

## **Prenatal care in the era of economic skyfall**

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### **Objective**

Starting October 2019, Lebanon experienced significant and unprecedented economic failing leading to 81% degradation of the local currency, 85% inflation, and socio-economic suffering. In 2020, Lebanon's GDP decreased by 20.3%, and GDP per capita decreased by about 40%. Lebanon currently ranks third in the global list of most indebted countries, and the situation is currently still deteriorating.

### **Methods**

Through data analysis of economic reports and of data from the Lebanese Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology we aim to assess the impact of a rapidly deteriorating economy on the prenatal care in Lebanon. Public and private sector endurance is also separately reported.

### **Results**

The impact on the medical infrastructure has been global and hit all sectors. The crisis is multifaceted, varied in the way it played out across public and private sectors and did not affect them equally. Some were better prepared than others to cope with severe fiscal pressure mainly through the support by non governmental organizations. The income of physicians decreased by more than 80% because of currency devaluation. Electricity cuts, physician leaving the country and the disastrous Beirut blast increased further the tension on diagnostic and invasive activities of prenatal care.

### **Conclusion**

Despite an evolving role of the public hospital that is supported by an international humanitarian aid, reliance is mainly on the Lebanese private sector, and antenatal care is based on a traditional model of private clinics. Given the multiple strains on the Lebanese health care system today, the plight of antenatal care providers may go unnoticed until the situation worsens.