

Historical and Current Context

Before the Civil War

19TH - 20TH CENTURY



Lebanon became more connected to the global economy, new forms of labor began to emerge, including factory work and wage labor in the emerging commercial sector

Lebanese people were doing domestic work (young girls)

Also some Arab women (Egyptians, Syrians, Palestinians)

Civil War

1975 - 1990

Disrupted the economy

40% of Lebanese migrated to the Gulf which created labor gaps

Immigration of workers from Africa and Asia filled these labor gaps

Kafala system was established

Workers that remained faced discrimination and violence



The Fall

2019-PRESENT



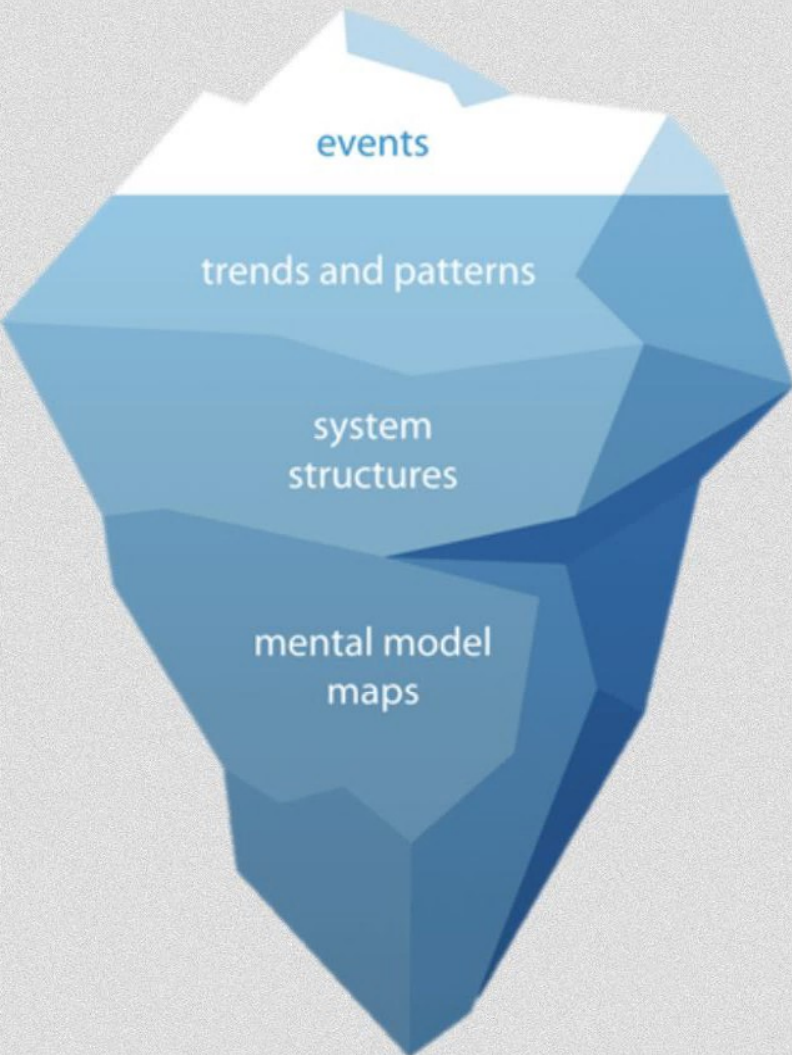
Political and economical instability in 2019

Pandemic and Beirut explosion in 2020

No pay and abuse for migrant workers skyrocketed

Significant decline in migrant workers rights and values

Iceberg Model



Events

- People don't follow existing rules
- Absence of proper regulations
- Inflow of low-skilled cheap labor
- Lack of proper welfare infrastructures
- Imbalance of power
- Low wages

Trends and Patterns

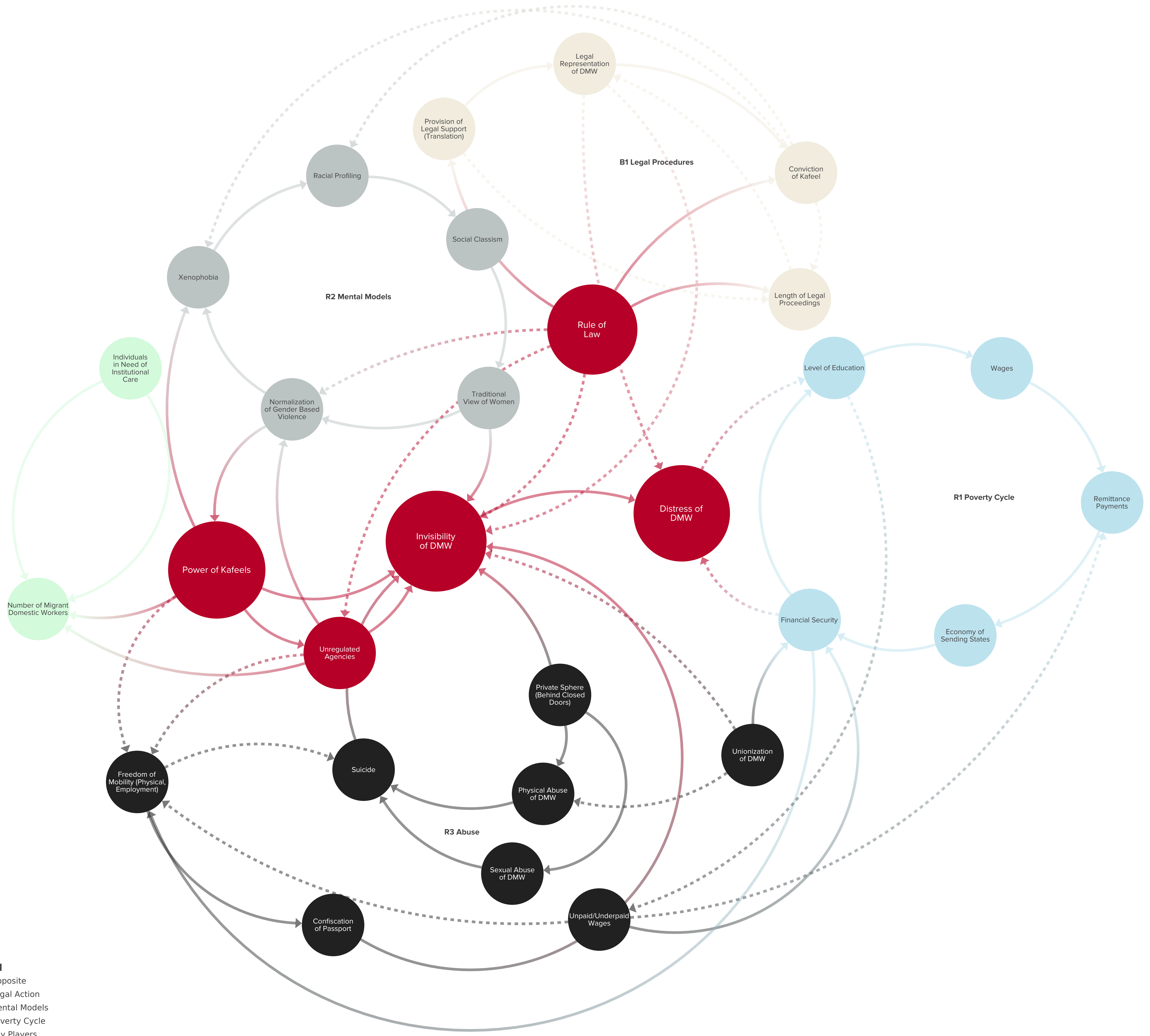
- Unregulated agencies
- Unreliable legal systems
- Weak labor laws
- Inadequate financial institutions
- Inaccessible higher education in home country

System Structures

- Financial and housing insecurity
- Sexual and physical abuse
- Violation of rules and regulations
- Physical and employment immobility

Mental Model Maps

- Belief that migrant workers are easily replaceable
- Hope of better life abroad
- Agencies and kafeels believe dehumanization of workers keep them loyal
- Normalization of racism and violence
- Culture of silence
- Social classism
- Bigotry rooted in patriarchal society



- Legend**
- Opposite
 - Legal Action
 - Mental Models
 - Poverty Cycle
 - Key Players
 - MDW Abuse
 - Others

Legend

- External Stakeholders
- Internal Stakeholders



The Story of how a Filipino Domestic Migrant Worker Faced the Kafala System



Fighting for Change

- Started to take part of protests to change the situation for domestic workers
- Worked with different NGO's and organization and is now a figure of the movement

"There is no freedom at all"

"We are facing deportation, if they know that we are fighting for and raising awareness for migrant domestic workers"

Understanding the Situation and Demands

- Discovering and understanding the harsh situation of other workers
- Demanded to go to church on her day off
- Unsuccessfully trying to terminate the existing contract

"I was really afraid"

"I was working from seven o'clock till three in the morning"

Signing a Contract with the Agency

- A contract of 3 years was signed
- The ticket to Lebanon would be covered by the employer
- The salary would increase during these three years
- Food and accommodation would be provided
- The worker should get a day a week off

"I was just excited to work abroad"

"I didn't receive anything for the first month, the second month and the third month"

Finding a New Employer

- Found new employers at the church after her original three year contract was terminated
- Her new employers were not Lebanese
- They treated her well, as promised by their contract

"I have to emphasize that my new employers are not Lebanese, they are foreigners"

"Whatever the taste I had to swallow it, drink water, and go to sleep"

Arriving and Facing the Harsh Reality

- The worker's passport was confiscated at the airport
- The first three months salaries were deducted to repay the ticket price
- The worker had to work seven days a week with overtimes
- The worker had no ways to contact her family

"It was just promises"

"Do you think migrant domestic workers are protected? We are not! We are not!"

Finding an Agency and Applying for a Job

- Contacting an agency in the Philippines
- Applying for a job
- A position was only available in Lebanon
- Getting through the process of obtaining a passport

Intersectionality
of Forces Driving
the **Vulnerability**
of Domestic
Migrant Workers



Gaps and Levers of Change

