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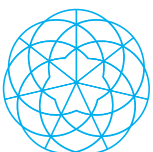

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Marta Welander

As a leading donor of the international refugee response, having mobilised over 9 billion euros since the start of the conflict towards humanitarian and development assistance,[1] the European Union has contributed greatly to a number of large-scale efforts aimed at addressing the crisis in a relatively holistic manner. On 26 April 2016, the European Commission released a communication entitled 'Lives in Dignity: from Aid-dependence to Self-reliance', in which it emphasises the importance of aid activities and programmes which engage displaced people themselves. The communication states that "[a] new, coherent and collaborative policy framework needs to be put in place harness[ing] the productive capacities of refugees and IDPs."[2] Accordingly, any new approach ought to ensure greater cooperation between donors, civil society and displaced people themselves because the effectiveness of development action "depend[s] heavily on the extent of 'buy-in' from the host communities and the displaced people themselves."[3]

In this context, an obvious 'low-hanging fruit' that lends itself very well to the EU's objectives of harnessing the capacities of refugees would be the funding allocated to civil society initiatives launched and led by refugees themselves in exile. Logically, by supporting such initiatives, funding endeavours of the European Union would not only be contributing to current aid initiatives but would also help strengthen the emergence of a Syrian civil society which would later on have the potential of continuing its activity in post-war Syria. This paper aims to assess whether the European Union currently has the capacity to enact the aforementioned policy framework by funding the Syrian civil society in exile. The paper focuses in particular on the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) and its potential support to the Syrian civil society emerging in Lebanon.

The paper starts by providing an overview of the European Union's funding towards addressing the 'refugee crisis' to-date, highlighting the limitations of these instruments in supporting smaller size local actors. In the second section, the paper assesses the importance of local actors, with a specific focus on Syrian-led civil society initiatives operating in Lebanon. The contribution of Syrian-led groups addressing the 'refugee crisis' is then explored, and it is argued that these groups are able to go beyond short-term "provision of food, medicine and blankets", as they also have the potential of building trust and strengthened relations between people from different parts of society. It is sug-

1 European Commission (2017). This figure includes funds drawn from the EU budget and Member States collectively.

2 European Commission (2016).

3 European Commission (2016) 10.

gested that such efforts therefore have the potential to help re-build the foundations of civil society in anticipation of ceasefire and a political solution to the Syrian civil war. The third section of the paper establishes that EU funding for Syrian-led initiatives is lacking, and identifies a number of key challenges and risks which a funding body may face when looking to support such groups. Importantly, in the fourth section, the paper focuses on the scope for evolving practice, proposing some relevant 'next steps' which would allow the EU to support a civil society in exile. It is argued that there is, first and foremost, an urgent need for increased understanding of the phenomenon, combined with the need to address a number of specific considerations to render funding mechanisms accessible to the exiled civil society. The paper concludes by recommending that the EU – as a leading donor in response to the Syrian crisis – starts exploring ways to tap into the potential of the Syrian civil society, in order to seize a unique, two-fold opportunity readily available.

1. The European Union's funding to tackle the 'refugee crisis'

The European Union has at its disposal a number of different funding mechanisms which lend themselves to supporting development, human rights and democratisation efforts; many of which could in theory be applicable to the context of the refugee crisis. These funding tools include – as outlined in the Multi-Annual Financial Framework for 2014-2020 –geographic instruments for Development, Neighbourhood, Enlargement and Partnership, as well as thematic programmes such as the 'Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities' (CSO-LA), 'Global Public Goods and Challenges (GPGC)' and the 'Instrument Contributing to Stability and Peace' (IcSP), and the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR).[4]

The objective of the CSO-LA is "to strengthen civil society organisations and local authorities in partner countries, improving governance and accountability through inclusive policy-making by empowering citizens and populations through the voicing and structuring of their collective demands."[5] This instrument is designed to promote partnership and collaboration between civil society actors and local governmental authorities and is therefore highly unlikely to be applicable for small local groups and refugee groups operating in a host country where they have little or no opportunity to interact with authorities at any level, not least because they are in essence operating outside of the official system.

Meanwhile, the GPGC, with a budget of roughly 5 billion euros over seven years, focuses on the very specific five key areas of environment and climate change, human development, sustainable energy, food security and sustainable agriculture, and asylum and migration. The 'asylum and migration' area of work aims to support programmes designed to "improve the governance of migration in and by developing countries, paying particular attention to maximising the positive impact and minimising the negative impact of migration and mobility on development in low and middle-income countries of

4 EuropeAid (2015b) 3.

5 EuropeAid, 'Guide to EuropeAid funding instruments 2014-2020' <http://www.globaltfokus.dk/images/EU-Funding/Guide_to_EuropeAid_funding_instruments_2014-2020.pdf> accesed 2 May 2016.

origin and destination."[6] However, prospective applicants soon learn that: "[t]o increase sustainability, bigger, more strategic projects are envisaged. International organisations such as UN agencies will be the main implementers, and CSOs' opportunities to receive funds will be limited."[7] Needless to say, it is unlikely that the smallest and least well-established organisations – such as local civil society groups or refugee-led initiatives – would be able to gain access to such funding.

As for the IcSP, during the period 2007-2013 this instrument donated the vast majority of its funding to UN agencies, third country governments and agencies, EU Member States, the private sector, international organisations, and only a small proportion to 'international and local NGOs.' The criteria of eligibility draw on "political appropriateness, eligibility within legal and thematic scope set out in IcSP Regulation, and suitability of the implementing body."[8] The eligibility criteria thus signal that this instrument does not appear to be designed for small grassroots organisations and refugee groups, with restrictive human and financial resources. Moreover, the fact that they often operate outside of the official structures in the host country renders them less likely to be considered as fulfilling the criterion of 'political appropriateness.'

Amongst the funding tools available at the EU level for human rights, democratisation and development efforts, few appear to be accessible for local actors and refugee-led groups. They generally target states or institutional actors and their modalities, objectives and architecture tend to render them inaccessible for smaller actors. The same can be said about the most recent addition to the EU funding mechanisms available to address the refugee crisis, the European Union Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syria crisis (the Madad Fund). This fund was launched in support of Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries, and is designed to contribute to the implementation of the 16 March 2015 Council conclusions on the EU Regional Strategy for Syria and Iraq as well as the ISIL/Da'esh threat, most notably by strengthening local resilience capacities in countries affected by the crisis.[9] Upon launching the first actions of the Regional Trust Fund in support of Syrian refugees in September 2015, Federica Mogherini, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission explained:

> "As the Regional Trust Fund kicks off with its first concrete action, the EU shows we care. We care for the Syrian people and for those who are taking responsibility in helping them. And it is no accident that the first contract opened through the Fund deals with schools and education. Syria is losing a whole generation to war and exile. A pen and a book can give hope to Syrian children. They are the best weapon against hatred and radicalisation. They can give a future to a whole country."[10]

6 EuropeAid, 'Guide to EuropeAid funding instruments 2014-2020' <http://www.globaltfokus.dk/images/EU-Funding/Guide_to_EuropeAid_funding_instruments_2014-2020.pdf> accessed 2 May 2016.

7 EuropeAid, 'Guide to EuropeAid funding instruments 2014-2020' <http://www.globaltfokus.dk/images/EU-Funding/Guide_to_EuropeAid_funding_instruments_2014-2020.pdf> accessed 2 May 2016.

8 <http://www.eplo.org/assets/files/2.%20Activities/Civil%20Society%20Dialogue%20Network/Funding%20Instruments%20Meetings/Instrument%20contributing%20to%20Stability%20and%20Peace%20-%20Consultation%20on%202015%20programming/EC_FPI_Presentation_Instrument_contributing_to_Stability_and_Peace.pdf> accessed 20 April 2016.

9 European Commission (2015a).

10 European Commission (2015a).

On 23 September 2015, when the European Commission presented a set of priority actions to implement the European Agenda on Migration – originally adopted by the Commission in May 2015, the most pressing need identified was to support Member States managing large numbers of refugees, which would require action both inside and outside the EU. Measures to be taken outside the EU focused on creating conditions where refugees could stay close to their home.[11] As far as funding mechanisms were concerned, Member States recognised the need to deploy additional national funding. They repeated their commitment at the European Council on 15 October 2015.[12]

The launch of the Madad Fund and the announcement of the 23 September priority actions seem to signal two clear aims of the European Union's funding efforts. While reiterating the EU's commitment to addressing the Syrian refugee crisis, they also emphasise on the one hand a focus on ensuring any funding efforts are fruitful in countering further radicalisation, and on the other an effort to ensure Syrians are able to remain in countries neighbouring Syria rather than making their way to Europe. There are clear synergies between these aims and the work of Syrian civil society in exile, which suggests that some form of funding relationship could be beneficial.

However, the recently developed funding instruments, such as the Madad Fund, specifically established to address the Syrian situation, do not appear to be particularly well adapted to ensuring the active participation and agency of smaller size local actors. Due to its lengthy bureaucratic application process[13] – which has to be carried out in English, French, Spanish or Portuguese – the Madad Fund appears more relevant and accessible to European and international NGOs with a high capacity to navigate through such systems. Indeed, prospective applicants learn that "due to the need to minimize contract management and to maximize coherence and synergies, [the Madad Fund is] looking for large multi-partner, multi-country, and multi-year actions. While not stipulating a minimum or maximum ceiling for actions, such actions should be conceived accordingly (with an indicative financial frame of more than EUR 5 million)".[14] Needless to say, such grant architecture does not easily lend itself to local grassroots groups and refugee communities operating in exile, as these often operate on shorter programme cycles, smaller scale projects, and less developed infrastructures to absorb large funds.

11 European Commission (2015b).

12 European Commission (2015c).

13 The application process consists of two stages; the first one requiring a 'Concept note / Proposal' to be submitted to the Madad Fund Manager, and the second phase requiring 'Action Documents' to be submitted to the Madad Fund Operational Board. The grant application form consists of 46 pages as a Microsoft Word document, and requires, amongst other elements, a detailed rationale broken down into 13 sub-points evidencing how the 'action' is 'relevant' and 'impactful.' Moreover, it requires the following: a rather complex 'action plan'; a logical framework; a detailed budget; a rationale of up to three pages explaining the 'sustainability' of the 'action'; financial data; a detailed overview of previous experience of the applicant; to name some of the key components. The application form is available from: European Commission, 'EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis The 'Madad Fund' <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prag/annexes.do?annexName=E3b&lang=en> accessed 1 April 2017.

14 European Commission, 'Information session on the EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian Crisis, the 'Madad' Fund' <http://www.ngovoice.org/documents/Madad%20Fund%20info%20session%20and%20QandA%20final.pdf> accessed 2 May 2016.

While most funding mechanisms available at the EU level hence appear inapplicable to supporting local civil society and refugee efforts, there is one outstanding funding tool to consider; the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), which may prove to offer the most plausible alternative for the European Union to support smaller local groups and refugee-led efforts out of the available mechanisms.

Launched in 2006, building on the European Initiative (2000–2006), the EIDHR aims "to promote democracy and human rights in non-EU countries, and covers a broad range of actions."[15] The instrument currently funds over 1,200 projects in approximately 100 countries. Its objectives are: to support human rights and fundamental freedoms in situations where they are most at risk; to support the EU's other priorities in the field of human rights, such as fighting against the death penalty, torture, children in armed conflicts, discrimination, gender inequality, etc.; to support democracy by strengthening the role of civil society in promoting participatory and representative democracy, transparency and accountability; to support targeted key actors and processes, including international and regional human rights frameworks and mechanisms; to step up the reliability and transparency of democratic electoral processes, in particular by monitoring them.[16]

In terms of the modalities of the EIDHR, the total budget for the current period (2014-2020) amounts to 1.33 million euros. 20% of this amount is expected to be allocated to directly support human rights defenders (HRDs).[17] The funding through the EIDHR is allocated through a number of different channels. Firstly, there are global calls for proposals managed from Brussels, usually once a year with an approximate budget of 20-40 million euros per call. Then there are 'country calls' for proposals through the so-called Country-Based Support Scheme (CBSS) which is "designed to reinforce the role of civil society in promoting human rights and democracy. The latter are managed by the EU delegations in-country, with the responsibility being delegated from the European Commission to these bodies. The annual budget for these is 82 million euros, distributed through a larger number of calls and aimed at supporting local CSOs. Thirdly, the EIDHR offers small grants for human rights defenders (HRDs) which consist of small *ad hoc* grants of maximum 10,000 euros for situations of urgent need.[18] There is also a direct awards fund, through which EU delegations negotiate directly with beneficiaries in crisis situation, each grant amounting to no more than 1,000 euros per action. There appears to be very little public information available regarding the governance structures relating to the disbursement of these funds. According to interviewees, there is relative flexibility with regards to disbursements, which has on at least one occasion taken place in cash.[19]

15 EuropeAid, 'Guide to EuropeAid funding instruments 2014-2020' <http://www.globaltfokus.dk/images/EU-Funding/Guide_to_EuropeAid_funding_instruments_2014-2020.pdf> accessed 2 May 2016.

16 EuropeAid, 'Guide to EuropeAid funding instruments 2014-2020' <http://www.globaltfokus.dk/images/EU-Funding/Guide_to_EuropeAid_funding_instruments_2014-2020.pdf> accessed 4 May 2016, 20.

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18 European Commission, 'Information session on the EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian Crisis, the 'Madad' Fund' <http://www.globaltfokus.dk/images/EU-Funding/Guide_to_EuropeAid_funding_instruments_2014-2020.pdf> accessed 4 May 2016, 20.

19 Interview with Anonymous.

In the fourth quarter of 2014, the new so-called Human Rights Facility was introduced as part of the EIDHR. This facility is used in the most difficult situations where calls for proposals are not possible. The facility offers 3.5 million euros per year, with a maximum of 1 million euros per supported action. The European Commission describes it as a 'demand driven' process and involves a two-way negotiation and joint work to agree a concept and budget.[20]

The EIDHR is often referred to as the EU's most flexible and innovative funding tool, in that it is able to respond in a timely manner to the most difficult emergencies and complicated country situations through *ad hoc* grants. The instrument does not require legal registration nor a bank account, which is rare for any type of funding instrument, be it private or public. It is arguably also more discreet than other instruments, in that the donor keeps a low profile and does not request grantees to publicise the fact that the financial support stems from the European Union. According to the European Union itself, the EIDHR is particularly handy in situations "where less speedy solutions would expose beneficiaries to the risk of serious intimidation or retaliation."[21]

This instrument was originally designed to respond to the most pressing human rights and democracy needs by helping civil society to become an effective force for political reform and defence of human rights. One of its key strengths, and which is highly relevant to the case of local civil society and refugee-led efforts in exile, is that it is "able to focus on sensitive political issues and innovative approaches. Its big value-added is also direct cooperation with local civil society organizations, which need to preserve independence from public authorities, providing for great flexibility and increased capacity to respond to changing circumstances".[22]

Thus, it appears as though there is a funding mechanism at the disposal of the European Commission through which it could, at least in theory, support local efforts and refugee-led civil society projects, in line with its communication from 26 April 2016 in which it advocated inclusive approaches and programmes aimed at harnessing the capacities of refugees themselves as part of the refugee response. In this light, it would be worth pondering the question as to what added value such an approach would actually bring. The emergence of a Syrian civil society in exile in Lebanon provides an interesting subject of study for such an investigation.

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20 EIDHR support to HRDs, 'The new HR facility' <http://www.eidhr.eu/files/dmfile/2014-05-07_FORUM014_Facility.pdf> accessed 8 May 2016.

21 European Commission, 'European Instrument for Democracy & Human Rights (EIDHR)' <https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/finance/eidhr_en.htm_en> accessed 8 May 2016.

22 EuropeAid (2015b) 3.

2. The importance of supporting local agents: the case of the Syrian-led civil society in Lebanon

The flourishing Syrian civil society emerging in exile in countries such as Lebanon appears to be an underexplored phenomenon, albeit one that lends itself particularly well to any discussion regarding the role and added value of local efforts in the refugee response. By way of background, Lebanon is currently hosting between one and two million Syrian refugees and displaced people. Considered one of the worst and complex humanitarian catastrophes of the current time, the Syrian war and the mass displacement of Syrians since 2011 has led to the killing of more than a quarter of a million Syrians, while more than one million have been left injured. The United Nations estimates that approximately 13.5 million people, including 6 million children, are in need of humanitarian assistance. Around 4.8 million Syrians have been forced to leave the country, with 6.5 million being internally displaced, which renders the Syrian crisis the largest refugee crisis globally.[23] The vast majority of Syrians resort to seeking safety in the neighbouring countries of Turkey (2,688,686 registered refugees), Egypt (118,512), Iraq (245,543) Jordan (637,859) and Lebanon (1,067,785).[24]

In Lebanon, one of the smallest and least prosperous countries in the region, the actual number of Syrians – including unregistered individuals – is estimated to have reached nearly 2 million, representing approximately 50% of the total population.[25] This displacement of Syrians *en masse* into Lebanon means that there are now Syrians from a wide variety of socioeconomic, sectarian and ethnic backgrounds that together form a microcosm of Syrian society in Lebanon.[26] As an indirect result of the arrival of large numbers of Syrians, Lebanon is experiencing heightened societal tensions and fears of sectarian conflict. The Lebanese government has allocated significant parts of the country's overstretched resources to deal with the influx of refugees by increasing public spending,[27] whilst struggling to handle the situation of increasingly impoverished segments of the Lebanese population.[28] In parallel, different UN agencies and a large number of international and Lebanese NGOs are working to fill gaps and provide emergency relief and services.

Due to the sheer number of Syrians in Lebanon, combined with unfulfilled international donor appeals and outstanding donations to the UN-led refugee response,[29] services and shelters are far from sufficient to reach all Syrians in need of protection. The absence of official refugee camps, as a result of an explicit government policy due to fears of the creation of permanent refugee enclaves within Lebanon,[30] further complicates the

23 UNOCHA, 'About the Crisis' <http://www.unocha.org/syrian-arab-republic/syria-country-profile/about-crisis> accessed 20 April 2016.
24 Ibid.
25 Dahi (2014).
26 Dahi (2014).
27 Ibid.
28 World Bank (2013).
29 As of June 2015, the funding gap of the 3PR Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan amounts to over $1 billion, representing a 78% funding gap. In 2014, the funding gap amounted to 50%, compared to 29% in 2013 and 30% in 2012. See UNHCR (2015).
30 Dahi (2014).

work of humanitarian relief agencies and leaves many Syrians in a deplorable situation without shelter, hygiene facilities and basic services.[31] Meanwhile, the tensions arising between Syrian and Lebanese host communities are not receiving the attention they need, meaning that there are significant gaps in the refugee response in various respects.

In this context, a wide variety of Syrian civil society actors has emerged to fill certain critical gaps in the refugee response. [32] Indeed, within the exiled Syrian population, individuals and groups with strong entrepreneurial abilities have taken the opportunity to set up different forms of organisations and associations.[33] This development has taken place in Lebanon as well as in other neighbouring countries – with a large number of civil society actors filling a variety of functions in the context of the civil war and the ensuing refugee crisis.[34]

Having previously been deprived of an environment allowing actors to operate freely as civil society under the rule of the Ba'ath party and its 1958 Law on Non-Governmental Organizations[35], many Syrians are now seizing the opportunity afforded by the much more liberal civil society context in Lebanon in which actors are able to operate without much government interference, and have set up different forms of organisations and associations, thus building the fundaments of civil society in anticipation of ceasefire and a political settlement.[36] Some of these individuals had been actively engaged in civil society activities that cropped up in Syria following the March 2011 revolution. When the uprising became militarized these individuals turned to civil society relief programmes across the country, before eventually fleeing to Lebanon when the security situation had become too dangerous. Others had never engaged with civil society projects, but found themselves prompted to do so given the sheer magnitude of the refugee crisis in Lebanon.

Most Syrian organisations or projects would operate in exile as non-registered and non-recognised entities for a number of reasons, ranging from legal to financial obstacles, and are therefore seldom included in statistical data or overview registers outlining what is being done by whom to address the refugee crisis.[37] There is no official count of the Syrian-led civil society organisations existing in Lebanon today, primarily due to the fact that many of them have been unable to register as legal entities. [38] Every so often a Syrian-led initiative is highlighted through social or traditional media channels, or through reports published by international NGOs, UN agencies and the like. However, such visibility is an exception rather than the rule.

31 Ibid.

32 Dahi (2014).

33 Dahi (2014).

34 Al-Jazeera (2014).

35 The 1958 Law on Non-Governmental Organizations was passed during the Egyptian-Syrian unity and places limitations on the establishment of organisations with the Ministry of Social Affairs having exclusive authority to decide about granting license to organisations. The government has the right to close any organisation without going through judicial channels, and any activities carried out without legal NGO status is punishable by imprisonment and fines. See, for instance, Wael Swah (2012) 13.

36 Al-Jazeera (2014).

37 Interview with Talmas. Without Lebanese individuals involved, Syrian organisations cannot register legally.

38 For an account of Syrian civil society prior to the revolution, see, for instance, Sawa W., 'Syrian Civil Society Scene Prior to Syrian Revolution' [2012]. There is no known overview of Syrian civil society in Lebanon, other than the present article.

To address this apparent lack of visibility and knowledge of such actors, two months of field research was conducted in May and June 2015, which managed to identify a total of 34 Syrian-led civil society actors operating in Lebanon (see list in Annex 1), 14 out of which were studied in detail (See Table I) through extensive interviews, and in many cases through direct observations. The selection of the 14 organisations studied in detail was determined on the basis of two key premises: their availability and willingness to interact and communicate; and their typology.[39]

A total of 20 qualitative interviews with representatives of Syrian-led civil society actors operating in Lebanon were conducted in Akkar, Beirut, Bekaa Valley, Tripoli and the Shatila camp in Beirut, all of which are locations with high numbers of Syrian refugees and high levels of civil society activity. The interviews were semi-structured and open-ended and aimed on the one hand to extract information needed in order to develop a mapping and typology of Syrian civil society actors in Lebanon, and on the other hand to bring out these actors' views on their current and future roles, the key challenges and barriers they face, as well as threats and opportunities linked to their sustainability and future development as Syrian civil society actors.

The field research also included the direct observations of civil society organisations' activities and the context in which they work. These observations took place in informal refugee settlements, in established Palestinian camps also inhabited by Syrians, in refugee schools and in homes. The direct observations aimed not only at obtaining a better understanding of the contexts in which the Syrian civil society actors operate, but also with the hope of gaining insights into the internal operations, governance structures and underlying values of the organisations.

A number of additional qualitative interviews were carried out with representatives of Lebanese and international NGOs, a civil society expert at the Delegation of the European Union to Lebanon, as well as academics in the field. A final component of the related final paper was a survey for small-sized civil society organisations, aiming to draw out lessons as to the most impeding barriers to funding. Twenty organisations participated in the survey carried out in Beirut, Lebanon, in May 2015.

Due to the sensitive nature of the research, a number of confidentiality issues had to be taken into account. One of the Syrian organisations took part in the interview only on the condition that its own name was left undisclosed. Others were hesitant to have their

39 The two-month field research was conducted in Lebanon in May and June 2015. A total of 20 qualitative interviews with Syrian-led civil society actors operating in Lebanon were conducted in Akkar, Beirut, Bekaa Valley, Tripoli and the Shatila camp in Beirut. All interviews were semi-structured and open-ended. They aimed, on the one hand, to extract information needed in order to develop a mapping and typology of Syrian civil society actors in Lebanon. On the other hand, they aimed to bring out these actors' views on their current and future roles, and the key challenges and barriers they face, as well as threats and opportunities linked to their sustainability and future development as Syrian civil society actors. Moreover, the field research included direct observations of civil society organisations' activities and the context in which they work. These observations took place in informal refugee settlements, in established Palestinian camps also inhabited by Syrians, in refugee schools and in homes. A number of additional qualitative interviews were carried out with representatives of Lebanese and international NGOs, a civil society expert at the Delegation of the European Union to Lebanon, as well as academics in the field. A final component of the research was a survey with 20 small-sized civil society organisations, which was carried out in Beirut, Lebanon, in May 2015, focusing on perceived barriers to funding.

names associated with statements regarding the international organisations' approach to the refugee response as they worried this could have an impact on their working relationship. By the same token, not all interviewed representatives of the European Commission agreed to be cited on specific information relating to the funding of Syrian civil society inside Syria, and with regard to similar matters.

The two-month field research found a wide variety of Syrian-led organisations, as outlined in Table 1. Some of the groups are working relentlessly in response to the suffering of fellow Syrian refugees, while others focused on projects aimed at easing the tension between Syrians and the host communities, and some run projects contributing to peace dialogues and reconciliation efforts or conduct and disseminate research. Syrians are thus able to build the fundaments of a civil society, in anticipation of a political settlement and ceasefire in their country.

Table I: An overview of selected Syrian civil society actors in Lebanon

	Organisation name	Year founded	Location of Headquarters	Main geographical focus of work	Nationality of founder(s)	Main staff nationalities	Key funding sources
1	Alphabet for Alternative Education	2013	Beirut / Bekaa Valley	Bekaa Valley, Lebanon	Syrian	Mainly Syrian, with Lebanese founding members	Private / Family donations
2	Basmeh wa Zeitooneh	Mid-2012	Shatila, Beirut	Shatila, Beirut & Bekaa Valley, Lebanon	Syrian	Mainly Syrian, with Lebanese founding members	Bilateral development aid, funds from partner NGOs
3	Decostamine	2014	N/A	Different parts of Lebanon	Syrian	Syrian	N/A
4	XXXXX	2001	Beirut (but planning to relocate to Jordan)	Inside Syria	Syrian	Syrian & European	Bilateral European development aid, funds from partner NGOs
5	Jusoor	Mid-2011	Beirut	Worldwide	Syrian	Syrian, Lebanese, Palestinian	Syrian diaspora (Standing donations, Crowdfunding, Private sector CSR)
6	Kayany Foundation	Mid-2013	Beirut	Bekaa Valley, Lebanon	Syrian/ Lebanese	Syrian, Lebanese, Palestinian	Private donations of high net-worth individuals & through auctions

	Organisation name	Year founded	Location of Headquarters	Main geographical focus of work	Nationality of founder(s)	Main staff nationalities	Key funding sources
7	Mobaderoon	2009	Various locations	Inside Syria, Lebanon & neighbouring countries	Syrian	Syrian	Bilateral European development aid, funds from partner NGOs
8	Nuon Organization for Peace-Building	2012	Beirut	Beirut, Bekaa Valley, Lebanon	Syrian	Mainly Syrian	Private / Family donations & Small funds from private foundations
9	Sawa for Development & Aid	End of 2011	Beirut	Bekaa Valley, Lebanon	Syrian	Mainly Syrian, with Lebanese founding members	Private / Family donations & project funds from partner NGOs
10	Sonbola	2014	Bekaa Valley	Bekaa Valley, Lebanon	Syrian	Mainly Syrian	Partner NGOs
11	Spark of March	2011	Beirut	Inside Syria	Syrian	Syrian	None
12	Syrian Eyes	2013	Beirut / Bekaa Valley	Bekaa Valley, Lebanon	Syrian	Syrian, Lebanese	Private / Family donations & small project funds from partner NGOs
13	Yasmine Syria	2012	N/A	Bekaa Valley, Lebanon	Syrian	Mainly Syrian	Private / Family donations
14	Watan	2011	Beirut	Lebanon & other neighbouring countries	Syrian	Mainly Syrian	Syrian diaspora (donations, Crowdfunding, Private sector CSR)

Based on the research findings, a classification has been developed by the author with the aim of providing an accessible understanding of these Syrian civil society organisations. A number of typologies are proposed.[40] First of all, they can be classified according to their *key approaches and activities,* under the two categories 'operational' and 'advocacy-oriented' borrowed from a typology proposed by the World Bank. In this typology, 'operational' refers to organisations whose main purpose is to design and implement projects or deliver services at community, national or international levels, whereas 'advocacy-oriented' refers to groups that work to raise awareness and/or promote a given set of interests through lobbying, press work and activist events.[41] See: Table II.

Table II: Typology of Syrian civil society actors in Lebanon, by key approaches & activities

Key approaches/activities	Description	Organisation names
A) **OPERATIONAL**		
Training on peace-building and reconciliation	The actor's main mission is to promote peace-building and reconciliation activities within the exiled Syrian community in Lebanon. This is done through structured conversations, trainings, workshops, and/or through education and other forms of interaction.	• Nuon Organization for Peace-building • Mobaderoon
Service provision – Health and/or psychosocial support	The organisation provides Syrian refugees with health care services and medication, and/or psychosocial services.	• Basmeh wa Zeitooneh • Syrian Eyes • Watan • Yasmeen Suriya
Service provision – Education	The organisation provides Syrian children with informal education, and/or provides them with support in order to attend formal Lebanese education.	• Alphabet for Alternative Education • Basmeh wa Zeitooneh • Jusoor • Kayany Foundation • Sawa for Development • Sonbola • Watan
Service provision – Livelihoods	The actor provides Syrians in Lebanon with income generation activities and/or vocational training and/or scholarships.	• Basmeh wa Zeitooneh • Jusoor • Sawa for Development • Syrian Eyes • Watan

40 Welander (2016) 23-28.
41 World Bank (2002).

Key approaches/activities	Description	Organisation names
A) **OPERATIONAL**		
Community dialogue – Host community focus	One of the main aims of the organisation is to ease tensions and foster peaceful relations between Lebanese host communities and Syrian refugees.	• Decostamine • Nuon Organization for Peace-building
Community dialogue – Syrian focus	One of the main aims of the organisation is to bring together Syrians from across the political spectrum to find common ground and gain a better mutual understanding and respect; encouraging people from across the political spectrum to channel their frustrations through other means than violence and solve conflict peacefully.	• Mobaderoon • Nuon Organization for Peace-building
B) **ADVOCACY-ORIENTED**		
Research & Publications	The actor conducts research linked to the Syrian conflict and/or refugee crisis and presents findings in publications.	• XXXXX • Spark of March • Watan
Monitoring of human rights violations	The organisation gathers information about human rights abuses linked to the conflict in Syria, in order to raise public awareness.	• Nuon Organization for Peace-building • Spark of March • Watan
Media work & journalism	The actor works through traditional and/or social media to raise awareness of a certain topic.	• XXXXX • Spark of March • Watan
Regional or international advocacy	The actor utilises regional or international advocacy channels to make its voice heard.	• Nuon Organization for Peace-building • Watan
Network-building	The actor interacts non-overtly with like-minded organisations to create a network based on political goals.	• XXXXX • Watan

While most of the identified organisations are *either* operational *or* advocacy-oriented, we see that Nuon Organization for Peace-building and Watan fit well under both types, meaning that they could be referred to as 'hybrid' organisations.

Syrian civil society in exile can also be classified according to their *level of operations*. From this perspective, all of the *operational actors* work primarily at the local community level (albeit many of them in multiple locations and thus might identify themselves

as working at the national level). The two organisations identified as heavily *advocacy-oriented actors* (XXXXX and Spark of March) mainly work at the national or regional levels. Meanwhile, the work of the *hybrid actors* identified above (Nuon Organization and Watan) takes place both at the local and national levels.

Another way to classify Syrian civil society actors in Lebanon is by their *official status,* which is something that may affect their ability to carry out their work in Lebanon. Indeed, the official status of an actor tends to affect its ability to attract local and foreign funding to sustain its work, and determines how likely it is to run free of risks and government interference. See: Table III.

Table III: Typology of Syrian civil society actors in Lebanon, by official status

Type	Description	Organisation names
Registered NGO in Lebanon	The organisation has registered under the Lebanese 1909 Law on Associations as an official NGO. Organisations in this category may have an operational advantage vis-a-vis non-registered actors in that they face fewer risks of having their work hampered, and they are freer to collaborate with international NGOs, UN agencies. They can also apply for and receive foreign and local funding.	• Alphabet for Alternative Education • Basmeh wa Zeitooneh • Kayany Foundation • Nuon Organization for Peace-Building • Sawa for Development • Sonbola
Registered company in Lebanon	The organisation has not registered as an NGO under the Lebanese 1909 Law on Associations. However, it is operating legally in Lebanon due to its official status as a non-profit company.	• XXXXX
Registered NGO abroad	The organisation has not registered officially under the Lebanese 1909 Law on Associations. However, it is operating legally in Lebanon due to its official NGO status in another country, usually in Europe or North America.	• Jusoor • Watan
Registered company in Syria	The organisation has not registered officially under the Lebanese 1909 Law on Associations. Rather is registered as a company in Syria, rendering it a legal entity.	• Mobaderoon
Non-registered entity	The organisation has not registered officially under the Lebanese 1909 Law on Associations. As such, it is not operating as a legal NGO in Lebanon. For organisations in this category, it can prove difficult to collaborate with international NGOs, UN agencies, or to apply for foreign funding.	• Syrian Eyes • Yasmeen Suriya • Decostamine • Spark of March

The above classification suggests a certain link between the type of work conducted by an organisation and its official status. The majority of 'operational' organisations engaged in relief and service provision are registered as official NGOs in Lebanon or abroad (with the exception of Syrian Eyes and Yasmeen Suriya). Meanwhile, most of the 'advocacy-oriented' or 'hybrid' organisations have either opted for a status as a registered company, or have remained non-registered (except Nuon Organization).

Syrian civil society in Lebanon can also be classified in accordance with their *organisational structure*, focusing on the one hand on whether the entity operates through paid staff, volunteers, or both, and on the other hand as to whether it operates from an official office space with a clear team structure. See: Table IV.

Table IV: Typology of Syrian civil society actors in Lebanon, by organisational structure

	Official office space & clear team structure / closely knit team	Ad hoc office spaces & clear team structure / closely knit team	No physical office space & loose network of individuals operating separately or together
Paid staff only	• XXXXX		
Paid staff & volunteers	• Basmeh wa Zeitooneh • Kayany Foundation • Mobaderoon • Alphabet • Sawa for Development • Watan	• Jusoor • Sonbola	
Volunteers only	• Nuon Organization	• Syrian Eyes • Yasmeen Suriya	• Decostamine • Spark of March

The above classification suggests that while Syrian-led organisations strive for an official office space and clear team roles, several of them are lacking one or both. All organisations but one, (XXXXX), work through volunteers to sustain its work, while several also have a few paid staff members to coordinate activity.

A further classification is according to whether a clear political agenda or line underpins their work or mission. See: Table V.

Table V: Typology of Syrian civil society actors in Lebanon, by political position

Position	Description	Organisation names
Overtly political	A political position lies at the heart of the organisation's work, and informs its mission.	• XXXXX • Spark of March • Watan
Not overtly political	The organisation does not affiliate itself with any political camp. Individual team members' political opinions do not inform the mission of the organisation nor its partnerships.	• Alphabet for Alternative Education • Basmeh wa Zeitooneh • Decostamine • Jusoor • Kayany Foundation • Mobaderoon • Nuon Organization for Peace-Building • Sawa for Development • Sonbola • Syrian Eyes • Yasmine Syria

As demonstrated by the above-mentioned system of classification, the majority of organisations are hence approaching their work in a politically neutral way. Some may wish to avoid being constrained by the interests of a political group, and others may realise that being associated with a certain political agenda could hamper their work and sever their relationships with beneficiaries, funders and other partners. It is worth noting that the organisations that were earlier identified as 'advocacy-oriented' or 'hybrid' organisations are also classified as 'overtly political', with the only exception of one organisation (Nuon).

It is worth emphasising that through a classification of Syrian civil society actors in exile donors can better get to know this new phenomenon and gain an understanding of how funding could be made available to support the emergence of civil society actors during the ongoing crisis. The two-month field research activity presented in this paper is one of the first of its kind, and invites further elaboration and research by interested parties.

For the purposes of this paper, a number of questions arise from the overview of Syrian civil society in exile. In particular, what, if any, is the significance and added value of this phenomenon? Is there any point in trying to support exiled Syrian civil society through funding?

First of all, as regards the short and medium term significance of the Syrian civil society in exile, a number of research findings from the case study of Lebanon pointed to the idea of programming effectiveness through local ownership and well-tailored services. Addressing reconciliation between different socio-political, religious and geographical groups will be of crucial importance for the future of the country. Undoubtedly, best placed to address these issues are Syrians themselves, who have an in-depth understanding of the various structures of the Syrian society, its history and societal dynamics. This view is reflected by a scholar who observes that "wars destroy not only buildings and bodies but also trust, hope, identity, family and social ties."[42] Local civil society and community-based groups with knowledge of the backgrounds and cultural references of the people and groups having experienced the violence can help rebuild societies in ways which state actors and international agencies might not.[43] Another scholar adds that the role of civil society in building trust is particularly crucial in cases when groups of people have been socialised to view 'the other' as an opponent and 'enemy'.[44]

Several of the Syrian-led organisations in Lebanon are thus engaging in activities aimed at generating trust and cooperation across different sections of society in exile; over ethnic, religious and political divisions.[45] For instance, the organisation Mobaderoon, whose primary mission is to build trust, understanding and support peaceful coexistence between Syrians, brings together people from diverging ethnic, socioeconomic and geographical backgrounds. It aims to address, and bridge, longstanding prejudices and promote better understanding between groups through open communication channels. As an example, they have held workshops with people from the whole spectrum; ranging from Islamists to seculars, people from disadvantaged backgrounds to wealthy families, and so on. [46]

It is highly unlikely that an international NGO could manage to bring together the same spectrum of workshop participants and skilfully navigate the tensions and debates, not only due to language barriers but also cultural and procedural barriers. Conversely, Syrian organisations have a very strong commitment and operational flexibility, which makes them particularly well-placed to facilitate discussions and find solutions to problems before they escalate into conflict.

Several other Syrian-led organisations in Lebanon run similar workshops and community activities aimed at problem-solving, mediation and reconciliation. Nuon Organization, for instance, offers training sessions aimed at promoting tolerance among different Syrian constituencies, whilst also providing training for individuals to become strong civil society actors with the hope that they will later contribute to peace-building in future Syria: "We thought that the Syrians should work to unify their efforts to achieve civil peace as a preparation for more effective work in the next stage".[47] A representative from Nuon explained that Syrians consider themselves best placed to conduct such activities, given their in-depth knowledge of the Syrian social fabric and given that beneficiaries of the activities tend to trust them.[48]

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42 Pouligny (2005) 496.
43 Ibid.
44 See, for instance, Orjuela (2003) 197.
45 These organisations include Mobaderoon, Nuon Organization, and Decostamine.
46 Interview with Mohamed.
47 Interview with Salloum.
48 Interview with Salloum.

Other groups focus specifically on easing tensions between refugee communities and their Lebanese host communities. Decostamine, a group that takes its name from the Syrian decongestant drug with the same name, started carrying out its work as a response to increasing number of violent clashes between Syrians and Lebanese host communities in areas like Tripoli, Baalbeck and Akkar where the density of Syrians is high. While prejudice against Syrians is commonplace, Decostamine runs community activities to "show the human face of Syrians"[49] and to demonstrate that most Syrians do not wish to fight but rather live normal lives as doctors, architects, etc.[50]

Needless to say, while there is an important role for Lebanese organisations to play in this context, Syrian civil society organisations appear to be better placed than INGOs to take part in implementing efforts aimed at building such bridges, being able to bring on board Syrian groups and encourage them to engage with Lebanese host communities in a positive manner. Those Syrian groups contributing to eased tensions gain respect by both Lebanese and Syrian sides, and thus help build bridges between societies.[51]

As regards service provision and reconstruction work, there are no doubts that the UN agencies and international NGOs are playing a crucial role in Lebanon and other neighbouring countries. Meanwhile, the aforementioned field research in Lebanon indicated that the humanitarian work carried out by Syrian civil society groups had a clear added value in that their work comes with an added reconciliation element.[52] Syrian civil society groups providing humanitarian services tend to be led by educated middle classes from major Syrian cities, while their beneficiaries usually represent families from less privileged backgrounds having seen their home towns completely destroyed by the war,[53] which creates a reconciliation element between socio-economic and political groups. There is, moreover, an aspect of local ownership of reconciliation processes, which implies responsibility on the part of local actors. As one civil society activist suggests, "humanitarian relief provided by Syrians is the doorway for future reconciliation amongst the people themselves."[54]

Several interviewees perceived that Syrians working together as providers and beneficiaries of services help create and maintain peaceful relations across societal boundaries. A number of respondents reported that recipients of relief services often express their appreciation over the fact that the service providers were fellow Syrians, and some reported that the most vulnerable groups of refugees, in particular women, were more prone to open up and speak to civil society representatives if they knew they were Syrian.[55]

49 Interview with Yousef.
50 Interview with Yousef.
51 Examples include Decostamine, Mobaderoon, etc.
52 Welander (2016) 28-37.
53 Al-Jazeera (2014).
54 Massa Mufti, Director of Sonbola, quoted in Al-Jazeera (2014).
55 Interviews with Ibrahim, Talamas, Suqi, among others.

Due to their strong presence on the ground, even within the most fragile and dangerous contexts, Syrian-led civil society groups also appear to be particularly well-placed to monitor human rights violations in the camps and analyse early warning signs of conflict between and within refugee communities. While international NGOs and UN agencies are reported to require a long time to mobilise themselves and arrive on-site in the case of an emergency, the Syrian civil society has nearly constant presence through their camp coordinators and volunteers, and are hence able to react swiftly and draw attention to critical situations and play a role in addressing them before violence breaks out. Their flexible organisational structures moreover mean that they can mobilise an emergency response much quicker than the larger NGOs with complex bureaucratic procedures standing in the way of swift reaction.[56]

Many Syrian-led organisations, with their in-depth knowledge of Syrian social structures, are perhaps also best placed to fully understand the way each camp operates and can thus ensure that service provision is as effective as possible. Respondents explained that INGOs and the UN tend to do all their relief work through the head of the camp – the 'shaweesh' – who is often a corrupted leader that provides services only to the families he likes or who belong to his socio-political group. Needless to say, this creates significant tensions and discontent. Syrian-led organisations tend to circumvent the 'shaweesh' and deliver services and goods directly to each family, ensuring that no one is discriminated against, thereby reducing the risk of additional tensions or conflicts breaking out within or between camps.[57]

As one respondent phrased it: "Most of UNHCR aren't Syrian, not even Lebanese, so they don't know the people and what's happening [in the camps]. They just came from Europe or from the US and try to work here and this doesn't make sense when there are many Syrian-led organisations who can do the work".[58] Another interviewee said: "The big organisations don't always know the needs, or don't always respect the needs [of Syrians]."[59]

The provision of education for children in refugee settings is of undisputed importance, not least because disrupted schooling and a lack of safe spaces for children who have witnessed brutality and war can increase instability in society, and in some cases radicalisation. While the UN agencies, international NGOs and, in the case of Lebanon, the authorities are playing an absolutely crucial role in the provision of education, there seems to be added value brought about by Syrian-led projects. [60]

Indeed, despite enormous efforts of Lebanese authorities and the UNHCR and UNICEF led education working group[61], there are many barriers to the enrolment of Syrians into Lebanese schools, including lack of transportation between the camps and schools, the

56 Interview with Al-Sheikh *et al*.
57 Interviews with Ghanem; Al-Sheikh and Anonymous.
58 Interview with Salloum.
59 Interview with Ghanem.
60 Interview with Haidar; Interview with Ibrahim.
61 This working group aims to coordinate education efforts by civil society and monitor relevant policy updates. A number of Syrian civil society groups are members of this working group.

volatility of refugee families' situations, child labour, and gaps between Lebanese and Syrian curricula, including language barriers.[62] There is also a lack of social acceptance of Syrian children in schools, both by teachers and students. Jusoor's school director explains: "It is still strange for both sides. They don't feel that [the Syrian students] should be there."[63]

The interventions range from the provision of alternative education to children who are unable to attend Lebanese schools (Alphabet, Basmeh wa Zeitooneh, Sawa) to the preparation of children for the Lebanese curriculum (Jusoor) and homework support (Kayany Foundation; Jusoor). As such, the Syrian civil society groups which provide education in Lebanon are filling a number of concrete practical gaps, whilst potentially also contributing towards the countering of further violence and radicalisation of youth by focusing on inclusion, integration and self-empowerment.

Within schools, Syrian-led organisations do not merely provide the usual educational programmes, but also ensure the curricula is tailored to meet the very specific needs of Syrian children. The Nuon Organization, for instance, provides peace education to children and runs workshops about peace and tolerance. The organisation raises awareness about small and medium sized arms and works to prevent children from being sent to participate in the war. Several other organisations, including Alphabet and Kayany Foundation, also integrate specific elements of peace-building and mutual understanding into educational activities for children.

Many Syrian organisations in Lebanon, such as Syrian Eyes, also ensure to provide cultural education to children, in order to help preserve the Syrian cultural heritage and folklore. Through storytelling, music and games, the organisation gives refugee children a sense of security and peace whilst also learning about their country of origin.[64]

One Syrian teacher in Lebanon explains that she can really notice that the psychological state of the children is volatile due to the amount of violence experienced: "They have seen a lot of things they should not have seen...they are no longer kids."[65] Syrian teaching staff may therefore better placed as they have shared the experiences of the war with the children, and can address their difficulties and make sure the children feel a sense of belonging and find ways to deal with their frustrations.[66]

Along these lines, an interview with a European Commission representative based on the frontlines in one of Syria's neighbouring countries emphasised that Syrian organisations are indeed best placed in assessing the needs of exiled Syrians. They are for instance better able to relate to their mind-sets and have many times shared the trauma experienced by the beneficiaries, which helps increase the effectiveness of programme planning and delivery.[67]

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62 Interview with Jesri *et al*.
63 Interview with Salem.
64 Interview with Al-Sheikh et al.
65 Interview with Jusoor teaching staff 1.
66 Interview with Jusoor teaching staff 2.
67 Interview with Nagoda.

These perceptions are shared with scholars in the field who caution against the potentially harmful impact associated with using external resources in work aimed at rehabilitation and relief: "Excessive use of external resources can foster dependence and passivity. It can also become a new object of contention, inadvertently fueling the conflict." If these activities are instead carried out by local organisations, relief and rehabilitation can be done with a long-term perspective and promote sustained and comprehensive reconciliation.[68]

The view that local ownership is essential for successful programming is far from unique to the context of Syrian civil society in exile. This is something that has already been widely recognised by the development sector for a number of years, as part of global efforts to address challenges of poverty eradication and promote sustainable development.[69] In mid-2015 the president of the European Union Committee of Regions, Markku Markkula, noted that:

"The lack of local ownership is one of the major weaknesses of the Millennium Development Goals. Based on its rich experience in regional policy, the EU should be on the front line in supporting local and regional authorities' participation to development and promoting the subnational dimension in the future international framework for development. A financial bonus could be granted to partner countries that consider regional and local development policies within their national development strategy".[70]

It is not only within the international development sector that the importance of local ownership is highlighted. When discussing human rights and the development of democratic governance models it is widely recognised that local ownership of the processes are key to success. The European Commission stresses the importance of ensuring "local ownership of governance reform processes" by ensuring dialogue with all relevant stakeholders including civil society.[71]

Drawing on examples from the Balkans and Afghanistan, another observer argues that donor agendas and the failure to work through local civil society can cause the sudden appearance of programmes that are "completely disconnected from the core issues faced by the [people] of those regions and even more from their cultural references."[72]

What this suggests then, is that Syrian civil society in exile is of importance in that it can increase programming effectiveness through local ownership and well-tailored services, ensuring that such efforts address Syrians' concerns and contribute to strengthen social ties in the short and medium term. Therefore, rather than viewing Syrian staff as low-cost manpower available to large NGOs and UN agencies whenever they are needed, or as actors who have the potential to learn from international colleagues and imitate their organisational structures, Syrian actors should be recognised as capable strategic partners who are deeply rooted in the complex political, social and cultural dynamics

68 Aall (1996).
69 Committee of the Regions (2015).
70 Committee of the Regions (2015).
71 EuropeAid (2015).
72 Pouligny (2005) 499.

of the Syrian war. It must indeed be acknowledged that is the Syrians themselves who best understand the dynamics of their own situation and who can identify ways to resolve conflicts and rebuild their country. By overlooking existing local knowledge and resources, international actors risk missing a unique opportunity to contribute positively to peace-building and reconciliation efforts.

In addition to the short and medium term benefits of the Syrian civil society as discussed above, there is another side of the coin which equally ought to be taken into consideration. Syrian civil society organisations operating in exile are not only useful in programming and short term containment of tensions and conflict, they could also have the potential of forming the fundaments of a Syrian civil society in the longer term; a phenomenon that had long been thwarted during Assad's regime, but which will be required for a democratic development in post-war Syria.

Indeed, it could be argued that the formation and preservation of a Syrian civil society is important for a number of reasons. First of all, it is widely recognised that civil society can play an important role in building and consolidating democracy and 'good governance' after conflict, complementing other parts of the democratic programme.

It is widely recognised that civil society actors play a crucial role in democratic transitions at the local level, in that they can hold local authorities accountable, push it to fulfil its responsibilities and to ensure the rule of law is implemented.[73] Civil society can also act as a mechanism for political mobilisation and participation of the wider population, and can help in disseminating democratic ideas and norms.[74]

In a similar vein, the Development Assistant Committee of the OECD notes in its guidelines on conflict, peace and development co-operation that international donors can effectively support peace-building efforts by "identifying and supporting key actors and mechanisms dedicated to peace and reconciliation at the community level."[75]

As regards the fulfilment of human rights, one scholar emphasises the crucial role played by civil society in ensuring that human rights become meaningful in local social settings:

"Intermediaries such as community leaders, nongovernmental organization participants, and social movement activists play a critical role in translating ideas from the global arena down and from local arenas up. These are people who understand both the worlds of transnational human rights and local cultural practices and who can look both ways. They are powerful in that they serve as knowledge brokers between culturally distinct social worlds."[76]

73 See, for instance, Pouligny 496 and Diamond (1997) as quoted in Makumbe 305.
74 See, for instance, Bunbongkarn 141.
75 Development Assistance Committee (1997) 48.
76 Engle M. (2006) 38.

Based on these premises – that civil society is a crucial component in peace and democracy building as well as in ensuring the respect for human rights – international actors have for some time tended to encourage the formation of a civil society body in the aftermath of war and conflict, mainly by pouring in funds and encouraging the creation of new NGOs shaped through a 'Western mould', carrying out activities that donors deem important.

One example of this was the civil society construction and peace-building efforts in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the 1990s. While international efforts there managed to create more than 400 new NGOs in the post-war transition period, mainly due to a huge funding input, Bosnian citizens tended to perceive Western civil society building programmes as "bizarre and alien efforts that do not take into account Bosnian history and society."[77]

The international civil servants working on the programmes aimed at setting up the new Bosnian NGOs were often ill-equipped to grasp the dynamics of social, political and cultural contexts. Eventually, this meant that the well-funded NGOs which suddenly appeared in society were not necessarily able to bring about real change as they were not always driven by concern for the people.[78] As such, the whole process was largely perceived as an externally driven process, and Belloni notes that "the mushrooming of local NGOs does not lead per se to the establishment of a healthy civil society."[79]

It seems fair to suggest that such attempts have proven ineffective if not futile, as they may have done little more than creating 'empty boxes' rather than allowing for the organic growth of meaningful civil society entities that are well aware of the underlying social and political life in a certain context.[80] Therefore, in the case of Syrian civil society, international efforts aimed at building an entirely new civil society in the post-conflict period would not be a commendable endeavour. Instead, international actors such as the European Union may wish to consider supporting the Syrian civil society emerging organically in exile, in anticipation of an end to the armed conflict in Syria.

The hypothesis that Syrian civil society in exile may play a longer term role beyond their current activities has resonated throughout the conduct of the aforementioned field research. Through a number of interviews with Syrian civil society in Lebanon, it transpired that many of these actors indeed envisaged a role for themselves in rebuilding a future Syria.

XXXXX, for instance, is one of the most long-standing Syrian civil society organisations founded already in 2001[81] which sees a clear role for itself in the post-war Syria. XXXXX relocated to Lebanon towards the end of 2011 when the revolution escalated into armed conflict. In exile, the organisation immediately started to work on capacity building for effective democratic leadership. It works to strengthen the role of civil society in the current war and to empower local leaders to cope with challenges of transition and

77 Belloni (2001) 169.
78 Belloni (2001) 170.
79 Belloni (2001) 178.
80 Pouligny (2005) 505.
81 XXXXX started its work in Syria in 2001, with a focus on political liberalisation and human rights. It worked in whichever areas it was possible to do so, for instance in women's rights or environment, with the underlying objective of promoting political liberalisation and human rights.

peace-building in the future Syria. The organisation works through a network within Syria and in neighbouring countries, and aims at creating a network of trust and a stronger civil society, which can be brought back to Syria after the war has ended.[82]

Meanwhile, by providing alternative media and information sources, some Syrian civil society organisations in exile aim to support the freedom of access to information and to encourage genuine debate over the future of Syria.[83] As an example, 'Spark of March' has since the start of the revolution been producing newspapers, documentary movies and TV reports, documenting human rights violations and the deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Syria and in refugee communities. Their aim is to raise awareness of the actual situation which might not be seen through official media, and to send a message that "this should never happen again", thus promoting popular resistance to war and conflict. The most recent work of Spark of March focuses largely on demonstrating examples of judicial and democratic institutions set up by the Syrian opposition in cities within Syria, so as to provide examples of what democratic governance in Syria could look like in the future.[84] The organisation sees a clear role for itself in the future Syria as part of a flourishing civil society.

Similar sentiments were expressed by Syrian civil society at a conference organised by the American University in Cairo in 2015. One participant emphasised the importance of the ongoing work of Syrian civil society at the grassroots level, and explained how it works towards a new civic pact amongst Syrians in anticipation of peace.[85]

However, without funding Syrian organisations express a general concern that they may have to discontinue their activities. No matter how strong the dedication of an organisation's management, they may one day be forced to look consider establishing a for-profit business or seek a paid job elsewhere if they are no longer able to receive even the most modest of salaries from their organisation.[86] Indeed, if they are to sustain their current work and develop as strong civil society actors that can play a role in peace-building and reconciliation in Syria, they will require support from the international community.

As such, nurturing the continued existence and development of Syrian social fabric ought to be an important investment for the international community in anticipation of post-war Syria. During this time the emergence of a democratic society could be aided by the existence of a strong and diverse civil society, as also suggested by one of the European Commission's interviewees working closely with this type of group in the region.[87] This view was also emphasised by Salma Kahale, Executive Director of a Syrian civil society organisation, during a European Parliament hearing on 21-24 April 2015. She explained that much of Syrian civil society has been left alone morally, politically and financially, insisting that: "Syrians must be considered partners and agents – and not only seen as victims or jihadists."[88]

82 Interview with Anonymous.
83 Interview with Darwich.
84 Interview with Darwich.
85 European Foundation Centre (2015).
86 Interview with Talamas; see also Fadi Hallisso, quoted in Open Democracy (2014).
87 Interview with Nagoda.
88 European Endowment for Democracy (2015).

In short, the aforementioned field research in Lebanon suggests that Syrian civil society organisations have the potential of contributing towards the preservation of a microcosm of Syrian society, in that it constitutes a much needed Syrian social fabric and the fundaments of civil society. In this sense, the Syrian civil society may hence bring about a number of short and medium term benefits relating to programme effectiveness deriving from local ownership of interventions. Based on this, if the European Union is to support conflict-ridden countries such as Syria, it appears to make sense to consider Syrian civil society organisations in exile as a prime point of reference. Not only does Syrian civil society have the potential to preserve the Syrian social fabric, but it could also constitute the basis for society once the conflict is over. Indeed, the European Union appears well placed to support the Syrian civil society in exile through funding, not least given the large amounts it has channelled into the crisis over the past few years, and with recently renewed commitments to boost its efforts.

In particular, the European Union, as part of its wide-ranging efforts to foster human rights and democracy through its external policies, and with a number of flexible funding instruments at its disposal, appears well placed to seize the opportunity of supporting the Syrian civil society in exile.

3. The Absence of EU Funding for the Syrian Civil Society in Exile

As a leading donor to the refugee crisis globally, the European Union has made available over 4 billion euros to-date. So what has been its support to the Syrian civil society in exile? Following the suspension of all cooperation with the Syrian government in 2011 (i.e., the bilateral cooperation under MEDA and ENPI; the regional cooperation; EIB loans and technical assistance[89]), the European Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood at the time, Štefan Füle, declared in July 2012 that the EU was to remain "deeply committed to delivering aid in support of the Syrian people, refugees, students, human rights defenders and civil society". At the time, Füle specifically singled out the contribution of the EIDHR as a key financial instrument that could meet this aim, which at that time was supporting different actions by Syrian civil society for approximately €4.5 million. On a separate occasion, Füle described the EIDHR as "a specialised component to [the EU's] crisis management toolbox."[90]

As previously discussed, the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) would be the best placed instrument to support Syrian civil society in exile due to its flexible architecture and processes., The European Union, through the EIDHR, has indeed been able to fund Syrian civil society within Syria for a number of years, with a particular focus on internet freedom, bloggers, journalists and individual human rights defenders.[91] In theory, all that is needed for a grant to be made is "one person and one bank account," which means that an organisation does not necessarily need to be legally registered to be considered for funding.[92] In contrast with most funding instruments, the

89 EU Neighbourhood Info Centre (2012).
90 EuropeAid (2011) 1.
91 EuropeAid (2001) 15.
92 Interview with Lafourcade.

EIDHR does not require approval of the host government and, in cases where funding would put an organisation or defender at risk vis-à-vis the government, or if it would be unable to handle the fund due to its size, the funds could be channelled through a host institution, whilst at other times large sums of money would be transferred over country-borders in suitcases.[93]

However, surprisingly, there are no available statistics or anecdotal information indicating that EIDHR funding has reached the Syrian civil society in exile until the time of writing this contribution. In an attempt to understand the reasons for this, a number of interviews were conducted with representatives of the European Commission in Brussels and in countries neighbouring Syria.

During the series of interviews, more questions rather than answers emerged. EC representatives themselves raised questions such as: "Why should everyone do everything everywhere?"[94] and "why should the EIDHR provide funds towards the refugee crisis when there are other instruments that do this?".[95] From this perspective there appears to be reluctance towards exploring the potential of funding Syrian-led civil society groups, because there are more straight-forward options for responding to the Syrian crisis; for instance, by funding European and international NGOs and development agencies, and by continuing the deployment of funding tools the way they have always been used. Therefore, it appears as though Syrian civil society operating in exile is almost entirely disconnected from the EU's funding opportunities, with very few examples of funds reaching Syrian actors inside the country and no known examples of *exiled* Syrian civil society accessing such support. This of course raises the question of whether the apparent disconnect between EU's funding mechanisms, and in particular the EIDHR, and exiled Syrian civil society is a sensible and thought through approach, or whether we are in fact faced with a missed opportunity yet to be explored.

As previously discussed, the EIDHR would technically allow the European Union to fund and support the Syrian civil society in exile. Yet, to-date there have been few[96] known instances of such funding disbursement, which of course raises the question of why there is a disconnection between the EIDHR and the Syrian civil society in exile. What could be the reasons for this?

As with all civil society funding streams, there are undoubtedly a number of risks involved in the case concerned. First of all, the usual risk of fraud might be perceived as heightened in the context of Syrian-led civil society groups, given that they have seldom had an opportunity to register as legal entities[97] and are therefore unlikely to be

93 Interview with Anonymous.

94 Interview with Lenormande, et al. A very different answer was given by a European Commission representative working with civil society in one of the countries bordering Syria, which suggested that this has indeed occurred on various occasions.

95 Interview with Gharbaoui.

96 The EIDHR Country-Based Support Scheme (CBSS) allocations 2007-2013 included a certain % of allocations to Syrian civil society actors, <http://www.enpi-info.eu/files/publications/Delivering%20on%20the%20Arab%20Spring.pdf> accessed 20 August 2015. An anonymous EU Commission representative moreover mentioned instances of funding to Syrian actors via cash transfers, during a confidential interview in Brussels in 2015.

97 Interview with Talamas.

scrutinised by any governmental body. Without a solid accountability and monitoring mechanism, it is difficult for the European Union to fund such groups. A number of interviewees[98] confirmed that the lack of EU staff capacity means that it would be difficult to monitor and assess small Syrian organisations, which is why they tend to fund larger, well-known organisation where the risk of fund mismanagement is relatively low. Given the European Union's accountability vis-à-vis EU citizens, great caution needs to be taken.

Apart from the risk of fraud, other forms of fund mismanagement can be a potential outcome when an organisation has low capacity and little experience with funds management. Moreover, smaller organisations tend to have difficulties in absorbing the size of funds which the EIDHR disburses. The interviewed EU representatives confirmed that the lack of capacity on the EU side means that they would currently be unable to disburse smaller funds as this would strain the contracts management capacity of EU staff.[99] It is, therefore, not practically feasible with the current architecture of the EIDHR to engage directly with smaller types of organisations such as those composing the Syrian civil society in exile.[100]

Another critical risk for the European Union would be to see its financial support backfiring if it were to lead to an increase in further conflicts between groups, rather than reconciliation. One of the interviewed EU representatives cited the potential aggravation of the civil war as a key concern.[101] Given that civil society organisations may be organised along political, ethnic, or religious lines, there are concerns about what the strengthening of one group and not the other could entail. Similarly, there is the potential risk of increasing tensions between NGOs pre-existing in the host country and Syrian-led civil society organisations, by funding one and not the other, or forcing them to 'compete' for the same funds.

Another potential concern is that funding might 'fall into the wrong hands', i.e. radical groups including but not limited to ISIL/Da'esh. Such fears might be based on actual misplacement of funds in the current context,[102] as well as past examples of funding leading to the unintentional strengthening of the Polisario group operating within the refugee camps near the Saharawi border in Algeria, and the politicisation among Polish refugees in Austria in the 1980s.

Overall, because the European Commission is accountable to the public regarding its spending, it is fully understandable that the EU would need to ensure that its funding is accompanied by an adequate monitoring mechanism for funding disbursed to Syrian civil society groups in exile; something which is not currently in place. One interviewee therefore noted that funding a Syrian group is "a logistical nightmare."[103]

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98 Interview with Gharbaoui; Interview with Lafourcade.
99 Interview with Gharbaoui; Interview with Lafourcade; Interview with Anonymous.
100 Interview with Lafourcade.
101 Interview with Lenormande.
102 One such instance was mentioned by an anonymous EU representative during an interview.
103 Interview with Lenormande.

In addition to the aforementioned and well-founded reservations, the research study found that EU representatives did not necessarily have an in-depth understanding or awareness of the new phenomenon constituted by Syrian civil society, and the significance thereof.[104] Those who were aware of the existence of such groups in the first place, tended to view them as small and insignificant actors in comparison with larger European and international NGOs.[105] In other words, the added value of Syrian civil society was not generally understood by EU representatives, with a few exceptions.[106]

In short, the risks associated with funding a civil society in exile – combined with a lack of in-depth understanding of the phenomenon itself – could undoubtedly qualify as some of the reasons why the flexibility of the EIDHR has not been fully utilised to-date. Should the EU wish to proceed to supporting a civil society in exile, it would need to both increase its understanding of the phenomenon, and importantly, address the aforementioned considerations carefully in order to review its current funding procedures to ensure they are appropriate in the face of the exiled civil society concerned.

4. Scope for Evolving Practice: Making a New Funding Relationship Work

If the European Union were to consider providing financial support for Syrian civil society in exile, the most obvious way to play this role appears to be through the EIDHR. The flexibility which lies at the heart of this instrument means that it could technically be used to channel funds to civil society projects and programmes operating in exile. However, a number of issues would need to be carefully addressed.

Firstly, in order to address the fear of funding falling into the wrong hands, the EU would need to review its monitoring mechanisms to ensure they are able to deal with this new type of entity. For instance, EU Delegations could play a role by connecting with exiled organisations and by ensuring field-visits and regular meetings. On a practical level, it appears as though the EU does not currently have the capacity or structures in place to fully familiarise itself with the civil society landscape, in particular not with smaller groups such as those composing the Syrian civil society in exile, which would require field visits and tailored monitoring mechanisms not required for larger organisations.

During some conversations with the EU Delegation to Lebanon, it became clear that this delegation would not currently be open to address funding for Syrian civil society groups in Lebanon. This would be under the responsibility of the EU Delegation to Syria, which is currently based in Brussels.[107] Needless to say, it would be difficult for a remotely based Delegation to fund groups without presence on the ground. If EU Delegations do not have a mandate to work with civil society groups that are not registered in the country of deployment, it is of course very difficult to see how they could support a civil society

104 Interview with EEAS in Beirut reflected limited knowledge of the Syrian civil society actors in Lebanon.
105 Interview with Lenormande reflected the usual pragmatic response of 'why local organisations when there are INGO in the field.'.
106 Lafourcade and Nagoda were familiar with – and appeared appreciative of – Syrian civil society in Syria and Turkey respectively. The EEAS delegation to Syria (currently based in Brussels) was unavailable for interviews.
107 Interview with Gharbaoui.

in exile on their territory. This ought to be reviewed, and the capacity of delegations' staff should be built, in order to ensure their awareness of their responsibility to support not only local and international civil societies, but also a civil society in exile. Increased understanding of the phenomenon would most likely eliminate the risk of funds falling in the hands of ISIL/Da'esh; a fear which appears to be rather unfounded in many cases.

One well-founded risk is related to the potential mismanagement of funds. A viable option in such cases could be to channel larger funds through a larger international organisation which would work closely with Syrian organisations, disbursing smaller funds to them in accordance with their capacity. The EIDHR could encourage large international NGOs to work with Syrian-led organisations by setting aside parts of the funding for precisely such partnerships, which would force INGOs to set aside any sense of competition and work in close collaborations with Syrians in the design and implementation of their programmes.

One interviewed representative at an EU delegation in the region explained that this is in fact already happening, which suggests that such practices could be replicated by other delegations too.

Along these lines, one Syrian-led organisation interviewed during the research period similarly recommended that larger grants could be given to some of the larger-sized registered Syrian organisations in exile, who could then act as an umbrella organisation supporting smaller and non-registered groups.[108] This would not only increase the capacity of smaller organisations through transfer of funds, knowledge and peer-learning, it would also create increased collaboration and a sense of a cohesive Syrian civil society in exile. According to some respondents, this is already happening in a number of cases.[109]

Another potential option for the EIDHR would be to take a chance on a non-registered entity, subject to a positive relationship between the EU Delegation and the organisation in question. One of the interviewed organisations in Lebanon shared a funding success story in this vein. Despite not being registered legally at the time, a bilateral aid donor took a chance and allocated a relatively large sum of money to the organisation, allowing it to develop its structures and services significantly. The director of said organisation urges donors to do the same for other small Syrian-led organisations in exile: "There are many young groups here in Lebanon who are fighting for a cause. They have the will to make a difference and they want to work, but no one wants to support them. It's not logical!"[110]

One of the largest international NGOs focusing on poverty alleviation similarly explained how they had worked closely with a non-registered Syrian civil society organisation on a number of occasions, providing funding for small project activities. This was based on a good relationship rather than a contractual basis.[111]

108 Open Democracy (2014).

109 For instance, Basmeh wa Zeitooneh and Watan channel funds to small Syrian-led organisations. Similar funding umbrellas were also mentioned in the interview with Nuon Organization but without specifying names.

110 Interview with management level staff, wishing to remain anonymous for privacy reasons.

111 Interview with Anonymous INGO personnel.

Another identified risk is the fear of aggravating conflicts or increasing tensions through funding. However, a good understanding of the exiled civil society landscape and local context could once again ensure that EU funding would not fuel further conflicts between groups. The field research on the case study of Lebanon suggests that there is ample collaboration between organisations, rather than conflict. Indeed, several interviewees reported that they work in partnership with one or more Syrian civil society organisations. By joining forces, they reported that they can complement each other's work and draw on each other's strengths. While some of these partnerships seemed fairly permanent, others appeared to be more of an *ad hoc* nature, with organisations coming together to support one another in case of emergencies, such as storms and fires. One respondent mentioned that a Syrian civil society network called the 'Syria Peace Network' has been created by Syrian-led organisations.[112] One representative emphasised the importance of collaboration between Syrian organisations through the following sentence: "[My organisation] is part of the growing Syrian civil society, which can only grow and become a force through cooperation, partnership and shared knowledge."[113]

Should the EU indeed wish to develop its ability to fund a civil society in exile, there are a number of additional recommendations which emerged from the field research on the case study of Lebanon. First of all, it is recommended that EU Delegations do more to inform a wider range of civil society actors about available funding opportunities, not least Syrian-led organisations, in order to widen the circles of applicants and thus move away from continuously funding the more 'usual suspects', such as larger NGOs. A civil society survey carried out in Beirut in May 2015 showed that most small organisations are wholly unaware of the existence of the EIDHR and similar funding opportunities.

Secondly, the EIDHR funding architects may wish to either consider shortening the application process and reducing the amount of required paperwork significantly, or do as one researcher suggests, namely "shift their focus from 'short-term project thinking' to longer-term 'process thinking'"[114]. This would give increased flexibility to grantees to use their funds as appropriate in accordance with the situation on the ground.

During the interviews several Syrian-led actors mentioned that, due to the extremely fluid situation in which they are working as it is subject to constant change, the existing funding schemes are inappropriate for them. The time span between applying for funding and receiving a grant is often so long that when the money eventually arrives the context on the ground may have changed so much that the project is no longer very relevant. During a civil society survey conducted with small NGOs in Lebanon in May 2015,[115] 65% of respondents found international funding requirements too complex, and therefore recommended that the EU revises its funding application processes, introduces shorter funding cycles and makes available a number of small grants with the view of making it

112 Interview with Bokern.

113 Massa Mufto of Sonbola, quoted in Al-Jazeera (2014).

114 Barnes (2006) 93.

115 A paper-based survey for small-sized civil society organisations was carried out by the author to draw out lessons about the most impeding barriers to funding among organisations of similar type and size as the Syrian organisations featured in this paper. Twenty organisations from Lebanon and other MENA countries participated in the survey at the University St Joseph, in Beirut, Lebanon, in May 2015.

less complex and with fewer documentation requirements. Alternatively, the aforementioned option of channelling funds through a larger INGO or an UN agency could equally be a viable option to circumvent the challenges relating to complex application processes and inappropriate funding cycles and grant sizes.

Thirdly, experts tend to recommend that donor-grantee relationships are also made less asymmetric and less intrusive into internal governance issues. It is recommended that donor requirements are adapted to each local context, as too much paperwork often diverts too much time and energy away from the real work on the ground, and also in fact can be perceived as a double-standard: "We tend to ask for more accountability and better governance on the part of our interlocutors, while the 'international community' keeps making arbitrary decisions regarding local situations and changing what local people have decided."[116] Along these lines, one respondent in Akkar advised international supporters such as the European Union to "give the organisations in the field the freedom to achieve the broader goals",[117] referring to the often too strict indicators and benchmarks imposed by funders.

Furthermore, in order for EIDHR funding to be as effective as possible in strengthening the Syrian civil society, it might be worth considering to provide core-funding grants to help all Syrian organisations in exile build a strong administrative and operational structure.[118] This would boost civil society actors' knowledge, skills and professionalism and help strengthen the institutional capacities of the organisations concerned.[119] Without such support, they are unlikely to develop as civil actors and will continue to conduct their work "in survival mode" – on an *ad hoc* and purely reactive basis, rather than working more strategically with a longer term vision. For instance, throughout the research period, it was seen that most Syrian groups in exile are operating without an office space. Through core-funding, namely unrestricted funding aimed to support the development of an organisation's internal structures, processes and systems, and similar forms of invaluable support, international actors could help ensure that relevant organisations have a stable and safe hub to work from.

Lastly, the aforementioned survey conducted for small civil society organisations in Lebanon regarding the EIDHR recommended that EIDHR documentation and instructions ought to be made available in Arabic as there is often a language barrier hindering organisations from applying for funding.

116 Pouligny (2005) 504.
117 Interview with Bokern.
118 Open Democracy (2014).
119 Barnes (2006) 93.

5. Concluding Remarks

The extensive field research undertaken in Lebanon highlighted a previously under-investigated emerging phenomenon: Syrian civil society that had not previously been researched or tracked in a systematic manner. The same phenomenon exists in a number of neighbouring countries as well as within the EU itself. The findings and patterns from the Lebanese case study are therefore likely to be directly applicable in other contexts.

The research study in Lebanon found that Syrian-led civil society organisations and associations are likely to have potential to both contribute towards better tailored service provision and programming in the short and medium terms, whilst also constituting the foundations of Syrian civil society in the longer term; a phenomenon that had long been thwarted during Assad's regime, but which will be required for a democratic development of post-war Syria.

Indeed, the work carried out by the Syrian civil society in the case study of Lebanon appeared through field research to go beyond mere short-term provision of food, medicine and blankets. The activities of Syrian civil society groups have the potential of building trust, peace and strong relations between people from different parts of society, thus helping re-build the fundaments of civil society in anticipation of ceasefire and a political solution to the conflict.

It is therefore recommended that the European Union – a top donor in response to the Syrian crisis – starts exploring ways to tap into the potential of the Syrian civil society, in order to seize a two-fold opportunity available. The paper identifies a number of key challenges – risks as well as operational and capacity-related barriers – with which the EU is faced in this context.

As such, the question of whether the European Union would like to do more to support the Syrian civil society in exile remains to be considered by the European Commission and the Member States. In this light, it may be useful for the European Commission to develop a clear position paper on the support to civil society initiatives operating in exile generally, and in the Syrian context specifically.

Indeed, the EU ought to determine whether the non-funding of the exiled civil society in the Syrian context is a necessary and consciously chosen approach, or whether it might be a missed opportunity with great potential, ready to be seized. As one expert highlights, although investment in the Syrian civil society carries certain risks, "so does inaction, particularly as both refugee and host communities become increasingly restless."[120]

120 Dahi (2014).

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04. Working Papers Global Campus Working Papers

2017

The absence of EU funding for Syrian civil society groups in exile: A missed opportunity or a sensible approach?

Welander, Marta

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