



# Legal assistance 2015

Facts and challenges

Under the Patronage of H.E. Me George Jreij  
President of Beirut Bar Association

with the support of Open Society Foundations



# CLDH Legal Assistance Program

Since the beginning of 2015 (6 months):

- 5 lawyers involved
- Working in Beirut, South, North and Bekaa
- Number of cases assisted:

85 at the center (legal consultations)

165 in the prisons

# CLDH Legal Counseling at the Center

Provides legal advice and support to any vulnerable person without any discrimination based on gender, nationality, political affiliation...

Main populations currently assisted:

- Refugees from Syria
- Migrant domestic workers

Other cases of refugees from Iraq, Sudan... or victims of torture from various origins also benefit of legal consultations at CLDH

In 2015, the legal consultations at the center have been supported so far by:

- Working together for Human rights
- Euro Mediterranean Foundation to support Human Rights Defenders
- The Netherlands embassy in Beirut
- UNVFVT
- DANIDA

CLDH cover the legal costs of beneficiaries every time possible (renewal of residency, exit fees, copies...)

# Refugees from Syria assisted at the legal consultations

**85 persons** (73 men and 12 women)

Specific vulnerabilities of refugees from Syria



## Achievements:

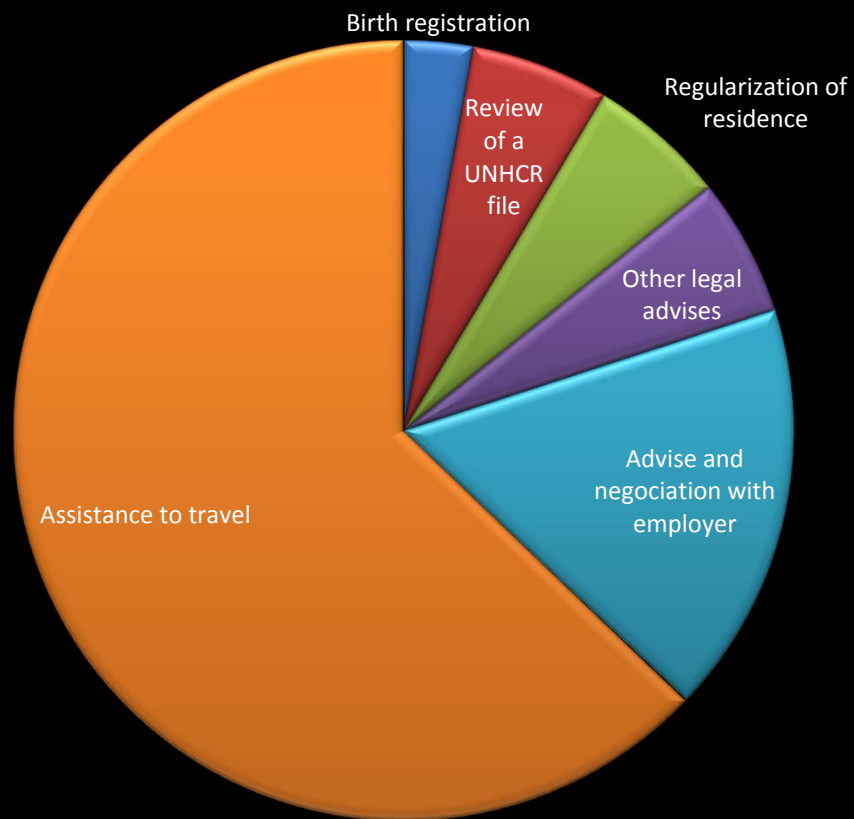
- 17 of them were resettled in safe third countries
- All were counseled and assisted regarding residency and work issues (fees coverage)

# Migrant domestic workers assisted at the legal consultations

**37 persons** (2 men and and 35 women)

From Cameroon, Ethiopia, Kenya, Philippines,  
Madagascar, Mali, Sri Lanka...

## Assistance to MDW



# CLDH work in the prisons

The legal assistance program in the prisons aims at providing an effective legal assistance to the most vulnerable inmates.

CLDH isn't able to assist all the persons requesting its assistance in the prisons and is prioritizing the people who can be released immediately or at immediate risk of unfair trial (appeal that needs to be done for example).

In 2015, the legal assistance program in the prisons has been supported by:

- Open Society Foundations
- The Netherlands embassy in Beirut
- The Euro Mediterranean Foundation to support Human Rights Defenders
- UNVFVT
- DANIDA

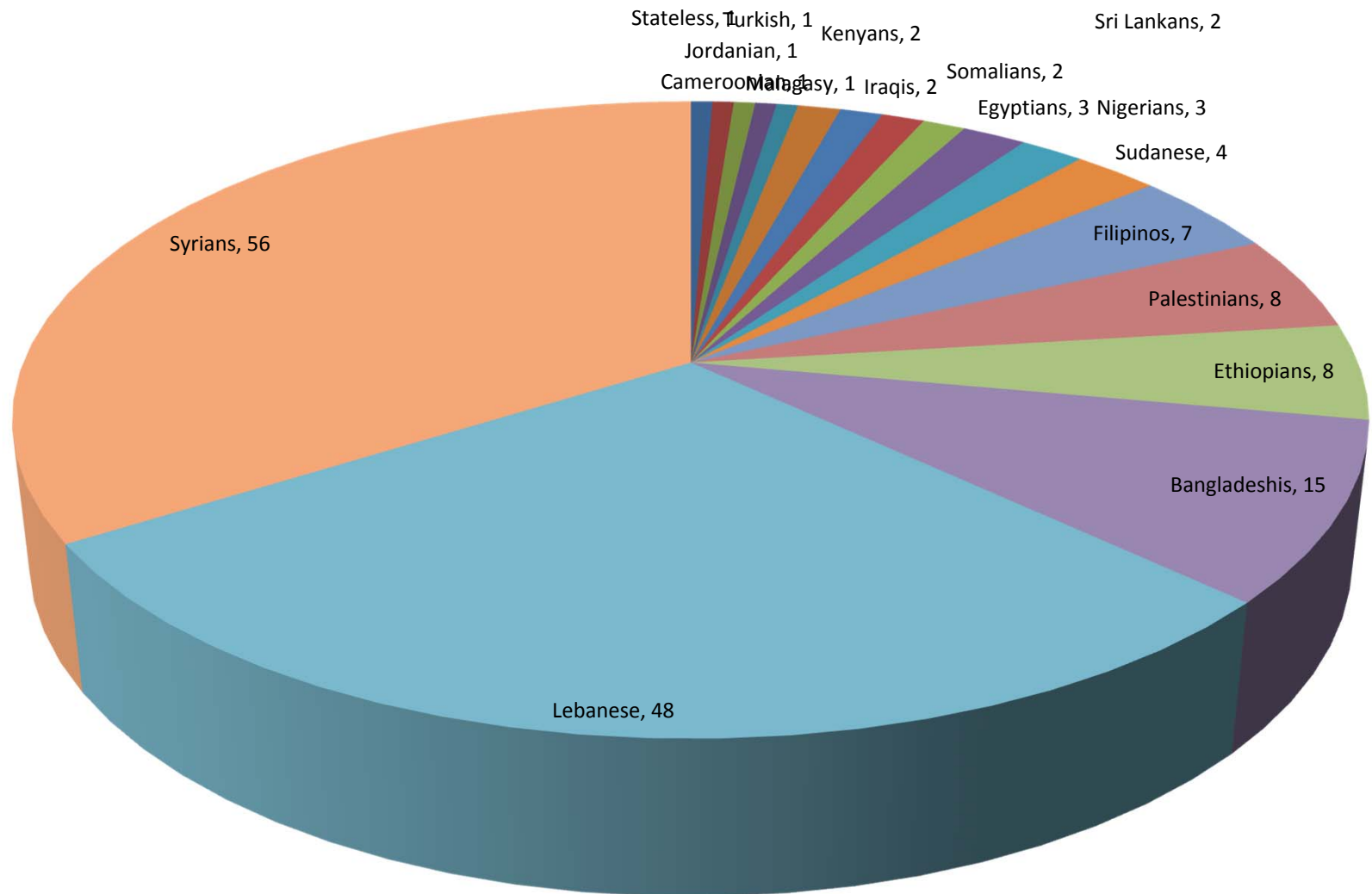
CLDH cover the legal costs of beneficiaries every time possible (bail, judiciary fees, copies...)

# In the prisons

165 vulnerable inmates assisted in the prisons  
(102 men, 63 women) since the beginning of  
2015

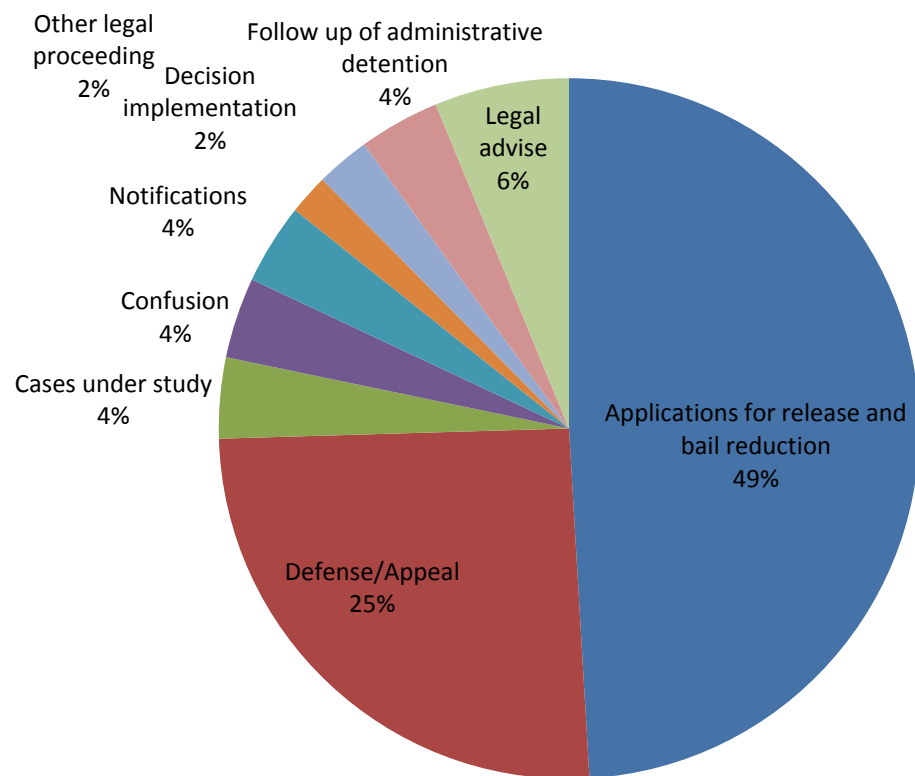


# Nationalities of inmates



# Lawyers interventions in prisons

## Interventions conducted



# Results of assistance in prisons

- 57 persons released since the beginning of 2015
- 6 of them were declared innocent of charges of murder, drugs, kidnapping, money forgery...
- Several are still assisted in their trial's sessions after their release

# Main challenges of the Legal assistance in the prisons

## 1. TORTURE

- Law implementation: violations of art 47, pave the way to disappearance and torture
- Continuous summons of LGBTs for the sole fact of being LGBTs, and anal tests
- Torture continues systematically in investigation places
- Women and men are tortured during investigation(60%)
- Women are particularly vulnerable to sexual abuse
- Judges continue to cover up torture
- Detention conditions in GSO are a tantamount of torture
- Forcible deportation of refugees to their country of origin based on “voluntary return” signed under psychological torture
- Human rights defenders sued for denouncing torture

# Main challenges in prisons

## 2. DELAYS IN TRIAL

- Excessive delays in investigation, especially in Baabda court
- Indictment division keeping the cases in drawer for several years
- Persons tried in absentia while they are detained
- Delays in trials because of non notifications of witnesses or co defendants
- Delays in trials because no transportation from prison to court
- Delays in trial because of the judge's absence or any other reason
- Delays in trial because no translator

# Main challenges in prisons

## 3. DELAYS IN RELEASE

- Delays in release because the “khoulassa” did not reach the prison
- Delays in release because GSO does not hand over the detainees
- Excessive detention duration at GSO

# Main challenges in prisons

## 4. RIGHT TO A LAWYER

- Detainees claim that they don't know that they have the right to have a lawyer free of charge
- Detainees complain that their lawyer take money but doesn't defend them/doesn't attend the sessions
- Detainees complain that the lawyer attends the session without having read/copied the file