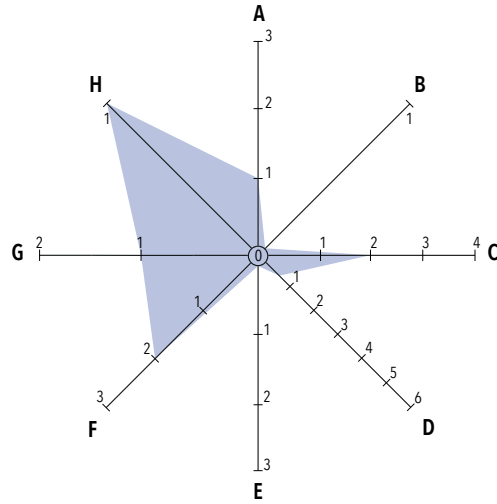
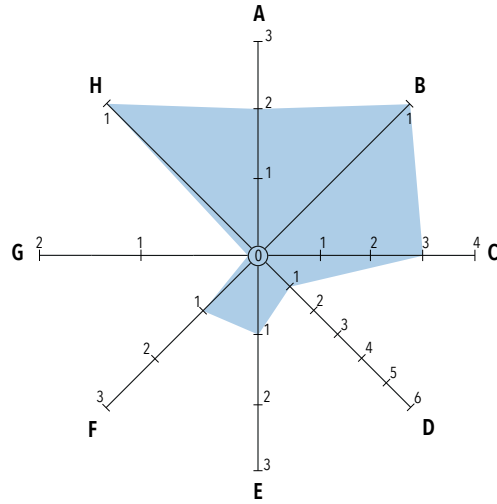
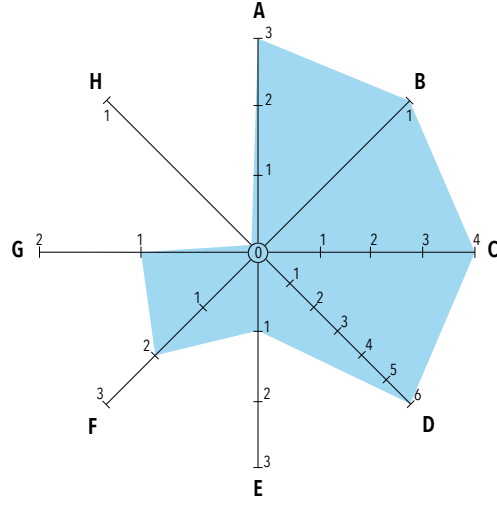
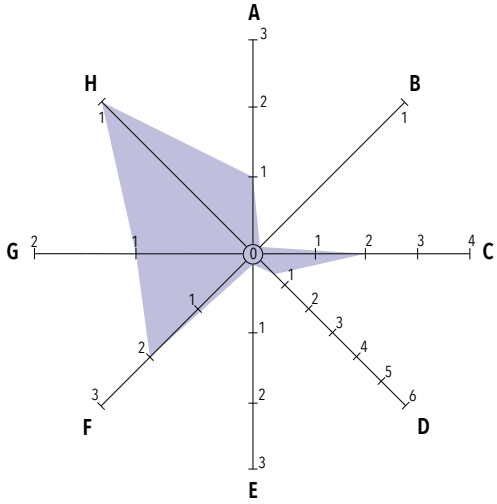
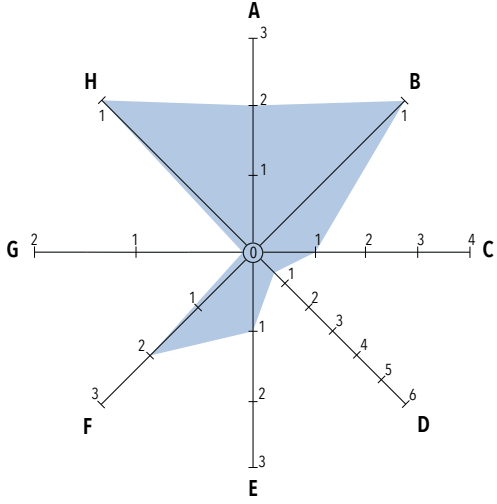
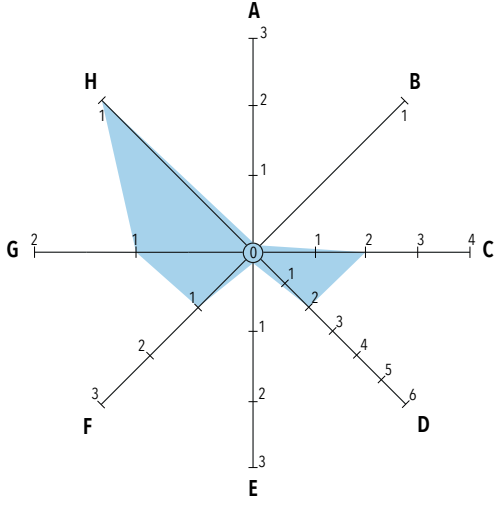






وحالة واحدة تمكّن الحل. وصرّح ثلاثة من أصحاب هذه للتاجر لحسابهم الخاص، إما لأنهم يريدون أن يكونوا «أحراراً» ولغادرتهم حينما يحتاجون إلى ذلك، وإما لأنهم كانوا يملكون أصلاً أعمالهم الخاصة في سوريا، وبالتالي كان فتح أعمال خاصة بهم في لبنان خيارهم الوحيد. كانت عوائل الذين بَدروا خيارهم قابلاً لهم أن يكونوا «أحراراً» في التنقل ولغادرتهم تعيش في سوريا، وكانوا يسافرون إلى سوريا بشكل دائم. أما الآخرون، فكانوا يملكون خبرة سابقة في مجالات عملهم ورأس مال جيلوبه معهم لفتح أعمال في لبنان. وكان لدى عدد كبير من أصحاب التاجر الذين قابلاً لهم قدرة على الوصول إلى لبنانيين «يعرفون كيفية تسيير الأمور»، وإلى

فقر السوريين من أصحاب التاجر الذين قابلاً لهم العمل لحسابهم الخاص، إما لأنهم يريدون أن يكونوا «أحراراً» ولغادرتهم حينما يحتاجون إلى ذلك، وإما لأنهم كانوا يملكون أصلاً أعمالهم الخاصة في سوريا، وبالتالي كان فتح أعمال خاصة بهم في لبنان خيارهم الوحيد. كانت عوائل الذين بَدروا خيارهم قابلاً لهم أن يكونوا «أحراراً» في التنقل ولغادرتهم تعيش في سوريا، وكانوا يسافرون إلى سوريا بشكل دائم. أما الآخرون، فكانوا يملكون خبرة سابقة في مجالات عملهم ورأس مال جيلوبه معهم لفتح أعمال في لبنان. وكان لدى عدد كبير من أصحاب التاجر الذين قابلاً لهم قدرة على الوصول إلى لبنانيين «يعرفون كيفية تسيير الأمور»، وإلى



#### A FUTURE PLANS

- 0- closure
- 1- undetermined/struggling
- 2- no mention of plans
- 3- expansion

#### B MENTION OF DEBTS

- 0- yes
- 1- no

#### C RELATIONSHIP TO NEIGHBORHOOD

- 0- tensions
- 1- uneasy
- 2- calm
- 3- good terms
- 4- engaged

#### D TIME SINCE OPENING

- 0- less than a year
- 1- 1 year
- 2- 1.5 years
- 3- 2 years
- 4- 2.5 years
- 5- 3 years and more

#### E SIZE OF BUSINESS

- 0- no employees
- 1- small <8
- 2- medium 8...<20
- 3- large >20

#### F OWNERSHIP

- 0- managed
- 1- subcontracted
- 2- rented
- 3- owned

#### G CLIENTELE'S SOCIO-ECONOMIC CLASS

- 0- lower class
- 1- middle class
- 2- upper class

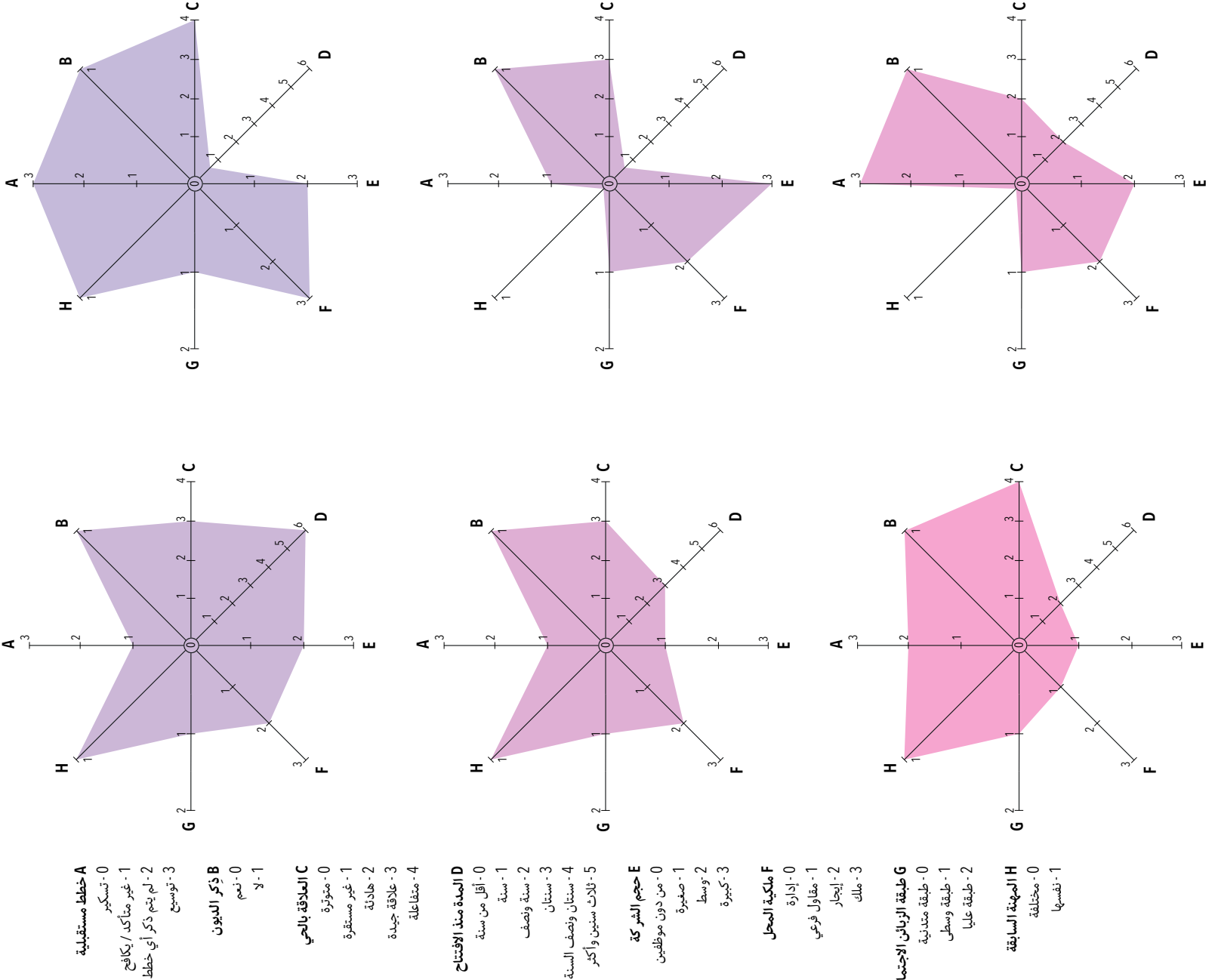
#### H PREVIOUS OCCUPATION

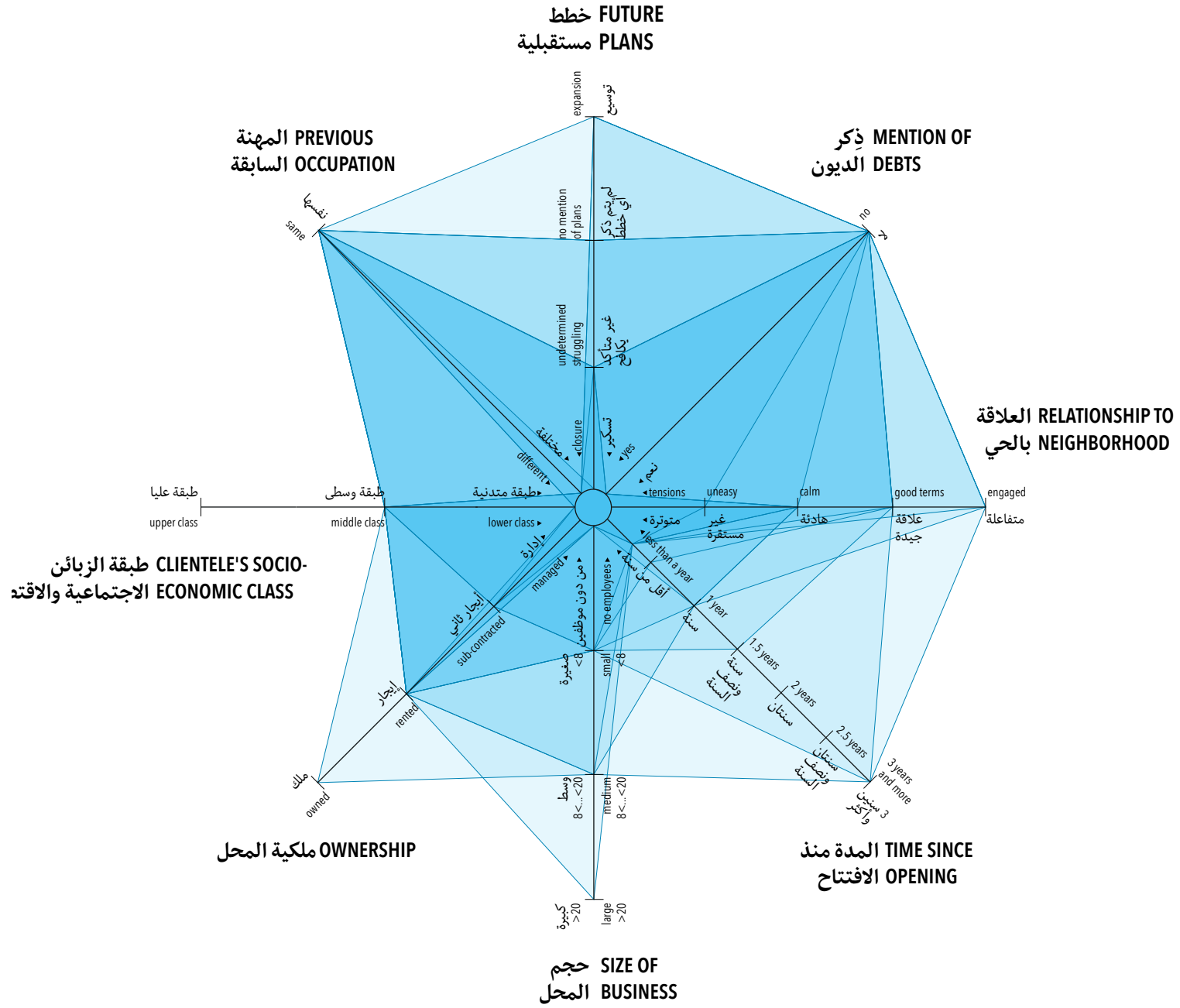
- 0- different
- 1- same

groups. We called the first *struggling businesses*, as it incorporates those who are fraught with emotional and/or material challenges. The second category is that of *coping businesses*, referring to those who have managed to set a business that functions rather well. The third category is that of *comfortable businesses*, indicating those who have a relatively prospering business and who are living rather affluently.

The struggling businesses include four out of our twelve interviewees: two bakers, a carpenter and a

sweets shop owner. All are hardly making enough money to cover their daily living expenses, all allude, or overtly state, being in debt and facing the risk of closure. All expressed feelings of nostalgia, remorse, or melancholy, and a strong desire to return to Syria. Asked about their larger experience in Lebanon, these respondents state that they don't socially engage with the "Lebanese", beyond the basic interaction related to business (e.g. buying supplies, keeping a good relation with the landlord). With mostly small shops with no

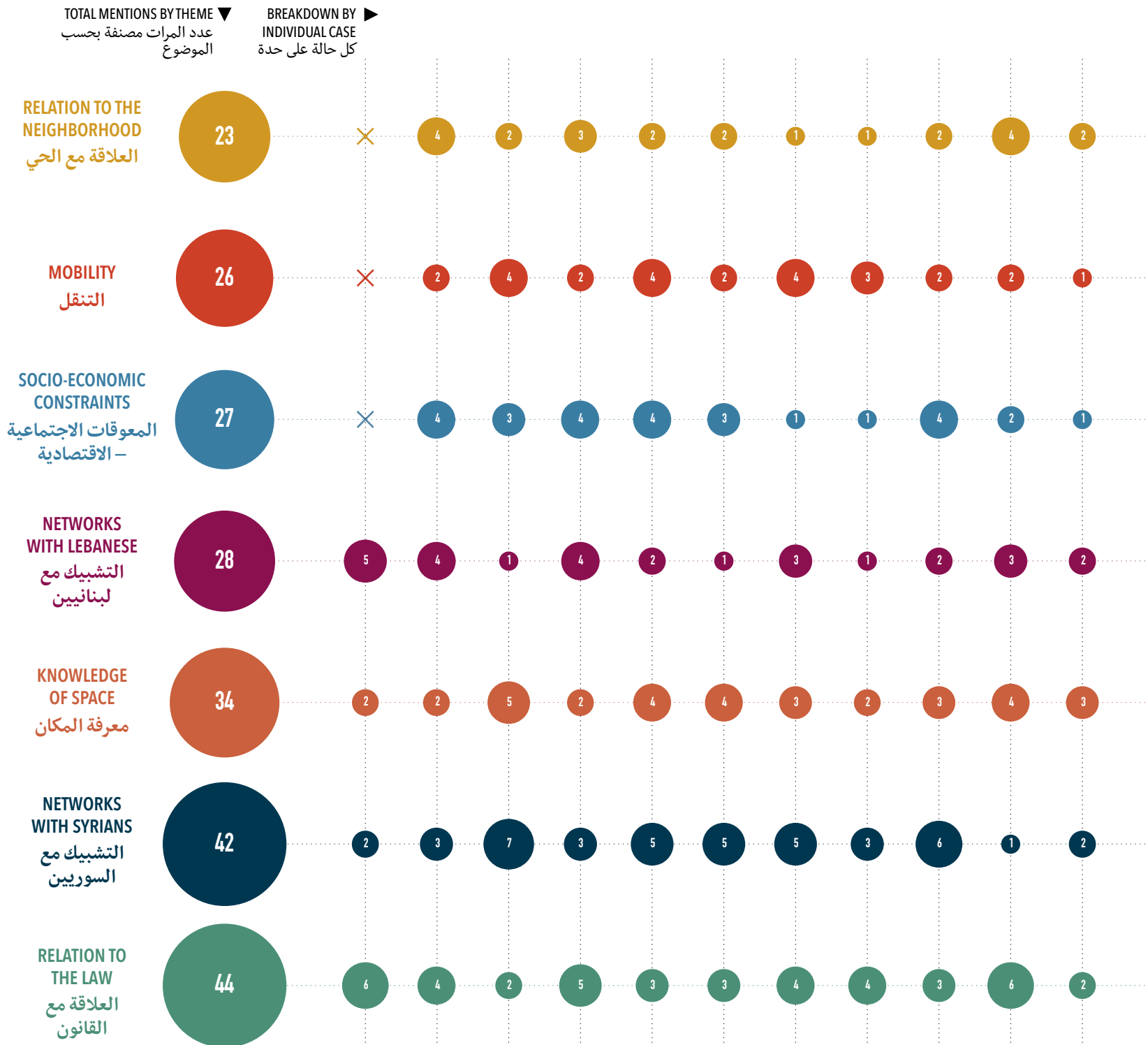






# أكثر المخاوف التي يتحدث عنها 12 سورياً يملكون متاجر وأعمالاً

## 12 SYRIAN BUSINESS OWNERS' MOST FREQUENTLY MENTIONED CONCERNS

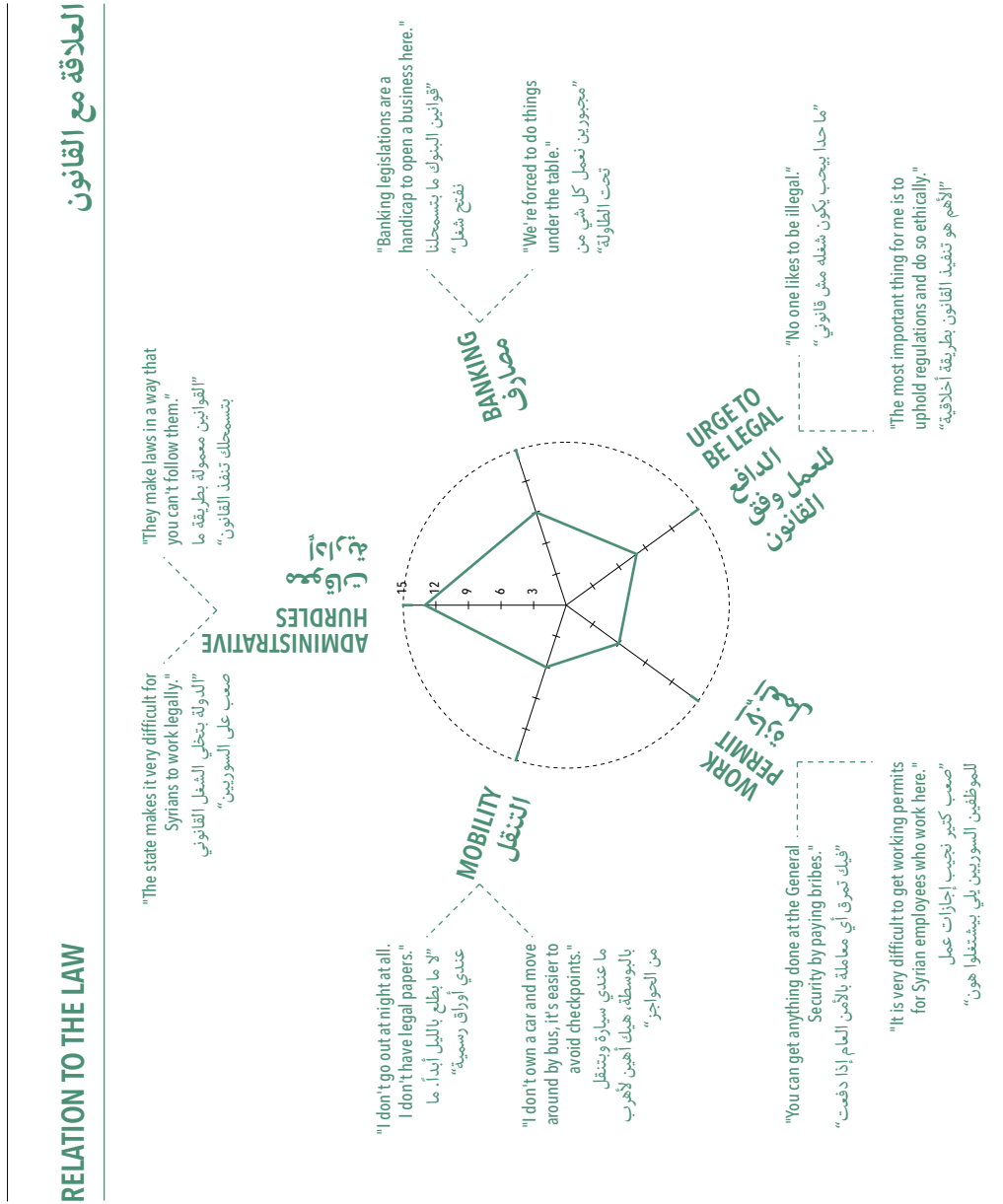


bution of Syrian-owned businesses to the economic life of Hamra or Tariq el-Jdideh. We can hypothesize, cautiously, that it is likely that Syrian-owned businesses are healthy competition as they are adding and/or complementing existing market offers in these commercial neighborhoods. Although they are perhaps selling quality goods or services at lower than market prices, one can posit that, soon enough, these prices

will be regulated and the market cycle will re-adjust. In Afif al-Tibi, we learned that Lebanese shop owners who used to acquire cheap and quality fabric from Damascus and who are now unable to do so, have shifted their import trajectory to Turkey, especially after the waving of visa regulations on Syrians and Lebanese. They thus seem to be working closely with Syrian businessmen to purchase Turkish fabric. Some

# مخاوف متكررة: مواضيع فرعية وأمثلة

## RECURRING CONCERNS: SUBTHEMES AND EXAMPLES



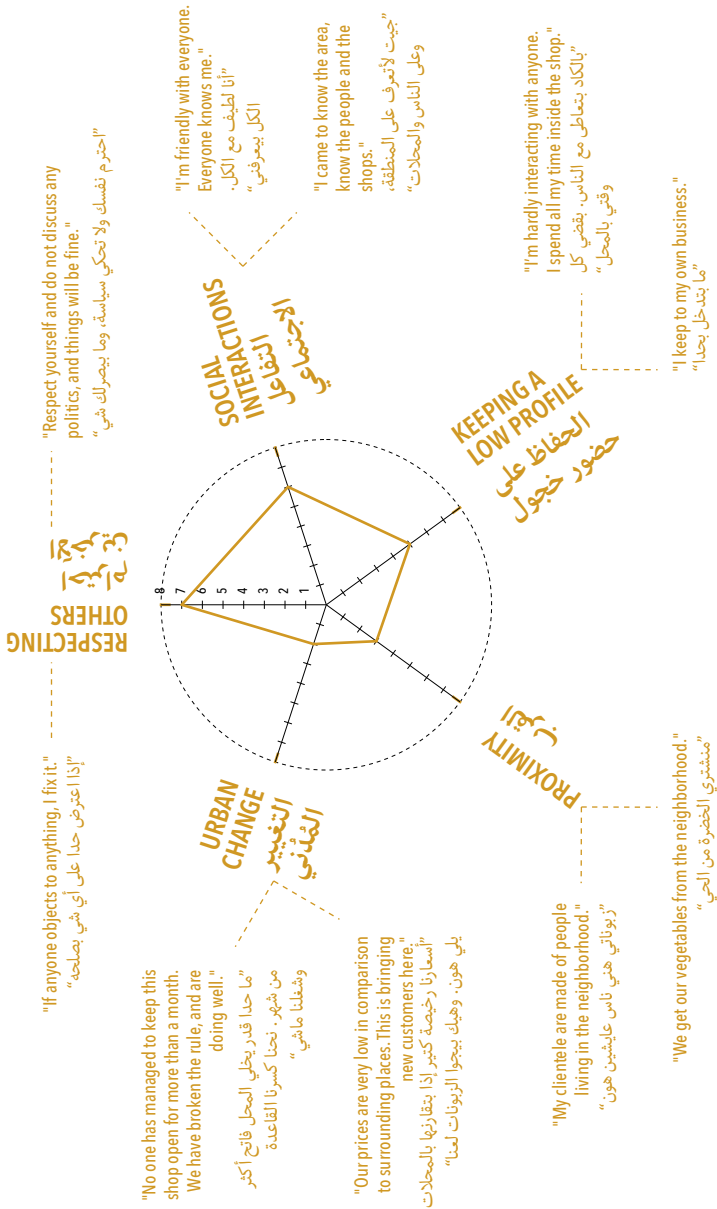
يكونوا يتراجعوا عن الأعمال التجارية التي بدأوا بها في السابق، خاصة في المناطق التجارية المركزية. هذا يرجع إلى عدة أسباب، من بينها التغيرات الاقتصادية والبيئية التي تؤثر على الطلب على السلع والخدمات. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، فإن ارتفاع تكاليف التشغيل والتوزيع قد يؤدي إلى انخفاض الأرباح، مما يدفع الملاك إلى التفكير في إغلاق الأعمال أو تقليص حجمها. كما أن التغييرات في القوانين واللوائح قد تخلق حواجز إضافية أمام الأعمال التجارية، مما يجعلها أقل جاذبية للمستثمرين والمستهلكين على حد سواء.

لقد لاحظنا أن العديد من أصحاب الأعمال في حمص يعانون من صعوبات في الحصول على التراخيص اللازمة لتشغيل أعمالهم بشكل قانوني. هذا يرجع إلى الإجراءات البيروقراطية المعقدة وارتفاع تكاليف الحصول على هذه التراخيص. كما أن التغييرات في القوانين المتعلقة بالعمالة قد تجعل من الصعب على أصحاب الأعمال توظيف موظفين محليين، مما يؤدي إلى انخفاض الإنتاجية وزيادة التكاليف. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، فإن ارتفاع أسعار المواد الخام والمنتجات النهائية قد يؤثر سلبًا على القدرة التنافسية للأعمال التجارية في السوق المحلية.



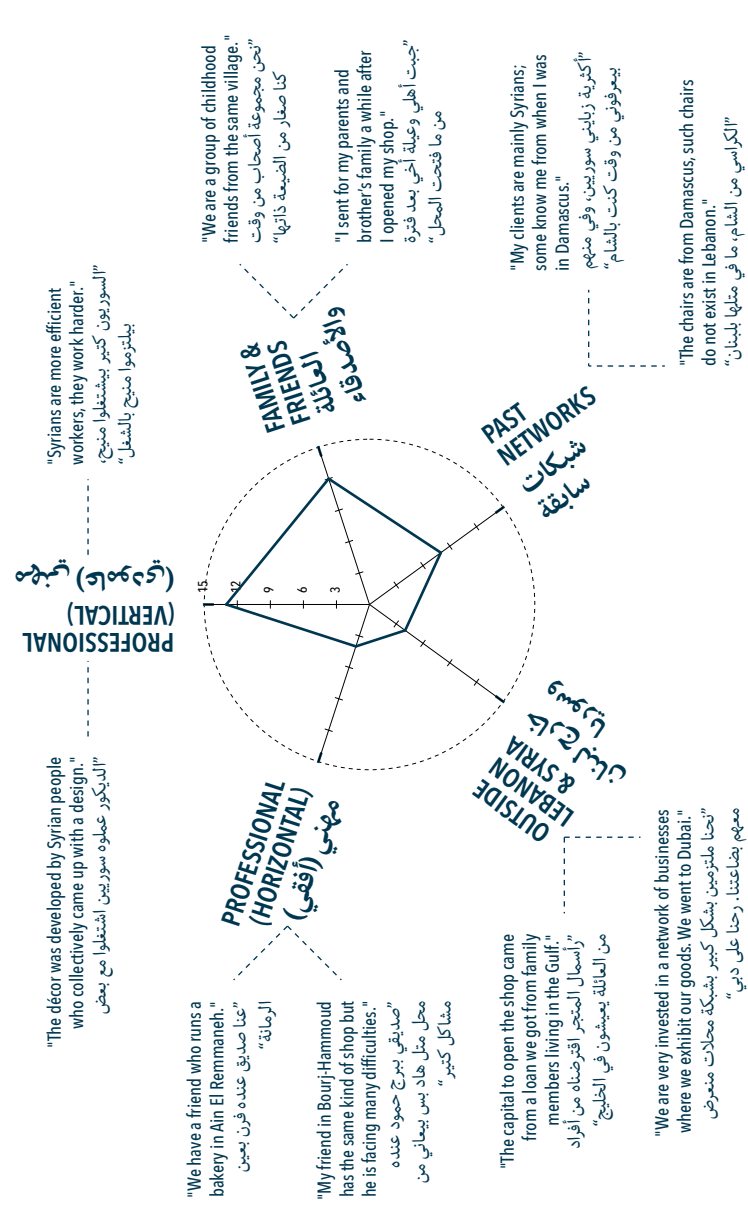
العلاقة مع الحي

RELATION TO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD



تشبيك مع سوريين

NETWORKS WITH SYRIANS



of them have even hired Syrians as shop managers. Also, several of these Syrians relocated to Tariq al-Jdideh with their families, renting apartments, enrolling their kids in the district's school, so they can undertake their business more efficiently. As such, the Syrian war seemed to have opened new global market opportunities to Lebanese wholesale traders in Tariq al-Jdideh, in partnership with Syrians, in addition to enhancing

the local economy of the district. Additionally, we received anecdotal information about Syrian-owned factories in Aramoun producing clothing and employing cheap Syrian labor.

In sum, it is difficult to make an informed comprehensive assessment of the overall impact of the actual contribution of Syrian-owned businesses on the urban economy. More systematic data collection

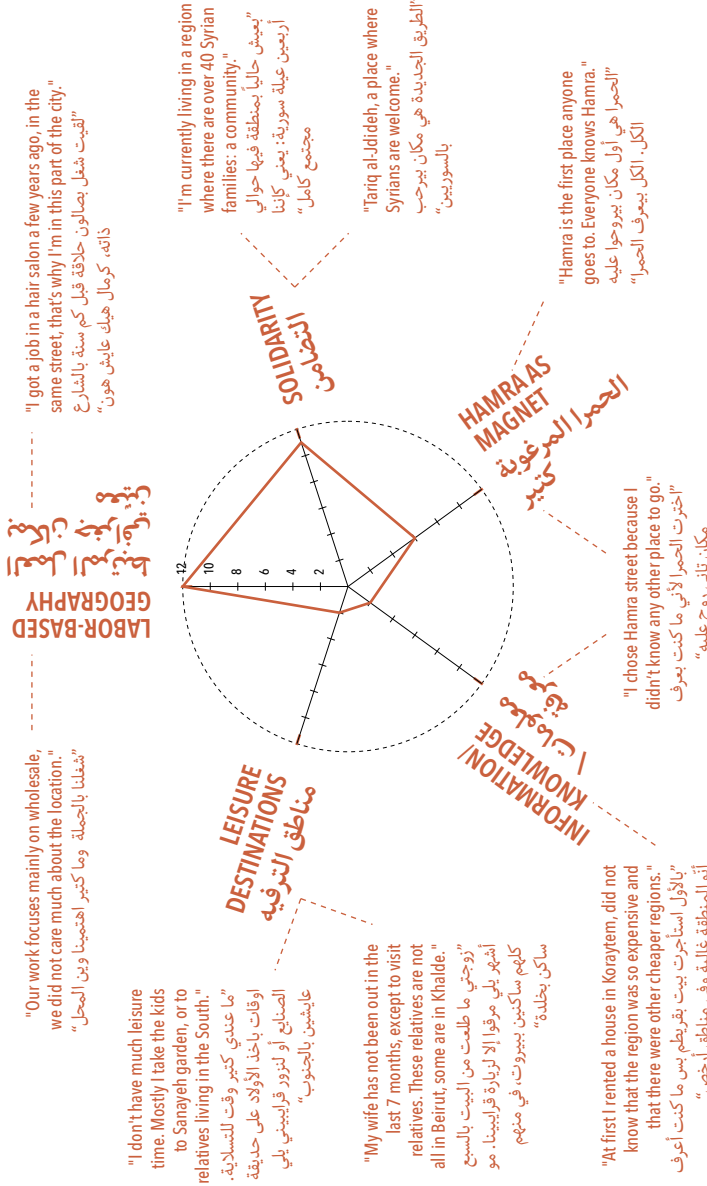
...of them have even hired Syrians as shop managers. Also, several of these Syrians relocated to Tariq al-Jdideh with their families, renting apartments, enrolling their kids in the district's school, so they can undertake their business more efficiently. As such, the Syrian war seemed to have opened new global market opportunities to Lebanese wholesale traders in Tariq al-Jdideh, in partnership with Syrians, in addition to enhancing the local economy of the district. Additionally, we received anecdotal information about Syrian-owned factories in Aramoun producing clothing and employing cheap Syrian labor. In sum, it is difficult to make an informed comprehensive assessment of the overall impact of the actual contribution of Syrian-owned businesses on the urban economy. More systematic data collection

needs to take place to profile, in detail, the practices and constraints of these businesses, especially with regard to the relations and networks with Lebanese partners and stakeholders. Most interesting are the scale and type of these businesses, which is smaller than the large-scale capital investments that Syrian nationals have been historically making in Lebanon since the 1950s (e.g. in the restaurant sector with al-

Bouless family), and qualitatively different from the low-skilled Syrian labor that has been an integral part of the Lebanese informal economy since the Syrian occupation (e.g. Syrians working in the construction sector). These small and medium Syrian businessmen never came to Lebanon prior, as they probably did not need to. They are in Lebanon because they have been forcefully displaced by the horrors of the current war,

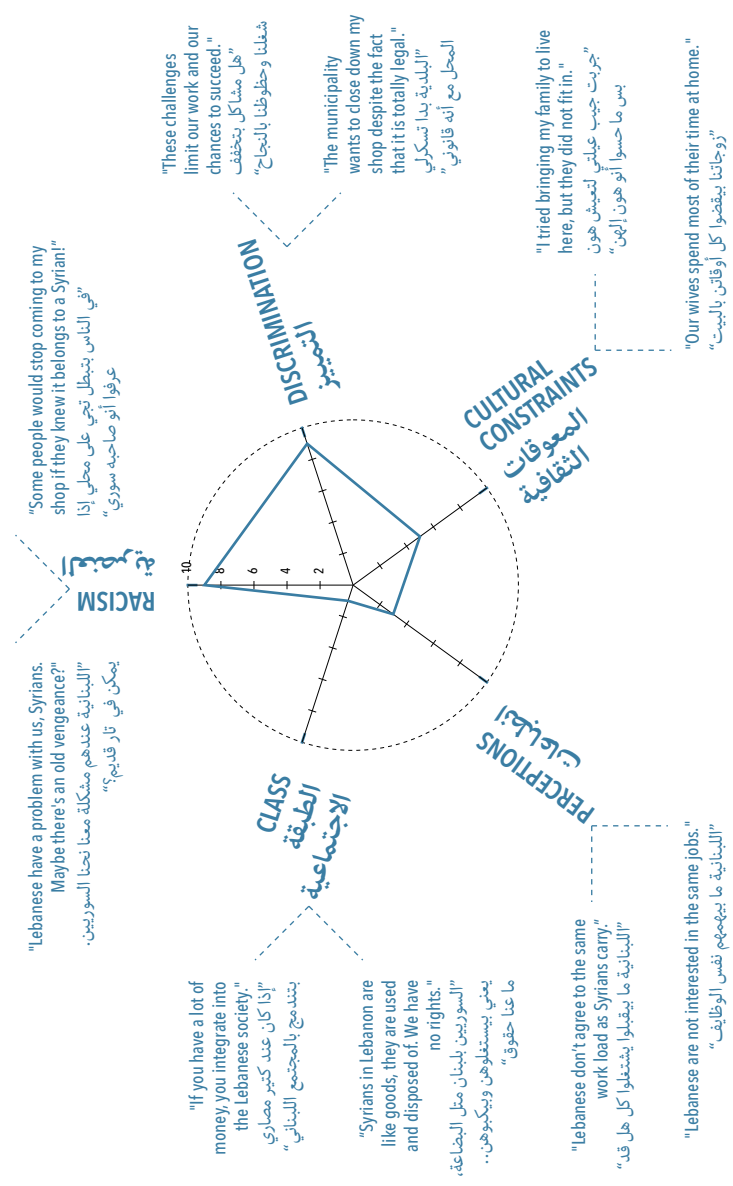
معرفة المكان

KNOWLEDGE OF SPACE



المعوقات الاجتماعية - الاقتصادية

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS



... (Arabic text describing the challenges and constraints mentioned in the chart, such as discrimination, cultural differences, and economic factors.)

... (Arabic text describing the socio-economic constraints mentioned in the chart, such as class differences, racism, and perceptions.)

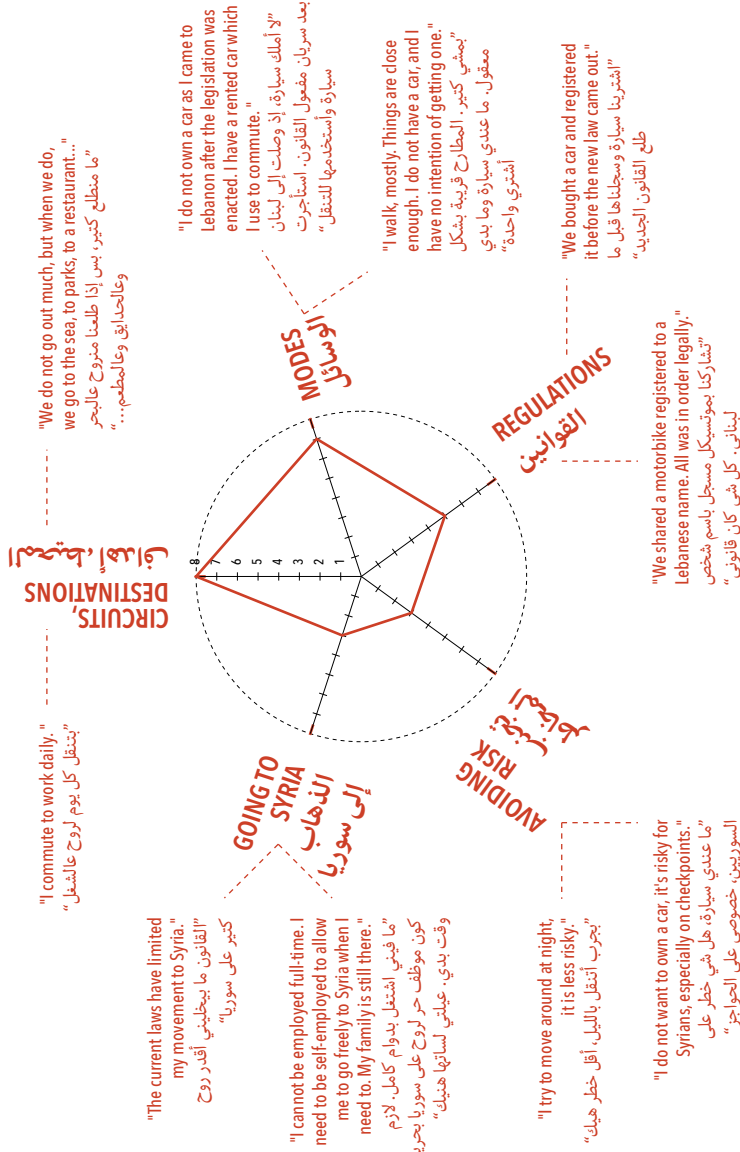
where they are using their know-how and experiences to recreate the lifestyles they had in Syria.

Our analysis further led us to extract four themes that shed light on the practices and experiences of all three categories of Syrian businesses. First, Syrian businessmen all shared the urge of being legal (*ni-zami*), amidst the difficulty of coping with unclear Lebanese regulations. Second, businesses with an

extensive social network—and hence more access to information, stood out. Businesses with no networks struggle, as they have little to no access to resources or to valuable information—such as our carpenter. The bakers managed to open their business thanks to a loan they received from family members living in the Gulf. The sweets shop owners opened their business after they saved enough money through work

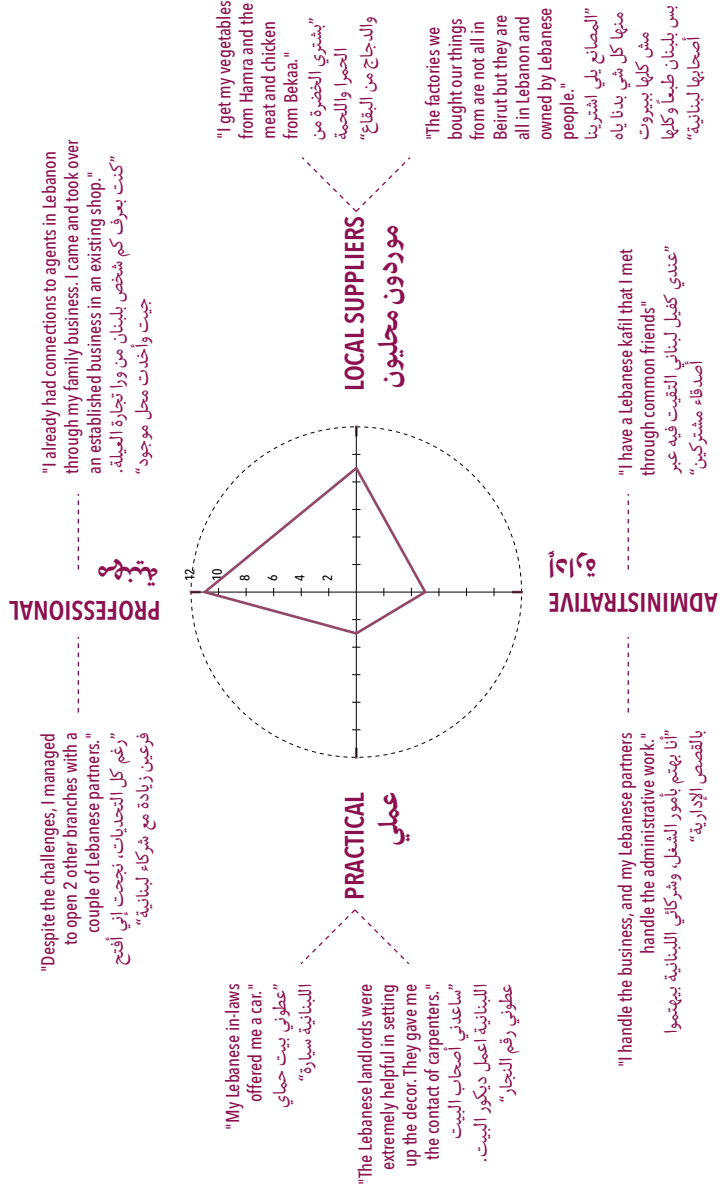
التنقل

المتنقل

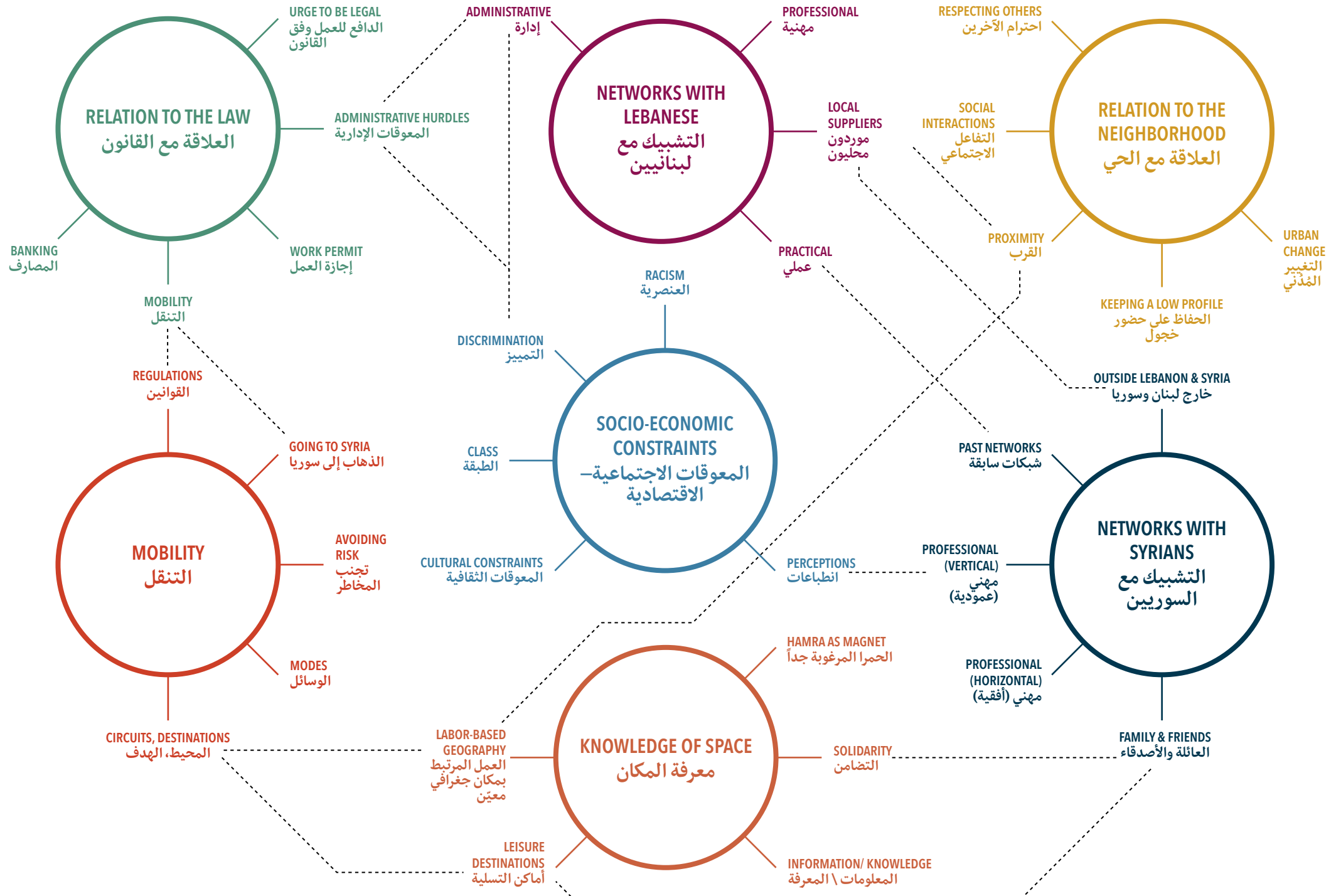


تشبيك مع اللبنانيين

NETWORKS WITH LEBANESE







have established businesses in Lebanon in the past few years, we are thus able to better understand the diversity of their experiences: Syrian businesses are not a homogeneous lot—some are struggling, others are coping, and still others are comfortably performing. Our work suggests that their businesses are likely a positive contribution to urban life in the city, which gets enriched and diversified. While we do not have enough data to support this claim, this is a first hypothesis that invites further research on this issue, outside of Hamra, and municipal Beirut. Our work shows that Syrian-owned businesses are often closely associated to Lebanese, who partner with them, advise them, or work for them. Thus, there are more interconnectedness than one would have supposed, which needs to be further deciphered and investigated.

In closing, while the most-skilled Syrians who could have enriched and diversified its labor market have left, the Lebanese government is not interested in enabling less-skilled Syrians to integrate economically and contribute to local development, namely because of its deep-rooted fear of demography, sectarian power configurations, and geopolitics. Worse, the ambiguous policies of the Lebanese government vis-à-vis Syrians, especially in the labor sector, have largely detrimental effects on the stability it claims to harbor.

A longer version of this essay entitled “Entrepreneurial Refugees and the City: Brief Encounters in Beirut” was published in *The Journal of Refugee Studies* in February 2018. The findings of this essay were further developed in Watfa Najdi’s Masters in Urban Planning and Policy (MUPP) thesis entitled “Syrian-Owned Businesses and Impacts on the City: The Case of Beirut,” American University of Beirut, 2018.

<sup>1</sup> ILO (International Labor Organization). 2014. *Assessment of the Impact of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon and their Employment Profile*, Beirut: ILO, p.14.

<sup>2</sup> ILO. 2014. *Op. Cit.* p. 10.

---

<sup>1</sup> ILO (International Labor Organization) (2014). *Assessment of the Impact of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon and their Employment Profile*, Beirut: ILO.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

“Entrepreneurial Refugees and the City: Brief Encounters in Beirut” في *Journal of Refugee Studies* في شباط 2018 وفي *أطروحة ماجستير لوطفي نجدي في التنظيم المدني في العاصمة اللبنانية في بيروت* “Syrian-Owned Businesses and Impacts on the City: The Case of Beirut” American University of Beirut, 2018.

١ ILO (International Labor Organization) (2014). *Assessment of the Impact of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon and their Employment Profile*, Beirut: ILO.

٢ Ibid.