

Refugees = Partners Media Round Table

اللاجئون شركاء
REFUGEES = PARTNERS
في الإنسانية، في المسؤولية

Bridging the Data Gap between Media & Research: Challenges and Responses

Beirut, Lebanon, February 2020

Press Release

In the presence of a number of researchers and media professionals “Refugees=Partners” organized a media roundtable discussion titled “Bridging the Data Gap between Media and Research: Challenges and Responses”, on Thursday, 6 February 2020, at Gefinor Rotana Hotel, Beirut.

The roundtable aimed to discuss the availability of quantitative and qualitative data regarding the socio-economic indicators of refugees in Lebanon and access to credible and up-to-date evidence-based information. The sparsity and diversity of data sources have become a challenge, both to the media and academic fields

Roundtable discussion 1: a number of academics and specialist researchers discussed how mainstream media has vilified refugees by using problematic data that is often false, and not backed up by real facts, as well as local and international discourse and trends that escalate anti-refugee sentiments. Also, the limitations of social media as a medium to disseminate information were included in the scope of the discussion. The attendees also focused on the importance of creating a counter-discourse to the prevailing narrative on the rights of Syrian refugees by collecting evidence-based information about the positive social and economic contributions of refugees and migrants.

During Roundtable 2, attendees analyzed the importance of responding to these challenges by focusing on community leaders, mainstream media and social media in promoting social cohesion and eliminating tensions between host communities and refugees. The discussion also expanded on the benefits of using fact-based research in media and to approach audiences of various backgrounds, and to counter the narrative surrounding refugees, and discourse focused on xenophobia.

At the end of the Roundtable, the attendees stressed the need to share knowledge and expertise between researchers and media professionals, and the dire need for access to transparent research and information to counter the polarizing discourse, which relies on misleading, selective, and incorrect information. Since the lack of comprehensive surveys and data is a major constraint for journalists, independent media platforms and activists alike would benefit from the access to information in their pursuit to oppose the xenophobic and racist rhetoric surrounding both refugees and migrants in Lebanon. Therefore, there is a dire need to Bridging the Data Gap between Media and Research.

Additional information for Journalists:

Refugees = Partners is a research-based initiative implemented in coordination with the Lebanese Economic Associations (LEA) and the Syrian Center for Policy Research (SCPR) to promote an inclusive socio-economic environment by creating a counter-narrative on rights and protection of the Syrian refugees through advocacy, social activism and calls for policy change.

The project intends to accomplish this through generating evidence-based knowledge and creating a wide-reaching media campaign that highlights the shared humanity between the Lebanese host communities and Syrian refugees. This initiative will focus primarily on the socio-economic impacts and contributions of Syrian refugees to the development of local communities.

The initiative, which is a joint effort by Lebanese and Syrian civil society organizations, intends to: create a platform for constructive dialogue; identify challenges, opportunities, and share responsibilities; counter the polarized and hostile narratives against refugees; and enhance the emergence of inclusive policies that benefit both the Lebanese host communities and Syrian refugees.

The “**Media Roundtable**” page on "Refugees=Partners" website contains illustrated materials from the Roundtable discussion, the press release, the Roundtable basic concept notes, and the Roundtable agenda.

<http://refugees-partners.org/media-roundtable>

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For more information about the project, kindly see the social media platforms:

Website: www.refugees-partners.org

Facebook: [refugeespartners](https://www.facebook.com/refugeespartners)

Twitter: [refugeespartner](https://twitter.com/refugeespartner)

Instagram: [refugeespartners](https://www.instagram.com/refugeespartners)

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