

Final conference

Access to Justice for Syrian Communities – Formal Challenges, Informal Opportunities

Venue: UNESCO-International Center for Human Sciences, Byblos

Date: 22-23 September, 2016

Organizers: UNESCO-CISH, Lebanese American University (Department of Social Sciences (DSS) and Institute of Social Justice and Conflict Resolution (ISJCR)), International Alert (IA)

Participants: judges; UN; embassies; NGOs; researchers, scholars; donors, think tanks and policy makers, students

Language: English and Arabic with simultaneous translation

Rationale and description

The conference on “Syrian communities’ access to justice formal challenges and informal opportunities” concludes a two-year research project that has probed into Syrian communities’ access to formal and informal justice in Lebanon through the lens of various methodologies. The project is funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research and implemented by a research consortium bringing together CISH, the Lebanese American University and International Alert. The research consortium is led by CISH.

While there is a plethora of writings and reports on Syrian communities’ livelihoods, little do we know about the conditions impacting their justice concerns, and their recourse patterns to formal and informal justice mechanisms. Moreover, there is paucity of research when it comes to mapping actors involved in the *making* of formal and informal refugee justice in Lebanon. More broadly, there is scarcity of research in the region on how justice is to be understood and conceptualized in the wake of the post-2011 displacement crises and their implications for Syria’s bordering countries. With this background, the conference will not only conceptualize justice as the regulation of conduct through the judiciary prism, but will also debate ‘access to justice’ through various forms of conflict regulation and mediation that are extra-judicial (e.g. intervention of a third party, adjudication by an authoritative figure, community-based participative approaches).

Favoring a multi-stakeholder approach, the conference aims to spark a conversation between academics and practitioners on the meaning and forms of access to justice for displaced Syrians in addition to the tensions and opportunities that displacement brings along. It will adopt a mixed approach that generates on the one hand knowledge on forms of justice mechanisms, and that informs on the other the crafting of rights-based national and international policy frameworks. In broader perspective, the conference aims to foster policy and social learning from other cases and regions with a view to promoting justice in fragile contexts lacking well-defined asylum regimes and subject to various geopolitical constraints.

Aims

- To present and discuss the research on formal and informal justice produced within the framework of the project;
- To promote a critical stakeholder dialogue around understanding of and access to justice for Syrian displaced communities in Lebanon and the region;
- To inform the development of more effective interventions by relevant local, national and international actors in Lebanon and the region;
- To inform the writing of a policy brief that takes into consideration Lebanon's contextual challenges while identifying opportunities for improved protection in the context of displacement

Program

Day 1

Opening session: Registration

16:00 to 16:30

Welcome note

16.30 to 17.15

Speakers:

- CISH: Dr. Adonis Akra, CISH director
- LAU: Dr. Imad Salamey, ISJCR director, LAU
- IA: Chiara Butti, IA director

Break

17.15 to 17.30

Session 1: Regulation and protection. Regional contextual challenges and implications for access to justice

17.30 to 19.30

Chair: Dr. Tamirace Fakhoury (LAU)

Brief introduction to the project

Dr. Karim Mufti (CISH) Refugee protection in Lebanon: Insights from the field

Dr. Senay Ozden, (Hamisch Syrian Cultural House in Istanbul), Protection of displaced Syrians in Turkey

19.30 Dinner

Day 2

Session 2: Conceptualizing and mapping the nexus between formal and informal justice

Chair: Dr. Jennifer Skulte Ouaiss (LAU)

09.00 to 11.00

Dr. Shelley Deane (Brehon Advisory and University of Belfast) Informal opportunities and challenges: Comparative insights

Dr. Tamirace Fakhoury (LAU) The nexus between formal and informal justice in Lebanon: insights from a nation-wide survey

Ann Christin Wagner (University of Edinburgh and IFPO Amman) Mechanisms of informal justice in Jordan

Dr. Muzna Al Masri, Mapping informal justice in Lebanon

Break

11.00 to 11.30

Discussion: Conceptualizing and mapping the nexus between formal and informal justice

Moderator: Dr. Marwan Rowayheb (LAU)

11.30 to 12.30

Panel: Gender, displacement and recourse to protection: patterns, trends and opportunities

Chair: Lina Sinjab (BBC)

12.30 to 13.30

Zoya Rouhana (KAFA) Challenges to women's access to justice

Charbel Maydaa (MOSAIC) Justice for LGBTI individuals in displacement

Frank Elbers (LAU, IWSAW and HREA)

Lunch

13.30 to 14.30

Session 3: Enhancing access to justice in fragile settings: temporary mechanisms and gradual reforms

Chair: Dr. Karim el Mufti (CISH)

14.30 to 16:00

Judge Nazek Khattib (Ministry of Justice)

Ilina Slavova (International Alert)

George Ghali (ALEF)

Nizar Saghieh (Legal Agenda)

Dr. Senay Ozden (Hamisch Syrian Cultural House in Istanbul)

Fadi Hallisso (Basmeh w Zeitouneh)
