Introduction

The Arab world consists of 22 Arabic-speaking countries of the Arab League which is a regional organization that looks after the affairs and interests of the Arab countries.

Nowadays, the Arab World is torn apart by conflicts that triggered waves of demonstrations and protests, riots, and civil wars in pursuit of democracy, law and social rights.

Journalists and intellectuals are watching with interest the great powers acting from a desire I) to profit or II) to preserve their interests.

There is a mixed feeling of hope and fear vis-à-vis of the downfall of Arab governments in favor of more democratic, populist, and/or Islamist governments in the Arab World.

The ongoing reconfiguration of powers within and between states shaped a dramatic truth: all states of the Arab world are now very bad.
The interests and benefits of external powers are based on PETROL

The reason why the Arab world has lagged behind in democracy is mainly because of its oil wealth and conflicts, rather than its religion and social structure.

Some Arab states enjoy hefty revenues through oil sales, and other countries are deprived of such a huge source of wealth.

The Middle East has always been the battlefield for proxy wars between the United States and Russia, important for its oil reserves.
Result of the Crisis

I. Immigration
II. Human Trafficking
III. Lack of justice and peace
IV. Violation of Human Rights
Arab spring prompted biggest migrant wave since world war II

The unrest known as the so-called “Arab Spring” has led to hundreds of thousands of people being displaced:

- In Tunisia, refugees fled to Europe in search of better economic opportunities.
- Syrian refugees continue to flow into Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon.
- Libya struggles with internal displacement and a worn out economy.

Countries like Jordan and Lebanon are forced to confront the problem of refugees coming into their country in search of sanctuary.

In sum, the challenges are enormous.
Since the beginning of the Syrian crisis, Lebanon witnessed an influx of Syrian refugees who are spread in the regions all over the country among the population.

Since the arrival of refugees in Lebanon, the Lebanese government has taken a humanitarian approach allowing displaced Syrians to enter Lebanon. There have been cases of arrests for illegal entry/stay in the past many months.
Lebanon, a country of 10452m², 4,800 million people going through a huge socio-economic crisis caused by:

- The immigration of 4 million refugees (2 and a half million Syrians, 1 and a half million Iraqis and Palestinians. *(The number continues to grow).*

Nothing had been planned to accommodate the exodus of refugees that are scattered throughout the country.

*Most live in tents and others were able to rent one small apartment for 3 or 4 families.*

- The Palestinian presence dating for years and in large numbers in over 18 camps.

- The escalation of foreigner workforce.
Lebanon has seen its population more than double following the exodus of Iraqis and Syrians. As a result, the infrastructure is no longer holding, coupled with electricity shortage and scarce drinkable water.

Unemployment rose among Lebanese, substituted by a Syrian workforce that is cheaper and underpaid. The cost of living is increasing, poverty is on the rise forcing young people to leave the country in search of a better life.

Schools are over boarded and hospitalization is not provided to everyone. The Government is unable to cope under this situation.
During our visit to the ESCWA center we met Mr. Sakkaf who shared with us the ESCWA’s vision and mission toward the situation. The advancement of women’s rights is a matter of urgency in the Arab region and essential for meaningful development. Although significant progress towards women’s empowerment has been made in most Arab countries, women in the region continue to face great challenges and uncertainty, particularly in situations of conflict, economic difficulties and political instability. Gender-based discrimination remains widespread and their access to resources, opportunities and decision-making continues to be limited.

The ESCWA Centre for Women (ECW) carries out research on gender equality in the region and evaluates the impact of national policies, legislation and programs on gender issues. **Priority issues for the center include**: gender-based violence, women’s economic participation and access to resources, female political participation, women and the knowledge society, and women, peace and security.

The ECW strives to find suitable solutions to the problem of gender discrimination, organizes capacity-building throughout the region and advises member States on gender issues and on reporting to Human Rights bodies on their compliance with international conventions on the rights of women.

**ESCWA is struggling with the Arab States who unfortunately are distracted by other issues deemed more important.**
• Mindful of the current situation and its implications on our society, the mission of the Good Shepherd Sisters has expanded its scope beyond the war in Iraq.

• Add our traditional centers (2 shelters to women and girls), we mobilized to respond to the needs of the refugees. Our service is addressed to any person regardless of race or religion.

• We are collaborating with other NGOs. Our engagement and commitment are on site.

• Currently, we are overwhelmed by Syrian refugees at a rate of 200 people per day in each apostolate.

Our centers are a true crossroads where the opportunity is given to Christian and Muslim people who meet in the waiting room and share the burden of life. Suffering unites them.
Each day the good shepherd sisters receive in Deir Al Ahmar center around 400 children coming from different camps seeking shelter, education, peace and care.

A full yearly program is set to give them all the needed requirements for their development on a daily basis which they are divided into groups:
1- from 8 am till 2 pm
2- from 3pm till 6.30 pm

The problem of trafficking in Lebanon is small, though exists. In April 2016, security forces discovered a sex trafficking ring and freed at least 75 women most of them are Syrian. The case is considered the worst sex trafficking scandal in Lebanon in decades. As prostitution is illegal in Lebanon, massive investigations and research tactics were set by the government that finally succeeded by shuttering the location immediately. Several NGOs are assisting the women to rebuild their lives by providing safe houses and offering medical, psychological and legal support.
III Lack of justice & peace
The influx of over a million Syrian refugees has severely strained Lebanon on social, economic and infrastructure levels. Tensions between Syrian Refugees and Lebanese nationals competing for the same resources and services are at a breaking point.

Multiple social cohesion and community support initiatives were implemented to improve intercommunity relations.
**Internalization:** Process by which individual members of a formal group take on the attitudes, beliefs, perspectives, and values held by other members.

With the secularists, we introduced a new model to help the internalization process: regular meetings every 6 weeks over a topic to achieve internalization for better integration.
IV Violation of Human Rights
Yet millions of women and children around middle east continue to experience discrimination in:

- Education (illiterate)
- Formation
- Health
- Poverty
- Shelter
- Human assistance with Human Right based approach
Good shepherd sisters role

Confronted with the current challenges, situations of violence, unemployment, exploitation in all its forms, we want to meet the needs by participating in actions for justice by living and working closer to the poor and the marginalized.

Good Shepherd Sisters is missioned to host at any time of day and night, the distressed women and children who suffer from various forms of injustice.
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<td>a. Development</td>
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<td>c. Leadership for women and children</td>
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<td>d. Motherhood</td>
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We, sisters of the good shepherd:
Our vision for the future
We, sisters of the good shepherd with our staff are in consistent workout on future plans to guarantee all the cases without any differentiation are receiving the same measure of help needed for their spiritual and social development.

Specific programs addressed directly to women and children enabling them to cultivate a sense of belonging, fully developing their individual potential and helping them to transform their lives by continuous studies and improvements to our hosting houses, dispensaries, psychological and juridical support needed for their healing journey.

Your support and our constancy to succeed this mission will bring hope and peace back to many hopeless hearts.