



The Syrian Business Diaspora

A WORLD BANK INVESTIGATION ON THEIR PRESENT SITUATION AND
FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

Our investigations focus on the Syrian business diaspora

Our team has communicated with you:

- Through focus groups in Amman, Aqaba, Beirut, Boston, Cairo, Detroit, Dubai, Frankfurt, Gaziantap, Geneva, Houston, Irbid, Istanbul, London, Paris, New York
- Through numerous conversations with the diaspora – including many here today
- Through an electronic survey using a snowball methodology – 150 responses in 1 week!

The objective of the investigations was twofold:

- To dimension the potential of the Syrian diaspora entrepreneurs in terms of investment in hosts (Jordan for example) and in Syria itself
- To understand the constraints faced by the Syrian entrepreneurs everywhere to enable a conversation around how we (the international development community) can help them wherever they wish to operate.

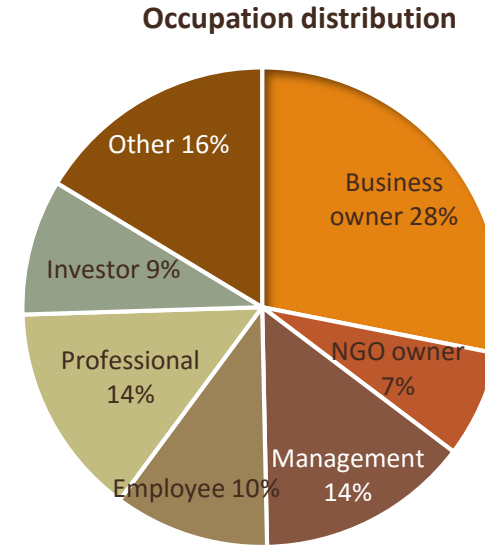
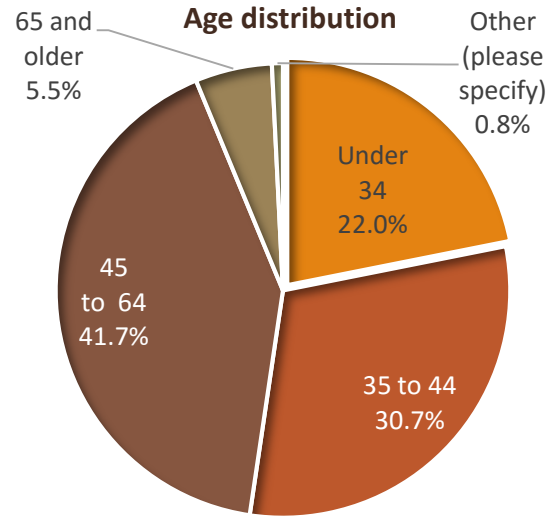
Key Findings: The Good News

- Incredible interest and belief in Syria – PRIVATE SECTOR LED GROWTH IS THE KEY
- Syrians business DNA – acumen is alive and well – MANUFACTURING IS AT THE CORE
- Diaspora business network is providing us a glimpse of its potential in trade and investment
- Diaspora businesses are competitive (strong export orientation)
- There are investment deals that can be done
- Remarkable philanthropic efforts – Over 60% of respondents
- From the refugee perspective – Syrians employ Syrians!
- Our findings apply not only to neighboring host countries (Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey etc) but also the rich countries (USA businesses face banking challenges as well)
- You have lots of friends who want to work with you – multinational, private sector foundations, and NGOs

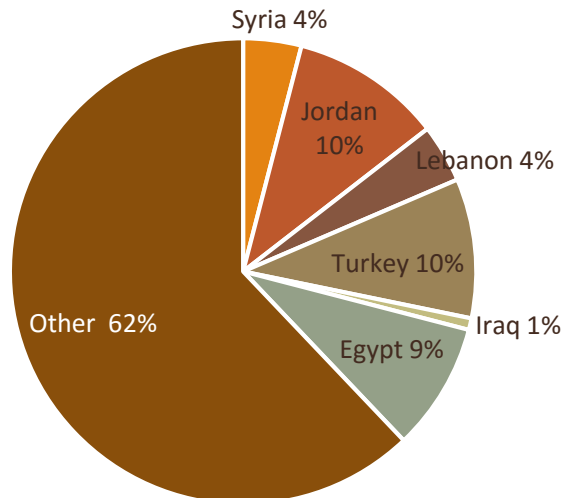
Key Findings: The Not So Good News

- Sixty years of sanctions have limited recent diaspora businesses absorption of best practices in terms of management, financing and marketing
- Syrian diaspora businesses face many challenges around establishing, operating and financing their businesses – from the neighboring countries to the OECD
- Diaspora businesses have very limited ways of getting their voices heard
- Trust issues keep coming up

Brief Survey Demographics



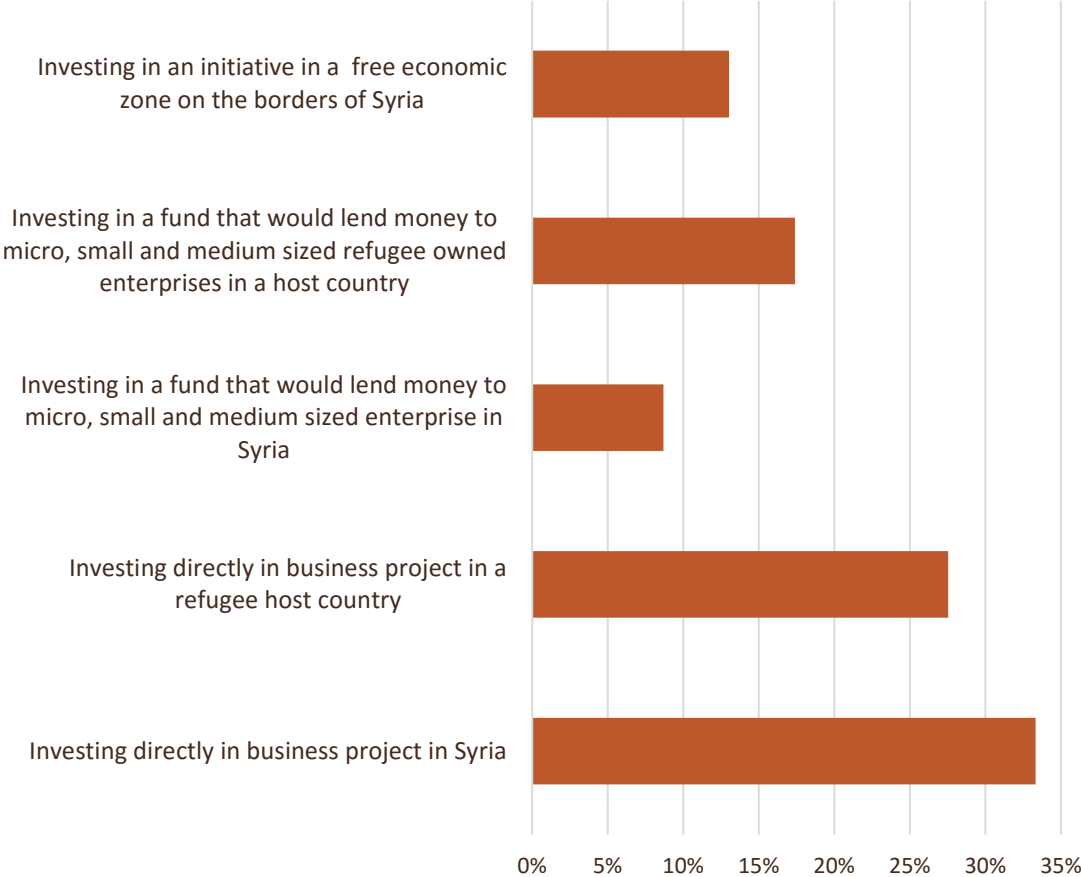
Current Country of Residence



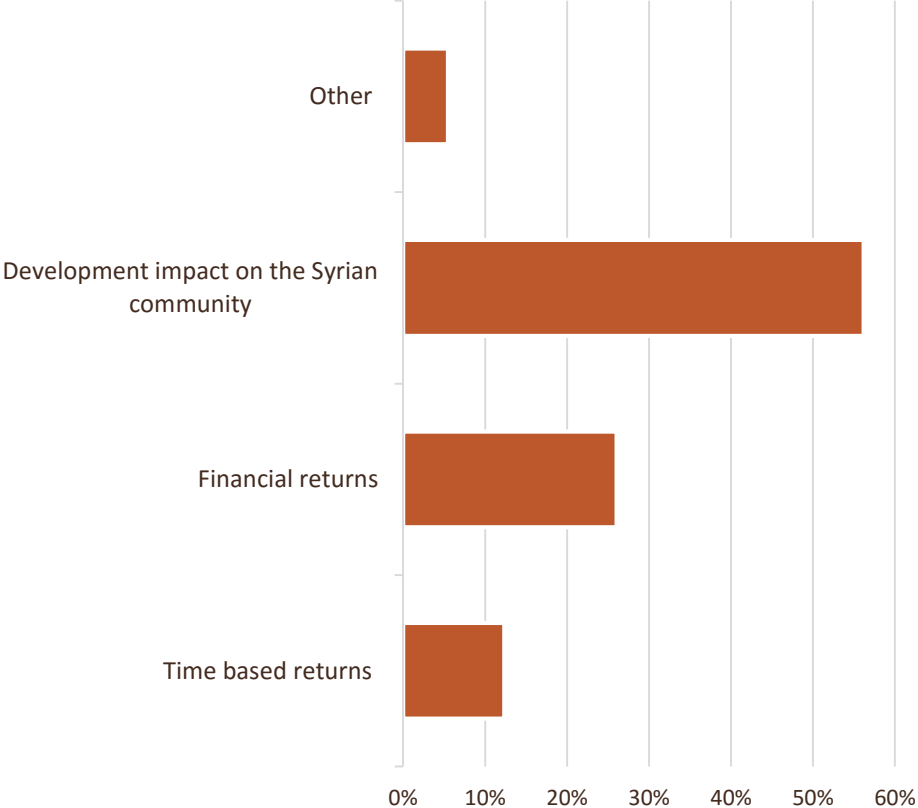
- 23% female and 77% male
- 70% - Wish to return to Syria
- 60% - Current or potential investor
- 84% - Currently or previously had a business establishment in Syria
- Only 38% reside in neighboring host countries but 87% currently invest or support refugee livelihood there
- 96% - Interested in being contacted for this initiative

Investment Drivers

Preferred Investment location & type



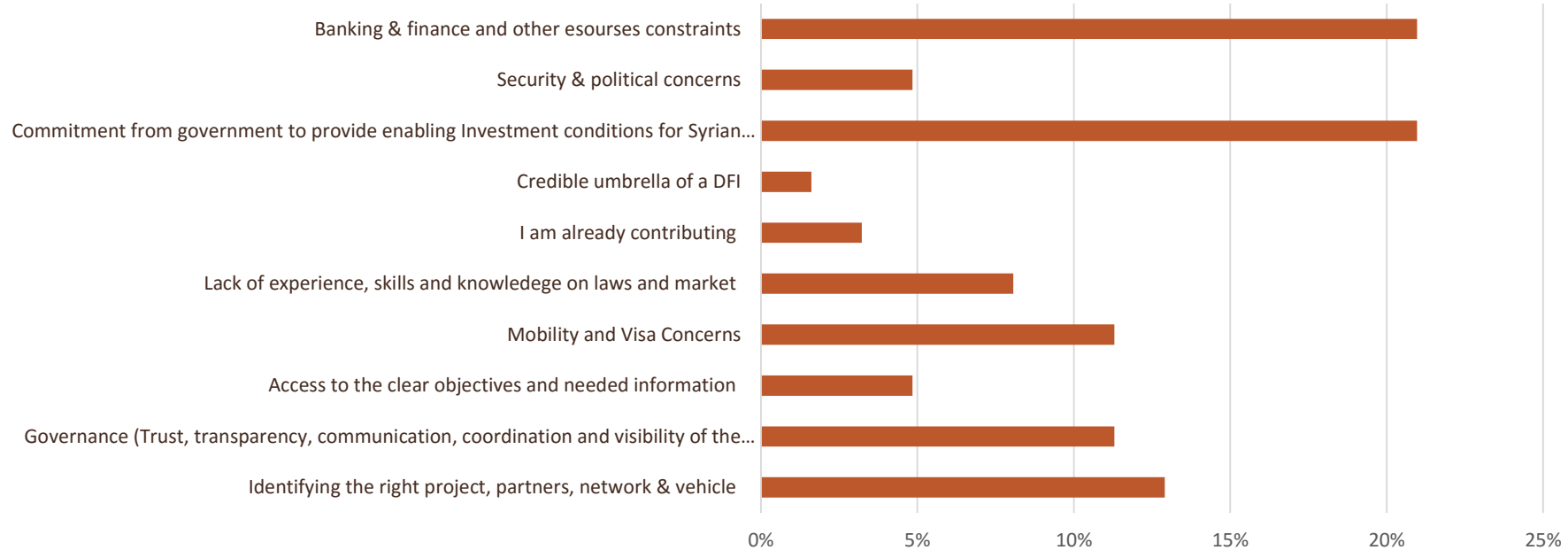
Expected type of Returns



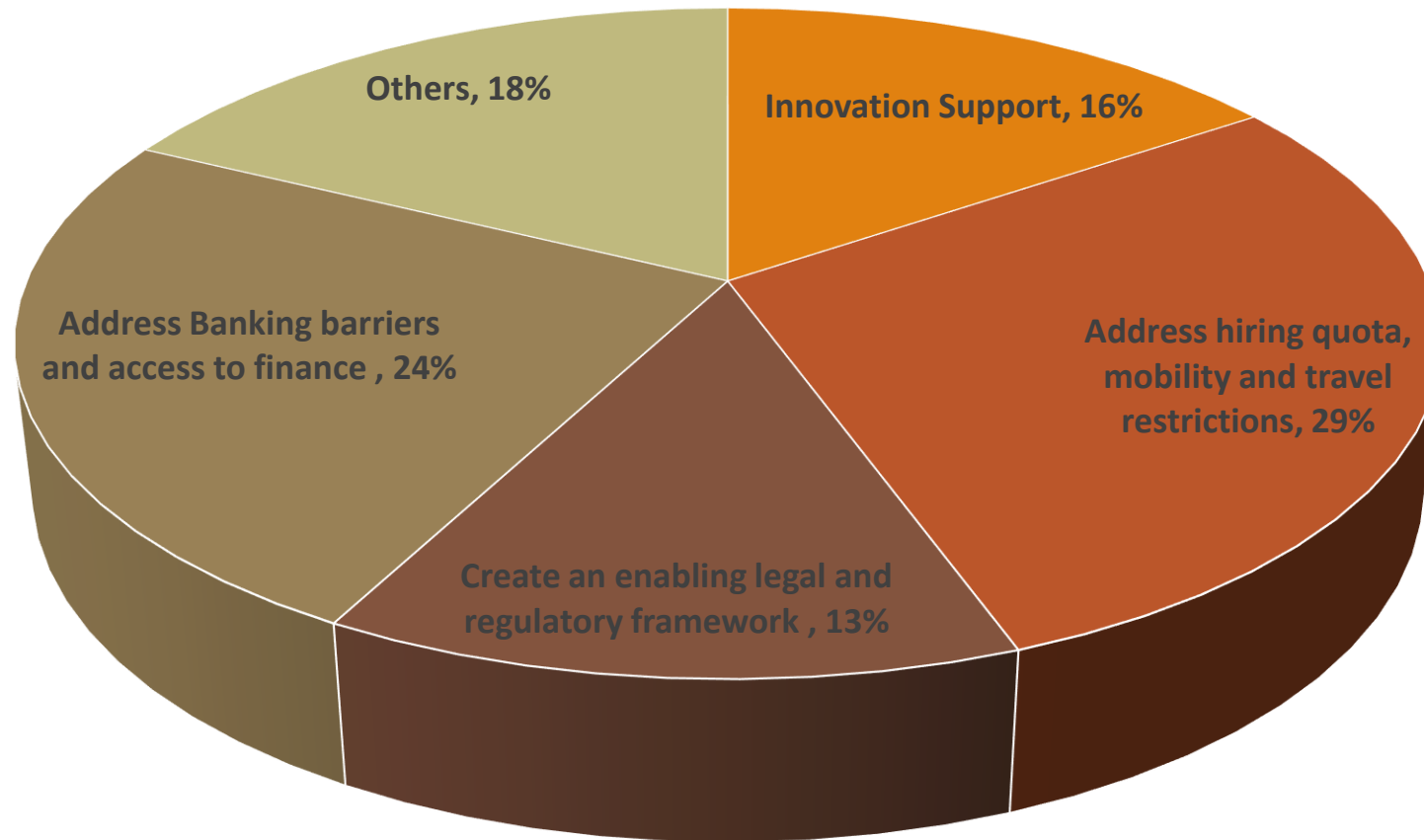
Leveraging the EU Preferential Market Access in Jordan

- ❑ Over 50% of respondents indicated they are unaware of the EU preferential market access in EU
- ❑ 63% of respondents indicated interested in investments or philanthropic initiatives that would leverage the EU market benefit as well as benefit Syrian refugees in Jordan

Main constraining factors



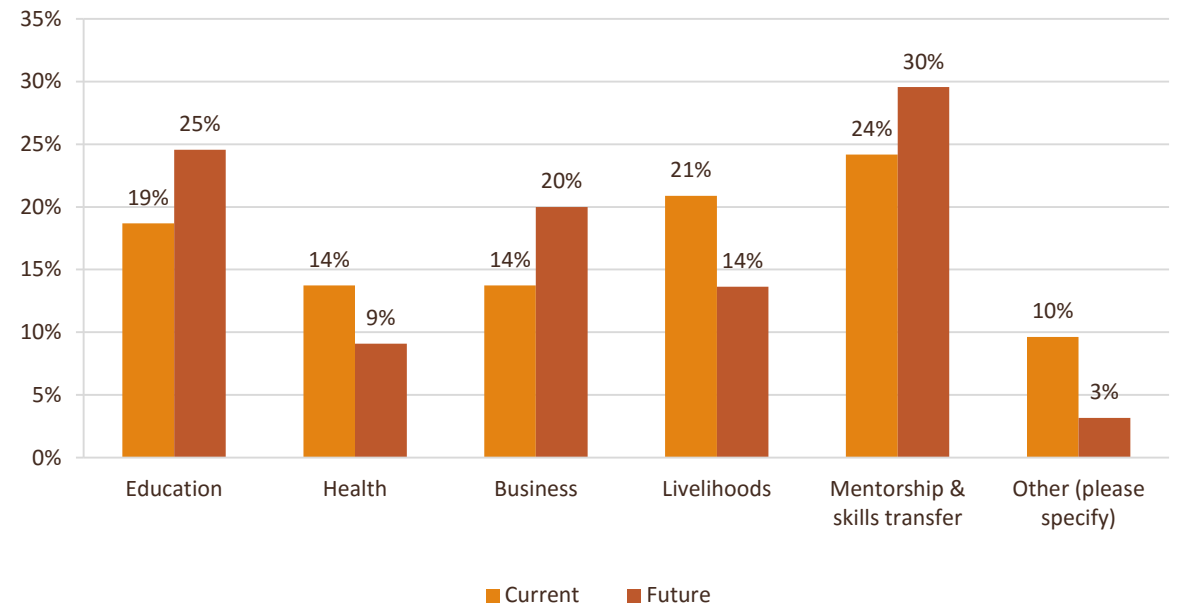
Request to the International Community



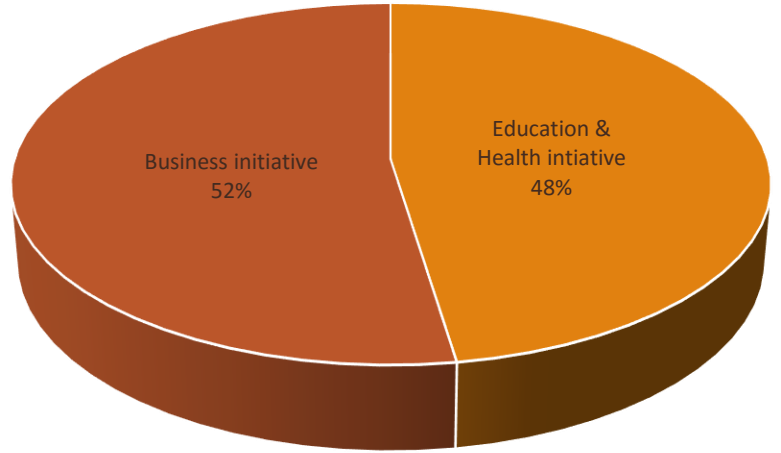
Contribute

Interest & willingness to

Current vs Future Support Interest



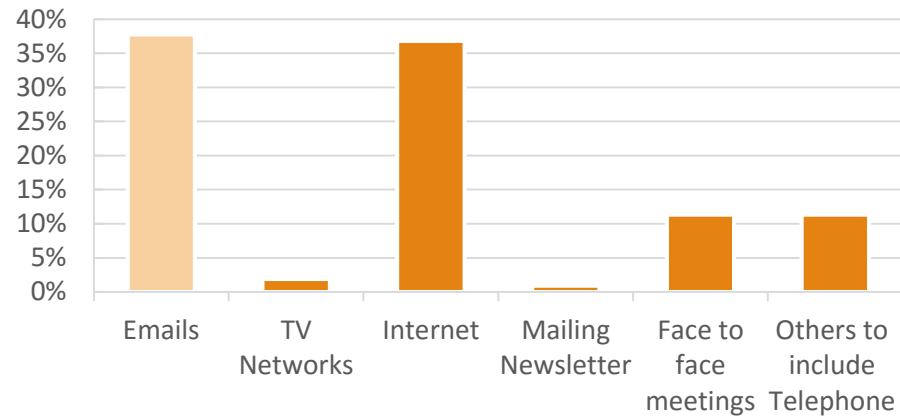
Willingness to contribute



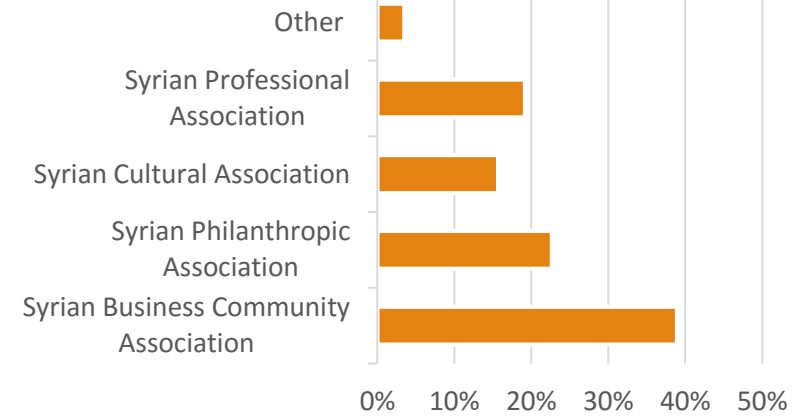
- ❑ There is generally an interest to support Syrian refugees, but there is a decrease in aspiration to just supporting livelihood (35% decrease in current versus future) towards supporting more sustainable initiatives such as business (46% increase in current versus future), mentorship and education.
- ❑ 60% indicated a philanthropic interest for contributions of money and time to support either business, education or health needs
- ❑ Main skills transfer activities of interest: mentoring and teaching
- ❑ Key impediments to skills transfer → "I do not know how to contribute"

Engagement

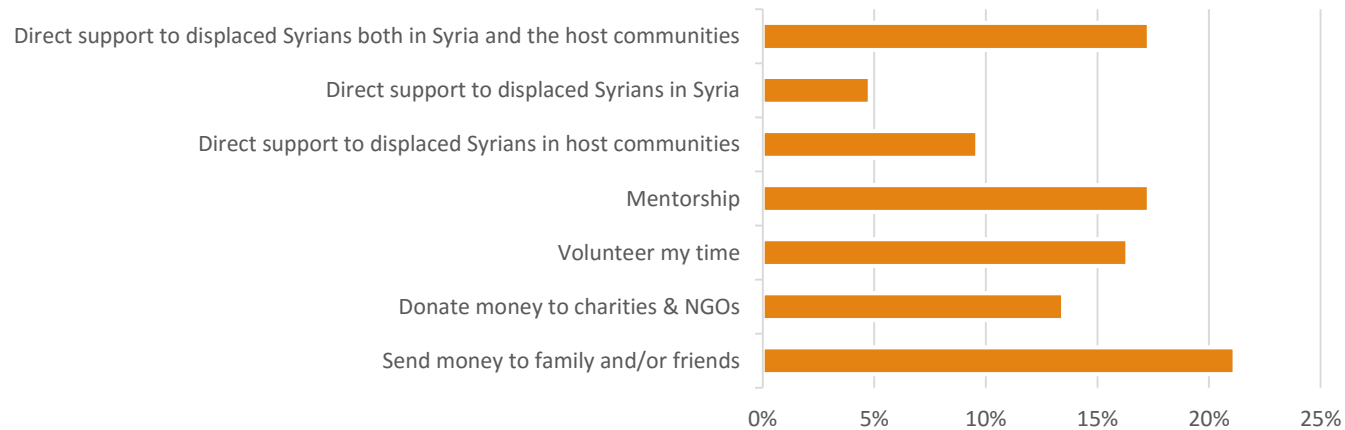
Preferred means of communication



Associations of Interest



Preferred ways of engagement



Conclusions

This work has identified a set of issues we need to collectively work on:

- The need for collective action by businesses to solve regulatory problems and pursue networking opportunities
- The desire to upgrading diaspora business competitiveness
- Finding solutions to financial sector challenges
- Ensuring young men and women are empowered and included
- The close linkages between businesses and philanthropy