; Social & Cultural Development; Training & Capacity building	Education during emergency; Mobile clinics; Food and non-food aid distribution	1983

Name of CBO	Current Sectoral Expertise	Overall Programs Implemented in Crises	Year CBO was Founded
Mouvement Social	Advocacy & Awareness; Children & Youth; Development Education; Human Rights & Protection	Making kitchens inside of schools hosting displaced communities; Programs and entertainment for the displaced children; Awareness sessions; Conflict resolution Dialogue Encouraging and building local volunteers; Needs Assessment	1961
Nabaa (Development Action Without Borders)	Community Development	Community development programs during emergency; Food & non-food distribution; Psychosocial support; resilience; Needs assessment; Aiding host families; Advocacy for refugee rights Working in emergency while maintaining all services available	2001
Najdeh Association	Advocacy & Awareness; Children & Youth Gender Issues Human Rights & Protection Mental Health & Refugees	Food and non-food item distribution; Needs assessment; GBV and women's rights; Psychosocial support	1978

4. Context: preparedness and responsiveness to crisis in Lebanon

The information for this section is based on four in-depth and semi-structured interviews conducted with representatives from international humanitarian and developmental agencies and organizations[7]. These agencies and organizations have been involved in setting and overseeing the drafting and implementations of disaster risk strategies and response plans, laws, programs and trainings to build a disaster management and prevention system and procedures in Lebanon. The questions asked during the interviews focused on getting an overall description of these programs and initiatives.

State-centered initiatives

Qualitative interviews revealed that there has been considerable work conducted on managing and reducing the risk for crisis[8] in in Lebanon through different disaster risk management initiatives, programs, policies and recovery initiatives, dating back at least to the aftermath of the Grapes of Wrath operations in 1996[9]. Most of these projects seem to have been firstly implemented and coordinated at the level of the government, following a somewhat top-down approach that targeted the Prime Minister's Office, the ministries[10], then working regionally at the level of governorates, while training municipalities and various state entities whose function is directly implicated in crisis management like the Civil Defense and the Red Cross. By focusing on the state, these programs aim to produce more empowering responses to future crisis/disasters[11]. Other initiatives also seek to engage and train local capacities at the level of civil society and community empowerment, especially women[12].

One of the main initiatives established so far is "Strengthening Disaster Risk Management Capacities in Lebanon", a project launched in 2009 between UNDP and the Lebanese government, represented by the Prime Minister. The project aims to help the government develop its own disaster management and risk reduction strategy, which aims at both managing and preventing the occurrence of disasters. Since 2009, the project has managed to establish an operational Disaster Risk Reduction Management (DRM) Unit that works under the Prime Minister's Office to coordinate during disasters and conflicts. Programs and guides like the Crisis Recovery program and the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) guide were also designed to manage and decrease the risk of future disasters[13].

The project also developed the National Disaster Management Strategy (NDMS) and the National Response Plan (NRP). While the Lebanese government has not of yet officially endorsed the national strategy for managing disasters, a law to form a national disaster coordination committee has been passed. However, this

7 The agencies interviewed were Diakonia, Swiss Agency for Development and Coordination (SDC), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

8 While most of the projects and initiatives seem to focus on disaster, many of the same established units, entities and trainings can easily be used when facing a crisis or a conflict.

9 Interview with Fadi Abilmona, UNDP, June 2015.

10 Each ministry has its own contingency plan in case of disaster/crises.

11 Interview with Dalia Lakiss, SDC, November 2015.

12 Interview with Rodolph Gebrael, Diakonia, April 2015.

13 Interview with Dalia Lakiss, SDC, November 2015.

committee functions solely on the level of the response to crisis and disaster, while the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) guide was designed to function on all levels of prevention, preparedness, response and recovery[14]. As a result, there is not a lot of prevention work initiated by the Lebanese government on disaster and conflict reduction. On the contrary, there seems to be a trend towards managing crisis and disaster rather than managing their prevention[15]. Focusing solely on the level of the response might be caused by a lack of Lebanese state budget and funding directed at the management and prevention of crisis[16]. There, the Lebanese government has adopted the DRR guide, but uses it to focus more on responding to crises and disasters. Events like the collapse of Fassouh building in 2012, the Ethiopian plane Crash in 2010, along with Israeli wars and aggressions in 1996 and in 2006, all aided in mobilizing state officials more towards a need for a national plan and a routinized set procedure for preparing and responding to crisis[17].

A mapping on how different Lebanese state institutions respond to crises and disasters was conducted in 2009 for the "Strengthening Disaster risk Management Capacities in Lebanon" project, out of which was produced a fully operational Disaster Risk Management Unit, where the idea was to establish an institutionalized and routinized procedure to respond to different emergencies without having to return to the different bureaucratic state bodies for approval, to facilitate the rapidity of the response to crisis[18]. This was done by capitalizing on pre-existing state or semi-state entities and organizations whose function or mandate is to respond for crises, like the High Relief Committee, the Lebanese Red Cross, the Civil Defense, the military and police. These units were included in the National Disaster Management Strategy (NDMS) and the National Response Plan (NRP), where their roles were drafted, specified and organized along a national preparedness and responsiveness plan[19].

To summarize, some of the programs and initiatives conducted so far include[20]: establishing a central and equipped operation room presided by the Lebanese prime minister that links with other operation rooms in the governorates; incorporating Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) measures for buildings by the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR) and planning on how to further include DRR measures in the private sector; strengthening state capacity in disaster and crisis prevention; developing and launching the National Operation Room at Grand Serail; drafting a law that aims at developing a national disaster risk management authority[21]; mobilizing and activating pre-existing state entities that can have a role in preparing and responding to crisis, and including them as actors in the National Disaster Management Strategy (NDMS); finding a common framework for all different parties and sectors in Lebanese state institutions in terms of crisis response, the role of each organization or unit and who/when to intervene; developing national and local capacities by providing simulation

14 *ibid.*

15 *ibid.*

16 *ibid.*

17 Interview with Fadi Abilmona, UNDP, June 2015.

18 *ibid.*

19 Interview with Fadi Abilmona, UNDP, June 2015; Interview with Rawad El Zir, OCHA, April 2015; Interview with Rodolph Gebrael, Diakonia, April 2015; Interview with Dalia Lakkis, SDC, November 2015.

20 Based on interviews with Fadi Abilmona, UNDP, June 2015; Rawad El Zir, OCHA, April 2015, Rodolph Gebrael, Diakonia, April 2015 & Dalia Lakiss, SDC, November 2015.

21 The law draft still hasn't been issued at the time of writing this report.

training for different units on emergencies, providing Early Recovery workshops and Information Management and targeting Media; designing curriculums that include training on how to prepare and respond to crisis for people applying for state jobs; Raising national capacities by Getting Airports Ready for Disaster (GARD) and developing response plans for BRHIA and RIAK Military Base; training around 30 people from different sectors and ministries on data assessment, management and consolidation for emergencies and crises; working on the role of women in preventing or limiting crisis and producing a home guidebook on disasters; launching the "Resilient Cities campaign"[22] with the participation of 64 municipalities and 8 unions of municipalities from different governorates in Lebanon. The campaign was based on three themes: Know more, Invest wiser, and Build safer. Finally, the United-Nation Higher Committee for Refugees (UNHCR) has drafted a Lebanese crisis response plan (LCPR) for the Syrian Refugee crisis that includes the Lebanese state and civil society organizations as responding actors[23].

Some of the challenges raised by the four representatives of the donor organizations and agencies were obstacles in: 1) allocating state funds for disaster risk management; 2) legislating and approving the draft law on how to respond in disasters and conflicts; 3) coordinating between different state sectors, ministries and between different regions, on responding to emergencies; 4) the unavailability and lack of data on available infrastructures, resources and populations mobility that can be used during emergencies; 5) A need for more data analysis of and research on previous and current crises, their impact, and the local response; 6) a limited long term assessment of risk; and 7) duplicating efforts between different humanitarian organizations.

A rather limited inclusion of local civil society

Finally, all interviews showed that the role of CBOs in the programs and work conducted so far around disaster management is still somewhat limited. While the role of CBOS is mentioned in the national strategy and response plan[24], it is not yet activated, or a procedure is not yet in order for them. A general framework for the role of CBOs has been drafted and proposed to be included in the National Response Plan, including all three levels of DRR: preparedness, response and recovery[25]. The conceived role of the CBOs includes the following[26]:

a- In the Preparedness phase: awareness raising, coordination, designing standardized criteria for relief, trainings, preparing a system for registration and relief distribution; forming support groups; participating in simulation trainings that comply with Prime Minister Office's warning threat signals for crisis and disasters; identifying places and sites that can be used as shelters across the country;

22 UNDP, importance of resilient cities campaign, 2011, http://www.drm.pcm.gov.lb/?q=node/40 [last accessed on September 14th 2015].

23 To read more: https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/Syria/LCRP_document_EN_26Mar2015.pdf [last accessed on November 11th, 2015].

24 Interview with Fadi Abilmona, UNDP. June 2015.

25 Interview with Sawsan Bou Fakhreddine,director of Association for Forests, Development and Conservation and technical adviser on disaster risk reduction for the Prime Minister's Office. November 2015.

26 Based on a draft document prepared by Sawsan Bou Fakhreddine entitled "the general framework of the national response plan: the regional response plan & the role of community-based organizations and committees".

b- In the Response phase: coordinating with local and national units and leadership; providing relief; preparing reports on crisis management and the identifying needs; participating in the evaluation of the crisis and disaster in terms of scale, need and form of intervention; generating statistics on the damage; providing psychological support;

c- The Recovery phase: Following up with the displaced communities as they return to their homes; short and long-term needs assessment; providing psychosocial support; evaluating the intervention provided during the crisis or disaster; conducting studies for forming local developmental projects; developing and adjusting disaster risk reduction guides and programs.

While there is a conceived role for the CBOs, it has not yet been activated or actively included within the national strategy and response plan.

5. CBO preparedness & responsiveness

Nine in-depth interviews were conducted with the CBOs mentioned above. Questions asked focused on the local expertise and resources acquired during conflict and post-conflict situation, the current CBO level of preparedness and responsiveness to crisis, the perceived role of INGOS, the state and the community in facilitating or obstructing local forms of preparedness and responsiveness to crisis.

CBO's expertise in preparing and responding to conflicts and war: the emergency-development *continuum* in practice

At least three of the researched CBOs were established and founded as a direct response to massacres, political conflicts of the civil war[27], both in terms of the services provided and the conflict-affected communities they sought to assist. These emergency CBOs managed to turn their approach and focus to development work after the war, sometimes combining both emergency and development work with the same communities they aimed to service in the beginning.

The rest of CBOs were either founded prior and during the Lebanese civil war, but then converged their services into emergency assistance with communities they saw as being the most vulnerable in conflict and war; or were founded in the early 2000 and went through their first experiences with conflicts and wars in 1996 and the Israeli war on Lebanon in 2006. In that sense, all interviewed CBOs have compiled practical and complex expertise on how to respond to wars and conflicts, and, as the interviews show, have also formed a sort of a preparedness process that is not necessarily always routinized, explicit or formalized, but sometimes also more intuitive and based on their know-how. This form of expertise was formed in the field during the civil war that started in 1975, the Israeli invasion in 1982, the 1996 and 2006 Israeli wars, and the Nahr al Bared war in 2007, among others.

While the researched CBOs might differ significantly in nature, time of founding and approach[28], qualitative analysis of the interviews showed that all have acquired a certain expertise in facing and responding to emergencies and crises. However, there was variation in how the CBOs understood or perceived what it means to be prepared for crises and wars, as well as what they described to be their level of preparedness.

> Emergency programs during the civil war were contingent on the needs back then, very tactical in nature. When interventions are based on short term needs that should be fulfilled imminently like in a time of war they become ad hoc and are wide in scope, so our emergency interventions encompassed many fields and areas like victims of war, wounded people, emergency relief networks, women as sole providers in their homes, people who lost their homes, rehabilitation. In 1988 we have rehabilitated all houses in Ain el Hilweh, during the war of the camps we were distributing doors and windows and others supplies for houses, so the needs were shifting according to the situation and to the needs without duplicating with other NGOs.
> **Najdeh Association.**

Overall, the response work done during earlier crises were more contingent on the direct and evolving needs of the affected communities, with time most of the CBOs stated that their work became more routinized as they also attempted to maintain their development services as well.

> *We learned that we should intervene from the start, that we should work on resilience, on adaptability from the beginning of the crisis, to lower the issues that will be created later, on by making the beneficiaries of your services or the displaced people partners in the decision making process, by training them, by asking them to volunteer to lower the tensions that are inevitable in these situations, to give them agency over their fate, and to help them be more resilient in the face of this crisis, and to enable them to be able to come back to his/her normal life after the crisis, so that this crisis doesn't become an excuse for seclusion and self-loathing but for empowerment.*
> **Nabaa Association.**

Box 3: Some of the expertise and skills acquired when facing crises, wars and conflicts

Establishing and running hospitals and ambulances
Running mobile clinics to access different regions in Lebanon
Learning to balance between emergency programs while preserving the development work and services established before the crisis, incorporating communities deemed vulnerable to the crisis into the already established services as aid communities, evaluation & need assessment skills to understand the impact of the crisis
Adapting to the needs of the serviced communities during war and following them as they became displaced to continue their offered services
Integrating mental health services in emergency healthcare
Capitalizing on established connections with community and, most importantly, regional state institutional and community leaders, during emergencies and crises
Providing emergency programs for communities who are not covered by International humanitarian agencies and organizations
Education during emergency and crisis
Food and item distribution of relief
Advocacy for the rights of refugees and displaced
Resilience

Perceived level of CBO preparedness and responsiveness

Almost all CBOs had a defined vision of how to respond to future crises based on previous expertise and services, and were also engaging in some sort of a preparation for emergencies. The level of preparedness for the nine CBOs varied from having explicit contingency plans for emergencies and conflicts to presenting a more intuitive plan of action that emerged out of their expertise in the field. From the nine CBOs interviewed, three organizations had prepared contingency plans or had a disaster management program[29] in case of disasters and conflicts and were part of institutional humanitarian networks for emergency preparation like the International Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), setting up codes of conducts during crises, among others. Some had a very clear contingency plan, while others had a more flexible plan.

For some CBOs that were not emergency by nature, like Mouvement Social and Mada for example, what was crucial during emergencies was the ability to maintain the CBO's principles, goals and services that pre-existed the crisis, in the face of the drastic shift in humanitarian funds away from development and activities they considered to be in the heart of crisis prevention like youth dialogue, conflict management and trainings on communication.

Our centers would be open for everyone, the social workers would start propagating in the camp and we would start coordinating with other NGOs in the camp and we ask for help from the UN agencies for food and non-food items, medicine, the priorities of relief, health and prevention, and we mobilize our volunteers for distribution and we immediately get the children to our centers to start recreational activities to relieve the stress, and a lot of psychologist volunteers come from outside the camps and give a lot of stress management workshop to our social workers, because they are also under stress.
Beit Atfal Al Soumoud.

Many CBOs viewed their trained social workers, many of the times locals from the same community they service, as the most important resource and expert in a time of crisis[30]. One common important predictor of a good preparedness and responsiveness that many CBOs addressed during emergencies and conflicts was an accurate and thick assessment of the needs of the communities affected, as well as of the nature and scale of the crisis. Another was the relationship with the community, and the established networks between state institutions, community leaders, school directors, youth, volunteers and members of community as a resource of preparedness that can be easily capitalized on in times of emergencies to facilitate response for relief[31].

29 "In time of crises, the spinal organism of the organization, which is the Relief and Emergency department, is the first to take the initiative, because of its liaison with the Ministry of Defense and the Civil Defense. Immediately after, the second organism, which is the Medical services department, intervenes, with the blood banks, to keep pace with relief services that are being administered through all the clinics spread on all the Lebanese territory, supplying health services for prevention, primary care, medical consultations and distribution of medicinal drug,s be it to the wounded or through psychological support programs. These programs have been implemented since the 2006 Israeli aggression on Lebanon, even though psychological support was being administered to our patients in a spontaneous manner before 2006". Interview with Leila Jaber from the Lebanese Red Cross, March 2015.

30 "Our social workers are well trained to get to people as the crisis start, they know which people need immediate help, through the surveys they conducted, they know who to look for or which NGO to look for specific services, how to lead to people to these services, to the closest NGO with these services, the most convenient, the distribution process with numbers, how to use social media properly and call for a day for distribution for specific families. The volunteers go through a lot of workshops too, do a lot of community service before the crisis, and distribution, to get to know more the community they would be intervening in. Now we're looking into civil defense mechanisms that could fit in the narrow streets of our camps, how to give first aid on site, how to transport patients, and we are now working with a grassroots initiative to be able to transport patients on motorbikes because of the narrowness of the streets, people there had to adapt. We are given them the basic trainings on how to protect themselves, how to give first aid, how to transport patients and wounded people, and we are convincing donors to fund this project, and to be able to export to other camps." Interview with Hanan Masri from Beit Atfal Al Soumoud, April 2015.

31 Interview with Leila Jaber from the Lebanese Red Cross, March 2015; interview with Hanan Mastri from Beit Atfal Al Soumoud, April 2015; Interview with Isabelle Peillen from Mada Association, April 2015; interview with Feyrouz Salame from Mouvement Social April 2015.

These relationships also help create non-formal forms of responses in communities[32]. Additionally, training the civil society on preparedness for the crisis occur, and encouraging coordination between CBOs and NGOs, was also a factor[33]. Others mentioned work conducted towards preparing and responding to crises was: trainings on psychosocial aid; compiling data on all the emergency NGOs working in the same area or sector; needs assessment in emergencies; food distribution and relief.

32 Interview with Isabelle Peillen from Mada Association, April 2015; interview by Elia El Khazen with Feyrouz Salame, from Mouvement Social, April 2015.

33 Interview with Leila Jaber from the Lebanese Red Cross, March 2015.

> *For Mouvement Social we work more on the strategy of responsiveness to be able to respond to a crisis within our principles and our philosophy of work in this new context. We were put to the test several times in front of the humanitarian way of working that we have resisted, especially with the Syrian crisis. In 2006-2007 we were working spontaneously but now we have a better understanding with it, to adapt with and coordinate with local council immediately to be a part of the community, to coordinate with municipalities, to share our expertise to increase the responsiveness of these actors.*
> **Mouvement Social.**

Box 4: CBO predictors of good preparedness and responsiveness to crisis

Accurate and thick assessment of the nature of the crisis and the emerging needs of the communities
Relationship with the community
The established networks between state institutions, community leaders, schools directors, youth, volunteers and members of the community
Empowering and supporting the establishment of non-formal local types of responses to crisis
Training of civil society; training on emergency interventions (psychosocial aid)
Compiling data on all the emergency NGOs working in the same area or sector
Ability to provide relief distribution
Food and non-food distribution and relief

Perceived role of INGOs

When asked about the role of INGOs in facilitating CBO's preparedness and responsiveness to crises, many of the CBO representatives saw INGOs more as competitors than allies. Some also described their relationship with INGOs as paternalistic, in a sense that the latter seem to hold more of the decision making process and the funds, thereby dictating what happens on the ground during crises. However, many CBOs talked about the importance

of coordination in general, especially in terms of assessing the needs during crises.

Most of the CBOs had INGOs as partners but could not translate specifically how this relationship can facilitate or hinder preparedness/responses except in terms of funds under the INGO's mandate. These funds help sculpt new expertise through training, especially in terms of preparation for crises, but it also made CBO dependent completely on funding trends.

Furthermore CBOs differentiated between a relationship of "long-time partnership" with INGOs or international donors and a relationship that is based solely on funding, sometimes with restricted nature and agenda that aim to change and transform local programs and policies, which affect their sustainability. There was also a need to coordinate between local CBOs first and foremost during emergencies rather than just with INGOs.

We have a lot of individual donors who fund specific programs, like funding the mobile clinic in Bekaa for 6 months, and this makes our job easier as we are able to ask for specific services to be funded by these donors. Of course we have partners that have been us for years but our local partners, the most important ones, are municipalities and local councils. We don't have a relationship with INGOs because their work is based on funds, or they work with local implementers, most of the time their regulations do not work with us and their projects are short term. Their presence is important for expertise but their presence is very expensive, especially the expats, they say there aren't any local expertise but they are recruiting a lot from our staff, they do a lot of research but most of it has already been done, a waste of money, time and resources, they don't consult with local NGOs as much as they should. UNHCR are lowering their aid without lowering the number of expats who work for them which does not make sense.
Makassed Association.

We have a great relationship with UN agencies and with all the international partners who don't try to change our programs. I don't think INGOs are doing a great job, other than increasing salaries and attracting our employees, their interventions are for the most part catastrophic and I think they should be more modest about their approach and be more reliant on CBOs on how or where to approach vulnerable entities because what they are doing is creating more dependence than sustainability, and when the funds dry up they will pack their bags and leave and we will still be here trying to fix their errors. But we have good strategic alliances with funders who respect what we're doing and know how important our work is.
Imam Sadr Foundation.

One of the INGO operating during the 2006 aggression sent one of its staff to "deal with the rationing of milk" by suggesting to induce women in schools to breastfeed to able to avoid a milk shortage, completely undermining anything close to the cultural setting and overstepping on their duties which didn't involve the distribution of food items. A local volunteer would have never suggested this in the first place. INGOs staff have a parachuted program they want to implement irrelevant of the setting they are in.
Lebanese Red Cross.

Finally, some representatives commented on the lack of locality in the work of INGOs during crises, especially those bringing international experts during emergencies rather than relying on already existing expertise, thereby undermining it.

Perceived role of the state

Interviews showed that most if not all CBOs have in one way or another worked, coordinated and collaborated with local municipalities in providing services during emergencies and in terms of preparing for it. Some CBOs work closely with ministries as well. However, during emergencies, most CBO seem to agree that the state's structure is weakened and becomes ineffective. This was mainly based on the recent experience of relief during the 2006 war[34], not on the current level of preparedness and responsiveness of state institutions.

There was however an acknowledgment that the state is now doing more in terms of preparedness and responsiveness.

Many CBOs also spoke of the need for a clear policy of action from the side of the state, be it around how to act in emergency to how to deal in emergencies for specific communities and a challenge to make the state shift its policy to a preventive one, to join efforts with CBO.

34 For more refer to Lamia Moghnieh, "Local forms of relief during the July War in 2006 and international humanitarian interventions: implications on community preparedness for war and conflict", *Civil Society Knowledge Center*, Lebanon Support, June 5th, 2015, available at: http://cskc.daleel-madani.org/paper/local-forms-relief-during-july-war-2006-and-international-humanitarian-interventions [last accessed on July 4th, 2015].

The majority of the NGOs are almost part of the government. The MOSA budget 65 million dollars goes directly to most of the religious and sectarian NGOs. In Lebanon we have 860 medical centers and dispensaries, 760 for the NGOs and 100 for the public sector. The real challenge should be through this channel, to change the curative culture to a preventive one. To be able to coordinate between the NGOs to be able to make that happen.
Amel Association

I don't know if the state is putting itself on the side or it is the UNHCR which is putting it on the side, but it shouldn't be that way, but what we are seeing now is that the state is attempting to take a bigger role, a more active role in doing things correctly, but it's not always the state's fault, we sometimes go to meeting where the state isn't invited, which is a problem, if I don't invite the state and went passed it how can I hold it accountable for the work it should be doing?
Makassed Association

The state, or the Ministry of health, should set a national strategy for the health condition in Lebanon, and prioritize its support accordingly. The state clinics are ineffective in providing primary and secondary healthcare. It should lower this waste of resources and coordinate with CBOs like us on where to open its clinics rather than compete with us on the same areas.
Lebanese Red Cross

The role of CBO in preparing community & local groups for crises

All representatives of CBOs saw the community they were servicing as the CBO's main partner and perceived the relationship of trust as itself a resource for a good form of preparedness and a rapid response to crises. They also viewed their services and programs as directly and indirectly affecting the overall preparedness of the community to future crises since they contribute to the community's empowerment and development. Building the community's capacities and awareness, as well as coordinating with local groups, leaders and different other actors was also seen as crucial for preparedness and responsiveness to crisis[35]. Communities that were affected by and exposed to war and conflict were also perceived to be the ones with the expertise and knowledge in "what to do during a crisis", as learning from their experiences is crucial for local CBOs' understanding of the cultural and sociopolitical nature of these conflicts and how communities deal with them[36].

35 Interview with Feyrouz Salame from Mouvement Social, April 2015.

36 Interview with Hanan Mastri from Beit Atfal AlSoumoud, April 2015.

37 Interview with Kamel Mohanna from Amel Association March 2015, interview with Raed Ataya from Nabaa Association April 2015.

38 Interview with Leila Ali from Najdeh Association, May 2015.

"On a local level we have a very good relationship, local councils, municipality, frequent visits, especially when it comes to advocacy. The higher we go up the ladder the more complex this relationship becomes, for more than one reason, because there isn't a clear policy on how to deal with Palestinian refugees, where we have a good relationship is the council for Palestinian/Lebanese dialogue, when they have an issue we are the first organization they contact, and we are very responsive, but their problem is their mandate due to a shift in mandate by the government, it was shifted towards fighting discrimination against the Palestinians and now it is geared towards policy making rather than dealing with socio-economic issues which are at the core of the problem. The government does not have a clear policy towards Palestinian refugees; it is ever changing and blurry, especially when it comes to women or Palestinian women's rights.
Najdeh Association

We are in constant communication with the people in the camps, and they have a large experience of crises and wars and violence like children in 2006 who knew first when the bombardments were going to happen when they saw the MK, listening to these people and learning from their experiences is crucial and most importantly adapting our service to their changing needs.
Beit Atfal Al Soumoud

Community participation in the training process, strategy making and decision-making, whether during emergency or in development, was also seen as crucial for establishing a meaningful and efficient preparedness and responsiveness to crisis[37].

Psychosocial tools and psychodrama were also mentioned as tools for recovery from trauma and preparedness for future crises[38]. Finally, engaging and supporting emerging local groups and local community responders that are able to conduct relief and response to crises.

Every (Palestinian refugee) camp we are present at has a local council that represents it which gather popular fronts, community councils, local forces and organizations, we have parent councils which participate in the decision making process and a youth league that also participates. They all participate in the training process, in strategy making and in the decision making process as a whole, be it in emergency, security or other important features, every decision is debated through them.

Nabaa Association

We did that in 2006, we were also supporting the orange house initiative in Tyr, and a group of women in tebnine who wanted to equip computers in public schools. There was also an initiative between youth and Palestinian Refugee camps in the south, Bekaa and the north, and they asked us to support.

Mada Association

Overall problems and challenges faced

Based on the interviews, the following problems and challenges faced during crises were:

a. The shifting of funds during emergencies that focuses solely on the crisis itself which makes developmental CBOs turn completely towards emergency work, thereby leading to duplicated emergency work on the ground, or for the CBOs to struggle to maintain their own principles, goals and services. Some CBOs have argued that a complete shift to emergency and then back to development in a cyclical way is not useful, efficient nor does it show a commitment to the community they service, but it is best during an emergency to preserve the principles and developmental nature of the CBO and the long term work it has achieved that makes a better trust with the community;

This question is very pertinent especially in the current context, and by that I mean the Syrian crisis, and how we dealt with it according to our experience and principles. And like I said before we could have dragged ourselves into (emergency) humanitarian aid to be more sustainable for a while, but we would have lost the trust of the community we work in. It was very important for us to fuse different nationalities in the projects we were implementing be it Lebanese Kurdish, Lebanese-Lebanese and Lebanese Syrian. Development for us means increasing responsiveness for future crises to the individuals we are dealing with and for them to be independent of us (…)

Mouvement Social

b. Dependency on INGO funds that makes it hard to be locally prepared for crisis since this preparedness is more tied to donor expectation and global measures of preparedness and responsiveness, leaving little room for local specificities;

c. Problems in sustainability during crises with the constant reliance on INGO donor agencies and organizations for funds, which render CBOs' local programs at risk. While some CBOs referred to generating projects to sustain their programs, others sought out a variety of funds, thereby decreasing their dependence on one donor sources;

When we talk about sustainability, we talk about our own sustainability, most of our funds come from private donors which assures some sort of independence from foreign agendas, in 2006 for example 55% of the funds we got came from expats in Africa and the gulf countries. This diversity of funders gives us independence and confidence to move forward.
Imam Sadr Foundation

d. INGOs taking local experts crucial for preparedness and responsiveness from their locality and giving them high salaries that CBOs cannot afford, instead of encouraging and supporting local expertize;

Currently we have a big issue with INGOs because of how they pry away our trained staff with inflated salaries that we cannot compete with, after the experience and the training they had with us and we lose touch with the community because of this social worker we lost due to higher salaries, so we start the program of training, not knowing that this INGO is today here but might be gone in a couple of years.
Beit Atfal Al Soumoud

We succeeded in having a good coordination during the crises but we didn't succeed in continuing this coordination after the war. In 1982 we had a very good experience in coordination but then it faded away as the conflict withered away. We were responsible in for three hospitals underground in 82, and we asked the minister of health to continue our responsibilities even after the invasion, the state declined our proposition. The Lebanese government should take the initiative to join our forces, the NGOs should be a pressure group, and our work is to push the minister of health to have a good policy.
Amel Association

e. Lack of coordination with ministries and other state institutions in the aftermath of the crisis as part of the post-conflict process of recovery and development;

f. Lack of a process of accountability for CBOs in front of the aid communities they are serving, especially when CBOs do not have the necessary fund to fulfill the needs of these communities.

The refugees put us at a point of accountability where we became responsible for the role that should be played by the UNRWA and the state. This was a very difficult challenge for us. How do you respond to that when your funds and resources are limited? What are the criteria you work on to avoid discrimination with funds being restricted more and more, especially now.
Nabaa Association

6. Recommendations

Based on the analysis of the interviews and on what has already been done in Lebanon in terms of preparedness and responsiveness, the following three recommendations are suggested:

a. A more inclusive, integrated and activated role for the CBOs in the National Response Plan (NPR) and the National Disaster Management Strategy (NDMS):

Interviews have shown that CBOs possess different important expertise and resources acquired from direct field experience with different conflicts and crises. This expertise is on the level of human resources (social workers and staff), skills (like needs assessments, health) and relational (in terms of the long-standing relationship with communities they service). While the role of CBOs has been acknowledged and recognized in the national draft plan for preparedness and responsiveness, one recommendation is to more actively include CBOs as actors, rather than mere references for services, by inviting them to draft their own role and position, similarly to what has been done with different state institution units and groups. One suggestion can be that a coalition of CBOs can be formed and invited to work solely on preparedness and responsiveness procedures and measures. By including CBOs actively in this manner and allow them to draft their own role, a more equal relationship of coordination might ensue between CBOs, the state and INGOs. Moreover, the experience of the 2006 war has shown that CBOs and other local groups that emerge as a direct relation to the war, not only were able to act much faster than the state, but they also activated state institutions during emergency[39]. CBOs and other local emerging groups have the ability to respond quickly outside of bureaucratic and political authorities that can restrict an immediate response by the state, something that is highly important during emergencies. Furthermore, CBOs have the capacity, resources and expertise to work on crisis risk reduction and prevention. As suggested by the document mentioned above[40] on the conceived role of CBO in the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) plan, CBOs should be more actively included in DRR planning and within the National Response Plan as valuable assets for disaster and crisis management.

b. Drawing from the importance of local ownership during emergencies, from the importance and richness of local expertise and from the general feeling from CBOs that local expertise is being undermined by more global standards, a second recommendation is for capitalizing on the experiences and capacities of CBOs, and building on them by producing a local form of preparedness and responsiveness that can follow these different themes, some of them

39 Interview with Rawad El Zir, OCHA, April 2015; Lamia Moghnieh, "Local forms of relief during the July War in 2006 and international humanitarian interventions: implications on community preparedness for war and conflict", *Civil Society Knowledge Center*, Lebanon Support, June 5th, 2015, available at: http://cskc.daleel-madani.org/paper/local-forms-relief-during-july-war-2006-and-international-humanitarian-interventions [last accessed on July 4th, 2015].

40 Based on a draft document prepared by Sawsan Bou Fakhreddine entitled "The general framework of the national response plan: the regional response plan & the role of community-based organizations and committees".

were addressed by international humanitarian agencies and organizations as challenges and problems to crisis management.

1. Creating local database of services, communities, infrastructures and human resources that can be established at the level of CBOs and circulated among them;

2. Creating more local manuals and guides for crisis preparedness and responsiveness drawn from CBOs' own expertise and available skills;

3. Identifying the different networks and relationships CBOs have established with different communities and working on supporting these relationships and including them in trainings and conversations about preparedness and responsiveness;

4. Working with CBOs on capitalizing on and reinforcing the community's own forms of preparedness and responsive to crises.

7. Summary and Limitations

This study explored the role of CBOs in preparing and responding to crises in Lebanon and their perception of the role the state, INGOs and the community takes during emergencies. Based on qualitative theme analysis, it offered an in-depth reading into and an analytical description of CBOs' contributions to the work of preparedness and responsiveness to crisis. One of the limitation of the study is that it did not focus on measuring the work CBOs engage in terms of recovery after the crisis. Another limitation is that the study focused only on established CBOs, and did not include smaller CBOs that have recently emerged in Lebanon. As such, it presents a cornerstone for future analytical research on the topic. Further research is also needed on the work conducted by the different governorates, unions of municipalities and municipalities on DRR, and how they work and coordinate with CBOs, knowing that at the regional level specifically, CBOs have more leverage in terms of prevention, response and recovery.

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Appendix A: Questionnaire CBOs

This in-depth questionnaire will be administered to around 10 community based organizations in Lebanon. The interviewer will rely on it to structure his interview with the interviewees. Conceptually, the questionnaire covers the relationship between local expertise, relationship with international organizations and the level of preparedness and responsiveness to conflict and war. It will be a flexible questionnaire in a sense that it will serve as a thematic structure that the interviewee will rely on to conduct the interview. The data from this in-depth questionnaire will serve two purposes: first it will help us formulate a checklist or a most closed-ended questionnaire to be administered for a bigger sample of CBOs in order to test their level of preparedness and their ability to sustain local capacities. Second, it will serve as more qualitative data to include in the overall report on the level of preparedness and responsiveness.

We will be interviewing the directors of these institutions.

The interview should not take more than one hour maximum.

Consent form and script:

Hello, my name is {} from Lebanon Support. Lebanon Support is working on a project that documents and measures the different local relief and development programs, initiatives and expertise launched and executed by community-based organizations in Lebanon as a response to the different wars and violent events since the civil war until today. The [name of organization] has been a leading organization in providing local relief and development since []. We would like to interview you on your experience with humanitarian intervention during crises and wars and their aftermath, as well as get a sense from you on your current level of preparedness and responsiveness to future wars and violence in Lebanon. The interview will be recorded.

I- Description:

A- Description of the group

• Type (collective, political group, NGO based organization, foundation, charity-based group etc.)

• Approach to service

• Sectoral expertise

• Focus

• Specific principals or politics of action:

• Overall short description of the group

B- Programs and services provided during emergencies/conflicts and wars

• Description of old programs (location, populations, programs and services)

• Description of current programs and services (*idem*)

• Description of geographic locations:

• From your own local experience in the field, what are the existing and past vulnerabilities in the region where you currently provide services? What are the vulnerabilities and the needs (always related to conflict, war, emergencies and their aftermath)

II- Expertise in emergencies and wars

Experience with crisis/war/violence/disaster: previous and current experiences.

Here is a more opened form of narrative about the group/organization's experience with the services provided during war/emergencies.

• What type of services that were provided through different conflicts and wars (talk about each war/conflict separately). How was the experience for each war/conflict? (from the past until today)

• What has changed in terms of relief work from the past until now?

• What kinds of experience and expertise did you acquire?

• Weaknesses and challenges faced?
  - Specifically describe the expertise gained from these experiences during different conflicts
  - Specifically describe how do you design, manage and implement your operation in times of fluctuation between crisis, or "development"?
  - coordination with local NGOs: do you work with other local NGOS on filling in local expertise you do not have in times of crisis or do you rely on international expertise?

III- Relation with International organizations

A-International organizations

• Describe relationship with international organizations since the foundation of the group. How and when it changed, what changed about it:

• In terms of expertise, support, dependency, following different crises (1982, civil war, 1996, 2006, 2000, refugees Syrian and Iraqi etc.)
  - In what ways do working "with" international organizations enrich the group/foundation during emergencies/wars and in what ways weakens it?
  - How is your local expertise and knowledge in war and emergency relief incorporated within this relationship? Can you give examples?
  - What are your local strengths and weaknesses appreciated and acknowledged in this relationship and in what ways are they not?
  - In practice I will give you three concepts you can define the relationship between you and the international organizations: implementer, equal partner, I prioritize my own programs and services and resources over international ones. can you give an example of this relationship?

B-Funding policies

• Describe the funding policies related to conflict and war in all these conflicts. In what ways do funding policies your group abide by or are under, strengthen your work and humanitarian intervention during conflict/war and in what ways it does not?

• Autonomy or dependence? Sustainability?

IV- Preparedness and responsiveness level

• How do you assess your current level of preparedness for future crises (war, violence), in comparison with past programs?

• Drawing from your local expertise and problems faced during these crises

• Drawing from your current situation/relationship with international organizations and funding

policies

V- Suggestions to improve and create sustainable local capacities

• What does it mean to have sustainable local capacities for you?

• In the light of your relationship with international organizations/policies/donors etc., how do you envision sustainability in your work?

• What suggestions you have to improve and create sustainable local capacities in the face of new conflicts/wars?

VI- The State's involvement (promoting and supporting governments in emergency preparedness)

• What has the state (at various levels) done in terms of incentives and support, to prepare for crises and emergencies, and to provide communal resilience?

• What has the state done in terms of managing risk and reducing vulnerability in specific regions?
  - In terms of budget allocation
  - In terms of specific state programs, policies, manpower

• What do you envision the state role to be in emergencies and crises? both in terms of prevention and during the emergency?

• How can both NGOs and the government actually cooperate regarding:
  - The setting up up early warning signs?
  - The setup of actual emergency preparedness?

VII- Strengthening community resilience and capacity to prepare for emergencies?

• How do you think community resilience can be strengthened to better cope with crises?

• Are there any grassroots efforts that were undertaken that you know of that you could tell us more about? And have you worked with them?

• How can community responders (including, youth, activists, volunteers) be better supported in humanitarian preparedness from your organization ? And practically how you think it is feasible? Should this be financed?

Appendix B: Questionnaire humanitarian experts

• How do you, as an expert and organization, measure the level of preparedness and responsiveness to crises on a local level?

• What is your definition of local preparedness to crises?

• How do you assess the level of preparedness and responsiveness to crises on a local level?

• How do you assess a good level of preparedness? What are the indicators for that?

• How do you assess a good form of responsiveness to war/crises? What are the indicators for that?

• And what kinds of local responses to wars and crises do you anticipate/expect to have? In which areas specifically?

• In the context of Lebanon, what do you think are the problems and challenges of building such a responsiveness and preparedness level on the level of
  - Government
  - Local NGOs –INGOS (Funding and sustainability; Capacity and know how)
  - Other groups
  - The community itself/ resilience

• In the context of Lebanon. what do you think are the resources and strengths in building such a responsiveness and preparedness level?
  - Government
  - Local NGOs –INGOS (Funding and sustainability)
  - Other groups
  - The community itself

• How would you assess the effect of INGOs in vulnerable areas? The level of coordination between them and CBOs?

• Question about the effect of funding and dependency on foreign funds? How does your organization deal with that with its local partners?

• From your perspective would you see a gap between international indicators for preparedness and local understandings / praxis of actors at a local level?