



Activities
Report

2016

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Table of Contents

<i>Presentation of the Lebanese Center for Human Rights</i>	3
<i>Donors</i>	4
<i>Facts and Figures</i>	5
<i>Arbitrary Detention and Torture in Lebanon</i>	7
1. Legal Assistance to Vulnerable Inmates in the Lebanese Prisons	7
a. CLDH Intervention.....	8
2. Legal Consultations at the Center	10
3. Advocacy and Awareness Raising Activities.....	11
a. Publishing Reports.....	11
4. Other Advocacy and Awareness raising activities	13
<i>Centre Nassim for the Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture</i>	17
1. Services	17
2. New foreseen activities.....	20
3. Documenting torture – Developing a database.....	20
<i>Enforced disappearance</i>	22
<i>Migrant Workers, Asylum Seekers and Refugees</i>	23
1. Individual cases follow-up.....	23
2. Advocacy and Awareness Raising Activities.....	25
a. Organizing Events.....	25
3. Press Releases	25
<i>Overview of the Human Rights situation, capacity building and networking</i>	27
1. Social Media	27

Presentation of the Lebanese Center for Human Rights

The Lebanese Center for Human Rights (CLDH) is a Lebanese non-political, non-profit and independent human rights organization, based in Beirut.

The CLDH was created in 2006 by the French Lebanese Movement SOLIDA (Support for Lebanese Detained Arbitrarily) that is active since 1996 in the fight against arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance and impunity of the perpetrators of gross human rights violations.

CLDH monitors the human rights situation in Lebanon, fights against enforced disappearance, impunity, arbitrary detention, and racism and provides rehabilitation to the victims of torture.

CLDH regularly organizes press conferences, workshops, trainings and awareness-raising meetings on human rights in Lebanon and records and documents violations of human rights through reports and press releases.

CLDH team on the ground supports initiatives aimed at unveiling the fate of all the missing persons in Lebanon.

CLDH regularly follows up on numerous cases of arbitrary detention and torture in coordination with Lebanese and international organizations, with the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention and the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture.

In 2007, CLDH opened Centre Nassim, a rehabilitation center for the victims of torture in Beirut, a member of the IRCT (International Rehabilitation Council for Torture victims), that provides multidisciplinary support to the victims of torture and their families.

CLDH compiles a daily press review about human rights violations and ongoing judiciary cases in Lebanon, and daily updates several blogs.

CLDH is a founding member of the Euro-Med Federation against Enforced Disappearances (FEMED), a member of the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN) of the SOS Torture Network of the World Organization against Torture (OMCT) and of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH).

Donors

CLDH is extremely grateful for the financial support it receives from individuals, foundations and embassies, which makes our work in Lebanon possible. Their generosity allows CLDH to respond to Human rights violations, and to operate independently from political, economic or religious interests.

- **AEDH** (Working Together for Human Rights) – Supported the legal assistance activities to migrant workers.
- **DANIDA/Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark** – Through its Regional Development and Protection Programme (RDPP) supported a project titled “Legal assistance to vulnerable persons in the context of the war in Syria”.
- **Oak Foundation** - Financially supported Centre Nassim.
- **Open Society Foundation (OSF)** – Provided support to the project “Legal assistance to vulnerable inmates in Lebanese prisons”.
- **Sigrid Rausing Trust** – Provided CLDH with funding for various activities.
- **The Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands in Lebanon** – Provided CLDH with funding for various activities.
- **UNOCHA** (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs) – Provided support for the project titled “Legal assistance to vulnerable persons in the context of the war in Syria”.
- **UNVFVT** (United Nations Voluntary Fund for the Victims of Torture) - Supports Centre Nassim in the rehabilitation of the victims of torture.
- **Private donors** - Regularly contribute to the funding of the organization’s activities.

Facts and Figures

Arbitrary Detention and Torture in Lebanon

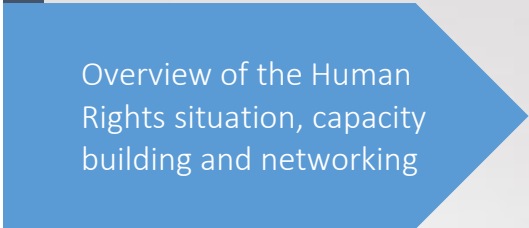
- 5+1 Lawyers (5 providing Legal Assistance and 1 providing Legal Consultations)
- 666 persons provided with Legal Assistance in 2016 (an increase of 200% compared to 2015)
- 310 vulnerable inmates released (an increase of 200% compared to 2015)
- 215 persons provided with Legal Consultations
- 3 reports published
- 3 press releases/press conferences
- 1 petition launched
- 1 National Conference for the Prevention of Torture for Lawyers organized

Centre Nassim for the Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture

- 124 beneficiaries assisted in 2016
- 19 newly registered beneficiaries in 2016
- 684 consultations provided
 - 169 Psychologist
 - 229 Lawyer
 - 82 Social Worker
 - 145 General Practitioner
- 100 Male and 24 Female beneficiaries
- 1 database developed

Migrant Workers, Asylum Seekers and Refugees

- 54 people assisted
- **1 event organized**
- 5 press releases



Overview of the Human Rights situation, capacity building and networking

- 250,850 page views on blog
- 170,000 views on website
- 6,167 articles published on website since 2013

Arbitrary Detention and Torture in Lebanon

Objective ***Contribute effectively to reducing the practice of arbitrary detention and torture in Lebanon***

1. Legal Assistance to Vulnerable Inmates in the Lebanese Prisons

According to the figures from the Government of Lebanon, in 2014, there were 11,961 inmates in the Lebanese detention centers¹, **which was exceeding almost three times the capacities of the detention facilities**. In March 2016, with a delay of 15 years from the due date, the Government of Lebanon submitted to the UN Committee Against Torture (CAT) a report presenting the Lebanese laws regulating the judiciary and penitential systems, especially those related to the prevention of torture. In the same report, the poor conditions of detention that affect most inmates in the Lebanese prisons, and the faults in the provision of legal aid have been acknowledged and the government pledged to take effective steps towards the improvement of such conditions.² Meanwhile, a large amount of detainees and prisoners could be immediately released if they could avail to adequate legal assistance. Considering that **around 67%³ of detainees in Lebanese prisons have been subjected to torture and/or ill-treatment** at a time of their detention, it is of paramount importance to provide legal assistance to these vulnerable groups.

Several cases of arbitrary detention persist: foreigners detained beyond the end of their sentence, detainees stranded in prisons for administrative or financial reasons, detainees convicted to several sentences and who should be released according to the law on cumulative sentences, detentions on grounds of national discrimination, arrests on grounds of sexual orientation, and non-observance of procedure.

Insufficient judiciary assistance by the Lebanese state, insufficient amounts paid to the lawyers at the end of each calendar year by the Bar association that do not cover their real expenses in the cases, are at the core of this problem. Consequently, the lawyers do not have a possibility to effectively defend low-income inmates who are not in a position to cover certain expenses. In addition, foreigners that have been convicted for illegal entry or stay are not included in the judiciary assistance provided by the Lebanese state, thus, they are left in a limbo state without lawyers defending their cases.

¹ Report by the Government of Lebanon for the UN Committee Against Torture (CAT), (2016) available in Arabic online at: http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2fCAT%2fADR%2fLBN%2f23259&Lang=en

² Report by the Government of Lebanon for the UN Committee Against Torture (CAT), (2016) available in Arabic online at: http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2fCAT%2fADR%2fLBN%2f23259&Lang=en (last accessed 25/11/16)

³ Arbitrary Detention and Torture in Lebanon - Endless Suffering of Inmates, A Threat to Justice – Lebanese Center for Human Rights, 2013; available at: <https://goo.gl/h8Daoj>

Refugees from Syria are also in a precarious legal situation in Lebanon, a country that has not signed the 1951 Geneva Convention on the refugees' status and simply tolerates them on its territory without giving them the rights and protection they should be entitled as refugees.

When Syrian refugees are arrested by the authorities in Lebanon, or when they have legal issues with the security services or the courts in Lebanon, they cannot benefit of social connections to appoint lawyers who will assist them effectively in the courts. Moreover, because of their refugee situation, they often cannot afford the services of a lawyer and the legal aid system run by the Lebanese state is unable to handle the high number of requests.

This project is implemented with the continuous support by the Open Society Foundation, the Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands in Lebanon, RDPP, and UNOCHA. In 2016, CLDH managed to secure funding for this programme and to assist more beneficiaries than ever.

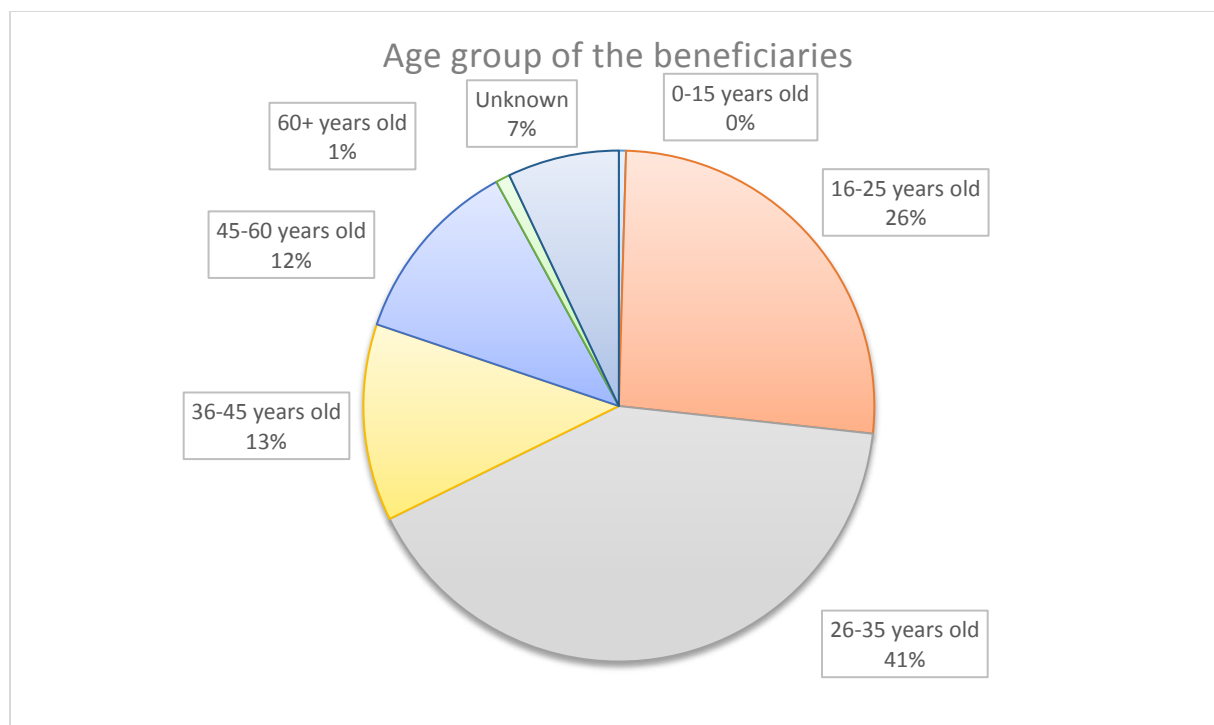
a. CLDH Intervention

In 2009, CLDH started a project aiming at supplying for the lack of legal provision in the Lebanese system, by assisting vulnerable inmates in the detention centers all over the country, thus guaranteeing their right to access to legal representation.

During the reported period, CLDH continued to visit Lebanese prisons and to meet victims of arbitrary detention and victims of torture. It also received many cases referred by relevant prison visitors, prison directors, families and relatives of inmates. CLDH continued to document and follow up their cases in accordance with the demands and specific needs of the beneficiaries of the program.

The team of 6 lawyers continued providing support during 2016. In total, **the number of vulnerable inmates that received assistance by CLDH's lawyers in 2016 is 666 persons (including 20 minors).**

As a result of CLDH's intervention, 310 vulnerable inmates were released, which represents 46.5% of all cases assisted. 148 cases were closed because of other reasons including: having a lawyer appointed individually (by the Bar association or privately by the family), not being able to assist them in any way, based on the decision of the lawyers, or because the beneficiaries did not want a lawyer, etc.). However, the number of released inmates will further increase since many of the remaining 208 vulnerable inmates are still being assisted by the lawyers. Due to additional funding and experience, CLDH's lawyers were able to increase the number of assisted individuals and the number of released individuals compared to 2015. More specifically, **the number of assisted and released individuals has doubled compared to 2015.**

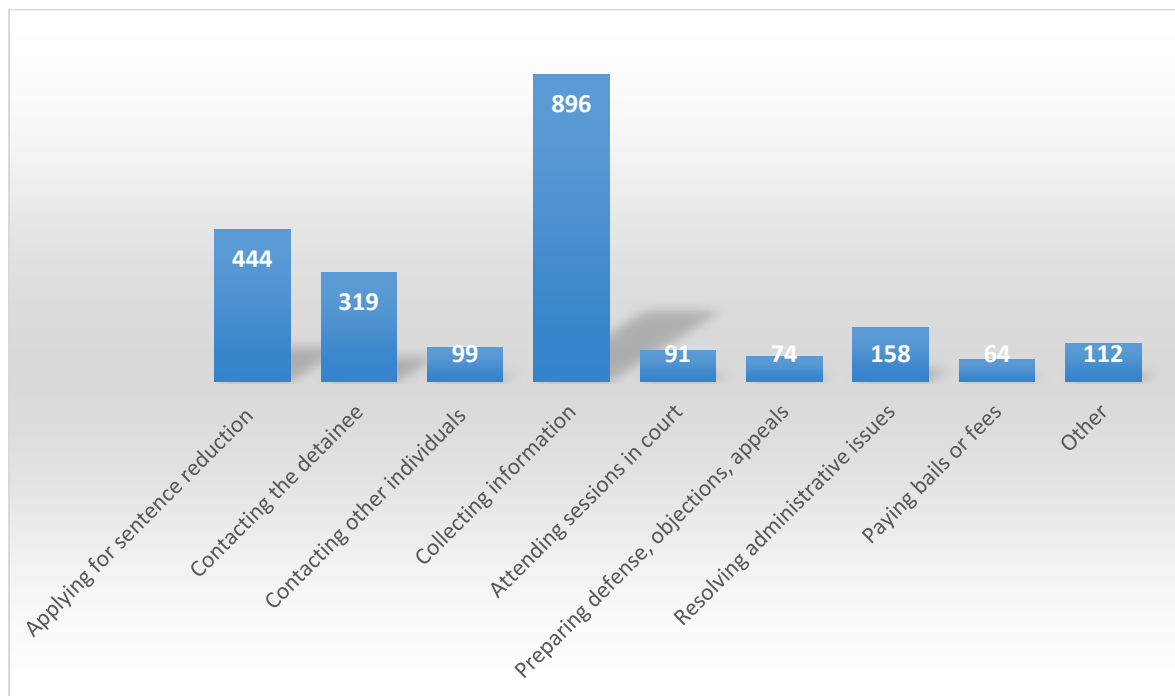


The vast majority of the beneficiaries were Syrian refugees (239 individuals) and Lebanese citizens (222 individuals). However, the remaining 205 individuals were from 27 different nationalities, including Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Kenya, Palestinian refugees, etc.

Starting from March 2016, CLDH began utilizing new Monitoring and Evaluation tools for its Legal Assistance programme which will help measure the impact of the action. Using the new M&E tools, CLDH was able to calculate the number of interventions by the lawyers in a more accurate manner. Below is a more detailed breakdown of the type of interventions provided by the lawyers (the interventions are counted starting from May 2016):

- Applying for sentence reduction (release on bail, bail reduction, concurrency of sentences, penalty reduction);
- Contacting the detainee (visit or making him/her sign papers);
- Contacting other individuals (Embassy, UNHCR, GSO, family, prison authorities);
- Collecting information (copying files, retrieving file numbers, identifying the place of the detainee);
- Attending sessions in court;
- Preparing defense, objections, appeals;
- Resolving administrative issues (sending papers to court from prison, corrections in files, admitting POA);
- Paying bails or fees;
- Other.

The number of interventions in 2016 was as follows:

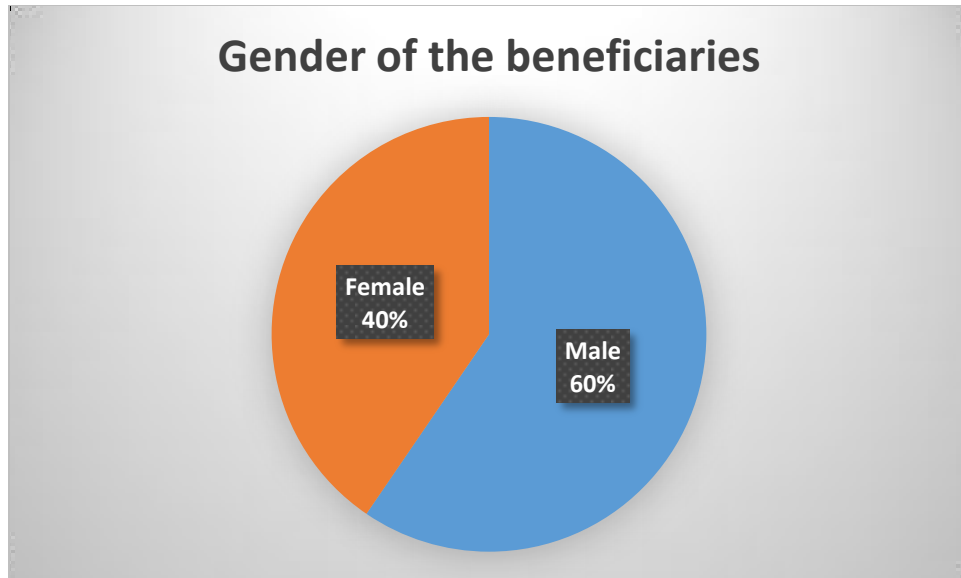


2. Legal Consultations at the Center

In 2016, CLDH continued providing Legal Consultations to refugees and other vulnerable host community members (more particularly victims of torture) at CLDH's premises. A lawyer provides the refugees and vulnerable host community members with counsel regarding their file at UNHCR, their legal status in Lebanon or any other legal issue they may have (housing, evictions, land and rent disputes; civil cases; domestic violence; birth registration; cases of early marriage and recognition of documentation; legal status; renewal of documentation; etc.). Cases are referred by UNHCR, UNRWA, ICRC and their partners as well as other NGOs. Priority is given to the most vulnerable, including: LGBT, victims of SGBV, journalists, human rights defenders, Palestinian refugees from Syria, and victims of torture.

In total, 442 consultations were provided to 215 (60 individuals were Centre Nassim beneficiaries) persons. Majority of beneficiaries were from Syria (101), Lebanon (9), Cameroon (29), Sudan (10), etc.

Among the foreigners assisted, 11 of them were asylum seekers, 95 were registered at UNHCR, and 109 were not registered.



3. Advocacy and Awareness Raising Activities

a. Publishing Reports



**VICTIMS OF TORTURE
FROM SYRIA:**
STAYING IN LEBANON AND SUFFERING
REPEATED TRAUMATIZING EXPERIENCES
JULY 2016



In September 2016, CLDH published a report titled *“Victims of Torture from Syria: Staying in Lebanon and Suffering Repeated Traumatizing Experiences”*⁴.

The report focuses on torture endured by Syrian refugees in Lebanon and in Syria. It also includes testimonies of a few Syrian refugees who have been subjected to torture and the effects of torture on the victim (affecting their psychological and physical health).

“Since my arrest in Syria, I have a phobia of military uniforms; when I see them it reminds me the day of my arrest, my stomach hurts and I begin shaking and sweating. The Lebanese militaries at the checkpoints notice this and make fun of me. Several times they took me out of the car and let me wait beside the road pretending that they will arrest me although I have a legal status and didn’t do anything” testified one of the refugees from Syria “I would rather stay on my mattress all day watching the humid ceiling than go out and face this again” – one of the testimonies included in the report.

⁴ “Victims of Torture from Syria: Staying in Lebanon and Suffering Repeated traumatizing Experiences” – Lebanese Center for Human Rights (CLDH); Available on: <http://bit.ly/2tmpkaV>



On October 31, 2016, CLDH published a report titled *“Legal Challenges faced by Refugees from Syria in Lebanon”*^{56789 10}. The aim of this report is to highlight the impact of the Government of Lebanon’s stricter policies with regards to the stay of refugees from Syria into its territory. By drawing a causative connection between the deteriorating conditions of refugees from Syria and the political and legal approach of the Government of Lebanon to the issue, CLDH raises awareness in view of advocating for the implementation of a real legal framework that adjusts the safety and security concerns of refugees from Syria in Lebanon. CLDH strongly believes there is a need for the implementation of a real legal framework for the status of refugee-hood, both for Syrian refugees and refugees of other nationalities. In particular, in order to tackle the legal challenges that have been identified in the report, CLDH

pushes state and non-state actors, on a local and international level, to actively contribute simultaneously. The report was widely covered by the media and consulted by many partners. CLDH did a presentation of the report, its findings and recommendations to all partners at a UNHCR Protection working group on November 29th 2016.

⁵ “السوريون اللاجئون يواجهها التي القانونية الصعاب عن الانسان لحقوق اللبناني للمركز تقرير” – NNA, Available at:

<http://bit.ly/2u5v3Rf>

⁶ “Le CLDH appelle à établir un véritable cadre juridique pour le statut de réfugié au Liban” – Iloubnan, Available at:

<http://bit.ly/2u4t26n>

⁷ “السوريون اللاجئون يواجهها التي القانونية الصعاب عن الانسان لحقوق اللبناني للمركز تقرير” – NNA, Available at:

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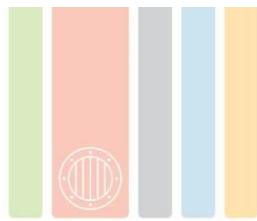
⁸ “Roundtable on refugees brings govt together” – The Daily Star, Available at: <http://bit.ly/2uvglPg>

⁹ “Legal Challenges faced by Refugees from Syria in Lebanon” – Lebanese Center for Human Rights (CLDH);

Available at: <http://bit.ly/2h5nReB>

¹⁰ Live video of the Roundtable – CLDH Facebook, Available at:

https://www.facebook.com/cldh.ngo1/videos/593336054202237/?hc_ref=PAGES_TIMELINE



SHADOW REPORT:
SUBMISSION TO THE COMMITTEE
AGAINST TORTURE IN RELATION TO ITS
EXAMINATION OF THE INITIAL REPORT OF
LEBANON (MARCH 2016)



On December 15, 2016, CLDH published a report titled “Shadow Report: Submission to the Committee against Torture in relation to its examination of the Initial Report of Lebanon (March 2016)”¹¹¹²¹³¹⁴. The aim of this report is to bring alternative information to the Initial Report submitted by the Government of Lebanon to the Committee Against Torture in March 2016. The report addressed arbitrary detention and torture in Lebanon, it also noticed that Lebanon’s Initial Report mainly recalls draft laws, initiatives of the civil society, or projects without effective measures to criminalize torture. In its report, CLDH challenges every article of the Initial Report and provided alternative facts-based information proving that torture is still a systematic practice in Lebanon. CLDH has submitted its shadow report to Committee Against Torture in view of its 60th session that will examine Lebanon’s Initial Report.

4. Other Advocacy and Awareness raising activities

During the reporting period, the following advocacy and awareness raising activities were conducted by the Lebanese Center for Human Rights, with the aim of informing the public and policy makers of the practice of torture and arbitrary detention in Lebanon:

On February 26, 2016 CLDH hosted a “**Lawyers National Conference for Prevention of Torture**”, with the support of the Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands in Lebanon. The conference took place in Smallville Hotel in Beirut and was attended by 48 lawyers from all over Lebanon. Conference started with opening remarks of **H.E. Mrs. Hester Somsen** by stating that CLDH and the Embassy of The Kingdom of The Netherlands have been collaborating since 2007. Embassy provides support to the center and values the reports that the center publishes.

Mr. Wadih Al-Asmar gave an overview of CLDH and its work. After stating the definition of torture from The Convention Against Torture, Mr. Al-Asmar described the methods of torture used in Lebanon. He

¹¹ “...لبنان في للتعذيب تعرضوا الذين الموقوفين عدد هو هذا” – LBCI; Available at: <http://bit.ly/2vSj6NL>

¹² “New report casts doubt on Lebanon’s steps to end torture” – The Daily Star; Available at: <http://bit.ly/2tBwval>

¹³ “Rapport accablant du CLDH sur la torture dans les centres de detention” – L’orient le jour, Available at: <http://bit.ly/2uyCh0R>

¹⁴ “Shadow Report: Submission to the Committee against Torture in relation to its examination of the Initial Report of Lebanon (March 2016)” – Lebanese Center for Human Rights (CLDH) – Available at: <http://bit.ly/2u5OSIb>

spoke about different ways that CLDH and Centre Nassim assist victims of torture in their quest to rehabilitation. He stated that *“Every lawyer and the public prosecutor have large roles to play in fighting against torture”*

Mr. Georges Ghali – Programs Manager at ALEF – Act for Human Rights, had a presentation on the topic of *“The protection of the detainees from torture in the Lebanese Law”*. He started by citing Article 401 of the Lebanese penal code and its definition of torture as *“whoever exercises the act of inflicting pain on a person that isn’t allowed by the law, in order to get confessions on a crime, or information about a crime, is sentenced to prison from 3 months, to 3 years”*. He continued on to compare the definition of torture according to the Lebanese law and The Convention Against Torture. He explained that the differences were obvious and the need of reforms.

Dr. Myriam Younes – Professor at the Beirut Arab University (on subjects such as: International Law, Legal Methodology, etc.), gave a presentation on *“International commitments of Lebanon, how to use them in the Lebanese courts”*. She explained the different mechanisms that play in securing Human Rights. Dr. Younes went into details explaining National, Regional, and International mechanisms. She went on describing how Government reports vary from the ones that NGOs publish, since Government always tries to hide reports of torture.

Two of CLDH lawyers, **Ms. Hasna Abdul Reda** and **Mr. Issam Sbat** led a discussion on *Practices paving the way to the practice of torture* recalling the role of the lawyer in preventing torture and presenting a few cases. They gave examples of cases they were in charge of. In their opinion, in many instances, medical reports and forensics are not detailing the torture as it happens. They also stated that their clients admitted to any crime just because torture was unbearable. Also, they explained the practice of not allowing the lawyers to see their clients in private after they have been subjected to torture. This hinders their defense according to the lawyers.



Participants at the “Lawyers National Conference for Prevention of Torture”

Between January and February 2016, the Lebanese Center for Human Rights as part of its advocacy activities organized meetings with:

- The Minister of Justice;
- The General Director of the General Security;
- The Human Rights Commission of the Parliament;
- The EU Special Representative for Human Rights;
- The EU representative for Human Rights Defenders in Lebanon.

Between 16 and 22 April, 2016 Mr. Wadih Al-Asmar attended several meetings as part of CAT mission to UN offices in Geneva, Switzerland. “Shadow Report: Submission to the Committee against Torture in relation to its examination of the Initial Report of Lebanon” was presented to various NGOs and working groups at UN.

June 24, 2016. On the occasion of “International Day in Support of Victims of Torture”, CLDH launched an online petition addressed to the Lebanese government asking for implementation of policies and processes which will lead to torture-free Lebanon. In the petition it was noted that *“Lebanon is bounded by its ratification of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which strictly condemn and forbid the practice of torture, but the country does not comply with these requirements. In the Lebanese law itself (Criminal Procedure Code articles 47 and 77, and Penal Code article 401), torture is strictly forbidden and perpetrators have to be prosecuted.”* Based on reports published by CLDH and other organizations *“the Lebanese justice system almost systematically commits serious breaches of procedures that ease the use of torture: violations of fair trial standards, incommunicado detention, non-appointment of lawyers, lack of confidential communication between the lawyer and his client and excessive length of detention in custody are common practices.”*

The petition was signed by 110 individuals.¹⁵

October 31, 2016 CLDH organized a launching event for the “Legal challenges faced by refugees from Syria in Lebanon” report. The aim of the event was to present CLDH’s findings and recommendations bring together different stakeholders addressing the issue of refugees from Syria in Lebanon, including international donors, legal actors, state representatives, civil society organizations and media.

November 11, 2016 CLDH held a press conference with TV and newspapers. CLDH President, Mr. Wadih Al-Asmar explained the legal situation of refugees from Syria, including the impact on their daily lives, consequences on their safety, their economic conditions and access to school. He also outlined CLDH’s

¹⁵ Torture is a Crime - and a Shame for Lebanon – Petition launched by CLDH. Available at: <https://www.change.org/p/torture-is-a-crime-and-a-shame-for-lebanon>

recommendations addressed to the various stakeholders addressing the issue of refugees from Syria in Lebanon¹⁶.

December 15, 2016 CLDH organized a launching event for the “Shadow Report” with the aim of presenting CLDH’s findings and recommendations, bringing together different stakeholders addressing the issue of torture in Lebanon, including international donors, legal actors, state representatives, civil society organizations and media¹⁷¹⁸.

¹⁶ ILoubnan - <http://bit.ly/2u4t26n>

¹⁶ NNA - <http://bit.ly/2u5v3Rf>

¹⁶ The Daily Star - <http://bit.ly/2uvglPg>

¹⁷ The Daily Star - <http://bit.ly/2tBwval>

¹⁸ L’orient le jour - <http://bit.ly/2uyCh0R>

Centre Nassim for the Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture

Objective ***Offer and provide multi-disciplinary assistance to the victims of torture***

1. Services

Centre Nassim is a multidisciplinary center for the rehabilitation of torture victims. It provides medical, psychological, legal, and social support, as well as assistance with vocational rehabilitation and physiotherapy. A team of professionals has been established along with a well-developed framework for care and monitoring. Centre Nassim provides the following support:

Medical support - The majority of the beneficiaries of the Centre are among those who have not received care during their imprisonment or after their subsequent release from prison. Some have been subjected to grave torture during the imprisonment/detention and carry many a physical scar of the abuse suffered by them, for e.g.; severe bruises/injuries to various parts of the body, pains and aches, loss of body parts, loss of mobility etc. To compound their woes, these beneficiaries are also, in most cases not entitled to any state support, since social security is restricted to only those employees who have been declared by their Lebanese employers. Since the majority of beneficiaries are Syrian refugees, unemployed or not gainfully employed and therefore, they are not in a position to obtain proper medical care and assistance for their needs.

Physiotherapy - In addition to the above, Centre Nassim also provides for physiotherapeutic care of the beneficiaries. Treatment of beneficiaries at Centre Nassim is based on various approaches including a kinesiological approach that applies scientific based medical principles towards the analysis, preservation and enhancement of human movement in all settings and populations. Our physiotherapist works out a treatment plan which involves explaining to the patients about the exercise and massage regimen that will be followed at the Centre as also the exercises that the patient will do at home to aid in faster recovery. In short, our beneficiaries benefited immensely from this therapeutic regimen of controlled exercises, ergonomics and lifestyle modifications.

Psychotherapy - The effects of torture are often a combination of physical injuries as a result of the inflicted violence and the mental trauma associated with experiencing such acts. The mental suffering due to torture and Post-traumatic stress disorders (PTSD) are the most commonly observed cases at the Centre. There are also patients who have experienced intense bereavement and grief over the death or disappearance of their loved ones. At Centre Nassim, cases are systematically assessed by the psychologist, who then puts together a therapy programme involving autogenic training, supportive psychotherapy, psychoanalytical psychotherapy, relaxation or a combination of all, after taking into consideration unique factors that each case may present. Whenever necessary, the cases are reviewed on a regular basis by an external psychiatrist. The psychologist successfully dealt with several cases of

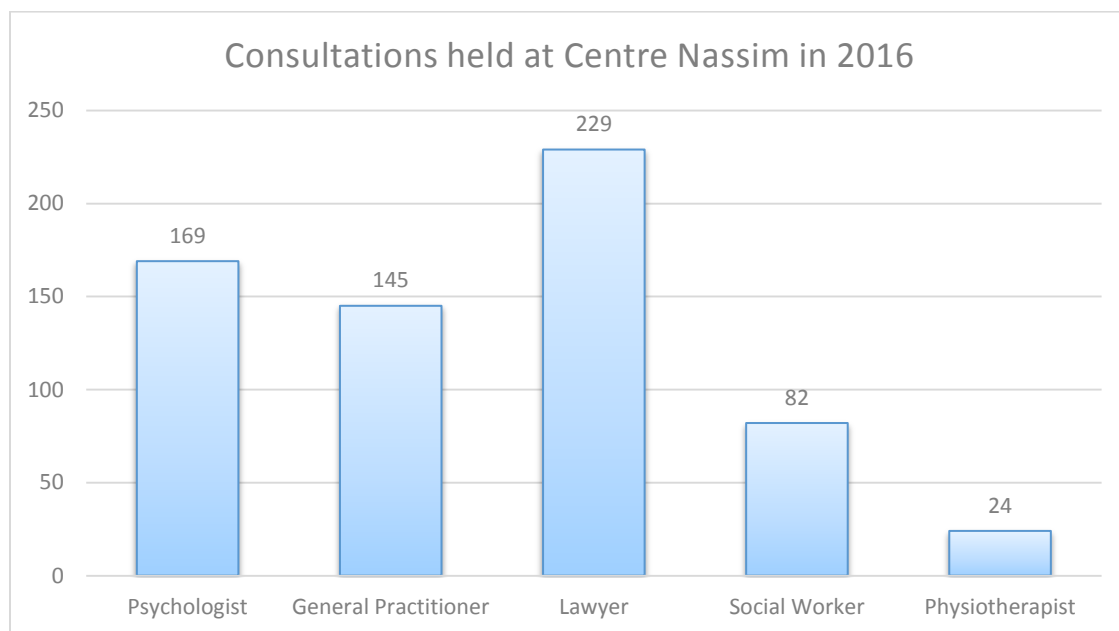
PTSDs, adaptation disorders, acute depression, delusions etc. and had facilitated several beneficiaries to successfully reinvest in their social and professional life. Another important observation is that psycho-education coupled with general health education and physiotherapy has led to the alleviation in the physical symptoms of many patients.

Social Support - The social worker identifies the obstacles in preventing family and social reintegration of the victim, and puts in place a programme aimed at providing appropriate assistance to the beneficiary. Wherever necessary and according to requirement, the social worker also gets in touch with other organizations for provision of necessary assistance to the beneficiaries.

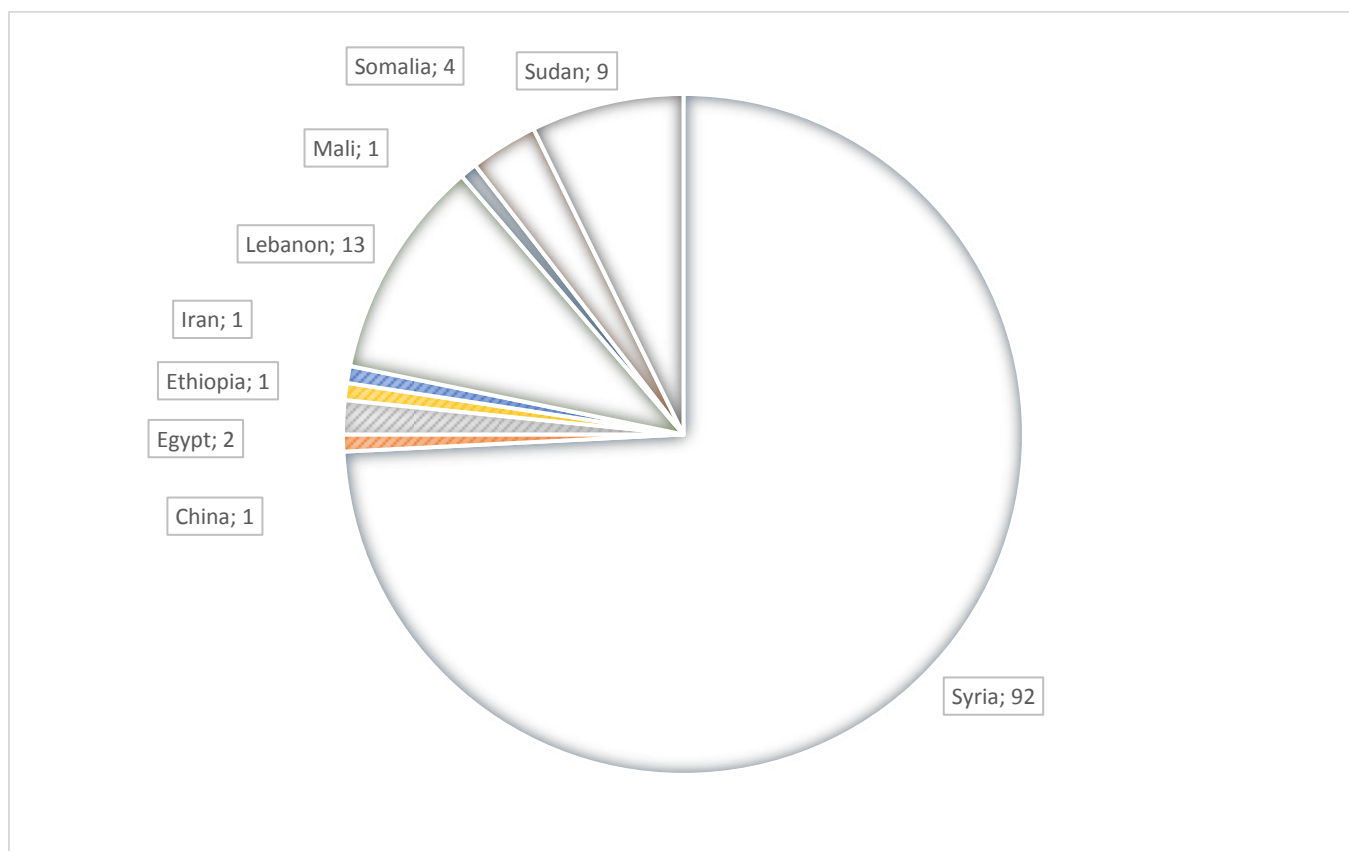
Legal Support - Victims of torture have many legal issues: claims for reintegration into workplace, clearing of criminal records, processing of asylum applications with UNHCR, help with issuance of stay permits and/or work permits, request for attestations for various administrative reasons, so on and so forth. Centre Nassim's lawyer provides extensive legal consultations and counseling to the victims on various aspects of laws relating to human rights violations, torture related issues; public interest litigation etc.

Financial Assistance – The Social worker sometimes allocates financial assistance for beneficiaries in urgent need of accommodation.

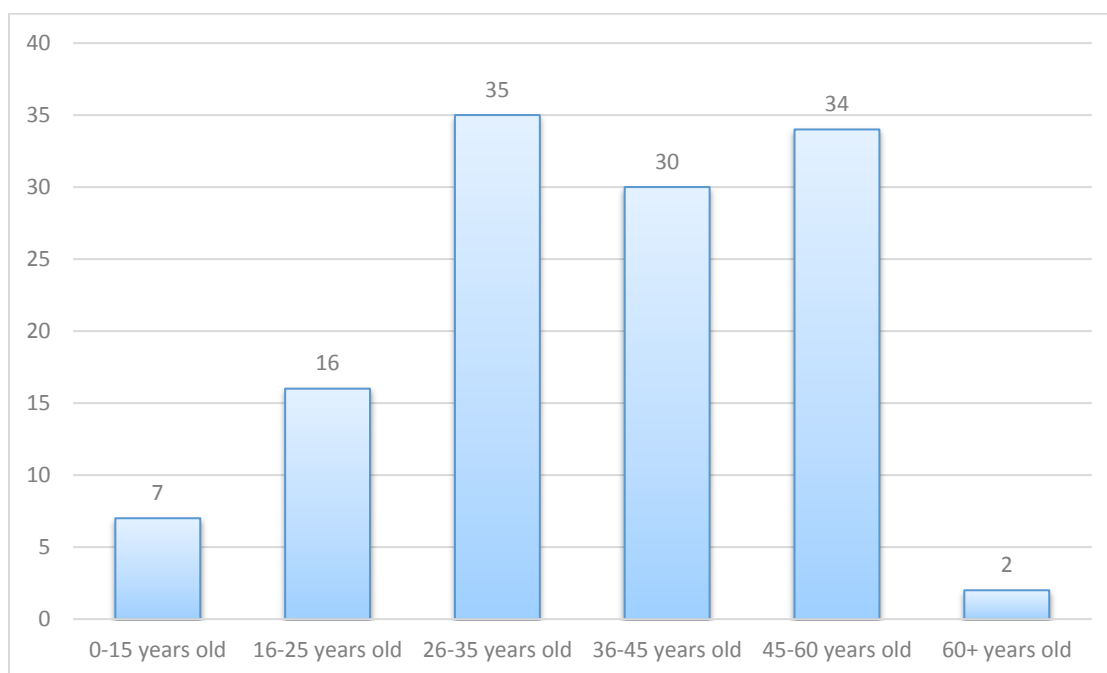
During the reporting period, Centre Nassim provided support to 124 beneficiaries, including 19 new beneficiaries with their dependents. During this period, 105 previously registered beneficiaries continued the rehabilitation process. In total, 684 consultations were provided to the beneficiaries. The consultations were as following:



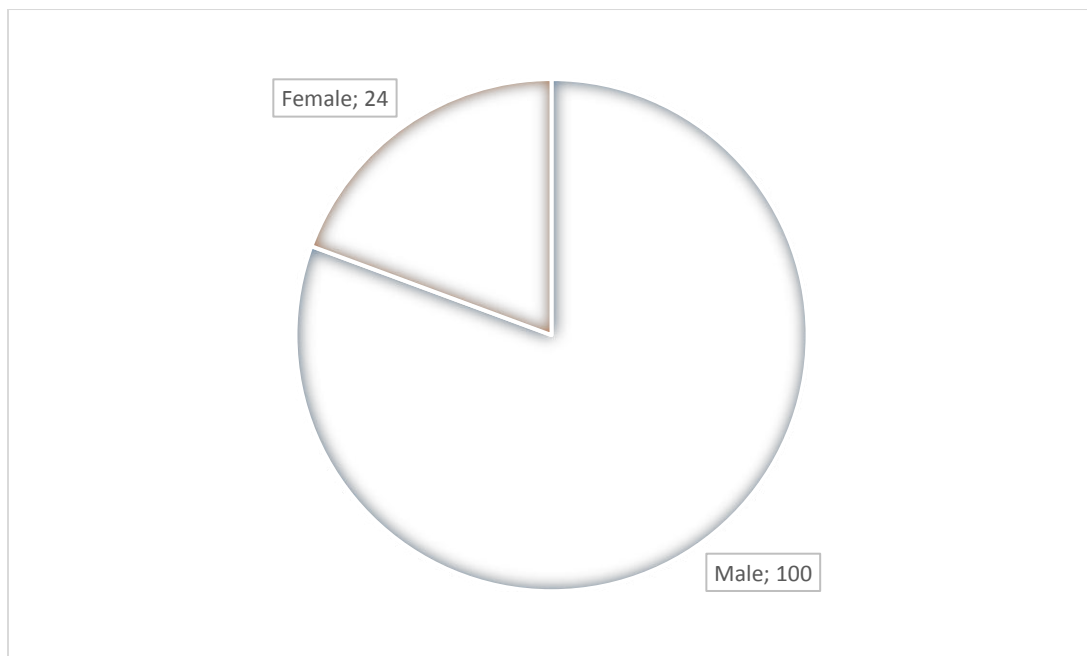
The nationalities and number of Centre Nassim's beneficiaries is shown in the following chart:



The age group of the beneficiaries of Centre Nassim is as following:



The gender of the victims of torture that were beneficiaries at Centre Nassim can be seen on the following chart:



2. New foreseen activities

As shown in the previous graphs, the highest number of beneficiaries are from Syria. CLDH will stay committed to helping these vulnerable groups.

For the following period, CLDH is planning to continue its rehabilitation activities, but also to increase its advocacy and awareness raising activities. This is planned because of the findings in CLDH's previous reports on torture as well as UNCAT's findings in its latest report and it will be funded in part by the continuous support of the Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands in Lebanon.

3. Documenting torture – Developing a database

In 2016 CLDH began working on developing a centralized database for Centre Nassim beneficiaries in order to become more efficient in managing the cases and documenting them in more detail. The database was developed in assistance with the International Rehabilitation Council for Victims of Torture (IRCT), which shared it with its member centers across the world, in order to solidify the fight against impunity. At the moment, the database is fully functional and CLDH staff is working on data entry for each case.

The Database in the Fight against Impunity (DFI) is a system-wide response to create the ability to evidence the center's work, its collection of appropriate, consistent and comparable clinical information. The data gathered is traditionally documented in physical files, whereas the DFI provides an elaborate electronic documentation of data from torture survivors which supports the fight to reach accountability of the torturers, prevention of torture, and the rehabilitation of the survivors.

The database is now being used by CLDH staff and each beneficiary's case is being inserted individually into the database. It is very elaborate and includes pre-torture history, the torture incident(s), and the post-torture situation. What's more, the DFI can easily be used for generating static reports. The importance of this database is that it provides the basis of, first, collecting information and evidence about where torture usually takes place, who the main victims are, and what torture methods are used in each detention location, which enables the center to hold concrete data allowing to hold perpetrators to account and to contribute to the end to impunity.

Second, the reporting based on the database is able to drive governments to account (especially if this uniform database is used by several centers in the same country), which will eventually lead to reporting on the global level to treaty bodies and thematic mechanisms.

Third, the database allows the collection of survivor narratives and thematic stories that can be used in awareness raising to increase understanding of torture and its survivors.

Fourth, the database enables the humanitarian sector – mainly the torture rehabilitation sector – to establish the basis for demanding resources and ensuring that the survivor's right to rehabilitation is recognized, respected, and fulfilled. This can be reached by using the data in awareness-raising campaigns to emphasize the importance of rehabilitation and the consequences torture can have, not only on victims, but also on society as a whole.

Last, as the database is used by Nassim Centre and other similar centers locally, regionally, and globally, researchers will be linked to the member centers to strengthen the research capacity of the global rehabilitation sector and to focus on key research questions in human rights clinical matters.

The DFI is being used by Nassim Centre for all the above considerations, but also because it provides a reliable and concrete documentation mechanism that is easy to use, and generates accurate and usable static reports. In addition, the database is providing a foundation for the future of the center's activities, mainly by providing it with the tools necessary to collect the necessary data to evidence torture and its consequences, which will aid the center in generating thematic reports, and ultimately cooperate with other DFI-using centers to generate thematic regional and global reports based on what is learned from the survivors during the work done to support them on their torture rehabilitation journey. This also means that the center will have the tools necessary to raise awareness on the gravity of torture, and the consequences resulting on the survivors and their surroundings.

Throughout the duration of the project, 125 cases were entered in the database.

Enforced disappearance

Objective

Support the families of disappeared and NGOs working with this issue, and contribute effectively to the establishment of truth and justice for all victims of Human Rights violations

Since 1996, CLDH works closely with the families of the disappeared, who are suffering from the psychological torture of not knowing what happened to their loved ones and who are therefore not being able to properly mourn their relatives if indeed they have been killed as a result of enforced disappearance, or to get information on their whereabouts in case they are still being detained in foreign jails. At the very least, the authorities should respect their right to Truth and help shed light on the fate of all disappeared persons in Lebanon in order to resolve this issue and start a real national reconciliation process.

For this reason, CLDH is calling for improvement of the draft law on enforced disappearance and the missing, prepared by a number of NGOs. In 2016, CLDH continued to be in the forefront of various activities undertaken in support of families of disappeared and working towards the establishment of truth and justice for all victims of Human Rights violations.

On December 17, 2016 CLDH in collaboration with: The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), SOLIDE Association, Committee of the Families of Kidnapped and the Disappeared in Lebanon, The Lebanese Committee of the Families of Detainees in Syria, and MP Ghassan Moukheiber organized a commemoration ceremony in honor of Ghazi Aad. During the event, the organizers called for resuming the journey to solve the issue of the missing and forcibly disappeared.

Migrant Workers, Asylum Seekers and Refugees

Objective

Raising awareness of the Lebanese society and authorities about the rights of migrants and refugees, strengthening and promoting the legal and social protection of migrant workers, asylum seekers and refugees.

1. Individual cases follow-up

Various sources estimate the number of migrant domestic workers in Lebanon between 150,000 and 200,000 in an overall work force of 1.45 million. Most of them come from Sri Lanka, Ethiopia, Philippines, Nepal and Madagascar. These women are often victims of exploitation, non-payment of wages, excessive working hours, verbal harassment, and confinement, confiscation of their passports, physical and sexual abuses, and sometimes even torture.

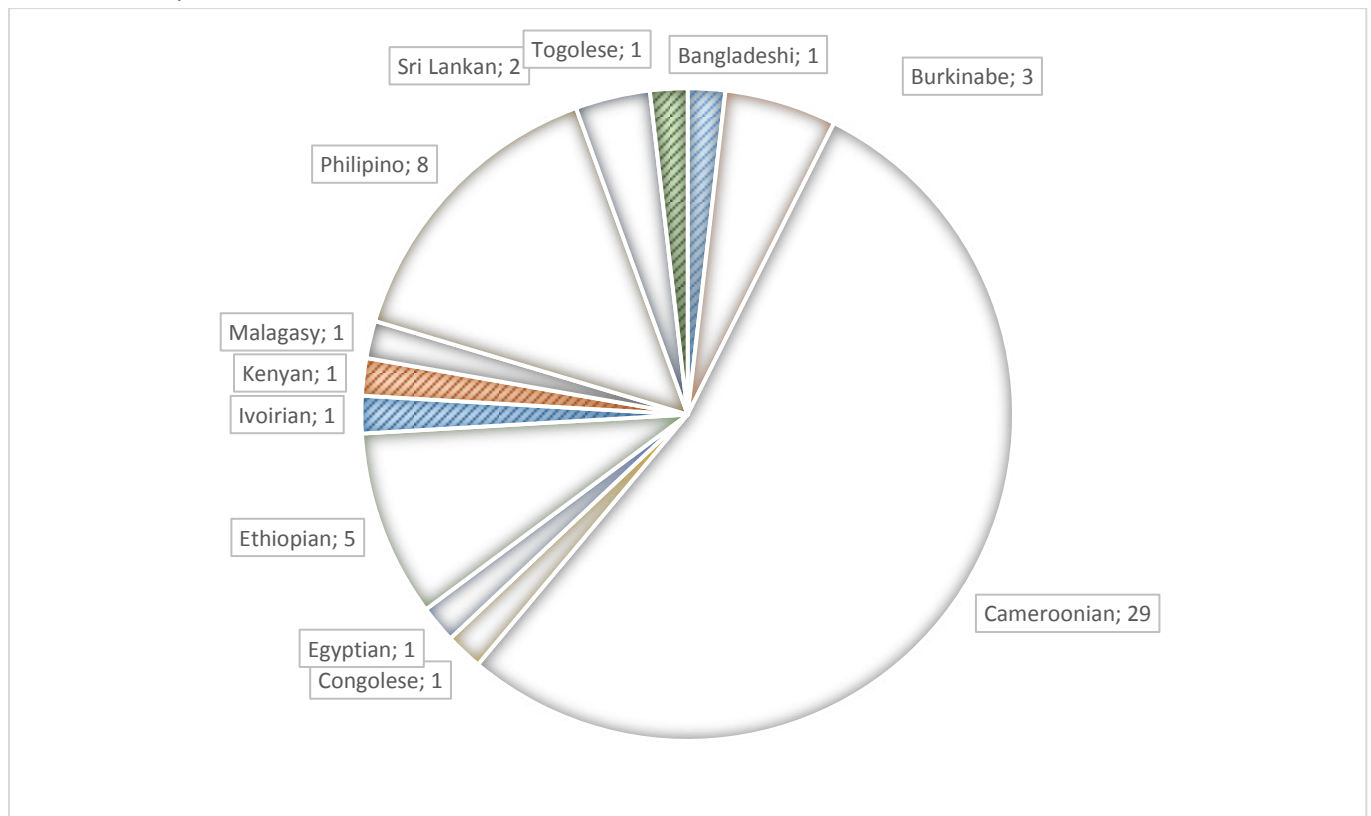
The Lebanese Center for Human Rights, which assists more than a hundred people each year in detention, is recognized for the competence of its team for legal aid. This recognition has led the organization to be more extensively consulted by migrant workers in Lebanon asking for help from the organization.

Migrant domestic workers do not fall under the labor law, and are subject to restrictive immigration rules based on the "kafala" system, which exposes them to the risk of being exploited, and makes it difficult for them to leave an abusive employer. Moreover, domestic employees who denounce their employers for abuse are confronted to a hostile judiciary system. The only solution for most domestic migrant workers is to run away from their work place, which expose them to arrest and arbitrary detention, or even to the threat of being deported to their country of origin, which sometimes leads to suicide.

In total, **54 people at the risk of becoming slaves were assisted by CLDH** during the reporting period. These cases were referred to CLDH by:

- Community leaders;
- Neighbors for abuse cases;
- Relatives;
- Other NGOs and the ICRC.

The nationality of the beneficiaries is as follows:



In the absence of legislation or practices that protect Migrant Workers, the interventions of the organization are of several types:

Negotiations/Pressure on the employer - to recover the passport of the employee, to obtain permission from the employer for a change of employer, or to let the employee leave the country;

Administrative procedures - Regularization papers, registering to the Ministry of Labor, registering to the General Security;

Legal Assistance - Removal of false complaints, defense in courts

The usual interventions are:

Registry of a child;
 UNHCR follow up;
 Residency renewal;
 Legal counseling;
 Facilitate in the return to their home country;
 Follow up with administrative detention;
 Defense in court;
 Legal advice and negotiations with employer, etc.

2. Advocacy and Awareness Raising Activities

Like every year since 2009, CLDH participated in the organization of the “Workers’ Day Parade and Festival for Migrant Domestic Workers” in coordination with other stakeholders working in the field.

3. Press Releases

May 24, 2016 CLDH published a Position Paper on the EU-Lebanon Partnership. In the position paper, CLDH shared its concerns regarding the human rights situation in Lebanon and urged the European Union External Action to seriously take several issues into consideration during the preparation of the new EU – Lebanon Partnership 2016-2020¹⁹.

July 18, 2016 CLDH issued a press release denouncing the disclosure of confidential information about an ongoing judicial case about an under-18-year-old rape victim. The press release stated that *“This irresponsible behavior of a media, apparently looking for sensationalism, and disregarding possible consequences for the victim, can be interpreted as an attempt to discourage victims of sexual violence to file complaints against their attackers”*²⁰²¹.

September 20, 2016 CLDH issued an “Op-ed on UN Summit for Refugees and Migrants”. In the document, CLDH urged the United Nations General Assembly, as well as state representatives, to include few commitments to address large movements of refugees and migrants²².

November 15, 2016 CLDH issued a press release and condemned the threat of unlawful forced evictions of Syrian refugees from Al-Rihaniyeh camp in the Akkar region and calls for an investigation into the incident and for protecting the refugees²³.

December 01, 2016 CLDH issued a press release calling on General Michel Aoun (the newly elected President of Lebanon) to take decisive actions and fulfill his responsibilities in all matters of human rights, as per inherent to his mandate as the new President of the Republic²⁴.

¹⁹ Position Paper on the EU-Lebanon Partnership – Available on: <http://www.rightsobserver.org/news/position-paper-on-the-eu-lebanon-partnership>

²⁰ “للاغتصاب تعرضت لقاصر الكامل الاسم الالكتروني موقع بنشر للتنديد باخبار تقدمنا: الانسان حقوق مركز” – NNA; Available at: <http://bit.ly/2vRSj3X>

²¹ Press release: The name of a minor rape victim revealed in the media – Available on: <http://www.rightsobserver.org/news/press-release-the-name-of-a-minor-rape-victim-revealed-in-the-media>

²² Op-ed on UN Summit for Refugees and Migrants – Available on: <http://www.rightsobserver.org/news/op-ed-on-un-summit-for-refugees-and-migrants>

²³ Press Release: Bebine Camps Eviction – Available on: <http://bit.ly/2vMRjgS>

²⁴ CLDH open letter to President Michel Aoun – Available on: <http://www.rightsobserver.org/news/cldh-open-letter-to-president-michel-aoun>

Overview of the Human Rights situation, capacity building and networking

Objective ***Provide a clear and complete overview of the Human Rights situation in Lebanon, and to be an active partner along with the other Lebanese Human Rights NGOs***

During the reporting period, the Lebanese Center for Human Rights continued to compile a daily press review, gathering all articles on human rights issues as published in the Lebanese press.

Currently, CLDH manages a press review blog (www.cldhpressreview.blogspot.com) and a press review website (www.rightsobserver.org).

The press review blog has 250,850 all-time page views and 16,638 articles.

To this date, the press review website has more than 170,000 views and 6,167 articles.

Both the website and the press review blog are updated on a daily basis.

1. Social Media

During the reporting period, CLDH was active daily on several Social Media sites. The Lebanese Center for Human Rights Fan page on Facebook²⁵ counted 3,279 “likes”. CLDH’s Facebook group²⁶ is also daily active and it had 1,871 members at year end.

CLDH also uses Twitter²⁷ to engage with its followers and counted 893 followers in 2016.

CLDH’s Instagram²⁸ profile has 147 followers.

²⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/cldh.ngo>

²⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/107869015821/>

²⁷ <https://twitter.com/HumanRightsCLDH>

²⁸ <http://instagram.com/cldh.ngo/>