

Beirut 18/2/1999

The "Committee of Families of the Kidnapped" was founded on 28 October 1982, following the first strike organized by these families for the purpose of determining the whereabouts of the kidnapped, call for their immediate release and the ceasing of kidnapping. Later, the Committee has continuously attempted to solve this pending issue, through:

- strikes,
- contacts with the religious, political and militia leaders,
- contacts with international and local organizations defending human rights,
- participation in international conferences and activities.

However, all measures and actions have unfortunately proved fruitless. The Lebanese government intervention, despite the importance of the issue, was almost entirely ineffective.

Considering the lack of awareness regarding this major public issue, and considering the limited available resources, the committee is proposing this following project, in the hope that it will capture the required support and assistance.

The Committee of Families of the Kidnapped

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War-Kidnapped in Lebanon Preliminary Proposal

I. Background

Fifteen years of war left Lebanon in a disastrous state at both the social and economic level. Among the issues that remain unsolved, and mostly overlooked, during the post war period is the case of the war-kidnapped. Despite the importance of this as a major issue in post-conflict reconciliation, there is a dearth of data and statistics regarding these war victims, mainly as to their total number, conditions of capture, as well as their fate and the impact on their families. However, unofficial sources estimate the number of war-kidnapped since the beginning of the war in April 1975 at around 17,000, covering different Lebanese areas, religious groups and nationalities.

The vital issue should be approached from a number of perspectives:

At national level: solving this issue will contribute to bringing together ex-combatants from different Lebanese groups, as well as consolidating peace and security in the country.

On the legal level: neglecting the problem of the kidnapped will result in several legal complications, in particular when such practices contradict the basic convictions, doctrines, and legislation of human rights. Other legal problems result from the ambiguous fate of the kidnapped, such as the question of inheritance. This was partially solved through laws which have been updated (mainly for Sunnite and Shiite groups) to declare the kidnapped as dead (after at least 4 years of disappearing) upon the request of beneficiaries of inheritance, and without investigating the fate of the kidnapped.

At socio-economic level: Having lost people during the war, especially when the individual is the head of household, most concerned families apparently end up among the disadvantaged groups in the country targeted for direct governmental and non-governmental aid and assistance.

II. Objective of the study

The issue is treated as a national concern. The study will be conducted with the following two main objectives:

- Estimating the number of war-kidnapped and the conditions of their capture during the war (April 1975–October 1990), in order to convince the government to investigate the fate of these people and declare the death of those proved to be undoubtedly dead, and to try to obtain the release of those who could be still alive
- Assessing the socio-economic conditions of the families with kidnapped members, mainly in relation to the impact of kidnap on their living. The prospects and perceptions of these families as to the fate of their missing people is an important dimension to be highlighted in this regard.

C. Scope of Work and Methodology

The scarcity of statistics, and sometimes the great disparities regarding the kidnapped and their families is a major obstacle facing the achievement of the study objectives. Taking this constraint into consideration, the survey will adopt the following methodology and steps:

I. Collection of available data

The study will attempt, as a first step, at collecting available data regarding families of kidnapped people from different official and unofficial sources: the "Committee of Families of Kidnapped", the "International Committee of the Red Cross", the Lebanese Ministry of Interior, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and any other concerned parties.

2. Media campaign

Due to the lack of an available comprehensive database maintaining information pertaining to the kidnapped and their families, the study will attempt at constructing one. It will be as comprehensive as possible, covering at least the different parts Lebanon as well as the different parties, religions, sects and nationalities.

It is known that the issue of kidnapped might face a political opposition, especially if it was approached in a way that might affect the position of current political personalities. For this reason, the approach will be purely socio-economic and public-spirited, with the aim of highlighting one of the major consequences of the war, with no specific targeting of any particular ex-militias or political parties.

For the purpose of constructing the database, the study proposes to conduct a media campaign urging the families with kidnapped members to present themselves to the "Committee of Families of the Kidnapped" and declare their current addresses. This process, although time consuming (more than two months), is believed to be the most effective way to arrive at a more accurate estimation of the total number of the kidnapped. It will also provide an up-to-date database to be used as a basis from which a representative sample will be selected.

3. Field Survey

3.1 Conceptual framework

This section will concentrate on the definitions, concepts and terms to be used throughout the study (e.g., kidnapped, families of the kidnapped, etc.).

3.2 Sample selection

Upon finalizing the construction of the database, a field survey will be conducted among a selected sample of households, the size of which will be determined, depending on the estimated size of the population concerned. An a-priori estimation of this sample is around 1,500 households having one or more kidnapped members. The sample will be selected according to the following criteria:

- Geographic distribution of households
- Religion /sect
- Nationality
- Date of kidnap

3.3 Preparing the questionnaire

Two different questionnaires will be prepared

Household questionnaire: The first questionnaire will address the households to assess the following:

- General information

- Religion/sect and nationality
- Size of the family
- Age structure
- Gender distribution
- Socio-economic conditions
 - Educational levels of the family members
 - Work status of family members
- Problems facing the households directly or indirectly resulting from kidnap (family status, financial..)
- Details about the attempts made by the family to investigate the fate of the kidnapped
- Theories and viewpoints of the households regarding the fate of the kidnapped
- Opinions of the households regarding the role of the government in this regard and their reaction towards the laws updated for declaring the death of kidnapped.

Personal Kidnapped questionnaire: This questionnaire will be used to collect data on the kidnapped person, through information from family members and/or friends, such as:

- General information
 - Sex, age, and marital status
 - Education achievements
 - Relation to the family
- Information related to kidnapping
 - Date and place of kidnapping
 - Conditions and motives of kidnapping, as perceived by the family
 - Political allegiance of the kidnapped
 - The party probably responsible for kidnapping

3.4 Field Work

In addition to data collection, the field work will comprise video recording for around 50-60 families showing the impact of the kidnap on the moral, psychological, and social standing of these families. The field work proceeds in the following stages:

- Preparing and training field surveyors and supervisors.
- Preparing the coding system necessary for the questionnaires
 - Preparing the surveyor guide comprising necessary clarification that assist in the field work.
- Collecting available and necessary data through field surveyors.

3.5 Data Processing

- Preparing data entry and processing programs
- Training the staff working on data entry
- Identifying output layout
- Extract the statistical results

4 Preparation of final report

The final report will provide an analytical, multi-faceted description of the issue, with special emphasis on the main findings. Moreover, recommendations and measures to be taken will be prepared at two levels:

- Actions to be taken by the government to determine the fate of the kidnapped
- Supportive, socio-economic measures to be rendered by governmental and non-governmental organization, to the needy families of the kidnapped.

IV. Cost of the Study

The study will cost US\$ 149,500 distributed as follows:

Tasks	Details	Man/ Week	Cost (US\$)
Media Campaign	5 daily spots (15-to-30 seconds per spot) on 3 well-spread TV stations, 3 radio stations Announcements in 3 daily news papers (10X10 cm)		55,000
Collection of available data	Social expert	8	10,000
Review of all documents and publications that addressed the kidnapped issue	Assistant	8	4,000
Technical File	Statistician	4	5,000
Field Work (incl. transportation)			38,000
	35 surveyors covering all of Lebanon 7 supervisors 1 coordinator		
Recording of testimonies	Video recording (50-60 interviews) on high quality VHS		6,500
Data Processing			2,500
	Preparing data entry programs using a specialized statistical package (Question, SPSS or Modaliza) noting that data could be imported via ACCESS or EXCEL. Data Entry Extraction of statistical tables (both simple and crossed tabulation)		
Final Report	Social expert	8	10,000
Overheads	Computers, papers, secretaries, photocopying,...		18,500
Total			149,500

