

Insan association established in 1998 works to protect and promote the rights of the most vulnerable individuals and communities living in Lebanon, which are most notably migrants, refugees and asylum seekers who arrive to Lebanon through different routes seeking for a better life.

For Asylum seekers and refugees, Lebanon is a country of transition and not a country of destination so they hope to be able to be resettled in a third country to rebuild their lives and be protected.

However, with all the economic, political and health crisis escalating very rapidly in Lebanon in the past few years, we have witnessed more and more migrants, refugees and also Lebanese nationals trying to leave the country using the “death boats” through the Mediterranean sea... we have seen many incidents where many lives were lost, specially those of women and children, who are the most vulnerable in these situations, while at the open sea and before reaching any boarders because of the overloading of boats and not taking any security measures into consideration, with the sole aim for smugglers to gain as much money as they can in the expense of lives of people. There are others who survived and told their stories; they have sold everything they owned, their homes, their furniture, their gold, everything in order to secure a place for them and their families on these boats and now that the attempt has failed, they had nothing left and no means to survive in their own country!! These are very tragic incidents and even after all these stories are told people are still willing to take the risk and risk everything including their lives and the lives of their loved ones since life in the country, they are in has become undignified and unbearable.

At the cross-regional center for refugees and migrants (CCRM) as we are a cross-regional network with member organizations from Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Bahrain, Kuwait, UAE, Morocco, Tunisia, Italy, Spain, Cyprus and Turkey, covering around the Mediterranean basin, our members in the different regions are trying to build bridges around the Mediterranean to unify efforts in assisting migrants on both sides of the basin (Arab countries and Europe);

As civil society and as stated in the global civil society priorities for the International migration review forum (IMRF) we believe that it is essential to incorporate transnational mechanisms and inter-State cooperation to search for disappeared migrants, whether alive or deceased. These should include cooperation between States of origin, transit and destination, to share genetic data and other relevant information, within strict parameters of confidentiality, privacy safeguards, and firewalls effective against any other use of data, in order to facilitate access to justice for families of disappeared persons and victims of massacres or extrajudicial executions and other crimes.

It is also essential for states to seek the assistance of civil society and organizations working to protect the rights of migrants and refugees and to have open coordination and cooperation with them in order to have best results in saving migrant lives and investigating for missing migrants.

Civil society with its diversity as regards to services, approaches and strategies, constitutes the natural environment where all segments of society can trust and benefit from; therefore, it should also be considered as a natural partner for governments and UN agencies who are seeking to uphold rights of people.

Civil society should be recognized as an essential partner and actor for both governments and UN agencies to cooperate with and not to be regarded only as a treat – without cooperation between these parties no effective solutions and protection for migrants can be achieved. Moreover, organizations working on the ground in assisting migrants should be granted protection and not fought by governments.