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Sudanese and Somali Refugees in
Urban Protracted Displacement,
Jordan: Exploring Experiences of
Dehumanisation and Restriction of
Agency

Master in Human Rights and Democratisation:
Arab Programme in Democracy and Human Rights

The Institute of Political Science of Saint Joseph University does not intend to give any approval or disapproval to the opinions expressed in this thesis. These opinions belong solely to their author.

This thesis is dedicated to Halima and her daughter Shahad.

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the experiences of dehumanisation and restriction of agency of Sudanese and Somali refugees living in urban protracted displacement in Jordan. These experiences are conceptualised using Hannah Arendt's theoretical framework of human rights and Heather Johnson's exposition of the agency of non-citizens. This thesis' primary contribution is to add knowledge to the under-researched, minority populations of Sudanese and Somali refugees in Jordan. It also adds to broader literature on the experiences of refugees in protracted situations in the Global South and contributes to overlooked areas of African identity in the Arab World, and Southern-led responses to displacement. This thesis is an inter-disciplinary study that adopts qualitative grounded theory methodology, conducting semi-structured interviews with Sudanese and Somali refugees and key informants, and facilitating focus group discussions with community leaders between March and May 2023 in Amman, Jordan. The findings identify four major barriers shaping the refugees' experiences: Lack of access to socio-economic rights, racism and discrimination, lack of integration and lack of legal protection. The findings then address the root causes of these barriers with analysis of Jordan's refugee response. Finally, the findings show how these experiences and barriers are countered by the community through support networks, civic participation, and individual acts of resistance.

Keywords: agency, dehumanisation, Jordan, urban protracted displacement, southern-led responses, Sudanese refugees, Somali refugees.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

3RP	The Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan
ARDD	Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development
CAT	Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (1984)
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CBP	Community-Based Protection
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)
CRP	Collateral Repair Project
CSC	Community Support Committee of the UNHCR
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DAFI Scholarship	Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative
ECHO	European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
EU	The European Union
FBO	Faith-Based Organisation
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FGS	Federal Government of Somalia
GCR	The Global Compact on Refugees
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)
ICERD	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965)
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966)
IJMES	International Journal of Middle East Studies

ILO	International Labour Organization
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IRAP	International Refugee Assistance Project
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
JOHUD	Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development
JRP	Jordan Response Plan
JRS	Jesuit Refugee Service
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoI	Ministry of Interior
MoL	Ministry of Labour
MoPIC	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
The Protocol	Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees (1967)
The Refugee Convention	The Convention Relating to the Status on Refugees (1951)
RLO	Refugee-Led Organisation
RSD	Refugee Status Determination
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
TRP	Temporary Refugee Protection
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

VAF Vulnerability Assessment Framework

WFP World Food Programme

WHO World Health Organisation

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PART ONE

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

On 15 April, 2023, armed clashes broke out in the Republic of the Sudan (Sudan) between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces. Four months later, this has resulted in the displacement of more than 4.5 million people including 731,601 asylum seekers and refugees.¹ This sudden escalation is a stark reminder of on-going instability in countries with protracted conflicts such as Sudan, hindering the safe return and reintegration of refugees. Similar challenges can be seen in the protracted crisis in the Federal Republic of Somalia (Somalia) since the outbreak of civil war in 1993. 1 million Somalians have been displaced in the Spring of 2023 due to conflict, floods, and severe drought.² Somalia's refugee diaspora of 799,100 and Sudan's of 844,300 are the ninth and tenth largest in the world, indicative of the length and severity of the conflicts.³

While many Somali and Sudanese refugees have fled to neighbouring countries in Africa, there are minorities that have ended up in the Middle East, including the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (Jordan). This thesis explores the experiences of these Sudanese and Somali refugees in a situation of protracted, urban displacement in Jordan. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) records 5,058 Sudanese⁴ and 579 Somali⁵ asylum seekers and refugees living in Jordan. The total figures of Sudanese and Somali nationals living in Jordan are estimated to be higher.⁶

In the context of the broader international landscape, there has been a rising anti-

¹ 'Sudan Situation', *UNHCR Data Portal*, (last updated 21 August 2023), data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/sudansituation.

² 'Over 1 million people internally displaced in Somalia in record time', *UNHCR*, (24 May 2023), [unhcr.org/news/press-releases/over-1-million-people-internally-displaced-somalia-record-time](https://www.unhcr.org/news/press-releases/over-1-million-people-internally-displaced-somalia-record-time).

³ Note that these figures are prior to the recent conflict in Sudan: 'UNHCR Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2022', *UNHCR*, (June 2023), 19, [unhcr.org/global-trends-report-2022](https://www.unhcr.org/global-trends-report-2022).

⁴ Due to the small number of registered South Sudanese refugees, (18) this thesis focuses on Sudanese refugees only. 'Refugee Data Finder', *UNHCR*, accessed 1 March 2023, [unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=M8sLAA](https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=M8sLAA).

⁵ 'External Statistical Report on Registered Refugees and Asylum Seekers, Jordan', (15 July 2023), *UNHCR*, data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/102179.

⁶ See Appendix 1.

immigration sentiment amongst the Global North⁷, with a particular focus on the ‘migrant crisis’⁸ in Europe. However, 76% of refugees are hosted by low and middle income countries.⁹ In the Middle East, Jordan and Lebanon are the top two refugee hosting countries per capita in the world.¹⁰ The rhetoric surrounding refugees in the Middle East is largely of a different nature than in the Global North. Roots of Arab hospitality and duty to care for those in need has resulted in significant measures to provide when resources are often scarce. But the reality is that this is a challenge: for the refugees, but also for the government, the host population, and the international humanitarian community seeking durable solutions.¹¹

Jordan has a long history of welcoming refugees through its borders since its foundation in 1921 as the Emirate of Transjordan. 27% of Jordan’s population are recognised as refugees by the UNHCR and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for the Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA),¹² the figure higher in reality. This is despite Jordan’s decision to not ratify the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its Protocol,¹³ instead governing refugees through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the UNHCR.¹⁴ While Jordan is known for hosting sizable populations of Palestinians, Iraqis and Syrians, there are also refugees from thirty-six other countries residing in Jordan.¹⁵ The scope of this research is limited to the experiences of Somali and Sudanese refugees as African-origin, minority populations, while acknowledging the presence of other minority nationalities.

Sudanese and Somali refugees, due to the protracted nature of their crisis, their small population size, and lack of visibility in an urban context, have largely escaped policy and research attention. Refugee Studies as a discipline itself has been accused of falling into the

⁷ This thesis uses the terms ‘Global North’ and ‘Global South’, or ‘North/South’ to refer to the regions of Europe and North America vs. the regions of Latin America, Asia, Africa and Oceania, emphasising the difference in geopolitical relations of power. Nour Dados and Raewyn Connell, ‘The Global South’, *American Sociological Association* 11, No. 1 (2012): 12-13, journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1536504212436479.

⁸ Terminology is contentious; here ‘migrant’ used to signify that the refugees are seeking economic benefit. Gavin Mortimer, ‘Europe has lost control of the migrant crisis’, *The Spectator*, (3 February 2023), [spectator.co.uk/article/europe-has-lost-control-of-the-migrant-crisis/](https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/europe-has-lost-control-of-the-migrant-crisis/).

⁹ ‘Global Trends’, 22.

¹⁰ ‘Jordan’, *UNHCR*, accessed 1 November 2022, [unhcr.org/countries/jordan](https://www.unhcr.org/countries/jordan).

¹¹ See Chapter 1.4.3 for further discussion of ‘durable solutions’.

¹² ‘Statistical Report’; ‘Where we Work’ *UNRWA*, accessed 25 July 2023, [unrwa.org/where-we-work](https://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work); Population of Jordan 11,148,278 in 2021, ‘Population Total, Jordan,’ *World Bank*, data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?locations=JO.

¹³ Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, July 28 1951, 189 U.N.T.S 137; Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, Jan. 31 1967, 606 U.N.T.S. 267.

¹⁴ Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Jordan and UNHCR, (MoU), Apr.5 1998, Official Gazette 4277, rescuerefugees.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/LE2JOR002_AREN.pdf.

¹⁵ ‘Refugees in Jordan in 2022’ *UNHCR*, [unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=sxa1Cl](https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=sxa1Cl).

trap of being policy-driven. Naohiko Omata establishes a connection between ‘over-researched’ and ‘under-researched’ refugee groups, and policy-driven research that is dependent on funding or recognition.¹⁶ Oliver Bakewell describes this as a ‘major weakness’, contributing to rendering refugee populations invisible.¹⁷ Existing literature on the Sudanese and Somali refugees in Jordan mainly consists of reports appearing after the mass deportation of Sudanese refugees by the Jordanian Government in December 2015. These reports are policy-focused, drawing attention to the lack of access to rights of ‘non-Syrian’¹⁸ refugees, evidencing problems such as aid distribution based on nationality.¹⁹

Given the multi-faceted nature of seeking refuge, this research adopts an interdisciplinary approach. It incorporates a human rights perspective to examine the refugees’ situation, a socio-cultural anthropological lens to understand their perceptions and experiences, and political and historical analysis to contextualise their position within the broader realms of geopolitics and international relations. This research is based on three months of qualitative field research conducted in Amman, Jordan in 2023, consisting of semi-structured interviews with Sudanese and Somali refugees and key stakeholders, and focus group discussions with leaders from the community. The research undertaken was exploratory in nature, using grounded theory methodology.²⁰

Through this research, experiences of dehumanisation and restriction of agency emerged, and were defined and conceptualised using Hannah Arendt’s theoretical framework of human rights, and Heather Johnson’s exposition of the agency of non-citizens.

The research question and sub-research questions were then formulated as follows:

What factors contribute towards the experiences of dehumanisation and restriction of agency of the Sudanese and Somali refugees in Jordan, and how are these experiences countered?

¹⁶ Naohiko Omata, “‘Over-Researched’ and ‘Under-Researched’ Refugee Groups: Exploring the Phenomena, Causes and Consequences”, *Journal of Human Rights Practice* 12, No. 3 (2021): 682, doi.org/10.1093/jhuman/huaa049.

¹⁷ Oliver Bakewell, ‘Research Beyond the Categories’, *Journal of Refugee Studies* 21, No. 4 (2008): 432, doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fen042.

¹⁸ ‘Non-Syrian’ is the policy term used by the UNHCR to refer to refugees from nationalities other than Syrian. ‘3RP Regional Strategic Overview 2023’, *UNHCR*, (2023), 41, reporting.unhcr.org/jordan-refugees-and-asylum-seekers-17.

¹⁹ For example Rochelle Johnston et al., ‘Realizing the Rights of Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Jordan’, *Norwegian Refugee Council*, (2019), reliefweb.int/report/jordan/realizing-rights-asylum-seekers-and-refugees-jordan-countries-other-syria-focus.

²⁰ Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. (Aldine Transaction: New Brunswick, 1967).

- i) *What barriers do the refugees face in everyday life that contribute towards these experiences?*
- ii) *How do the policies and agendas of Jordan's refugee response contribute to these barriers and impact the refugees' experiences?*
- iii) *How are community-led responses countering the barriers the refugees face and changing their experiences?*

This thesis, by focusing on Sudanese and Somalian refugees in Jordan, seeks to add to the limited research on these refugee populations to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences, as well as adding insight to minority refugee populations in urban, protracted situations in the Global South. It also contributes to under-researched areas of African communities in the Arab world, and Southern-led responses²¹ to displacement.

This thesis will be structured as follows: This chapter provides contextual background on refugee flows into Jordan and from Sudan and Somalia, demographics and key definitions and the legal and humanitarian framework governing the refugees. Chapter Two presents the literature review and the conceptual framework. Chapter Three explains the research methodology. Results and analysis are presented in Chapters Four, Five and Six, and then the thesis concludes in Chapter Seven with recommendations for further research.

1.2 Refugee Flows to Jordan

An overview will be given of the historical and political context of Jordan's refugee response, showing how the government dealt with each major refugee influx. This provides background for the analysis of Jordan's refugee response.

1.2.1 Foundations

After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the British protectorate of Transjordan was formed in 1921 and gained independence as the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in 1946. With the drawing of new nation lines, all those living in Transjordan at the time were given

²¹ 'Southern-led responses' are humanitarian responses developed and implemented in the Global South. Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 'Southern-led Responses to Displacement' in *Routledge Handbook of South-South Relations*, ed. Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Patricia Daley, 1st ed. (New York: Routledge, 2019), 239-251.

citizenship, including the Bedouin, peasants, townspeople in Salt, Amman and Ma'an and the many Circassians, Chechens and Armenians who were residing in Jordan. Chatty emphasises the legacy of the millet system in the Ottoman Empire, '[shaping] the way in which the great forced migration of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were absorbed into the fabric of the societies and cultures of the Middle East'.²² This pan-Arab ethos helped form, in conjunction with traditions of Bedouin and Islamic values, a strong value of hospitality²³ and therefore a welcoming, 'inclusive nationalism'.²⁴ The Constitution of Jordan, established in 1952, affirmed the principle of non-refoulement of refugees²⁵ - but no domestic legal framework for refugees was put in place.

1.2.2 Palestinians

In 1948, the demographic of Jordan changed dramatically with the influx of 450,000 Palestinian refugees during Al-Nakba as Palestine was occupied, doubling Jordan's population. The West Bank was unified with the East Bank as an outcome of the Jericho Conference of December 1948. Palestinians in Jordan and in the West Bank were granted Jordanian citizenship, having the unique status of both refugee under UNRWA and citizen through legal integration. The development of camps gave Palestinians access to international aid and service provision, while easing the pressure on Jordan's domestic situation.

The second wave of 350,000 Palestinians arrived in 1967 during Al-Naksa as Palestine was further occupied, and the economic difficulties of dealing with a second population increase saw a shift in policy. Entitlement to residency for Palestinians was a condition of the 1965 Casablanca Protocol produced by the Arab League (LAS)²⁶ in order to safeguard their right to return. However, as Gazan Palestinians had been under Egyptian governance, Jordan did not grant them citizenship, seeing them as only entitled to refugee status under the administration of UNRWA. To avoid contradicting the Protocol, Jordan issued Gazans with a travel document of limited two-year passports. This became *de-facto* policy for other Palestinians entering from other countries such as Iraq and Syria.²⁷ By 1970

²² Dawn Chatty, 'The Duty to be Generous (Karam)', *Journal of the British Academy* 5, (2017): 187, doi.org/10.5871/jba/005.177.

²³ Oroub El-Abed, 'The Discourse of Guesthood: Forced Migrants in Jordan' in Anita Fábos and Riina Isotalo, eds., *Managing Muslim Mobilities* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 82.

²⁴ Rochelle Davis et al., 'Hosting Guests, Creating Citizens: Models of Refugee Administration in Jordan and Egypt', *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 36 (2017): 3, doi.org/10.1093/rsq/hdx003.

²⁵ Article 21, Constitution of The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, (1952) as amended (2011).

²⁶ Protocol For The Treatment Of Palestinians In Arab States, Sept. 11, 1965, League of Arab States (LAS).

²⁷ Davis et al., 'Guests', 12.

relations with the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) started to deteriorate with clashes during Black September and subsequently they were cast out of Jordan. In 1988 Jordan handed the West Bank representation to PLO governance. In 1993, with the creation of the Palestinian Authority, Jordan no longer issued passports, nor allowed Palestinians that were entitled to a Palestinian passport, Jordanian citizenship.

1.2.3 Iraqis

There were several influxes of Iraqi refugees between 1991 and 2008 due to the Gulf Wars and the breakdown of rule following the American invasion of 2003. These influxes coincided with new economic pressures. From the 1950s, during the Gulf oil boom, a large number of Jordanians were sending remittances to Jordan, but the economic downfall of the 1980s and the political events in the 1990s resulted in 350,000 Jordanians returning home.²⁸

After the 1990 Iraq invasion of Kuwait and the 1991 Gulf war it is estimated that 500,000 Iraqis arrived in Jordan, many then migrating to a third destination.²⁹ Jordan welcomed those that stayed, allowing them to integrate into society. By 2003 it was estimated that there were about 250,000-300,000 Iraqis residing in Jordan,³⁰ (of whom only 7,482 were registered as asylum seekers or refugees).³¹ A new influx of Iraqi refugees arrived with the 2003 American-led war and downfall of Saddam Hussein. It has been shown that fewer Iraqis than expected fled initially, and also fewer than predicted returning to Iraq.³² Iraqis initially entered through Jordan's open-border policy with Arab nationals. However, after the Amman hotels bombings in 2005, initiated by Iraqis from al-Qaeda, and the execution of Saddam Hussein in 2006, they were seen as a security threat and borders were tightened, Iraqis needing a visa to enter.³³ By 2006 due to the rising conflicts in Iraq in the aftermath of the invasion, figures as high as 750,000 were estimated to be in Jordan.³⁴ These figures are disputed, with the Jordanian government accused of inflating the statistics in order to appeal for international development aid.³⁵

²⁸ El-Abed, 'Guesthood', 92.

²⁹ El-Abed, 93.

³⁰ El-Abed, 94.

³¹ 'Refugee Data Finder', *UNHCR*, unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=j8OodT.

³² Dawn Chatty, "Operation Iraqi Freedom" and its Phantom Million Iraqi Refugees', *Forced Migration Review* 18, (2003): 51, fmreview.org/sites/fmr/files/FMRdownloads/en/logistics/chatty.pdf.

³³ El-Abed, 'Guesthood', 95.

³⁴ El-Abed, 94.

³⁵ Dallal Stevens, 'Legal Status, Labelling, and Protection: The Case of Iraqi "Refugees" in Jordan', *International Journal of Refugee Law* 25 No. 1, (2013):36, doi.org/10.1093/ijrl/eet001.

The government also had a contentious relationship with the UNHCR during this period due to the UNHCR's attempt to apply a Temporary Protection Regime (TPR), and subsequently prima facie status to Iraqis,³⁶ whilst the government insisted on individual Refugee Status Determination (RSD). The UNHCR eventually had to backdown, and their leadership was replaced. From 2014 Jordan hosted more Iraqi refugees, especially Christians, fleeing the newly formed Islamic State of Syria and Iraq (ISIS).³⁷ and in 2023, 60,951 are registered with the UNHCR.³⁸

1.2.4 Syrians

In 2011 the Syrian crisis began, following the protests during the Arab Spring. An initial 600,000 refugees arrived in Jordan as two million were displaced from Syria's borders.³⁹ At first, as with the Iraqis, Syrian refugees were initially called 'guests' in government discourse.⁴⁰ However, due to the large numbers, this time, the government allowed the UNHCR to register the refugees prima facie and requested international support.⁴¹ The Za'atari and Azraq camps were set up in 2012 with international funding. The government continued to struggle to cope with the number of refugees, and from 2013 started to implement border restrictions.⁴² In 2016, after the ISIS suicide attack against a border post,⁴³ further restrictions were enacted, Minister of State for Media Affairs Mohammed al-Momani stating that the area around the berm⁴⁴ was a 'Daesh [ISIS] enclave,'⁴⁵ leaving 75,000 Syrians trapped without aid.

Increasing concerns over security and the ability to cope with the number of refugees saw a shift to a development approach: A humanitarian framework was set up under the Jordan Response Plan for the Syria Crisis (JRP), and in 2016 the Jordan Compact was

³⁶ Prima facie status refers to a person's recognition as a refugee 'on the basis of objective criteria' rather than individual refugee status determination. 'Glossary', *UNHCR*, accessed 12 November 2022, [unhcr.org/glossary](https://www.unhcr.org/glossary)

³⁷ 'Briefing Notes', *UNHCR*, (September 2014), [unhcr.org/news/briefing-notes/sharp-increase-iraqi-refugees-fleeing-isis-jordan-and-turkey](https://www.unhcr.org/news/briefing-notes/sharp-increase-iraqi-refugees-fleeing-isis-jordan-and-turkey).

³⁸ 'Statistical Report'.

³⁹ Chatty, 'Generous', 184.

⁴⁰ Chatty, 183.

⁴¹ El-Abed, 'Guesthood', 96.

⁴² 'Risk of humanitarian disaster', (9 December 2015), *Amnesty International*, [amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2015/12/jordan-risk-of-humanitarian-disaster-as-12000-refugees-from-syria-stranded-in-no-mans-land/](https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2015/12/jordan-risk-of-humanitarian-disaster-as-12000-refugees-from-syria-stranded-in-no-mans-land/).

⁴³ Osama al-Sharif, 'Why Jordan is unlikely to reconsider', *Al-Monitor*, (29 June 2016), [al-monitor.com/originals/2016/06/jordan-close-syria-border-economic-crisis.html](https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2016/06/jordan-close-syria-border-economic-crisis.html).

⁴⁴ The 'berm' is a raised barrier of sand marking the Jordanian limit of the Jordan-Syria border near Rukban and Hadalat crossings.

⁴⁵ 'Syria-Jordan border', *Amnesty International*, (1 September 2016), [amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2016/09/syria-jordan-border-75000-refugees-trapped-in-desert-no-mans-land-in-dire-conditions/](https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2016/09/syria-jordan-border-75000-refugees-trapped-in-desert-no-mans-land-in-dire-conditions/).

formalised, giving Syrians the right to work,⁴⁶ in return for international aid for development in Jordan.

1.2.5 Yemenis, Sudanese, Somalis and other nationalities such as Eritreans, Ethiopians and Chadians.

The outbreak of civil war in Yemen in 2014 resulted in many Yemenis-and Somalis living in Yemen-fleeing to Jordan, especially with most Gulf countries not permitting refuge. Yemenis already working in Jordan found themselves unable to return. 2013 and 2014 also coincided with increased conflict in Darfur, Sudan, the number of refugees rising during this period.⁴⁷ These refugees were able to undergo RSD and have access to UNHCR services until 2019 when the government halted any further registration by the UNHCR. As ‘non-border’ refugees, having to initially enter on a medical, student or tourist visa, there is no formal recognition of their status from the government or inclusion in policies or provisions such as the JRP, viewed as ‘illegals’.⁴⁸

1.2.6 Current political and economic situation

Jordan lacks capital sources and natural resources and is therefore vulnerable to changes in the global economic climate. Hazem Beblawi categorises Jordan as a ‘non-oil rentier state’⁴⁹ due to its reliance on external sources such as international aid. Jordan is classed by the World Bank as a lower-middle income country, with a Gross National Income per capita of \$4,103.3,⁵⁰ and 24.1% of the population live at or below the national poverty line.⁵¹ There has been significant regional instability in the last decade with the Syrian crisis, and more recently due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Jordan’s unemployment rate of 22.6% is still above pre-pandemic levels.⁵² With compounding difficulties from the Ukraine crisis and implications for food security, the vulnerability of Jordanians and refugees has increased.⁵³

⁴⁶ ‘The Jordan Compact’, *UNHCR*, globalcompactrefugees.org/gcr-action/countries/jordan.

⁴⁷ The UNHCR reports 2,463 Sudanese, Yemeni and Somali refugees in 2015 compared to 659 in 2011, ‘Refugee Data Finder’, *UNHCR*, accessed 14 April 2023, unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=8cK7HR.

⁴⁸ Zeynep Mencütek, *Refugee Governance, State and Politics in the Middle East*, (New York: Routledge, 2019), 192.

⁴⁹ Hazem Beblawi, ‘The Rentier State in the Arab World’, *Arab Studies Quarterly* 9, No. 4 (1987): 392, [jstor.org/stable/41857943](https://www.jstor.org/stable/41857943).

⁵⁰ ‘Jordan’, *The World Bank*, (2022), data.worldbank.org/?locations=JO-XN.

⁵¹ Maria Weldali, ‘Poverty Rate of 24.1% Requires Policy Change’, (June 2022), *Jordan Times*, jordantimes.com/news/local/poverty-rate-241-requires-policy-change-%E2%80%94-experts.

⁵² ‘The World Bank in Jordan’, *World Bank*, (January 2023), [worldbank.org/en/country/jordan/overview](https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/jordan/overview).

⁵³ ‘Secondary Impacts of The Conflict in Ukraine’, *Mercy Corps* (June 2022), mercycorps.org/sites/default/files/2022-06/SECONDARY-IMPACTS-OF-UKRAINE-CONFLICT-IN-THE-MIDDLE-EAST_JUNE-2022.pdf.

At the same time these developments, with other global challenges, have resulted in a decrease in funding of international aid.

These economic pressures, combined with continued challenges of hosting the refugee population, have resulted in gradual changes in public perception towards refugees, seen in the latest survey produced by UNHCR showing ‘indications of a growing fatigue’⁵⁴ and news articles stating that there is a ‘growing frustration’, especially regards to employment opportunities for locals, and even a ‘degree of anger and agitation’⁵⁵ from the host community.

1.3 Refugee Flows from Sudan and Somalia

1.3.1 Sudan

Since its independence from Britain and Egypt, Sudan has suffered from civil wars and famine. In 2003 civil war broke out in Darfur when the Sudanese Liberation Movement and Justice And Equality Movement rebel groups rebelled against the government of Sudan due to their treatment of the non-Arab population. The government-formed Janjaweed militia retaliated with brutal force. This saw the first major influx of Sudanese into neighbouring countries, such as Chad, Ethiopia and Egypt, but also those travelling farther afield to countries including Jordan. The government carried out a campaign of ethnic cleansing which resulted in the death of thousands of civilians and indictment of President al-Bashir for genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity by the International Criminal Court.⁵⁶ Adding to the instability was the separation of North and South Sudan in 2011, ethnic and tribal conflict combining with a myriad of disputes over borders and resources, specially over Abyei’s oil. Just two years after South Sudan gained independence, civil war broke out.

Despite the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur in 2011, the conflict escalated between 2012 and 2014 and the numbers of asylum seekers in Jordan significantly

⁵⁴ ‘UNHCR Survey Reveals positive Jordanian attitude towards refugees’, *UNHCR*, (January 2022), [unhcr.org/jo/17147-unhcr-survey-reveals-positive-jordanian-attitude-towards-refugees.html](https://www.unhcr.org/jo/17147-unhcr-survey-reveals-positive-jordanian-attitude-towards-refugees.html).

⁵⁵ Palash Kamruzzaman et al., ‘Syrian refugees and host community in Jordan’, *Jordan Times* (August 2022), jordantimes.com/opinion/palash-kamruzzaman-hanaa-albanna-najah-al-shanableh-and-mohammad-alhadab/syrian-refugees-and.

⁵⁶ ‘Sudan: Former President Omar Al-Bashir must not escape international trial’, *Amnesty International*, (August 2019), [amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2019/08/sudan-former-president-omar-al-bashir-must-not-escape-international-trial/](https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2019/08/sudan-former-president-omar-al-bashir-must-not-escape-international-trial/).

increased.⁵⁷ In 2019, following mounting protests, the military led a coup against Bashir. A transitional government was formed that was expected to rule until elections were held in 2022. However, in October 2021 there was a further coup, violence continuing amidst an unstable environment.

The Sudanese refugees in Jordan are mainly from Darfur. Many fled to escape being drafted into militia or because of persecution and violence, and now the second generation of Sudanese are being born in Jordan. The ongoing conflict in Darfur is exacerbated by the current war which has entered its fourth month. Since April 2023, 4.5 million have been displaced, and 3.43 million internally displaced.⁵⁸ In May 2023 the UNHCR issued a non-return advisory for Sudan due to the volatile situation, calling on all countries to allow civilians of all nationalities fleeing Sudan access to their territories, and suspension of negative asylum decisions.⁵⁹

1.3.2 Somalia

Forced displacement in, and from, Somalia is one of the longest-running crises in the world today.⁶⁰ In 1991 the state collapsed, and President Siad Barre was overthrown. During 1992-3 an estimated 250,000 people died, 800,000 refugees fled to Kenya and Ethiopia and 2 million were internally displaced.⁶¹

The period of 1996–2006 saw the declaration of several autonomous states and transitional governments, and some returns were facilitated, but the situation deteriorated further when the transitional government allied with warlords. In 2006, the Union of Islamic Courts was ousted by Ethiopian troops. This was seen as involvement of a foreign power by some and resulted in the emergence of al-Shabaab, hardline militias claiming to be in defence of Somalia against foreigners. International humanitarian law violations have been committed by all parties, including the ‘targeting of civilians, the killing, maiming and recruitment of children, and conflict-related sexual violence’.⁶²

⁵⁷ From 309 in 2012 to 1582 in 2014, ‘Refugee Data Finder’, *UNHCR*, [unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=T03Jzz](https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=T03Jzz).

⁵⁸ ‘Sudan Situation’.

⁵⁹ ‘UNHCR Positions on Returns to Sudan’, *UNHCR*, (May 2023), [refworld.org/pdfid/6450e5814.pdf](https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/6450e5814.pdf).

⁶⁰ Laura Hammond, ‘History, Overview, Trends and Issues in Major Somali Refugee Displacements in the Near Future’, *Bildhaan: An International Journal of Somali Studies* 13, No.7, (2014): 58, digitalcommons.maclester.edu/bildhaan/vol13/iss1/7/.

⁶¹ Hammond, ‘Displacements’, 58.

⁶² International Protection Considerations with Regard to People Fleeing Somalia, HCR/IPC/SOM/2022/01, *UNHCR*, (September 2022), 22, [refworld.org/docid/6308b1844.html](https://www.refworld.org/docid/6308b1844.html).

Violence continued from 2006, and combined with the 2011 drought, there has been massive displacement. Agencies have had difficulty getting access to provide aid due to al-Shabaab's control. By 2011 al-Shabaab tactically withdrew and on 20 August 2012, the FGS replaced the previous Transitional Federal Government, but has gained limited control in practice. al-Shabaab have still posed security challenges, and the backdrop of a humanitarian crisis has compounded difficulties. From May 2022, the FGS has been led by President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, with terrorist and militia attacks still rife.

As with Sudan, the second generation of Somalis are being born in Jordan, and prospects for return are slim. In September 2022, the UNHCR issued new guidelines asserting that 'States must allow people fleeing Somalia to seek safety, and that their refugee claims be assessed according to international law. Those found to be fleeing violence, human rights abuses and persecution would meet the criteria for refugee status'.⁶³ The UNHCR does however recognise the right to voluntarily return, whilst stating that 'returnees continue to face multi-faceted difficulties to their reintegration'.⁶⁴

1.3.3 Routes of Entry to Jordan

As neither Sudan nor Somalia share a border with Jordan, entry to Jordan necessitates travel by air, requiring visas in advance. Most Sudanese have arrived by plane from Khartoum to Amman on a medical, study or tourist visa and applied for refugee status before their visa expired. Others had been living in Jordan due to studies and found themselves unable to return due to increased conflict, registering as a refugee once their visas expired.

Somalis have usually arrived by plane to Jordan via a third country, the majority having fled to Yemen from Somalia via the Gulf of Aden, before having to leave once again due to increased conflict. Like the Sudanese, many have entered on a medical visa, and some with forged Yemeni documents in order to travel by air, resulting in further legal issues on arrival.

1.4 Demographics and Definitions

1.4.1 Demographics

Appendix 2 tables the current population of registered refugee and asylum seekers in

⁶³ International Protection, 9.

⁶⁴ International Protection, 54.

Jordan. Notably, the Somali population is just over 50% female, compared to the Sudanese which is approximately 25% female.

1.4.2 Definition of a refugee

The widely recognised definition of a refugee is found in the 1951 Convention, also quoted in Jordan's MoU:

'owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.'⁶⁵

Scholars have acknowledged that this definition has its limitations,⁶⁶ although they have struggled to agree on a more suitable one.⁶⁷ The Convention does establish a 'minimalist definition'⁶⁸ and a legal-normative basis, recognised by government and international institutions.⁶⁹ The understanding of the label 'refugee' is highly changeable depending on context and audience⁷⁰ and it does not define a sociologically relevant group.⁷¹ Scalettaris states it is 'not a characteristic, nor a condition that deeply affects identity or collective behaviours or strategies'.⁷² Anthropologists, such as Bakewell, show that the 'refugee experience' or the concept of 'refugeeness' does not exist.⁷³ Humanitarian policy – and Refugee Studies itself – have been critiqued as portraying refugees as mute, mass victims, without agency or individuality.⁷⁴ This thesis therefore uses the legal definition of refugee as a policy label, and

⁶⁵ Article 1, Refugee Convention.

⁶⁶ Such as being 'overly narrow': Andrew Shacknove, 'Who Is a Refugee?' *Ethics* 95, No. 2 (1985): 276, [jstor.org/stable/2380340](https://www.jstor.org/stable/2380340)), having racialized connotations: Maja Janmyr, 'The 1951 Refugee Convention and Non-Signatory States', *International Journal of Refugee Law* 33, No. 2, (2021): 193, doi.org/10.1093/ijrl/eeab043, or the need for a more inter-sectional approach: Peter Nyers, *Rethinking Refugees*, (New York, Routledge: 2006), 32.

⁶⁷ Georgia Cole, 'Beyond Labelling', *Journal of Refugee Studies* 31, No.1 (2017): 4, [doi:10.1093/jrs/fex021](https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fex021).

⁶⁸ Roger Zetter, 'Labelling Refugees', *Journal of Refugee Studies* 4, No. 1 (1991): 40, doi.org/10.1093/jrs/4.1.39.

⁶⁹ Giulia Scalettaris, 'Refugee Studies and the International Refugee Regime: A Reflection on a Desirable Separation', *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 26, No. 3, (2007): 40, doi.org/10.1093/rsq/hdi0241.

⁷⁰ Cole, 'Labelling', 2.

⁷¹ Scalettaris, 'Studies', 38.

⁷² Scalettaris, 40.

⁷³ Oliver Bakewell, 'Repatriation and Self-Settled Refugees in Zambia', *Journal of Refugee Studies* 13, No. 4, (2000): 361, doi.org/10.1093/jrs/13.4.356.

⁷⁴ Heather Johnson, 'Click to Donate' *Third World Quarterly* 32, No 6, (2011)

as a broader, convenient term to address all the Sudanese and Somali nationals who are seeking refuge, but acknowledges it is an inadequate label to categorise an individual human being.

1.4.3 Protracted Displacement

At the end of 2022, an estimated 67% of refugees⁷⁵ were in a protracted situation, which the UNHCR defines as '25,000 or more refugees of the same nationality have been in exile for five years or longer in a given asylum country'.⁷⁶ This excludes populations under 25,000, those that are not registered and does not account for the dynamics of individual protracted situations.⁷⁷ The UNHCR itself referred to this definition as 'crude'⁷⁸ but it has remained the default definition until today,⁷⁹ despite the use of a definition in 2009 removing the clause of population size.⁸⁰

The durable solutions presented by the UNHCR are repatriation, integration and resettlement.⁸¹ Many Sudanese and Somali refugees have been in Jordan for over ten years with little sign of having a realistic chance of resettlement,⁸² local integration not an option under the MoU governing the refugees,⁸³ and repatriation unlikely given the level of conflict in both countries. Therefore, this thesis, in line with scholars such as James Milner,⁸⁴ will use the term 'protracted displacement' in accordance with the 2009 definition to refer to their situation.

1.4.4 Urban displacement

Urban displacement refers to refugees that are not in a formal camp settlement. The UNHCR first produced policy on urban refugees in 1997, revised in 2009.⁸⁵ Around 60% of

doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2011.586235; Liisa Malkki, 'Speechless Emissaries: Refugees, Humanitarianism, and Dehistoricization', *Cultural Anthropology* 11, No.3, (1996), 377-404, [jstor.org/stable/656300](https://www.jstor.org/stable/656300).

⁷⁵ 'Global Trends'.

⁷⁶ 'Glossary'.

⁷⁷ Noted as a limitation in Albert Kraler et al., 'Understanding the dynamics of protracted displacement', *Forced Migration Review* 68, (2021): 49, [fmreview.org/externalisation/kraler-etzold-ferreira#_edn4](https://www.fmreview.org/externalisation/kraler-etzold-ferreira#_edn4).

⁷⁸ 'Protracted Refugee Situations', UNHCR, (10 June 2004), EC/54/SC/CRP.14, 2.

⁷⁹ 'Glossary'.

⁸⁰ 'Conclusion on Protracted Refugee Situations'. No. 109 (LXI), Excom, A/AC.96/1080, (December 2009), [unhcr.org/publications/conclusion-protracted-refugee-situations](https://www.unhcr.org/publications/conclusion-protracted-refugee-situations).

⁸¹ 'Solutions', UNHCR, accessed 4 October 2022, [unhcr.org/what-we-do/build-better-futures/solutions](https://www.unhcr.org/what-we-do/build-better-futures/solutions).

⁸² 'Solutions'.

⁸³ See Chapter 1.5.3.

⁸⁴ James Milner, 'Protracted Refugee Situations', in *The Oxford Handbook of Refugee and Forced Migration Studies*, ed. Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh et al, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 152.

⁸⁵ 'UNHCR Policy on Refugee Protection and Solutions in Urban Areas', UNHCR, (2009), [unhcr.org/media/unhcr-policy-refugee-protection-and-solutions-urban-areas](https://www.unhcr.org/media/unhcr-policy-refugee-protection-and-solutions-urban-areas).

the world's refugees now live in urban situations, reflecting a general population trend of the growth of cities.⁸⁶ 83% of refugees in Jordan live in urban areas;⁸⁷ the only camps are for Syrians and Palestinians. Due to the need to have proximity to services, most of the Sudanese and Somali refugees live in Amman, residing in areas such as Jabal Amman, Jabal Achdar, Jabal Hussein and Jabal Nutheif.

1.5 Legal and Humanitarian Framework of Refugees in Jordan

1.5.1 International

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

The origins of refugee law are found in the aftermath of World War II, along with the establishment of human rights law framework. Human rights and refugee needs are intertwined: violations of human rights are a reason for exodus, and also for preventing return. The UDHR is for every human being and includes the right to 'to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution', to not be subject to 'arbitrary arrest, detention or exile', a nationality, and freedom of movement.⁸⁸ The UDHR is not legally binding, rather acting as a foundational basis for international law and the binding Conventions that reinforce these rights.

Formation of the Office of the United Nations of the High Commissioner for Refugees

The Office of the UNHCR was established in 1951 with a mandate based on the Geneva Refugee Convention 'to ensure the international protection of uprooted people worldwide' and 'to promote the basic human rights of refugees and [ensure] they will not be returned involuntarily to a country where they face persecution.'⁸⁹ UNHCR established its office in Jordan since 1990 due to the influx of Iraqi refugees during the Gulf War. Its role has expanded as the number of refugees entering Jordan has increased.

⁸⁶ 'World Cities Day', *UNHCR*, (2022), [unhcr.org/news/press/2020/10/5f9c01704/world-cities-day-cities-lead-way-protecting-forcibly-displaced-against.html](https://www.unhcr.org/news/press/2020/10/5f9c01704/world-cities-day-cities-lead-way-protecting-forcibly-displaced-against.html).

⁸⁷ 'Jordan', *UNHCR*, accessed 4 October 2022, [unhcr.org/jordan.html](https://www.unhcr.org/jordan.html).

⁸⁸ Articles 14(1),9,15 and 13 respectively, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 12 Dec. 1948, G.A Res 217A (III),A/210.

⁸⁹ 'Legal Protection', *UNHCR*, accessed 12 November 2022, [unhcr.org/uk/what-we-do/safeguard-human-rights/protection/legal-protection](https://www.unhcr.org/uk/what-we-do/safeguard-human-rights/protection/legal-protection).

The Convention Related to the Status on Refugees (1951) and The Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees (1967)

The 1951 Convention is the foundation of international refugee law, defining who constitutes as a ‘refugee,’⁹⁰ sets the ‘minimum standards of treatment of refugees’ and their basic rights, including establishing the principle of non-refoulement, and the duties of the refugees and states’ responsibilities towards them. The 1967 Protocol removes the temporal and geographic limits set by the Convention.⁹¹ The Convention outlines the rights of refugees: The right to non-refoulement, to not be punished for irregular entry, to non-discrimination, the right to work, to housing, land and property (with some restrictions according to the capacity of the host country), the right to education, freedom of religion, access to justice, freedom of movement within the territory, to be issued civil, travel and identity documents and the right to social protection.⁹²

Jordan is not a State Party to either treaty, governing its relationship with the refugees through an MoU outlining the legal framework. Although the Refugee Conventions are the primary instruments protecting refugees, there are other International Conventions that Jordan is a State Party to and can offer protection to refugees:

Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Punishment (CAT)

Article 3 reiterates the principle of non-refoulement ‘where there are substantial grounds or believing that he would be in danger of being subjected to torture’.⁹³

Convention of the Rights of the Child and its Protocol (CRC)

The Convention is applicable to all children, not just citizens. Refugee children should ‘receive appropriate protection and humanitarian assistance.’⁹⁴ The right to a nationality is given, offering protection against statelessness, particularly relevant for Jordan who has not ratified either of the Statelessness Conventions.⁹⁵ Primary education should ‘be compulsory and available free to all’ and ‘secondary education available and accessible.’⁹⁶

⁹⁰ Article 1, Refugee Convention; see also Chapter 1.4.2.

⁹¹ Articles 2 and 3, Protocol.

⁹² Articles 33,31,3,17,21,13,22,4,16,26,27 and 24 respectively, Refugee Convention.

⁹³ Article 3, Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Dec.1984, U.N.T.S.,1465,85.

⁹⁴ Article 22,CRC.

⁹⁵ Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, Sept.28, 1954, 360 U.N.T.S.,117; Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, Aug.30.1961, 989 U.N.T.S.,175.

⁹⁶ Article 28(a),CRC.

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)

The ICCPR protects against non-refoulement and torture, cruel, inhumane or degrading punishment, and confirms the right to life.⁹⁷ While the right to seek asylum is not explicit, the Human Rights Committee (HRC) has raised concerns about Jordan's refusal in accepting asylum applications when refoulement is in question.⁹⁸

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)

The ICESCR gives everyone the right to work, to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, and to primary education that is compulsory and free to all.⁹⁹ However, states have a duty to progressively realise these rights according to their resources and developing countries, with due regard to human rights and their national economy, are able to determine to what extent they can guarantee the economic rights to non-nationals.¹⁰⁰

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)

The ICERD is applicable to all and defines racial discrimination as

‘any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social and cultural or any other field of public life’¹⁰¹

The implementation of these rights is dependent upon compliance with any observations or recommendations from corresponding Committees or from HRC special procedures,¹⁰² how and if the refugees' rights are incorporated into domestic law, and how well these rights are accessed in practice.

The North-centric nature of international law has been raised by scholars, such as

⁹⁷ Articles 6,7 and 12, International Convention of Civil and Political Rights, 16 Dec.1966, U.N.T.S,999,171.

⁹⁸ HRC Concluding Observations to Jordan, CCPR/C/JOR/5,(4.Dec 2017), para.24.

⁹⁹ Articles 6,12 and 13, International Convention of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, (ICESCR) Dec.16 1966,U.N.T.S,993, 3.

¹⁰⁰ Article 2(1) and 2(3), ICESCR.

¹⁰¹ International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, (21 Dec.1965), U.N.T.S,660, 195.

¹⁰² For example, recommendations include ratifying the Refugee Conventions, and opening the labour market to refugees. Report of the Special Rapporteur trafficking in persons, especially women and children, on her mission to Jordan, U.N.HRC,A/HRC/32/41/Add.1, (8 June 2016).

Anthony Anghie who shows its roots in the role of the colonial empire.¹⁰³ Petersen has referred to The League of Nations as the ‘twentieth-century reincarnation of the civilising mission’,¹⁰⁴ as much of Middle East and Africa was carved up under the jurisdiction of Western powers. Followed by decolonisation, the ‘trinity’ of nation, citizen and state remained the ordering principle.¹⁰⁵ Tendayi Achiume calls the global refugee regime a ‘racialised valve’,¹⁰⁶ restricting admission and rights to a limited class of non-nationals. B.S. Chimni highlights the limitations of the durable solutions, especially for Southern refugees, as repatriation is pushed as the favourable option.¹⁰⁷ The centrality of the Refugee Convention to refugee protection is often assumed; without accession a state is seen as ‘weak’.¹⁰⁸ Of the nineteen states in the Middle East and North Africa, less than a third are signatories to the Convention and its Protocol, yet four out of the six top refugee hosting states are in these regions.¹⁰⁹ Janmyr’s research shows that many states can acquiesce with international refugee law norms despite not acceding to the Convention.¹¹⁰ There is also growing acknowledgement of the role of Arab and Islamic approaches to asylum. Antonio Guterres, head of the UN, talks of ‘the deeply rooted Arabic traditions and customs [that] have... served as a solid foundation for protecting human beings’.¹¹¹

1.5.2 Regional

The Arab Charter on Human Rights

The Arab Charter was adopted by the Council of LAS in 1994 and ratified by Jordan in 2004, although it did not come into force until 2008.¹¹² It mainly addresses Arab citizens, but states that ‘political refugees shall not be extradited.’¹¹³ It gives the right to a nationality

¹⁰³ Anthony Anghie, *Imperialism, Sovereignty, and the Making of International Law*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 2004).

¹⁰⁴ Glen Petersen, ‘Colonialism, Sovereignty and the History of the International Refugee Regime’, in *Refugees in Europe, 1919-1959*, eds. Matthew Frank and Jessica Reinisch, (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017), 220.

¹⁰⁵ Simon Turner, ‘Biopolitics and Bare Life in a Refugee Camp’, in *Flucht als Politik*, ed. Katharina Inhetveen, (Rüdiger Köppe Verlag: 2005), 44.

¹⁰⁶ Tendayi Achiume, ‘Decolonizing Refugee Governance’, *Julien. J. Studley Graduate Programs in International Affairs* (2022) event.news.school.edu/decolonizingrefugeegovernance.

¹⁰⁷ B.S. Chimni, ‘The Geopolitics of Refugee Studies: A View from the South’, *Journal of Refugee Studies* 11 No. 4 (1998): 363-365, doi.org/10.1093/jrs/11.4.350-a.

¹⁰⁸ Martin Jones, ‘Expanding the Frontiers of Refugee Law’, *Journal of Human Rights Practice* 9, (2017): 213, doi.org/10.1093/jhuman/hux018215.

¹⁰⁹ Jones, ‘Frontiers’, 215.

¹¹⁰ Janmyr, ‘Convention’, 3.

¹¹¹ Ahmed Abou-El-Wafa, *The Right to Asylum between Islamic Shari’ah and International Refugee Law*, (Riyadh: Naif Arab University, 2009), unhcr.org/publications/legal/4a9645646/right-asylum-islamic-shariah-international-refugee-law-comparative-study.html.

¹¹² Charter on Human Rights, (May 22 2004), 23 I.L.M. 1522.

¹¹³ Article 23, Arab Charter.

and for women to pass nationality to their children, when it is in the best interests of the child and in accordance with domestic law.¹¹⁴ However, the Arab Charter has been criticised for its failure to meet international human rights standards, such as not prohibiting cruel, inhuman or degrading punishments.¹¹⁵

The Arab Convention on Regulating Status of Refugees in the Arab Countries

The Convention states treatment to refugees should be given ‘as accorded to foreign residents on their territories’¹¹⁶ and speaks against discrimination.¹¹⁷ The principle of non-refoulement is reiterated.¹¹⁸ However, it is not in force, and the revised version of 2018 has not yet been adopted.

While there is ‘a willingness to draft international laws, this is not met with an equivalent desire to enforce or implement such laws’,¹¹⁹ regional mechanisms in reality having little impact on refugees in Jordan.

1.5.3 National

Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Jordan and the UNHCR

In the absence of Jordan ratifying the Refugee Conventions, a Memorandum of Understanding was formalised in 1998, first drawn up in response to the influx of Iraqi refugees during the First Gulf War. It has continued to serve as the framework for the refugee response in Jordan.

The government officially mandates the UNHCR to provide international protection of refugees to the UNHCR¹²⁰ and they are responsible for RSD, an office in the Ministry of Interior (MoI) acting as liaison with the UNHCR.¹²¹ The definition of a refugee is based on the Refugee Convention, without the geographical and time limitations, as in the 1967 Protocol. The principle of non-refoulement is affirmed¹²² and that ‘asylum seekers and

¹¹⁴ Article 29, Arab Charter.

¹¹⁵ Mervat Rishmawi, ‘The Revised Arab Charter for Human Rights: A Step Forward?’, *Human Rights Law Review* 5, No.2, (2005): 361-2, doi.org/10.1093/hrlr/ngi021.

¹¹⁶ Article 5, Arab Convention on Regulating Status of Refugees in the Arab Countries (1994) 33 I.L.M. 166.

¹¹⁷ Article 7, Arab Convention.

¹¹⁸ Article 8, Arab Convention.

¹¹⁹ Dallal Stevens, ‘The Right to Asylum in International Law and Islamic Law’, *Refugee Law Initiative, University of London*, (2022), rli.blogs.sas.ac.uk/2022/12/14/the-right-to-asylum-in-international-law-and-islamic-law-some-reflections/.

¹²⁰ Article 2, MoU.

¹²¹ Article 13, MoU.

¹²² Article 2(1), MoU.

refugees should receive a treatment as per the internationally accepted standards.’¹²³

The UNHCR are tasked with finding the refugees a durable solution, ‘voluntary repatriation to the country of origin, or resettlement in a third country’.¹²⁴ Local integration is not given as an option. The sojourn of refugees should not exceed six months,¹²⁵ updated to one year in the 2014 amendments.¹²⁶ While this time-frame is unrealistic, it acknowledges the temporary nature of refugees in Jordan and the UNHCR’s responsibility for them. Resettlement is the main pathway to citizenship, for the 1% of refugees have the opportunity.¹²⁷

Refugees are exempt from overstay fees,¹²⁸ given freedom to practice religion without discrimination,¹²⁹ and free access to courts of law.¹³⁰ The right to livelihood is given, but only when the laws and regulations permit.¹³¹ Other rights that are present in the Refugee Convention are omitted, such as the right to housing, education, and freedom of movement.

Contrary to the MoU, the government’s decision on 1 January 2019 prohibited the UNHCR from registering as asylum seekers who entered the country for the purposes of medical treatment, study, tourism, or work, ‘effectively barring recognition of non-Syrians as refugees.’¹³²

Constitutional Provisions and domestic law

Non-citizens are excluded from most of the terms outlined in the Constitution of Jordan. Article 21 refers to the principle of non-refoulement, stating that ‘Political refugees shall not be extradited on account of their political beliefs or for their defence of liberty’¹³³ – the only time the label ‘refugee’ is referred to in Jordan’s laws.

¹²³ Article 5, MoU.

¹²⁴ Article 10, MoU.

¹²⁵ Article 5, MoU.

¹²⁶ The MoU was amended in 2014 and is not publicly available. The time period the UNHCR has to review an application was changed from 7-31 to 90 days, and the validity of a refugee’s identification extended from six months to one year: Khetam Malkawi, ‘Government and UNHCR Sign amendments to cooperation memo’, *Jordan Times*, (March 31 2014), jordantimes.com/news/local/gov%E2%80%99t-unhcr-sign-amendments-cooperation-memo.

¹²⁷ ‘Jordan: Resettlement Dashboard’ *UNHCR*, (February 2023), reliefweb.int/report/jordan/jordan-resettlement-dashboard-february-2023.

¹²⁸ Article 10, MoU.

¹²⁹ Article 6, MoU.

¹³⁰ Article 7, MoU.

¹³¹ Article 8, MoU.

¹³² ‘Jordan’, 2022 World Report, *HRW*, (2023), [hrw.org/world-report/2023/country-chapters/jordan](https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2023/country-chapters/jordan).

¹³³ Article 21, Constitution.

Legal Status

Refugee status is determined by the UNHCR, but the Somalis and Sudanese are not officially recognised in the JRP and this leads to discrepancies as to how they are regarded by the government. The presence of Somali and Sudanese refugees, as for all foreigners, is regulated by the Law of Residence and Foreign Affairs.¹³⁴ This allows them to remain in Jordan for up to an initial one month, which can be extended to three, and then a further three-month extension can be requested. From this point, overstay fees apply of 1.5JD per day¹³⁵ which is contrary to the MoU terms, but in practice, applies.¹³⁶ After six months, refugees are at risk of being arrested and deported. UNHCR works with deportation cases of registered refugees to minimise this happening.

Jordan's Nationality Law defines citizenship rights.¹³⁷ Unless the person has a father with Jordanian nationality then the pathways to citizenship are restricted. This can lead to statelessness and is contrary to the terms of the Arab Charter and the CRC that give the right to nationality. In the rare case Jordanian citizenship is achieved, it requires giving up one's original nationality, which would mean a refugee would also be giving up the right to return as a citizen to their home country – or pass on their nationality.¹³⁸ Forbidding dual-nationality is in accordance with LAS Nationality Law¹³⁹ and reflective of the policy of most countries in the Arab World.

Civil Status

A refugee's legal identity is defined through domestic law applicable to all nationals and non-nationals. Refugees need documentation from their country of origin for matters regarding marriage, birth and divorce. Informal marriages are illegal and subject to a fine.¹⁴⁰ Births cannot be registered without an official marriage certificate. There is a Sudanese Embassy in Amman whereby passport renewal or other civil documentation can be processed. There is no Somalian embassy in Jordan.

¹³⁴ Qānūn al-Iqāmah wa-Shu'ūn al-Ajānib Raqm 24 li-Sanat 1973 wa-Ta'dilātih, (1973, amended 2014).

¹³⁵ Article 34, 'Qānūn al-Iqāmah'.

¹³⁶ Amanda Meral et al., 'Inclusion and Exclusion in Urban Refugee Displacement in Jordan', *Overseas Development Institute*, (2022), odi.org/en/publications/inclusion-and-exclusion-in-urban-refugee-displacement-in-jordan/, 28.

¹³⁷ Law No. 6 Of 1954 On Nationality Jan. 1, 1954, amended 1987).

¹³⁸ Article 4 states that it is possible for any Arab national to gain citizenship after residing in Jordan for 15 years – subject to approval, and conditions including renunciation of nationality, Nationality Law.

¹³⁹ The Nationality Convention , (5 April 1954), LAS Resolution 776.

¹⁴⁰ Personal Status Law Article 36(c), (Law No.15 of 2019).

Livelihood

According to the Constitution, only citizens have the right to work.¹⁴¹ Since 2016 the Jordan Compact has facilitated the right to work for Syrians through the issuance of work permits and the establishment of Special Economic Zones, but it excludes refugees of other nationalities.¹⁴²

Sudanese and Somali refugees are in theory able to work as a non-national under Jordan's Labour Law,¹⁴³ but this requires a permit sponsored by an employer, renewed every year at considerable cost of up to 600JD (although in 2022 the costs were reduced for some fields),¹⁴⁴ and in limited sectors. They must also have a passport to apply,¹⁴⁵ ruling out any refugee without a valid one. They must be approved by the Minister of Labour and undergo a security check by the MoI, which involves losing refugee status – and hope for resettlement, as well as being subject to pay overstay fines from previous years.¹⁴⁶ This results in most Sudanese and Somali refugees working informally. Only 397 Sudanese nationals had work permits in 2021—and the percentage of these nationals being refugees would be a much smaller figure.¹⁴⁷

Education

Education in Jordan is governed by the 1994 Education Act,¹⁴⁸ the Ministry of Education (MoE) responsible for its execution. The Constitution provides free and compulsory education to citizens only.¹⁴⁹ However, there has been facilitation of the enrolment of refugees, especially Iraqi and Syrian, a double-shift system in operation to accommodate the large numbers. The 2018-2022 Ministry of Education Strategic Plan states 'The Ministry is committed to advancing the vision of quality education for all, including

¹⁴¹ Article 23, Constitution.

¹⁴² 'Jordan,' *Global Compact on Refugees*, globalcompactrefugees.org/gcr-action/countries/jordan.

¹⁴³ Article 12, Jordan Labour Law (No. 8 of 1996, and its amendments).

¹⁴⁴ 'Labour Minister to announce details of work permit fee reduction', *Ministry of Labour (MoL)* (2022), mol.gov.jo/En/NewsDetails/Labour_Minister_to_announce_details_of_work_permit_fee_reduction__Labour_Minister_reduction_of_work_permit_fees_aims_at_reducing_the_production_costs_for_the_private_sector#.

¹⁴⁵ 'Obtaining a Work Permit', *MoL*, accessed 4 February 2023, portal.jordan.gov.jo/wps/wcm/connect/gov/egov/government+ministries+_entities/ministry+of+labor/services/obtaining+a+work+permit.

¹⁴⁶ Understanding Financial Health of Refugees in Jordan', *Materialien und Diskussionsgrundlagen des Faches Wirtschaftsgeographie*, (2021), 48-49, [ku.de/fileadmin/150304/Publikationen/MDW_PDFs/MDW_29_2021_FIND_Jordan_R2_.pdf](https://www.ku.de/fileadmin/150304/Publikationen/MDW_PDFs/MDW_29_2021_FIND_Jordan_R2_.pdf).

¹⁴⁷ Table 44, Number of Work Permits granted to non-Jordanian workers registered with the Ministry of Labour by nationality, *MoL*, (2021), no breakdown specified for Somalis. mol.gov.jo/ebv4.0/root_storage/ar/eb_list_page/0-2021-2017_مؤشرات_سوق_العمل_الوطنية_.pdf.

¹⁴⁸ Qānūn al-Tarbīyah wa al-Ta'leem Raqm(3) li-Sanat 1994 wa-Ta'dīlātih, MoE.

¹⁴⁹ Article 20, Constitution.

vulnerable Jordanians and refugees.¹⁵⁰

The enrolment process is, however, complex and subject to change. In 2020 the MoE and the MoI stated that all refugees from countries other than Syria had to have a work permit or residency permit in order to have their children registered in Jordanian schools,¹⁵¹ which ruled out most from attending. This law was then later reversed,¹⁵² but subject to yearly approval.¹⁵³ Non-Arab nationals are also not permitted to study in Jordanian schools.¹⁵⁴ Non-Syrian refugees need to pay 40JD a year for Primary School and 60 JD a year for Secondary School, as other Arab nationals, and schools can accept them subject to their capacity.¹⁵⁵ Children must not be out of the education system for longer than three years or they are not able to enrol directly in formal schooling.¹⁵⁶ Regarding adult education, the UNHCR DAFI Scholarship programme is available to refugees of any nationality for those that are 28 years or younger.¹⁵⁷

Healthcare

The Ministry of Health (MoH) is the main healthcare provider. Government legislation for refugees has also fluctuated over the years. As of June 2020, primary, secondary and limited tertiary health care services are available to all registered refugees at the non-insured Jordanian rate at public health centres and Governmental hospitals.¹⁵⁸ However, the number and the capacity of public health centres are limited, and permission needs to be granted from the UNHCR before aid is given. Asylum seekers or undocumented refugees have to pay the foreigner rate, approximately five times higher, or use private facilities.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁰ Education Strategic Plan, 2018 – 2022, MoE (2018).

¹⁵¹ Protection Working Group, Minutes of Meeting, *UNHCR*, (8 September 2020), 7, data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/82895.

¹⁵² ‘Al-Tarbiyah: T’fā’ Ghayr al-Urdunīyīn Min Wathā’iq al-Intihāq bi al-Madāris’, (October 2020), *Ammon*, ammonnews.net/article/568797.

¹⁵³ ‘Non-Jordanians can enrol in schools’, (September 2022), *Jordan News*, jordannews.jo/Section-109/News/Non-Jordanians-can-enroll-in-schools-22412.

¹⁵⁴ Article 11, Qānūn al-Tarbīyah.

¹⁵⁵ ‘Asās Qubūl al-Ṭullāb al-Urdunīyīn wa Ghayr al-Urdunīyīn wa Intiqālihim lil-‘Ām ad-Dirāsī’, MoE, (31 July 2022); ‘Jordan: Country Report on Out of School Children’, *UNICEF*, 80, unicef.org/jordan/media/5501/file/OSC-Report-EN.pdf.

¹⁵⁶ Article 10.6, and Article 13, Asās Qubūl; ‘Country report’, 21.

¹⁵⁷ DAFI Scholarship Programme’, *UNHCR*, accessed 18 June 2023, services.unhcr.org/opportunities/frequently-asked-questions/dafi-scholarship-programme-faqs?.

¹⁵⁸ ‘Help’, *UNHCR*, help.unhcr.org/jordan/en/helpful-services-unhcr/health-services-unhcr/; ‘Jordan 2020 in Review’, *UNHCR*, (January 2021), reliefweb.int/report/jordan/unhcr-jordan-2020-year-review-supporting-refugees-jordan-what-we-achieved-2020.

¹⁵⁹ ‘On the Basis of Nationality’, *Mennonite Central Committee*, (December 2017), 18, rb.gy/xl7a5.

1.5.4 Humanitarian Aid Framework

The legal framework under the MoU has been outlined. The implementation of humanitarian aid is governed by the Jordan Response Plan for the Syrian Crisis (JRP),¹⁶⁰ in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR).¹⁶¹ This has been in operation since 2014, functioning under the UN international response to the Syrian crisis, the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP).¹⁶² The JRP is led by the Humanitarian Relief Coordination Relief Unit, part of the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoP), and coordinated by the UNHCR. It includes Syrian refugees, vulnerable Jordanians and limited support of Iraqis, and excludes refugees of other nationalities. Since its launch it has been severely underfunded.¹⁶³

Since 2015, the European Union, through the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), has encouraged a ‘one refugee approach’ that supports ‘humanitarian interventions targeting all refugees in need of protection and assistance to the same standards and irrespective of their country of origin.’¹⁶⁴ ‘The Grand Bargain’ was designed to reform the humanitarian sector with a more inclusive approach and balanced distribution of power, including INGOs providing 25% of their funding to local NGOs,¹⁶⁵ but its implementation has been criticised in Jordan.¹⁶⁶ The One Refugee Approach Working Group was founded in 2019, consisting of over thirty humanitarian organisations.¹⁶⁷ Their advocacy has resulted in changes such as the inclusion of non-Syrian refugees in the World Food Programme (WFP) food assistance,¹⁶⁸ and the UNHCR Vulnerability Assessment Framework (VAF) in 2021 included ‘non-Syrians’ for the first time.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁰ The Jordan Response Plan for the Syrian Crisis, (2020), *The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Government*, jrp.gov.jo/Files/JRP%202020-2022%20web.pdf.

¹⁶¹ ‘Multi-Year Strategy 2023-2025 Summary’, (2023) *UNHCR*, unhcr.org/jo/wp-content/uploads/sites/60/2023/01/2023-2025-SUMMARY-Multi-Year-Strategy-UNHCR-Jordan_final.pdf.

¹⁶² ‘Global Compact on Refugees’, *UNHCR*, globalcompactrefugees.org/good-practices/regional-refugee-and-resilience-plan-3rp.

¹⁶³ Johnston et al., ‘Rights’, 15; Meral et al., ‘Inclusion’, 8.

¹⁶⁴ ‘Humanitarian Implementation Plan for the Syria Regional Crisis’, *ECHO*, (2016), reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/SYR_HIP_EN.pdf.

¹⁶⁵ ‘The Grand Bargain’, *Inter-Agency Standing Committee*, (2023), interagencystandingcommittee.org/content/grand-bargain-hosted-iasc.

¹⁶⁶ Only six organisations were said to have benefited in 2019, with a lack of transparency. ‘The Grand Bargain’s Empty Promise in Jordan’, *Middle East Institute*, (January 2023), mei.edu/publications/grand-bargains-empty-promise-jordan.

¹⁶⁷ ‘Sawiyān: Focusing on minority refugee rights in Amman’, *European Endowment to Democracy* (June 2021), democracyendowment.eu/en/our-work/firstpersonstories/1265-dina-baslan-and-aaron-williams.html.

¹⁶⁸ ‘Food Assistance’, *WFP USA*, wfpusa.org/countries/jordan/.

¹⁶⁹ ‘2022 VAF Population Report for Refugees in Host Communities’, *UNHCR*, (2022),

Implementation

The UNHCR provides help with protection, cash-based interventions, education, health, livelihoods and economic inclusion and solutions.¹⁷⁰ The UNHCR gives protection through legal status with RSD (prior to 2019) and provide support with identity management and documentation, in addition to counselling and support options. Legal aid is available free of charge to any refugee, enacted by partners such as the International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP) and the Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development (ARDD).

Cash-based interventions are made on an assessment basis according to VAF scoring, enabling refugees to have access to services such as Cash and Voucher Assistance, Zain Credit, Winterization, and other UN support such as UNICEF and World Food Programme vouchers. These services are funding dependent and can vary from year to year. UNHCR has provided help with school fees and supplies over the years, depending on funding. UNHCR partner organisations Caritas & Jordanian Health Aid Society provide healthcare depending on funding, in parallel with government health services.

There are several organisations that are open to refugees of any nationality, providing a range of humanitarian services. Examples of INGOs that include provision for ‘non-Syrian’ refugees are CARE International, the Norwegian Refugee Council, and Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS). NGOs include Collateral Repair Project (CRP), JOHUD Community Centre, Nuzha, known as ‘Amira Basma’, and the Queen Noor Foundation, and numerous smaller, grassroots NGOs. There are also several community-based organisations (CBOs) and faith-based organisations, (FBOs), mosques and churches providing a range of services to try and fill the gaps in aid provision.

These frameworks will be used to analyse the barriers the refugees face in accessing their rights, contributing to their experiences of dehumanisation and lack of agency, and provides context for analysis of the Jordan Refugee Response. The literature review will now be presented.

data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/93754.

¹⁷⁰ ‘UNHCR Jordan’, *UNHCR*, accessed 12 October 2022, unhcr.org/jo/what-we-do.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This thesis is an inter-disciplinary study, and the research is exploratory in nature, using grounded theory methodology. The undertaking of a literature review before embarking on grounded theory research is a contentious issue, balancing ‘having an open mind with an empty head’.¹⁷¹ The researcher chose to conduct an initial literature review, following the Straussian grounded theory approach, emphasising the importance of having context of the field in which the research will be conducted.¹⁷² As research was conducted and the findings analysed, the researcher added to the literature review and created the conceptual framework.

The research question was formulated as follows:

What factors contribute towards the experiences of dehumanisation and restriction of agency of the Sudanese and Somali refugees in Jordan, and how are these experiences countered?

The concepts of dehumanisation and agency will firstly be defined, before addressing each sub-research question in relation to existing literature and frameworks that will be used to assess the findings.

2.1 Dehumanisation and Restriction of the Agency of the Refugee

There is literature from a range of disciplines on what it means to be human, and how one can experience a loss of this feeling of being human. The concept of dehumanisation has been developed mostly by the field of psychology, such as Nick Haslam’s framework,¹⁷³ who defines it at its core as ‘the denial of full humanness to others.’¹⁷⁴ While using Haslam’s definition, the thesis will focus on a human rights perspective, the language in which the refugees couched their experiences. Experiences of dehumanisation and restriction of agency are often intertwined: Arendt’s theoretical framework of human rights, alongside Johnson’s

¹⁷¹ Tracey Giles et al., ‘The Timing of the Literature Review in Grounded Theory Research’, *Advances in Nursing Science* 36, (2013): 29-40, dx.doi.org/10.1097/ANS.0b013e3182902035.

¹⁷² Juliet Corbin and Anselm Strauss, *Basics of Qualitative Research*, 4th ed. (Los Angeles: Sage, 2015).

¹⁷³ Nick Haslam, ‘Dehumanization: An Integrative Review’, *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 10, No. 3, (2006): 252–64, doi.org/10.1207/s15327957pspr1003_4.

¹⁷⁴ Haslam, ‘Dehumanization’, 252.

concept of agency, will be used to understand the refugees' experiences – and how they respond to them.

Arendt categorises human rights into two groups, civic rights, and 'the right to have rights'. Traditionally, civic rights are equated with citizenship, and refugees are excluded from the social contract that is the foundation of the nation-state.¹⁷⁵ Social theory literature conceptualises how agency can be taken away - in the case of the reduction of refugees to 'bare life',¹⁷⁶ or subject to the governing of 'biopolitics'.¹⁷⁷ Through the barriers and restrictions in law that the refugees face, this thesis will examine how it restricts their agency and causes them to feel dehumanised.

The 'right to have rights', however, is not dependent on the state, but on an individual's place in the public sphere, 'a place in the world which makes opinions significant and actions effective',¹⁷⁸ comprised of meaningful speech and action, and plurality based on equality and distinction.¹⁷⁹ Johnson defines agency as 'the capacity to act, and to be heard; it is the ability to have an impact both upon one's own life and upon the lives of others.'¹⁸⁰ The refugees' ability to exercise agency, therefore is also impacted by their interactions in the public sphere, at community level, as well as the restrictions they face in law.

Their experiences of dehumanisation, likewise, is impacted in the public sphere. Arendt argues that we are not born with dignity, rather it is attributed to us through our interactions with other.¹⁸¹ She distinguishes between what and who a person is.¹⁸² To treat a person according to 'what,' dehumanises the person, denied the opportunity to reveal themselves in the public sphere. 'If a Negro in a white community is considered a Negro and nothing else, he loses along with his right to equality, that freedom of action which is specifically human: all his deeds are now explained as some 'negro' qualities.'¹⁸³ Without

¹⁷⁵ Heather Johnson, 'Moments of Solidarity, Migrant Activism and (non)citizens at Global Borders', in Peter Nyers and Kim Rygiel, *Citizenship, Migrant Activism and the Politics of Movement*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012), 1101.

¹⁷⁶ Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller Roazen, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).

¹⁷⁷ Michel Foucault, *Society must be defended: lectures at the College de France, 1975-1976*, Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana, eds., (New York: Picador, [1975] 2003).

¹⁷⁸ Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, (San Diego: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1973), 296.

¹⁷⁹ Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 2nd ed., 175.

¹⁸⁰ Johnson, 'Donate', 1029.

¹⁸¹ Hannah Arendt, *The Burden of Our Time*, (London: Secker and Warburg, 1951), 439.

¹⁸² Arendt, *Condition*, 179.

¹⁸³ Arendt, *Origins*, 301-302.

plurality based on equality and distinction in the public sphere, an individual's right to feel human is denied.

However, despite these limitations to rights, Arendt also shows that the human capacity for action is inherent, one of the fundamental categories of the human condition.¹⁸⁴ Johnson's exploration of everyday agency builds on recent scholarship that shows how non-citizens are still able to have political subjectivity.¹⁸⁵ This will be further addressed in Section 2.4.

2.2 (i) Contributing Barriers

(i) What barriers do the refugees face in everyday life that contribute towards these experiences of dehumanisation and lack of agency?

Four barriers will be addressed: Lack of access to socio-economic rights, racism and discrimination, lack of integration, and lack of legal protection.

2.2.1 Lack of Access to Socio-Economic Rights

Access to socio-economic rights will cover the main domains of education, humanitarian aid, health, and livelihood. Access poses three challenges: Lack of access to rights in law, as outlined in Chapter 1.5, lack of access in practice to rights, and the treatment towards refugees in accessing these services.

Existing literature consists of a small number of reports regarding the lack of access of minority refugees to these socio-economic rights. Directed to policy-makers, they do not address root causes, nor allow for an in-depth look at refugee perspectives. Horst's work on the Somali diaspora in Dadaab warns of the tendency of reports to focus on refugees' needs, in itself underplaying the refugees' agency.¹⁸⁶

After the Sudanese protests and subsequent *en masse* deportation in 2015, the refugees' plight attracted more attention.¹⁸⁷ Davis et al., argue that Jordan's refugee regime

¹⁸⁴ Arendt, *Condition*, 8-9.

¹⁸⁵ Johnson, 'Solidarity', 122.

¹⁸⁶ Cindy Horst, 'A Monopoly on Assistance: International Aid to Refugee Camps and the Neglected Role of the Somali Diaspora.' *Africa Spectrum* 43, No. 1 (2008):121, jstor.org/stable/40175225.

¹⁸⁷ 'Jordan: Deporting Sudanese Asylum Seekers', *Human Rights Watch (HRW)*, (December 2015), hrw.org/news/2015/12/16/jordan-deporting-sudanese-asylum-seekers.

structures its service based on citizenship.¹⁸⁸ Most existing reports build on this analysis, referring to problems with donors only funding projects for Syrians,¹⁸⁹ and the exclusionary nature of the JRP.¹⁹⁰ However, the ‘hierarchy of aid’ model has been somewhat mitigated by recent changes in the VAF framework and promotion of the One Refugee Approach, likely in part due to the success of the advocacy of these reports. With these changes, and the halt of government registration from 2019, reports produced prior to this are limited in usefulness.

Scholars have critiqued humanitarian aid operations on an international level. In Barbara Harrell-Bond’s landmark study, she argues that humanitarian interventions create a dependency on aid, and that the treatment given by UNHCR can be ‘inhuman’.¹⁹¹ She also discusses the power-dynamics that they are working in,¹⁹² as does Michael Barnett who explores the paternalist nature of the UNHCR: How ‘compassion and care’ can easily coincide along ‘command and control.’¹⁹³ Liisa Malkki shows how humanitarian aid agencies can ‘depoliticise’ and ‘silence’ refugees.¹⁹⁴ Existing reports, in light of these critiques, will be used to analyse operations in Jordan and how this barrier to accessing socio-economic rights affects the refugees.

2.2.2 Racism and Discrimination

Adia Benton’s work has drawn attention to how ‘race has been erased, or at least minimised in analysis of humanitarianism and its effects.’¹⁹⁵ In the Jordanian context, Lewis Turner notes the racialised reactions of humanitarian workers in the Zataari camp in their comparisons of Syrians with Africans, homogenising ‘Africans’ as ‘passive, dependent, backward and impoverished’.¹⁹⁶ Reports have also highlighted racial attitudes of the

Aaron Williams, ‘Why Jordan Is Deporting Darfurian Refugees’, *Foreign Affairs*, (February 2016), foreignaffairs.com/articles/sudan/2016-02-04/why-jordan-deporting-darfurian-refugees.

¹⁸⁸ Rochelle Davis et al., ‘Sudanese and Somali Refugees in Jordan: Hierarchies of Aid in Protracted Displacement Crises’, *Middle East Report*, No. 279 (2016): 279, jstor.org/stable/44578522.

¹⁸⁹ ‘Displaced Minorities, Part II’, *Mixed Migration Platform*, (April 2017), reliefweb.int/report/jordan/displaced-minorities-part-ii-experiences-and-needs-somali-sudanese-and-yemeni-refugees, 5.

¹⁹⁰ ‘Displaced II’, 5.

¹⁹¹ Barbara Harrell Bond, *Imposing Aid* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986); ‘Can Humanitarian Work with Refugees be Humane?’ *Human Rights Quarterly* 24 No.1, (2002): 52, jstor.org/stable/20069589.

¹⁹² Harrell-Bond, *Aid*, 19.

¹⁹³ Michael Barnett, ‘Humanitarianism, Paternalism and the UNHCR’ in *Refugees in International Relations*, eds. Alexander Betts and Gill Loescher, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 115.

¹⁹⁴ Malkki, ‘Speechless’, 378.

¹⁹⁵ Adia Benton, ‘Risky Business: Race, Nonequivalence and the Humanitarian Politics of Life’, *Visual Anthropology* 29, No. 2 (2016): 191, doi.org/10.1080/08949468.2016.1131523.

¹⁹⁶ Lewis Turner, ‘“#Refugees Can Be Entrepreneurs Too!” Humanitarianism, Race, and the Marketing of Syrian Refugees’, *Review of International Studies* 46, No. 1 (2020): 147, doi.org/10.1017/S0260210519000342.

humanitarian aid sector¹⁹⁷ as well as in the public space¹⁹⁸ and in education, including racialised violence.¹⁹⁹ However there is scarce academic literature talking about racism and discrimination amongst these populations. The topic of race has been neglected in international politics and humanitarian work, and in scholarship itself,²⁰⁰ labelled by Debra Thompson a ‘racial aphasia’, defined as a ‘calculated forgetting, an obstruction of discourse, language and speech’.²⁰¹ Ian Haney-Lopez defines race as ‘the historically contingent social systems of meaning that attach to elements of morphology and ancestry.’²⁰² This research will explore how significant of a barrier this is to the refugees, directly impacting their sense of dehumanisation and lack of agency. Wider literature on race in the Arab world provides insight into the perception of Africans in the Arab world: A complex legacy of Arab slavery, colonialist influence and Arab nationalism.

Race in the history of the Arab world: Rightly so, the history of race is associated with European imperialism – including that imposed on Africa and the Middle East. However, the Middle East is by no means ‘immune or exempt from racism or practices of racial inferiorisation’, Burcu Ozcelik calling for a new research agenda of race in the Middle East.²⁰³ Bernard Lewis highlights the ‘remarkable dearth of scholarly work’ on race in the Arab world,²⁰⁴ his and Albert Hourani’s seminal writings²⁰⁵ alone in addressing the topic until recently. Islam speaks positively of Africans, the Prophet Muhammad’s position ‘setting a pattern for the entire history of Islam’,²⁰⁶ the Arab practice of Africans slavery undermined this.²⁰⁷ Although less oppressive and formalised than the Atlantic slave trade, due to its

¹⁹⁷ Williams, ‘Humanitarian’; Johnston et al., ‘Rights’, iii; ‘Basis of Nationality’, 6,32-33,36; Meral et al., ‘Inclusion’, 22.

¹⁹⁸ Rochelle Johnston et al., ‘Social Networks in Refugee Response’, *Mixed Migration Centre*, (October 2019), 6, mixedmigration.org/resource/social-networks-in-refugee-response/; ‘Sudanese refugees struggle against racism everyday’, *Jesuit Refugee Service*, (June 2012), reliefweb.int/report/jordan/sudanese-refugees-struggle-against-racism-everyday.

¹⁹⁹ ‘Basis of Nationality’, 7,31; Johnston et al., ‘Rights’, 33.

²⁰⁰ E. Tendayi Achiume, ‘Race, Refugees and International Law’, in *The Oxford Handbook of International Refugee Law*, eds. Cathryn Costello et al., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021) .

²⁰¹ Debra Thomson, ‘Through, against and beyond the racial state: The Transnational stratum of race’, *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 26, No. 1, (2013): 135, doi.org/10.1080/09557571.2012.762898.

²⁰² Ian Haney-Lopez, *White by Law: The Legal Construction of Race* (New York: New York Press, 2006), brooklinema.gov/DocumentCenter/View/8477/White-By-Law---Haney-Lopez--abridged-version, 7.

²⁰³ Burcu Ozcelik, ‘Introduction: Confronting the legacy and contemporary iterations of racial politics in the Middle East’, *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 44, No.12, (2021): 2156-7; 2162-3, doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2021.1919312.

²⁰⁴ Bernard Lewis, *Race and Slavery in the Middle East: An Historical Inquiry*, (New York: Oxford Academic Press, 1992).

²⁰⁵ Albert Hourani, *A Vision of History: Near Eastern and Other Essays*, (Beirut: Khayats, 1961).

²⁰⁶ Mark Perry, ‘Perceptions of Race in the Arab World’ in *Perceptions of Blackness and Whiteness in the Middle East*, 1-23 (c.2006), inhouse.lau.edu.lb/bima/papers/Perry.pdf, 4.

²⁰⁷ Perry, ‘Perceptions’, 4.

longevity of over 500 years, it a significant impact on society.²⁰⁸ Mark Perry and Eve Troutt-Powell show that blackness of the skin/African-origin became synonymous in the Arab world with both the notion and the word slave, ‘*abid*,²⁰⁹ and that linguistic connotations exist today from the legacy of slavery.²¹⁰ Lewis shows that racial stereotypes of the African in the Arab world are similar to what was found in the West.²¹¹ Troutt-Powell concludes that it instilled a racist discourse in the Arab world and contributed to the basis of lived experiences of racism until today.²¹²

The replication of Western colonialism also contributes to the view of race in Arab society. A ‘construction of whiteness,’²¹³ its origins in Western colonialist views, spread through education, media and popular culture, such as seen in beauty product advertisement. Additionally, the legacy of the role of Arab nationalism plays a role, deeming ‘Semitic Arabness superior to other types, particularly those that are both Arab and African’.²¹⁴ Turner points to the distinguishing of ‘Arabness’ from blackness’ in national identity formation such as in Egypt.²¹⁵ Troutt-Powell’s research shows that the Egyptians used the same language of racial superiority as seen in the British treatment of Egypt.²¹⁶ This complex legacy is outplayed in the context of interactions with African-origin refugees in Jordan.

Discrimination: Sudanese and Somali refugees can also experience discrimination, which can be racial, or/and xenophobic due to their status as a refugee, as well due to their African-origins. Discrimination refers to the different treatment of (groups of) individuals based on some ascribed or perceived trait.²¹⁷ Racial discrimination is defined by the ICERD.²¹⁸ Achiume defines xenophobic discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived ‘foreignness’, the status of being an outsider to a given political community.²¹⁹ The existing reports cite examples such as the exclusion of ‘non-Syrian’ refugees from the Jordan

²⁰⁸ Eve Troutt-Powell, ‘Is There Racism in the Middle East?’, *Al Jazeera Podcast* (2023), aljazeera.com/podcasts/2023/3/16/is-there-racism-in-the-middle-east.

²⁰⁹ Perry, ‘Perceptions’, 5; Troutt-Powell, ‘Racism’.

²¹⁰ Troutt-Powell, ‘Racism’.

²¹¹ Lewis, *Slavery*, 143.

²¹² Troutt-Powell, ‘Racism’.

²¹³ Perry, ‘Perceptions’, 10.

²¹⁴ Davis et al., ‘Hierarchies’, 3.

²¹⁵ Turner, ‘Entrepreneurs’, 148.

²¹⁶ Troutt-Powell, ‘Racism’.

²¹⁷ ‘Racism, Xenophobia, and Discrimination’, *Migration Research Hub*, accessed 12 March 2023, migrationresearch.com/taxonomies/topics-migration-consequences-for-migrants-sending-and-receiving-countries-socio-cultural-consequences-racism-xenophobia-and-discrimination.

²¹⁸ See Chapter 1.5.1.

²¹⁹ Tendayi Achiume, ‘Beyond Prejudice’, *Georgetown Journal of International Law* 45, No. 3, (2014): 331, ssrn.com/abstract=2294557.

Compact, and from accessing UNHCR registration from 2019²²⁰ and highlight racial discrimination in access to aid, in healthcare provision and in education.²²¹ There is no substantial research investigating these claims.

2.2.3 Lack of integration

There has been an increasing amount of literature available on the integration of the refugee as the number of urban refugees has risen, a key policy objective of the UNHCR durable solutions. This research does not aim to assess integration measures, but to define and show in what ways lack of integration causes the Sudanese and Somali refugees to experience dehumanisation and lack of agency. Alastair Ager and Alison Strang's framework defines core domains: The foundation (rights and citizenship), facilitators (language and cultural knowledge) safety and stability, social connection (social bridges, bonds and links), and markers and means (employment, housing, education and health).²²²

Karen Jacobsen proposes the concept of *de-facto* integration, relevant in countries (such as Jordan) where there are clear legal obstacles to citizenship. Refugees should still have the means to integrate into society. She defines it as where 'the lived, everyday experience of refugees is that of being part of the local community'.²²³ Charles Simpson and Agyeod Abo Zayed's research in Irbid and Allyson Hawkins et al.'s research in Amman similarly assess integration through this lens, focusing on what 'builds connectivity between refugees and the city'²²⁴ and stress the importance of intangible hurdles such as psychological, linguistic, or cultural struggles.²²⁵

Two reports analyse social networks with the non-Syrian communities, bringing to light difficulties including racial difference and discrimination, exploitation by property owners or employers, or with the police.²²⁶ Sudanese and Somali refugees are shown to have

²²⁰ Aaron Williams, 'Is the Humanitarian Sector Practicing what it Preaches?', *Locally Led*, (February 2023), [locallyledinternational.org/research-knowledge/humanitarian-sector-practicing-preaches.](https://locallyledinternational.org/research-knowledge/humanitarian-sector-practicing-preaches/), iv; Martine Ronde Berg, 'Jordan is Excluding Non-Syrian Refugees from Protection', *Amman Centre for Human Rights Studies*, (August 2022), achrs.org/english/2022/09/06/jordan-is-excluding-non-syrian-refugees-from-protection/.

²²¹ Johnston et al., 'Rights', 35; Davis et al., 'Hierarchies', 8.

²²² Alastair Ager and Alison Strang 'Understanding Integration: A Conceptual Framework', *Journal of Refugee Studies* 21, No. 2 (2008), 170, doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fen016.

²²³ Karen Jacobsen. 'The Forgotten Solution', Working Paper 45, *UNHCR* (2001), 9, unhcr.org/media/26581.

²²⁴ Charles Simpson and Agyeod Abo Zayed 'New Faces, Less Water and a Changing Economy in a Growing City', *Feinstein International Center* (July 2019), refugeesintowns.org/irbid#_ftn3.

²²⁵ Allyson Hawkins et al., 'Citizens of Somewhere', *Feinstein International Center* (2019), refugeesintowns.org/s/RIT-Report-Amman-Jordan.pdf.

²²⁶ Johnston et al., 'Networks'.

lower bridging capital than other refugees.²²⁷ In the light of this literature, the *de-facto* integration of Sudanese and Somali refugees will be analysed to see how this contributes to their experiences.

2.2.4 Lack of Legal Protection

Refugees face barriers with their legal status - their protection under the Jordan refugee regime, and their legal identity - their access to rights and documentation.²²⁸

Legal Status: The legal framework in Chapter 1.5 has outlined the legal status for Sudanese and Somali refugees and is discussed in reports, including: Their irregular status in the eyes of the government and lack of legal options to *de-jure* integration,²²⁹ lack of protection for registered refugees as well as the undocumented,²³⁰ risks of deportation,²³¹ and the lack of access to UNHCR registration as a refugee from 2019.

Legal identity: Alexander Burlin identifies three challenges: Lack of any documentation, lack of correct documentation, and unofficial documentation.²³² The haste in which a refugee leaves their country, the nature of their arrival, and their understanding of documentation needed of them, especially if there are language difficulties, can create a myriad of problems. The right to nationality is threatened with *de-facto* statelessness, registration and status issues around marriage, divorce and birth, and obstacles to resettlement. There is also the increased possibility of facing criminal charges for incorrect or falsified documentation. Access to justice is often prohibitive, as many refugees refrain from reporting issues due to their irregular status. This is compounded by the protracted nature of the crisis as refugees are often unable to retrieve or renew documentation, causing a ‘snowballing’ of the problem.²³³

These barriers will therefore be analysed in light of this literature to explore the Sudanese and Somali refugees’ experiences of dehumanisation and lack of agency. To gain contextual insight into these barriers, Jordan’s refugee response will be examined.

²²⁷ Noel Calhoun, ‘With a Little Help from Our Friends’, *UNHCR*, (2010), unhcr.org/media/little-help-our-friends-participatory-assessment-social-capital-among-refugees-jordan-noel.

²²⁸ Alexander Burlin and Ruba Ahmad, ‘Recognition beyond RSD’, *Refugee Law Initiative Blog, University of London*, rli.blogs.sas.ac.uk/2020/09/25/recognition-beyond-rsd-civil-and-legal-documentation-for-syrian-refugees-in-jordan/.

²²⁹ Johnston et al., ‘Rights’, 14-18.

²³⁰ Johnston et al., 42, Meral et al., ‘Inclusion’, 27.

²³¹ Johnston et al., 42; ‘Minorities II’, 2.

²³² Burlin, ‘Recognition’.

²³³ Burlin, ‘Recognition’.

2.3 (ii) Jordan's Refugee Response

(ii) *How do the policies and agendas of Jordan's refugee response contribute to these barriers and impact the refugees' experiences?*

The background of refugee inflows and the framework governing them has been outlined in Chapter One. A brief overview will be given of the actors involved and the key motivating factors regarding Jordan's refugee response. Jordan's response is formed from complex, shifting arrangements between these actors. Katharina Lenner builds on Jacobsen's groundbreaking framework analysing government refugee policy²³⁴ by showing that the government cannot be addressed as confined actor at national level, especially in an urban setting like Jordan, and is shaped by 'policy legacies and policy memories'.²³⁵ While the key actors are introduced here, how they interplay to impact the current status of Sudanese and Somali refugees will be analysed in the findings in Chapter Five.

2.3.1 The Government

Jordan's refugee response regarding Palestinians, Iraqis, and Syrians has been outlined in Chapter 1.2, showing how 'the response to each refugee influx generates feedback that influences the next model.'²³⁶ Jordan has balanced its hospitable roots with security and capacity concerns, and furthered its infrastructure and development goals to leverage international support to cope with the influxes. Lenner acknowledges the 'royal factor'.²³⁷ King Abdullah II's public declaration of 1.3 million Syrians in the country²³⁸ (rather than the more conservative estimates from UNHCR), and televised address that Jordan was 'at a boiling point' in its ability to cope with the refugees in 2016²³⁹ shaped the narrative of how Jordan portrayed itself internationally. The government also has a close relationship with international actors in determining refugee policy.

²³⁴ Karen Jacobsen, 'Factors Influencing the Policy Responses of Host Governments to Mass Refugee Influxes', *International Migration Review* 30, No. 3 (1996): 655–78, doi.org/10.2307/2547631.

²³⁵ Katharina Lenner, "'Biting Our Tongues", Policy Legacies and Memories in the Making of the Syrian Refugee Response in Jordan', *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 39, No. 3 (2020): 275-6, academia.edu/43498159/_Biting_our_tongues_Policy_Legacies_and_Memories_in_the_Making_of_the_Syrian_Refugee_Response_in_Jordan.

²³⁶ Davis et al., 'Guests', 2.

²³⁷ Lenner, 'Tongues', 287.

²³⁸ 'King addresses the London Donor Conference', *Ammon*, (February 2016), en.ammonnews.net/article/30266

²³⁹ Lyse Doucet, 'Interview with His Majesty King Abdullah II', *King Abdullah website*, (2016), kingabdullah.jo/en/interviews/interview-his-majesty-king-abdullah-ii-2.

2.3.2 International Actors

International donor community: Jordan has been an ally of the West since its foundations. More recently, its relationship with the West regarding its refugee response has been defined by its development agenda. Almasri refers to Jordan's 'refugee rentierism', defined as 'the phenomenon of using host status and refugee policy as primary mechanisms of international rent-seeking'.²⁴⁰ Jordan first furthered its development aims by appealing for funding for its infrastructure during the Iraqi influxes.²⁴¹ In 2016, the Jordan Compact was formalised, an outcome of the London Conference involving the UNHCR, British and other EU donor governments. It was framed as a policy success in international media,²⁴² the giving of 200,000 work permits to Syrians seen as a solution towards protracted refugee situations and at the same time boosting Jordan's economy. However, Almasri calls it a 'nationality-based labour inclusion strategy'²⁴³ finding that the Jordan Compact completely overlooked non-Syrian refugees, as well as deprioritising other migrant workers, exacerbating vulnerability in these communities.²⁴⁴ Davis et al. identify 'time' as an element contributing to this lack of attention by the international community to the Sudanese and Somali refugees, stating that the more recent, vast influx of Syrian refugees obscures those that have been present for decades.²⁴⁵ Whilst this is understandable given the number, it reinforces the exclusion of the almost 100,000 refugees present from other countries. How the international climate is currently affecting policy will be analysed in the findings.

The UNHCR: The UNHCR is present at the invitation of Jordan, but 'politics of accommodation'²⁴⁶ shape their relationship; the funding and framework of the UNHCR – and other UN agencies – are crucial to Jordan, and the UNHCR in turn reliant on Jordan's role in hosting such a large number of refugees in the region. The tension over treatment of the Iraqis has been shown in Chapter 1.2.3, and the findings will look at how the relationship between the UNHCR and Jordan impacts policy today. The North-centric roots of the international framework have been highlighted in Chapter 1.5.1, the UNHCR's ability to

²⁴⁰ Vicky Kelberer cited in Shaddin Almasri, 'The Political Economy of Nationality-Based Labor Inclusion Strategies', *Middle East Critique* 30, No. 2 (2021): 188, doi.org/10.1080/19436149.2021.1911459.

²⁴¹ Mencütek, *Governance*, 192.

²⁴² Katharina Lenner and Lewis Turner, 'Making Refugees Work? The Politics of Integrating Syrian Refugees into the Labor Market in Jordan', *Middle East Critique* 28, (April 2018): 1–31, doi.org/10.1080/19436149.2018.1462601.

²⁴³ Almasri, 'Political Economy'.

²⁴⁴ Almasri, 197-8 .

²⁴⁵ Davis et al., 'Hierarchies', 3.

²⁴⁶ Lenner, 'Tongues', 273.

protect the refugees limited within this.

Sudan and Somalia: Sudan and Somalia are Islamic nations and part of the Arab League, but their lack of geographical proximity to Jordan and position in the continent of Africa reflect less shared social-cultural values. El-Abed refers to ‘the similarities of familial, social, and cultural backgrounds between the Jordanians and the Iraqis, Syrians, or Palestinians’²⁴⁷ contributing to the message of unity and hospitality from the Jordanian people. Jordan’s relationship with the Sudanese and Somali governments also must be taken into consideration. Public acceptance of Sudanese and Somalis as refugees could be seen as an ‘admission to a state of war, conflict or turmoil in Sudan, [or] Somalia... that could compromise their political capital with other parties.’²⁴⁸

The findings will show how the dynamics between these actors influence the policies governing the Sudanese and Somali refugees, and how recent events are shaping Jordan’s refugee response and impacting the barriers the Sudanese and Somali refugees face, contributing to their experiences of lack of agency and dehumanisation. Finally, this thesis will address the refugees’ responses to these barriers and experiences.

2.4 (iii) Community-led Responses

(iii) How are community-led responses countering the barriers the refugees face and changing their experiences?

There has been growing literature on the agency of the refugee. Scholars have shown how the refugee is an individual with political subjectivity.²⁴⁹ The role of the citizen has traditionally been seen as essential to act as a bridge between the non-citizen and the state to bring about political change, indicative of a clientelist relationship rather than one of ‘equally powerful political voices’.²⁵⁰ Johnson shifts the focus from the citizen to the migrant or refugee enacting everyday activism, with ‘moments of solidarity’ between refugees and citizens creating opportunity for long-term impact.²⁵¹

²⁴⁷ El-Abed, ‘Guesthood’, 84.

²⁴⁸ Williams ‘Preaches’, 6.

²⁴⁹ Malkki, ‘Speechless’, 378, Johnson, ‘Click’, 1016; Turner, ‘Biopolitics’, 57.

²⁵⁰ Johnson, ‘Solidarity’, 120.

²⁵¹ Johnson, 125.

How the refugees exert agency to change their situation can be situated in the context of the ‘Southern-led response’, the local humanitarian actors of the Global South.²⁵² Fiddian-Qasmiyeh shows how this has been ‘rendered invisible’ in literature, assumptions made that humanitarian responses to displacement are developed and funded by the Global North.²⁵³ Even with more recent strategies such as the development of South-South partnerships focusing on ‘localisation of aid’, this can be seen an incorporation of Southern response into the colonial structures in humanitarianism.²⁵⁴ This research will therefore bring to light Southern-led responses of the refugees and the community around them, in the form of support networks, civic participation and individual acts of resistance. These responses create an opportunity to ‘impact both upon one’s own life and upon the lives of others,’²⁵⁵ which in turn allows recognition in society that can reinforce their humanity.

2.4.1 Support Networks

Fiddian-Qasmiyeh shows how refugees in protracted situations can be ‘providers’ of assistance, not just receivers, resulting in a status of ‘overlapping displacement’,²⁵⁶ as many refugees have lived in multiple countries, and have been present in the host country for an extended period. This leads to ‘refugee-refugee humanitarianism’ where refugees act as hosts and providers of support,²⁵⁷ as evidenced in Zoë Jordan’s research exploring how Sudanese refugees host other refugees in Amman.²⁵⁸ Reports on the Sudanese and Somali community have shown that they have high social bonding,²⁵⁹ able to find help from within despite limited resources. The findings will look at in which ways the refugees themselves, as well as the community around them, respond by providing support.

2.4.2 Civic Participation

Refugees also respond by engaging in civic participation. Schmalz explores the role of spaces of non-institutionalised political action, especially significant when refugees are

²⁵² Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, ‘Southern-led’, 241.

²⁵³ Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 240.

²⁵⁴ Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 241.

²⁵⁵ Johnson’s definition of agency, Johnson, ‘Solidarity’, 1028.

²⁵⁶ Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, ‘Representations of Displacement’, *Public Culture* 28, No.3, (2016): 460, doi.org/10.1215/08992363-3511586.

²⁵⁷ Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, ‘Representations’, 465-6.

²⁵⁸ Zoë Jordan, ‘The World We Share’, *Citizenship Studies* 26, No. 6 (2022): 868-884, doi.org/10.1080/13621025.2022.2103976.

²⁵⁹ Johnston et al., ‘Networks’; Calhoun, ‘Help’.

excluded from formal political participation.²⁶⁰ She refers to their ability to exercise their right to assembly and the right to association, as ‘associative rights’.²⁶¹ The most widely known act of civic participation from the Sudanese and Somali communities is the protests of the Sudanese refugees in 2015. Key demands included their rights to education, housing, health care and for resettlement.²⁶² As this research was being undertaken, two protests took place on 9 and 16 May 2023 involving approximately 100 Sudanese refugees outside of the UNHCR office in Khalda.²⁶³

Collective action can also be seen through other platforms such as the UNHCR Refugee Community Support Committees (CSCs) or other committee endeavours run by NGOs. The UNHCR has twenty-five CSCs in Jordan, defined as ‘support groups, formed at governate level where both refugee and hosting communities work together to promote social cohesion and enhance access to protection for refugees’.²⁶⁴ The findings will look at the civic participation of the refugees in expressing their agency and resisting the barriers they face.

2.4.3 Individual Acts of Resistance

Lastly, the thesis will consider responses of ‘everyday activism’.²⁶⁵ These ‘cycles of mobilisation,’²⁶⁶ small acts at individual level, can contribute to long-term change. Asef Bayat views grassroots activism as ‘the quiet encroachment of the ordinary’,²⁶⁷ often unnoticed in the face of more overt acts such as protests. This thesis will consider individual acts of creative resistance, advocacy and economic strategies.

This research therefore explores the refugees’ experiences of dehumanisation and lack of agency. It will identify barriers and show how they contribute to these experiences, and how they are rooted Jordan’s refugee response, and will then show how community-led responses are countering these barriers and experiences. The research followed a strict research methodology as outlined in the next Chapter.

²⁶⁰ Dana Schmalz, *Refugees, Democracy and the Law: Political Rights at the Margin of the State*, (London, Routledge: 2020), 106.

²⁶¹ Schmalz, *Democracy*, 106.

²⁶² Williams, ‘Deporting’.

²⁶³ See Appendix 20.

²⁶⁴ ‘Jordan–Community Support Committees’, (2019), *UNHCR*, data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/73272.

²⁶⁵ Johnson, ‘Solidarity’, 123.

²⁶⁶ Johnson, 124.

²⁶⁷ Asef Bayat, *Life As Politics: How Ordinary People Change the Middle East*, (Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam: 2010), 14-15.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher conducted qualitative methodology in order to understand the experiences and perspectives of the Sudanese and Somali community. Qualitative research allowed the researcher to ‘look into issues of human behaviour, relations and perceptions to understand social patterns and trends’.²⁶⁸ Primary research consisted of semi-structure interviews conducted with Sudanese and Somali refugees to gain in-depth insight into the refugees’ experiences and perspectives of their situation. Further interviews were conducted with key informants in the community to gain additional insight and inform contextual analysis. Finally, focus groups with Sudanese and Somali refugee community representatives and NGO leaders were held towards the end of the research period, enabling the researcher to corroborate findings, as well as bringing to light community-driven responses.

3.1 Grounded Theory

An exploratory approach was used using grounded theory which enables the researcher to develop theory from the data collected. Defined as ‘the discovery of theory from data systematically obtained from social research,’²⁶⁹ it is inductive in nature and an iterative process. Data was coded and analysed as research continued, until the point of saturation where conceptual ideas could be formed.

Grounded theory methodology was chosen as there is very little academic literature on the Sudanese and Somali refugees in Jordan. It is a useful approach in the generation of data in the absence of data or a conceptual framework to work with. The researcher also wanted to let the refugee speak for themselves, having their voices guide the research. Lastly, the researcher wanted to avoid any pre-conceived beliefs, especially having previously lived and worked in the community. However, the researcher acknowledges that her subjectivity can never be completely removed.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁸ Jordan Civil Society Program, *A Step-by-Step Guide to Focus Group Research for Non-Governmental Organisations*, (FHI 360 and USAID, 2012), 7.

²⁶⁹ Glaser and Strauss, *Grounded*, 2.

²⁷⁰ S. Hesse-Biber and P. Nagy Leavy, *The Practice of Qualitative Research*, 2nd ed., (New York: Sage, 2011).

3.2 Refugee Interviews

Research Design

The researcher partnered with an NGO in Jabal Amman, where a large number of the Sudanese and Somali population live. The NGO provided access to their contacts in the community who were enrolled in their English classes, and allowed interviews to be conducted at their centre. The researcher conducted voluntary response sampling, allowing refugees to choose to be part of the study, then included snowball sampling when the numbers started to tail off, interviewing refugees by referral from others.

The researcher was able to introduce herself and her research in person. The researcher then created a sign-up form.²⁷¹ The form link was posted in the students' WhatsApp group, alongside a voice-note and contact number for anyone who was illiterate or preferred to contact her directly. The researcher initially aimed to conduct fifteen interviews, given the time frame. However, the researcher conducted twenty-three interviews in total given the iterative nature of data collection and to ensure an adequate ratio of Sudanese and Somali refugees, male and female, and registered and undocumented, and until the saturation point in coding was reached. A pilot interview was conducted with a Somali refugee to test how the questions were perceived, and her feedback was taken into account. Thirteen interviews were conducted through form responses and a further ten interviews through referral.

At the beginning of the interview, the researcher reminded each participant of the nature of the research and verbally went over the consent form.²⁷² The interviewer then took a basic profile²⁷³ before proceeding with the interview. The questions²⁷⁴ were designed to open up the refugees' experience of life in Jordan, the environment they lived in, their relationships, and their life in their country of origin. The interviewer closed by checking if the participant wished to add final comments.

Challenges and Limitations to Research

The researcher acknowledges that twenty-three qualitative interviews is a small sample size and not representative of the community. The research area is confined to Jabal

²⁷¹ Appendix 3.

²⁷² Appendices 7,8,9.

²⁷³ Appendix 10.

²⁷⁴ Appendices 11,12,13.

Amman. As English participants from a local centre, it is possible that this may have had an influence on the type of answers the refugees gave; it is likely that as a sample they are more active in the community. Snowball sampling alleviated this, but the researcher was also aware of the continuation of similar networks. There was a lack clear sampling frame from the outset, due to a lack of up-to-date population figures for the communities, especially for those that have arrived after 2019.

Due to the research coinciding with the start of Ramadan, the researcher worked quickly to schedule interviews before participants' routines changed. All participants were Muslim and fasted during Ramadan, and it is possible that this affected refugees' participation as they adjusted to a new routine. Two interviews had to be rescheduled on the first day of Ramadan. Three interviews were held in participants' homes due to responsibilities during this time.

The centre environment was sometimes disruptive. To minimise interference, interviews were scheduled when the centre had no other activities. The researcher conducted three interviews online due to participants' work commitments and the researcher's personal circumstances. While the interviews started with video, they switched to audio, limiting the ability to note reactions or emotions.

There is also the potential of bias and subjectivity in the refugees' responses; they are sharing their opinions which are not necessarily based in fact. These opinions nevertheless show the researcher how the refugee feels, and what their experiences are, the purpose of this research. Their responses will also be triangulated with perspectives from other sources such as interviews with key informants and backed in literature to gain an accurate picture as possible.

Lastly, the scope of the research is limited to an analysis of their experiences of dehumanisation and lack of agency. The researcher acknowledges that the refugees have a multitude of experiences and that their lives are complex and multi-faceted.

Ethical considerations

The refugees' vulnerable situation in Jordan, and past challenges were taken into account. The researcher used trauma-informed training and ensured participants felt comfortable sharing, never putting pressure on them to answer questions.

Participants were provided with a consent form to ensure explicit permission was given to use the information from the interviews, and that they understood the interview's purpose, the voluntary nature of it, and that they did not gain anything from participating. However, despite clarifying that there was no direct benefit, refugees may have hoped for assistance due to their circumstances.

The researcher's positionality as an outsider, a British woman, is acknowledged. The researcher had some understanding of the context to their situations but was aware of her Western perspective and the power dynamics between them. Her association with the centre, while largely beneficial, as the centre is respected in the community, meant refugees could view her through a certain lens depending on their interaction with other volunteers. In general, the researcher found she was perceived as a neutral outsider and refugees shared freely. The researcher adhered to cultural norms during the interview process. To protect their identity, no names were recorded, and pseudonyms are used in the research findings. The researcher's laptop and data were secured at all times.

Language and translation

The interview guide was translated into Arabic by a bilingual speaker, checked, then back-translated to English to ensure equivalence. The refugees had the choice to conduct the interview in colloquial Arabic, Somali, or English. The researcher conducted interviews in Arabic and English, and used a Somali interpreter for two ladies who, while mainly speaking Arabic, occasionally changed to Somali. Most Somalis had fluent Arabic due to the length of their time in Jordan or Yemen. The researcher conducted interviews in Arabic as she is proficient in Jordanian Arabic and familiar with the refugees' context. An overseas Sudanese colleague transcribed the Arabic recordings for speed of processing and signed a confidentiality agreement.²⁷⁵ The researcher listened again to the recordings and read the transcripts to ensure accuracy of understanding. Using a translator was avoided due to confidentiality concerns, potential misunderstandings, and the length of time the interviews would have taken, the disadvantages seen as outweighing the disadvantage of the researcher not being a native Arabic speaker. Interviews were analysed directly from the Arabic transcript.

²⁷⁵ Appendix 18.

3.3 Key Informant Interviews

The researcher interviewed representatives from two CBOs, four NGOs and two INGOs that worked with Somali and Sudanese refugees, representatives from specific sectors of health, legal aid and education, a representative from the UNHCR Protection team, the regional deputy-director of Human Rights Watch (HRW), a Human Rights consultant, and a local researcher/activist/co-founder of an NGO. This provided insight from a range of perspectives and sectors. The researcher did not receive any refusals but not all invitations were responded to, such as the one issued to the Ministry of Interior.

Research Design

The researcher interviewed a representative from a local NGO as a pilot to ensure the questions were appropriate to the setting and to receive feedback. The researcher contacted all informants via email, following up via telephone communication. Semi-structured interviews were conducted²⁷⁶ in the workplace of the organisation, apart from one at the researcher's centre, and two online. Interviews were conducted in English, except for one in Arabic at the informant's request. A basic profile was taken,²⁷⁷ and then questions were asked that were tailored to the nature of their work, although the researcher started from a common base of questions. Most informants were positive about the nature of the research, and several asked the researcher more about the topic. The researcher transcribed the interviews herself.

Ethical considerations

Consent forms were signed²⁷⁸ and permission requested to record the conversation. Most organisations preferred their workers not to be named directly, while three organisations requested that the name of their centres not be disclosed due to the sensitivity of their work or legal status. Data and paperwork were handled securely. All organisations interviewed were used to interacting with foreigners and the researcher perceived no barriers in the interview because of this.

3.4 Focus Group Discussions

Three focus groups with refugee community representatives and NGO leaders were held towards the end of the research period.

²⁷⁶ Appendix 15.

²⁷⁷ Appendix 15.

²⁷⁸ Appendix 14.

Design

The researcher recruited NGO leaders that worked in the community by email, and they were invited to bring with them leader representatives from the Sudanese and Somali community. As the focus groups were held at the same date and time, all three groups were gathered together at the beginning to introduce the research and the ground rules, and at the end to close the discussion. One focus group was moderated by the researcher, and two moderated by research assistants. The researcher moderated the group when everyone was together, and the two other moderators acted as observers. The group participants were divided randomly into three, and then the researcher checked to ensure that one organisation was not represented twice in the same group to allow a variety of views and participants to speak freely about their experiences.

To initiate the discussions and encourage participant engagement, a short introductory case study was used. Participants were then asked a series of open-ended questions allowing participants to express their viewpoints and engage in dialogue with one another.²⁷⁹

The focus groups also provided a space for NGO workers and representatives to connect with each other, (without detracting from the purpose of the research). A further benefit was giving the refugee representatives a space to express themselves, something they expressed was lacking.

Challenges and Limitations

Not all participants who had confirmed attendance showed up – but the researcher had over-recruited, so the number present was sufficient. Some participants knew each other, unavoidable in a small community of NGOs serving a minority refugee population. However, some level of familiarity can be beneficial, allowing participants to feel comfortable sharing.²⁸⁰ With all focus groups, it is acknowledged that participants are likely to influence each other's answers.²⁸¹

Ideally the researcher would have facilitated all three groups, but this was practically not possible. To minimise any quality loss, the researcher selected and trained two

²⁷⁹ Appendix 16.

²⁸⁰ 'Jenny Kitzinger, 'The methodology of Focus Groups', *Sociology of Health and Illness* 16, No. 1 (1994): 103–121; D.L Morgan, *Focus Groups as Qualitative Research*, (California: SAGE, 1997), 37-38.

²⁸¹ Jordan Civil Society, *Guide*, 17; Kristen Reed, 'The Right Toolkit', *Berkeley Law* (2012), 39, law.berkeley.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/The-Right-Toolkit.pdf.

moderators. Both had some experience in the community and were familiar with the context, but did not know the participants. The moderators did not have observers or note-takers with them in each group due to lack of personnel, and the need to maintain a confidential atmosphere. All groups were recorded to avoid the need for additional notes.

Language proved a challenge as not everyone spoke one language and interpretation would have been time consuming. To mitigate this, two groups were held in English and one in Arabic (all with native speaker moderators). Interpretation was provided by one of the moderators at the beginning and end of the meeting when all groups were together. The two groups in English were transcribed by the researcher and the Arabic-speaking group transcribed by a third party who signed the confidentiality agreement.

Ethical Considerations

Ground rules were given and discussed in advance with moderators. The moderators were trained to be nondirective and to facilitate open, inclusive discussion and a respectful atmosphere.²⁸²

A consent form²⁸³ was shared with the participants as above. This was vocalised by the researcher to ensure understanding, especially if it was permissible to record. The researcher did not see her or the moderators' positionality as affecting the research, their roles to facilitate the space rather than contribute. A strict protocol was followed regarding confidentiality as outlined above.

As research progressed, the recordings were transcribed verbatim, coded and analysed. Appendices 4, 5 and 6 provide a profile of all participants. Any direct quotations shown in the findings reflect that the interview language was English. When the interview language was Arabic, comments are paraphrased in English. When a phrase or expression is used that is not common in English, it is transliterated using IJMES format,²⁸⁴ then translated to English in the footnotes by the researcher, unless otherwise stated.

²⁸² Lawrence Neuman, *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2014), 471.

²⁸³ Appendix 17.

²⁸⁴ IJMES Transliteration Chart, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Cambridge Core, [cambridge.org/core/services/aop-file-manager/file/57d83390f6ea5a022234b400](https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-file-manager/file/57d83390f6ea5a022234b400).

PART TWO

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

What factors contribute towards the experiences of dehumanisation and restriction of agency of the Sudanese and Somali refugees in Jordan, and how are these experiences countered?

In order to answer the research question, the findings will address each research sub-question in turn.

CHAPTER FOUR: (I) CONTRIBUTING BARRIERS

(i) What barriers do the refugees face in everyday life that contribute towards the experiences of dehumanisation and lack of agency?

Firstly an overview will be given as to how the refugees expressed their feelings of being dehumanised and lack of agency, then present the main barriers the refugees faced and how they contributed to these experiences.

4.1 Lack of Agency and Dehumanisation

*It's like we're living in a prison but it's open from above – Fatima, Somalia.*²⁸⁵

The refugees expressed a sense of feeling trapped in numerous ways, whether facing a barrier to their child's education, feeling fearful in the public space, being confined to the house to avoid harassment, or facing the long-term realisation of not being able to leave the country. Many expressed that their hopes and dreams were to leave Jordan, several sharing that circumstances in Jordan were not much better than what they had fled. Yaamin stated 'Jordan, Sudan, it's looking the same, just no-one can shoot with a gun.'²⁸⁶ Hana, from Somalia, who had previously lived in Yemen, pointed out that at least there was freedom to

²⁸⁵ Fatima, Interview, 25 March 2023.

²⁸⁶ Yaamin, Interview, 29 March, 2023.

work there and to register with the UNHCR.²⁸⁷ Hafiza, echoing Fatima's words, stated that life in Jordan was like being in a prison; she shared how she and her husband were detained in Eritrea – and in Jordan, it was as if they were detained due to their lack of ability to freely move or to see their family. She concluded life was worse here.²⁸⁸ There was a sense of time being wasted and lives on hold, many directing their hopes to their children's future. A lack of agency was especially expressed with those who were not registered, fearful of being stopped in the street or being deported, not having even the small hope of resettlement or access to protection from the UNHCR. Even with the thought of resettlement, more than one refugee expressed the reality that their future was not in their hands.²⁸⁹ Rarely did refugees speak of returning home as being a viable option, rather speaking of the on-going difficulties there.

*They call us Abū Samra, like we are not human – Abdul, Sudan.*²⁹⁰

Haslam's definition of 'the denial of full humanness to others'²⁹¹ is evident in how the refugees expressed their situations. Many refugees expressed pain and hurt through not being treated as a human being, whether by racial slurs, of being treated like an animal, or being treated differently because they were a refugee. This lack of recognition equated to a denial of an essential aspect of humanity.²⁹² Farida, a Somali representative, talked of the effect of not being seen as human as she was referred to as a nationality, or by a number.²⁹³ Fatima, from Somalia, described her heart as wounded by comments she had received stating that as a refugee she was ruining the country. The lack of ability to realise their rights, combined with how they were treated, resulted in a deep humiliation and sense that their life had been destroyed as Ibrahim, a Sudanese refugee expressed,²⁹⁴ reflective of Arendt's verdict of a human as 'dead to the world' without recognition from another.²⁹⁵

This thesis therefore conceptualises the refugees' experiences as experiences of lack of agency and of dehumanisation. Firstly, each barrier will be addressed in turn, showing the causes of, and the specific ways in which the refugees experienced lack of agency and dehumanisation.

²⁸⁷ Hana, Interview, 24 March, 2023.

²⁸⁸ Hafiza, Interview, 28 March 2023.

²⁸⁹ Mona, Interview, 28 March 2023; Aisha, Interview, 25 March 2023.

²⁹⁰ Abdul, Interview, 28 March 2023. Abū Samra is a derogatory term roughly translating as Father of dark skin.

²⁹¹ Haslam, 'Dehumanization', 242.

²⁹² Arendt, *Origins*, 297.

²⁹³ Farida, Somali representative, Focus Group Discussion 1, (FGD1), 23 May 2023.

²⁹⁴ Ibrahim, Interview, 26 March 2023.

²⁹⁵ Arendt, *Human Condition*, 176.

4.2 Lack of Access to Socio-Economic Rights

The legal framework of the refugees' access to rights and its limitations is outlined in Chapter One. The findings showed further limitations in terms of access to rights in practice, and concern of the refugees over how they are treated. Access to education, humanitarian aid, healthcare and livelihood will be analysed, as they emerged as major issues from the interviews.

4.2.1 Education

It was clear that most refugees struggled to access education for their children, despite the MoE Strategic Plan's commitment to advance 'the vision of quality education for all, including vulnerable Jordanians and refugees.'²⁹⁶ Perspectives of the refugees showed the high value of education for their children, especially by the Sudanese community. 'Al-'ilm nūr wal-jahl zulām'²⁹⁷ expressed Layla, a Sudanese mother of five. Mona, a Sudanese mother of three, stated that education was the most important issue in determining a future for her children. All the refugees with children expressed their desire to give their children a chance to have a future with education, usually linked to leaving Jordan, their perspective that there were no viable pathways to education from within.

Administrative and legal barriers: It was evident refugees faced obstacles registering their children due to unclear and changeable administrative practices. As outlined in Chapter 1.5.3, although the condition of residency should not be tied to refugee enrolment, the government's policy on this has been changeable, causing confusion. Layla had not succeeded in enrolling her children due to hold-ups. Initially, the school had said that they needed papers from the MoE, who said they needed to wait until they received permission from the UNHCR, and then after this, she was told again that they needed a residency permit. She became tearful as she told the researcher that eventually the UNHCR said they could do nothing to help. Mohammad, a Sudanese father of three, stated that he had been to the MoE more than ten times to petition to get their children enrolled. After three years, he was successful - but their children now also three years behind in their education.²⁹⁸

²⁹⁶ Education Strategic Plan 2018–2022, MoE, (2018).

²⁹⁷ An expression: 'Education is light, ignorance is darkness'; Layla, Interview, 22 March 2023.

²⁹⁸ Mohammad, Interview, 27 March 2023.

Sally, an informant from the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), confirmed difficulties in the community, speaking of the confusion between the UNHCR, the MoE and the schools – and how sometimes Principals were simply unaware of the latest legislation.²⁹⁹ Sally, and Akel, informant from the Collateral Repair Project (CRP),³⁰⁰ confirmed that refugees from South Sudan and Eritrea, were turned away as they were not members of the Arab League. The CRC Committee’s Concluding Observations include recommendations to provide ‘non-Syrian refugees’ with free education, and without needing identification.³⁰¹

Socio-economic barriers: Aisha, and Danya, a Somalian mother of three,³⁰² spoke of the extra cost needed for books and uniforms, funding from the UNHCR reduced after the pandemic. Hassan and Ahmad, from Sudan,³⁰³ and Aisha, from Somalia, shared of the prohibitive costs of higher education; Hassan stated he was too old to apply for the DAFI scholarship. Anya and Ibrahim, Sudanese parents, spoke of the high kindergarten fees for their daughter, Ibrahim working illegally to provide for this.³⁰⁴ It became apparent that these barriers were exacerbated by a feeling of shame. Danya spoke of the humiliation of not being able to afford to give her children the right materials or uniform to wear for school. Sally, JRS, reported that whilst eventually the refugees managed to enrol, it was usually at the cost of affecting their level of education and that the children were often humiliated in front of their peers, resulting in a ‘feeling of different treatment’.

Racial or discriminatory treatment: Whether facing racialised discrimination or racialised abuse from children or teachers, the environments described were deeply dehumanising. Many refugees shared personal experiences of bullying of their children by other children due to their skin colour and racialised discrimination by teachers. Hassan shared about his son who was behind in speech development due to trauma endured from bullying, and Sudanese mother Aziza shrugged her shoulders as she said how being bullied was seen as normal experience as a Sudanese.³⁰⁵ Aisha shared how the teachers treated her daughter differently due to her nationality, changing her grades, and that this was common amongst Sudanese and Somali children. The requests presented to the UNHCR during the

²⁹⁹ Sally, Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), Key Informant Interview, 3 April 2023.

³⁰⁰ Akel, Collateral Repair Project (CRP), Key informant interview, 23 March 2023.

³⁰¹ Committee on the Rights of the Child, Concluding Observations on the sixth periodic report of Jordan, CRC/C/JOR/CO6, (2 June 2023), para.40(a).

³⁰² Danya, Interview, 25 March 2023.

³⁰³ Hassan, Interview, 1 April 2023; Ahmad, Interview, 23 March 2023.

³⁰⁴ Anya and Ibrahim, Interview, 26 March 2023.

³⁰⁵ Aziza, Interview, 1 April 2023.

protests of May 2023 referred to the public education system's 'racist problems'.³⁰⁶ One focus group discussed the 'systemic racism' in the schools, Ramzi, a Sudanese representative, stating a long-term approach was required if change was to be brought about.³⁰⁷ This is consistent with the racialised discrimination and 'the dehumanising nature of anti-black racism' highlighted by reports, in which one father is cited outright as stating he 'did not want his daughter to study with black people'.³⁰⁸ Refugees and informants alike commented that often children stayed at home and mothers tried to teach them to protect them from the bullying at school. Amin, an informant from a Sudanese educational academy, stated that once schools reopened after Covid-19, parents commonly reported that their children refused to go back to school due to trauma from the bullying.³⁰⁹ The CRC Committee's Concluding Observations to Jordan of this year corroborates this, raising concerns of 'discrimination, violence, bullying and abuse experienced' by refugee children, recommending Jordan take more measures to combat violence in schools.³¹⁰

Pressure on education system: School capacity was also raised as an issue, several informants stating that the 20% quota for refugees was commonly given as a reason for rejecting refugees.³¹¹ The influx of refugees has put considerable pressure on the system, back in 2017 challenges were reported from the double-shift system.³¹² It is clear that the pressure has only increased. Some CBOs have tried to meet these gaps, such as the Sudanese academy providing education for those that are not able to access the Jordanian system. While these efforts are helping a small segment of the refugee population, they too faced many challenges. Amin shared of the needs for more funding and teachers, and of the obstacles of getting their students' education certified.

Due to the many challenges, refugees linked their future dreams to leaving Jordan in order for their children to receive education. The research indicates racialised and discriminatory barriers pertaining to the Sudanese and Somali's presence as Africans, and as refugees without residency permits, resulting in 'double discrimination'.³¹³

³⁰⁶ Article 5, 'Emergency Appeal', presented to the UNHCR, (16 May 2023), Appendix 20.

³⁰⁷ Ramzi, Sudanese representative, Focus Group Discussion 2, (FGD2), 23 May 2023.

³⁰⁸ Johnston et al., 'Rights', 33.

³⁰⁹ Amin, Sudanese Academy leader, Key Informant Interview, 26 April 2023.

³¹⁰ Concluding Observations, para.43(d);40(e).

³¹¹ Amin, Academy leader; Hala, Kindergarten worker, Key Informant Interview, 23 March 2023; José, English Centre leader, Key Informant Interview, 19 March 2023.

³¹² 'Displaced II', 4.

³¹³ Davis et al., 'Hierarchies', 8.

4.2.2 Humanitarian aid

The findings also revealed challenges with access to humanitarian aid. Insufficient financial assistance and the perception of how the refugees were treated in receiving this aid was significant in contributing towards a lack of agency and a dehumanising environment.

Insufficient financial assistance: The refugees reported varying amounts of help from the UNHCR, supplemented by small amounts from other UN-sponsored agencies or vouchers from NGOs. The most significant challenges were for refugees arriving after 2019, Sara, Abdullah and Nour, Bassan³¹⁴ and Hana, were not eligible for UNHCR assistance, forced to work illegally or rely on handouts. Anya and Ibrahim, and Abdul, registered refugees, also reported receiving no monetary help from the UNHCR and had not been given a reason why. Of those that did receive monthly support, most stated that it was insufficient, and Danya and Mohammad reported of delays, of years, before receiving aid. The appeal from the refugees to the UNHCR this May noted the ‘insufficiency of aid, if any’.³¹⁵

Hierarchy of aid: This was a key problem flagged by reports, highlighting the preference of Syrians over other nationalities. However, while most refugees expressed unhappiness with what they were receiving, comparisons between other refugees were not raised significantly. This could indicate that the positive changes in the last few years such as the inclusion of ‘non-Syrian’ refugees in the VAF and the pursual of the ‘one refugee approach’. Mona and Ali did refer to organisations turning away Sudanese, stating they can only help Syrians,³¹⁶ but the refugees focused on their experiences of how the UNHCR, and other organisations interacted with them, rather than differing levels of help.

Treatment & communication: The refugees shared their experiences of racism, discrimination, and feelings of humiliation from the lack of respect shown to them. Abdul stated that the problem is the workers treated the refugees in ‘the worse manner’ and that when he asked for help, the UN did not answer or listen to him. He repeated throughout the interview that the interaction with the UN was not good. Refugees and informants alike spoke of the UNHCR’s collusion with the government of those that were deported in 2016, instilling a sense of distrust that the UNHCR no longer had the Sudanese interests at heart.³¹⁷

³¹⁴ Sara, Interview, 24 March 2023; Bassan, Interview, 27 March 2023.

³¹⁵ Article 6, ‘Emergency Appeal’.

³¹⁶ Ali, Somali representative, JOHUD, Interview, 7 May 2023.

³¹⁷ Mona, Anya and Ibrahim, José; Dina Baslan, Researcher, Key Informant Interview, 23 May 2023; Adam Coogle, Deputy Director of HRW, MENA division, Key Informant Interview, 28 March 2023; Riyadh Suboh,

Negative feedback of other organisations providing aid was also raised, Mona naming a local charity association treating her with racist behaviour.

Informants also raised issues regarding communication with the UNHCR, especially regarding registration. Danya repeatedly stated ‘tbahdalit bahdala’³¹⁸ as she described her experience, sharing how she struggled to make ends meet while waiting a year for UNHCR interview and a subsequent year before she received her papers. Many spoke of the frustrating and costly process of going backwards and forwards to the office, often without benefit, being told that the UNHCR would call, but not hearing from them. José, English Centre Leader at an NGO, stated that what refugees spent on transport trying to advocate for their case was often more than the money they finally received for their needs. The protests of 2023 showed this frustration with communication. One placard stated: ‘We can talk to God, but we can’t talk to the UNHCR’³¹⁹ and the waiting time of three months between appointments was raised.

Many refugees expressed that they did not want to be dependent on aid. When subject to difficult treatment from the UNHCR or other organisations, it seemed to doubly wound them, firstly experiencing humiliation of being in a position where they were forced to seek aid, and then struggling with insufficient amount, if any, and the manner in which they were treated as they received it.

The treatment faced reflects concerns raised by scholars of the potential for power imbalance and inhumane treatment.³²⁰ However, humanitarian aid workers also face their own challenges in trying to provide these services, while being the direct contact to the refugees and being the person they blame. The researcher heard the frustration of NGO workers in interviews and FGDs as they discussed difficulties in raising funds and registration issues, the needs overwhelming – reflecting wider issues within the humanitarian system, further addressed in Chapter Five.

4.2.3 Healthcare

As discussed in Chapter 1.5.3, registered refugees are entitled to healthcare at the rate of uninsured Jordanians, and undocumented refugees must pay the foreigner rate. Access in practice was found to be challenging due to the limited resources of health providers and

Human Rights consultant, Key Informant Interview, 2 April 2023.

³¹⁸ Expression, translation ‘I was thoroughly humiliated’.

³¹⁹ See Appendix 20.

³²⁰ Turner, ‘#entrepreneurs’, 147; ‘Harrell-Bond, ‘Humane’, 152; Barnett, ‘Humanitarianism’, 115.

growing needs of the refugees, and as with other barriers, the treatment in which help was given.

Lack of health care for undocumented: Refugees that are not registered with the UNHCR have no option of accessing affordable rates or appealing to the UNHCR for help, their lack of agency considerable. The five undocumented refugees spoke of the lack of options for treatment for their health concerns, and NGO workers confirmed this. Sara and Hana, undocumented Somali refugees, shared of their difficulties on arrival: Sara's son broke his arm and had no access to help, and Hana needed an operation, but had no money to go to the hospital. Nour, an undocumented Sudanese refugee, shared how her mother was sick and they couldn't afford the medicine she needed, reliant on help from a local church health clinic.³²¹

Lack of health care available in practice for registered refugees: Refugees sounded weary as they talked about the obstacles. Hanan, from Somalia, shared about the lack of help from the UNHCR and the public hospital regarding her tumours³²² and Mona stated that her husband has been refused an operation. An issue raised by health workers and refugees alike was that the help available was not holistic. Ahmad, Hassan, Ibrahim and Hanan shared how they received the medical report (the diagnosis) only, with either no access to the actual treatment or funding beyond being offered vitamins. This was confirmed by informants; two organisations shared about medical missions that help with specific causes, but their services resulted in problems with accessing follow-up treatment.³²³

Treatment and communication: Several spoke negatively about the government hospital al-Bashir. Fatima shared of their lack of compassion and help, stating how they threw her out. She arrived in an ambulance, yet she was just given an appointment to return in three months. Mareyah, from Eritrea, expressed her view in one word: zibāla!³²⁴ José shared about a case where al-Bashir withheld a refugee's passport when she could not afford the emergency treatment she was given.

The cycle of waiting and obstacles faced in the system echoed the same problems with the educational system, and with receiving humanitarian aid. Ahmad shared that he had needed an operation four times and had been waiting over two years for permission from the

³²¹ Nour, Interview, 22 March 2023.

³²² Hanan, Interview, 14 March 2023.

³²³ Josef, JRS; Fiona, Health Clinic Leader, Key Informant Interview, 10 May 2023.

³²⁴ 'Rubbish!', Personal communication with Eritrean refugee Mareyah, 18 May 2023.

UNHCR, and after this there would be a further waiting period until al-Bashir acknowledged the consent. Fiona, an informant from a local Health Clinic, also remarked on the inconsistency in help available, some patients receiving discounts and others not, with no discernible explanation.

Pressure on health-care provision: Several NGO workers highlighted the complex, serious health needs of the refugee community, especially of a chronic nature due to a history of lack of nutrition, or untreated illnesses.³²⁵ Others had significant mental health problems because of their traumatic pasts,³²⁶ needing specialised psychosocial intervention. Adding to this, was a rising demand of healthcare. Joy, a local CBO worker, stated that there was almost a major medical health need at every family they visited. Fiona attributed this to the increasingly protracted nature of refugees' displacements, resulting in more help needed for a longer length of time, and the second generation of refugees being born, increasing the demand for help with birth and infant care.

Provision also appeared to be decreasing, especially since the pandemic. Josef, JRS, stated that Caritas, the major UNHCR health provider for refugees, reduced their services to just one branch compared to four in 2020, increasing the strain. Fiona reported of the decline of subsidies available from UNHCR services, as well as the limited funding and referral avenues of local clinics, stating it 'hits a brick wall very quickly' especially regarding secondary and tertiary health care.

Those arriving after 2019 are in a particularly vulnerable position with no recourse for help. But the challenges were widespread: Almost every refugee interviewed spoke of a health issue that they were not receiving care for. NGOs interviewed identified clear challenges in filling gaps and the tensions at the health clinic at how to spend scarce funds.³²⁷ The Sudanese protests outside of the UNHCR in May 2023 raised the complexity they faced in accessing health care, malnutrition amongst children, and psychological and mental stress faced.³²⁸ One focus group identified healthcare needs as one of the biggest challenges faced by the community – especially with mental health needs due to trauma faced and a cycle of 'losing hope'.³²⁹ Refugees' overall experiences were humiliation at not being able to get care

³²⁵ Fiona; Joy, CBO leader, Key Informant Interview, 30 March 2023.

³²⁶ Hanan; Ibrahim; Mona.

³²⁷ Josef, JRS; Fiona; Joy, CBO Leader.

³²⁸ Article 7 states 'complicated' nature of the health care system; concluding remarks draw attention to malnutrition and psychological stress, 'Emergency Appeal'.

³²⁹ Michael, CBO leader, FGD2.

for their family, distress over how they were treated, and frustration over lack of progress or agency to resolve their issues.

4.2.4 Livelihood

Value of work: The right to work was perceived to be one of the biggest stumbling blocks for the Sudanese and Somali refugees, their exclusion from the Jordan Compact having a major impact on their quality of life and sense of agency. Fatima and Mona both shared that they wanted to be able to stand on their own two feet and work so they can live like a normal human being. The value of work was seen in those who proudly shared about their successful careers in the past, including the professions of baker, engineer, mechanic, nurse, accountant and Embassy worker. Ahmad showed the researcher his work certificates from his long and successful career in Sudan, including several ‘Employee of the Month’ awards, pride in his work evident.

Lack of protection: For the undocumented, it was clear that they were the most at risk, the UNHCR not to be able to help them in cases of deportation. Bassan, who had worked as an accountant in Yemen, was now working two jobs illegally and shared how she was constantly afraid of being caught, and that there was no way for her to build a future in Jordan. Those who were registered, but did not receive any monetary aid, also had no other option but to work illegally.³³⁰ José shared that the Sudanese are particularly scared of being deported, as being sent to Khartoum could mean facing retribution including death.

Treatment: Refugees also spoke of poor treatment, and discriminatory and racial actions. Refugees shared how due to the illegality of their work, they were open to exploitation, experienced poor working conditions, low, and often delayed wages. There is little recourse for filing a complaint due to their lack of legal standing. Yaamin shared about the lack of respect shown at work, how he was treated as ‘useless or homeless’, and sometimes waited up to fifty days for his salary. Fatima shared of the dehumanising experience of having to take her clothes in prison after she was caught working. Hassan stated he had had no salary increase after six years and was frequently called racist names such as Abū Samra, and Mohammad how he was called ‘black man’ and ‘shukulata’ at work.³³¹ Ibrahim became distressed as he shared that not being able to work to provide for his family, and the way he was treated, affected him so much that he considered suicide,

³³⁰ Ibrahim; Abdul.

³³¹ ‘Chocolate’, a racial expression referring to his colour.

indicative of the depth of the dehumanising experience and lack of perceived agency to change circumstances.

The lack of right to work in their protracted situations of displacement was perceived to be one of the biggest barriers for the refugees, being unable to provide for their families clearly dehumanising, and having to additionally deal with the risk of working illegally bringing restrictions on freedom of movement and fear in the public space.

Barriers to education, humanitarian aid, health care and livelihood were prevalent across those interviewed. The undocumented refugees faced the biggest issues in terms of lack of agency, facing no protection or provision from the UNHCR. Whilst the lack of rights, whether in law or in practice, greatly reduced agency, the treatment, often racialised, in which these services were given, added an additional dimension of dehumanisation. Overall, it appeared that the situation had worsened during the last few years due to increased pressures on these sectors limiting their capacity.

4.3 Racism and Discrimination

All NGO informants and focus groups brought up the issue of racism and discrimination as a challenge for the community. In addition to the ways outlined above, it was evident in the public space. Refugees described faced significant dehumanising experiences at being constantly singled out because of their skin colour. This racism was often compounded by discrimination as a refugee, and as one focus group discussed, with the intersection of gender, or age: Farida stated, ‘we have faced this verbal sexual harassment, not just because of our skin colour, but because of being a woman.’ Layla expressed that she only felt comfortable going out in a group, facing harassment as a woman. The testimony from most female refugees revealed prior violence or abuse committed towards them as they fled war, racialised in the case of the Sudanese fleeing Darfur. The continuation of this in Jordan added to this humiliation.

Farida further shared how children are often targeted more than adults, due to the length of time they spend in a community setting, such as in education. Sally, JRS, stated racist attacks seemed to especially target the Somali children in the community. referring to ‘horrible treatment,’ violence, and direct attacks on the street. Many mothers stated that their children were not able to play on the street due to harassment; Danya stated that they moved

neighbourhoods due to attacks on her children and Ahmad described how his children play football inside the building to avoid attention.

Several refugees talked of racial insults and being uncomfortable in the public space. Abdul stated how ‘they look at us like animals’. Ahmad spoke of racist treatment in the mosque, forced to pray at home instead, stating how once they saw the black feet while you were praying, they’d push you away. Ahmad concluded ‘because of the black skin we can’t live in Jordan at all’.

Discrimination was mentioned in a range of sectors. Fabian, NGO leader, spoke of the difficulty with organising a football programme with children from different nationalities and how he ‘could see the discrimination, even among the kids’.³³² Fiona spoke of racial discrimination in the public space, sharing a story of a trip to the museum with a Sudanese family, stating that the museum officials at first refused to let the refugees enter, and when she explained they were her guests, reluctantly let them in. She then stated that they were watched as they went around in the museum, and then others inside complained of their presence to the security officials. Several refugees described of being swindled, treated differently in the shops because they are a refugee, witnessing Jordanians paying a cheaper price, or being served first.³³³ Discrimination in other sectors has been discussed above.

Discrimination regarding resettlement cases was also brought up by Hassan and Yaamin. The protests of 2023 also raised the issue of other nationalities being resettled at the expense of the Sudanese.³³⁴ The researcher could find no claims to support this, resettlement figures indicating that a significantly higher proportion of Sudanese and Somalis than Syrians have been resettled every year from 2017-2022.³³⁵ Faysal, UNHCR Protection officer, stated that this was a common misunderstanding; due to the size of the larger Syrian population, the resettlement of Syrians is much more visible.³³⁶ It is outside the scope of this research to determine or prove if policies are discriminatory. However, the refugees’ beliefs, while subjective, still informs their experiences and provides insight to how they perceive their situation.

Experiences of racism and discrimination are widespread problems across the sectors. It has a serious dehumanising effect, impacting most aspects of refugees’ daily lives, and

³³² Fabian, NGO Leader, FGD1.

³³³ Hanan, Ibrahim and Anya.

³³⁴ Video, @manasikkaballa2, *Twitter*, twitter.com/i/status/1658478857278849024.

³³⁵ Appendix 19.

³³⁶ Faysal, Protection Officer, UNHCR, Key Informant Interview, 19 March 2023.

contributes to refugees wanting to leave Jordan, having a deep sense of not being wanted. As shown in Chapter 2.2.2, the roots of racism and discrimination are complex, and compounded by a waning public support of refugees in a difficult economic climate can result in the ‘double discrimination’.³³⁷

4.4 Lack of Integration

De-facto integration refers to ‘everyday experiences of being part of a local community’.³³⁸ It is clear from the barriers outlined above how they can contribute to lack of integration, whether from being unable to work, or gain access to education or health care. Harassment, racist treatment, and the fear of getting stopped by authorities contributes to many avoiding the public space, perpetuating isolation and exclusion in society. In addition to these areas, Ager and Strang’s domains of integration cover:

Shelter: While this was not a main focus in the interviews, a few issues surfaced. Mona talked of the poor conditions and mould in her house affecting the health of her children. Many refugees shared of their stress in not being able to pay the rent. Anya shared how any day you could be removed from your house and there would be nothing to stop the landlord, showing the vulnerability of tenancy situations.

Socially networked into the host community: Whilst social bonding appeared to be strong within communities, (see Chapter 6.1), social bridging (between communities) was weak. Responses varied from those that stated they did not know or interact with others due to long working hours,³³⁹ to those who preferred familiarity with their own culture/were uncomfortable with others,³⁴⁰ to the more extreme responses of those who were fearful of their neighbours and had experienced attacks,³⁴¹ or other negative interactions as mentioned above. While responses in general referred to all other nationalities, not specifically the Jordanian host community, they are indicative of a lack of significant network other than their own culture. This supports the limited findings of previous reports of low social bridging between communities.³⁴² However, some of these refugees are involved in NGO

³³⁷ Davis et al., ‘Hierarchies’, 8.

³³⁸ Jacobsen, ‘Forgotten’, 9.

³³⁹ Bassan; Mohammad.

³⁴⁰ Sara; Hana; Rayna.

³⁴¹ Anya; Isra.

³⁴² ‘Johnston et al., ‘Social Bonding’, 6; Calhoun, ‘Help’; 6.

activities that try to increase these social networks, which will be addressed further in Chapter Six.

Language: Most of the Somalis that were interviewed had good command of the Arabic language. Sara and Hana, who arrived recently in 2022, struggled, and coupled with bad health and other fears, did not leave the house much. Hana shared that it was hard to attend any programmes due to the difficulties in language, such as studying at the mosque. Sally, JRS, spoke of bullying of language of Somali children due to language difficulties in school. Ali, Somali representative, highlighted the difficulties refugees faced in understanding what services are available to them.

The difficulties in these various domains adds up to a challenge to *de-facto* integration in everyday life. Some of these difficulties are due to the individual's context. Hana and Sara, struggling with mobility, newly arrived and with poor Arabic, are very poorly integrated compared to Mohammad, who has been here for almost 10 years, has learned English, speaks Arabic as his first language, and is involved in the community. But the overall experience expressed by the refugees was one of not being able to settle, their sights set on leaving Jordan. José expressed it as how the refugees were in a state of 'exile'. This lack of recognition in society furthers their sense of dehumanisation and lack of agency to change this.

4.5 Lack of Legal Protection

All three focus groups and key informants highlighted the legal restrictions the refugees faced as a root problem of the barriers faced in the community.

4.5.1 Legal Status

It is evident from the findings above that there are significant barriers, especially for the undocumented, with lack of protection at work and in the public space. Even those with refugee status did not feel protected due to working illegally, or because the police would not recognise their refugee documentation. Many refugees stated that they, or their husbands, had been in prison more than once for working illegally, Layla's husband detained more than five times. Others, registered and undocumented, stated how the police regularly interrogated them asking why they were living here without a residency visa. Sally, JRS and Adam

Coogle, informant from Human Rights Watch (HRW) stated how the darker skin colour of the African-origin refugees meant that they were a target for police to stop them, especially the Sudanese. While the researcher was listening to a voice note from Hanan, she was stopped on the street at Second Circle and interrogated as to the whereabouts of her iqāma. The researcher herself heard the interrogative tone of the police and the fear in Hanan's voice.³⁴³

In one FGD, two Somali representatives, Amir and Farah, discussed how the length of their presence in Jordan added to their vulnerability, the police often interrogating them as to why they were still here after so many years, fifteen in Farah's case.³⁴⁴ Farida shared her experience of being detained, saying that she felt 'stuck and... helpless' because she wasn't seen 'as a human, like referred to as a nationality, as a number'. Hassan shared of the lack of use of complaining to the police to raise concerns as a refugee without identification, and others referred to the lack of help from legal aid services.³⁴⁵

All focus groups raised concerns regarding the halt in registration, and the overall lack of durable solutions internationally. This was highlighted by refugees during the 2016 protests and again in the requests of 2023. One focus group discussed that refugees put themselves in a situation of risk like working illegally or demonstrating due to the fact there is no avenue for a sustainable legal solution.³⁴⁶ Sara and Hana, arriving in 2020, had spent their lives fleeing war between Somalia and Yemen, in their fifth displacement. Both had been registered refugees in Yemen, and endured crises such as losing their family in a bombing, Sara having been in a coma herself. Now in Jordan they had 'lost' their refugee status and were regarded as undocumented, showing the inadequacy of the system and lack of agency of the refugees to change their circumstances.

While it was dehumanising for the refugees knowing that they could not ever formalise their status in Jordan, the added dimension of fear from being caught by authorities, and the treatment in which they were often dealt with heightened these experiences.

4.5.2 Legal Identity

Several informants and refugees spoke of challenges for Somalis not being able to

³⁴³ Personal Communication, Hanan, 5 July 2023.

³⁴⁴ Amir and Farah, Somali representatives, Focus Group Discussion 3 (FGD3), 23 May 2023.

³⁴⁵ Ibrahim, Hanan, Ahmad.

³⁴⁶ FGD2.

renew their passport as there is no Somalian embassy in Jordan. Some noted the unhelpful nature of the Sudanese embassy. Dina Baslan, Human Rights researcher, activist and co-founder of Sawiyan, stated that it was the ‘enemy’ of the Sudanese, referring to the embassy’s involvement in the 2016 deportations and further schemes to deport Sudanese. Ghadeer, an informant from a Legal Aid Clinic, talked about the ‘obstruction’ of the embassy in not helping refugees obtain original documents and as the Civil Department in Jordan only deals with the originals, this furthered problems.³⁴⁷

Documentation issues can also lead to statelessness. Ali, Somali representative, raised his concern of the increasing amount of stateless Somali refugees, many entering with Yemeni documents. Hanan entered Jordan on a fake Yemeni passport and three years later she has unresolved legal issues stemming from this. Rayna, from Sudan, had her passport taken at the airport and never returned.³⁴⁸ Ali talked about the lack of fluency in Arabic compounding legal difficulties faced by the Somali community. Unfortunately, due to the desperation and vulnerable nature of many refugees, they can also be subject to fraud, further complicating documentation issues. While the researcher was in Amman, she was approached by a Somali man who had wired money to a contact in Turkey, believing it was helping him to get a visa via the Canadian embassy, devastated that he had been conned from the little money that he had.³⁴⁹

How these barriers are experienced varies according to the refugees’ own contexts, notably so with integration, as shown. José expressed how refugees’ trauma from the past impacts their life here, often making them especially sensitive to racialised behaviour. The depth of brutality many faced in Darfur due to their ethnicity left many Sudanese deeply scarred. Isra, who has been attacked and witnessed an attack on her two-year-old son in her home in Amman, after already experiencing horrendous levels of violence in Sudan, shared with the researcher how she rarely leaves the house, experiencing dehumanisation and lack of agency to an extreme level. Whereas Ali, a Somali representative, engaged in the community and legally volunteering, has a very different experience. While this research cannot quantify these experiences of dehumanisation and agency, it acknowledges the differing perspectives and experiences based on the individual’s context.

³⁴⁷ Ghadeer, INGO Legal Aid provider, Key Informant Interview, 29 March 2023.

³⁴⁸ Rayna, Interview, 25 March 2023.

³⁴⁹ Personal Communication at NGO Centre, 23 March 2023.

These barriers, experienced on varying levels, and intersecting in different ways, all contributed to the refugees' experiences. The undocumented experienced a severe lack of agency without UNHCR protection, but access to basic rights was challenging for all, especially not being able to legally work. Fiona, Health Clinic leader, spoke of the 'cascading' difficulties caused by the refugees not being able to work, affecting their safety and freedom of movement, and leading to tenancy insecurity, poverty and health issues. The treatment refugees faced across the sectors compounded difficulties faced in other barriers. Their lack of integration and recognition in the public sphere, and racist and discriminatory behaviour resulted in a loss of dignity and feelings of dehumanisation. The root causes of these barriers and experiences will now be addressed in light of further findings.

CHAPTER FIVE: (II) JORDAN'S REFUGEE RESPONSE

(ii): *How do the policies and agendas of Jordan's refugee response contribute to these barriers and impact the refugees' experiences?*

As shown in the findings in Chapter Four, and outlined in the framework in Chapter One, the challenges of provision for Sudanese and Somali refugees in domestic policy are evident. Jordan's domestic policies, shaped by past experiences of refugee influxes and the wider political climate, inform refugee policy, and consist of 'intertwined assemblages' of varying actors, policies and agendas that cannot be neatly categorised and defined.³⁵⁰ Therefore the findings show firstly how the 'policy legacies and memories'³⁵¹ are at the root of the framework governing the Sudanese and Somali refugees, secondly, the driving factors in the current political climate, and thirdly, policies that are an outcome of this.

5.1 Policy Legacies and Memories

5.1.1 Fear of Integration

Riyad Suboh, Human Rights consultant, identified the root of the problem as the issue of the integration of Palestinians, referring to Jordan's hypersensitivity to naturalisation. Scholars support this verdict, Stevens stating that the association of 'refugee' with 'Palestinian', and hence with permanent residency, has 'distorted the discourse' in Jordan.³⁵² Lenner states that the Palestinian experience 'is the narrative that lies underneath all of it'³⁵³ and Géraldine Chatelard talks of Jordan's fear over becoming a 'replacement state' for Palestinians.³⁵⁴ In 2013, in denying entry to Palestinians from Syria, Jordanian Prime Minister Abdullah Ensour summarised the government's stance: "Jordan is not a place to solve Israel's problems."³⁵⁵

Informants highlighted issues with the framework of Jordan's response stemming from this fear of integration, such as Jordan's persistence in not ratifying the Refugee

³⁵⁰ Lenner, 'Tongues', 274.

³⁵¹ Lenner, 273.

³⁵² Stevens, 'Legal Status', 19.

³⁵³ Lenner, 'Tongues', 280.

³⁵⁴ Géraldine Chatelard, 'Jordan: A Refugee Haven', *Migration Policy Institute* (August 2010), [researchgate.net/publication/46479098_Jordan_A_Refugee_Haven](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/46479098_Jordan_A_Refugee_Haven).

³⁵⁵ 'Not Welcome: Jordan's treatment of Palestinians escaping Syria', *HRW*, (August 2014), [hrw.org/report/2014/08/07/not-welcome/jordans-treatment-palestinians-escaping-syria#](https://www.hrw.org/report/2014/08/07/not-welcome/jordans-treatment-palestinians-escaping-syria#).

Convention, and the lack of a domestic legal framework.³⁵⁶ Suboh stressed that the Refugee Convention did not obligate a state to integrate refugees, only that State Parties ‘shall as far as possible facilitate the assimilation and naturalization of refugees.’³⁵⁷ He gave the example of Yemen who has ratified the Refugee Conventions and provides refugees with a legal status –but without giving them citizenship. During the focus group discussions, Akel, CRP, noted the limitations: ‘There is a lack of... durable solutions in Jordan. Despite all the work and efforts [of] community members’.³⁵⁸ Pastor Yazan of a local Sudanese Church summarised the measures available as ‘taking an injection’,³⁵⁹ acknowledging the limitations of any efforts towards integration in Jordan, not getting at the root cause.

Focus group discussions acknowledged that the challenge of integration was not unique for Jordan, situating it in a wider context of identity problems in the Middle East for all non-nationals, dual-nationality prohibited in the LAS. For the rare cases in which non-nationals are able to apply for Jordanian citizenship, Akel, CRP, stated that not many are willing to lose their identity, especially the Sudanese, forgoing return to Sudan as their home country or passing on their citizenship to their children. He also added that Jordan’s policy was flexible compared to most Gulf countries, where the UNHCR do not even have a presence.³⁶⁰

5.1.2 Lack of recognition

Suboh raised the politicised labelling of refugees, discussing how the labelling of Iraqi refugees as ‘guests’ influences the discourse on refugees until today. Stevens lists the many terms used to describe Iraqi refugees: ‘Irregular migrant’, ‘overstayer’, ‘incomer’ or ‘Arab brother or sister’³⁶¹ as the government persisted in refusing to acknowledge and therefore take long-term responsibility for refugees. Whilst this discourse changed for the Syrians, largely because of the overwhelming need for international support, ‘non-Syrian’ refugees such as the Somalis and Sudanese have always been outside the framework of the government’s discourse of ‘refugees’, excluded from the Syrian Refugee Response Plan.

This lack of recognition is reinforced by a lack of presence on international agendas.

³⁵⁶ Coogle; Suboh.

³⁵⁷ Article 36, Refugee Convention.

³⁵⁸ Akel, CRP, FGD2, 23 May 2023.

³⁵⁹ Pastor Yazan, FGD Closing session.

³⁶⁰ FGD Closing Session.

³⁶¹ Stevens, ‘Legal Status’, 18.

Ali, Somali representative, spoke of how the UNHCR ‘worked at trend’ and this did not include ‘non-Syrian’ refugees. Suboh stated that the international community was just not interested in accepting refugees from Sudan and Somalia for resettlement, not fitting their criteria. Nor do the refugees have the advocacy of the Sudanese embassy, as raised by Baslan. As shown in Chapter One, the North-centric foundations and framework of the international humanitarian system do not favour durable solutions for Southern refugees, especially minority populations that the government itself does not recognise.

5.1.3 ‘Politics of accommodation’³⁶²

Suboh discussed the tensions between the Jordanian government and the UNHCR in their treatment of Iraqis over their registration, and their differing population statistics. This shaped the government response to Syrian refugees, their numbers also inflated to garner international support. This reflects Lenner’s research on ‘politics of accommodation’ between the government and the UNHCR as she discusses how the UNHCR learned to ‘bite their tongues’ and ‘co-exist in silent disagreement regarding refugee statistics’.³⁶³ While the UNHCR register and recognise Sudanese and Somalis as refugees, the government view them as illegal,³⁶⁴ and the reports from the refugees in Chapter Four show how their refugee status is called into question by authorities, differing policies of the UNHCR and government co-existing.

5.2 Swinging of the Pendulum

Findings revealed a shift to more exclusive measures due to changes in the wider political climate. Coogle referred to the ‘swinging of the pendulum’ of Jordan’s domestic policies, with measures that ‘disincentivise or discourage’ the presence of nationalities other than Syrian. Baslan agreed, stating that since 2016, on a policy level, the situation had deteriorated by 2023.

5.2.1 Changes in the International Climate

Economic pressures: As seen in Chapter One, Jordan has faced considerable economic pressure due to the number of refugees it has hosted over the years. Many

³⁶² Lenner, ‘Tongues’, 275.

³⁶³ Lenner, 283; 289; as discussed in 2.3.2.

³⁶⁴ Mencütek, *Governance*, 192.

informants raised the current difficult economic climate, in Jordan and abroad. The Covid-19 pandemic changed priorities globally. Coogle shared how in 2019 he had a conversation with a diplomat who stated there were significant conversations about prioritising help for the refugee response in Jordan. However, with the onset of the pandemic, agendas were abruptly abandoned. Baslan stated how crises such as in Ukraine were taking attention and funding from humanitarian operations in the Middle East.

International Focus: Baslan brought up the rise of anti-immigration sentiment of the international community, especially against people of colour, sharing how Western governments ‘do not give a damn’ as ‘they themselves want to get rid of refugees’. Refugees and informants mentioned the change of laws in America with Trump capping numbers of refugees, specifically from Muslim majority countries.³⁶⁵ Aisha and Farida, both Somali, stated that they had finished the procedures for resettlement to America but when the law changed their applications were cancelled. More recently in the UK, the controversial Memorandum of Understanding with Rwanda,³⁶⁶ and the passing of the Illegal Migration Bill³⁶⁷ in 2023 shows the continuation of this sentiment. The current lack of will in the international community to cope with refugees or provide solutions is apparent.

Coogle admitted that the lack of action of Human Rights Watch (HRW) for Sudanese and Somali refugees was ‘an indictment on us’, that ‘local NGOs have been left to twist in the wind, unfortunately’. Whilst HRW were involved in the negotiations during the Sudanese deportations of 2015, their lack of action or awareness since then shows to what extent the Sudanese and Somali refugees are not on the international radar.

Refugee Returns: Baslan noted the recent acceptance of Syria back into the Arab League in May 2023, driven by the Jordanian government. A Jordan official states that the deal is based on ‘a general amnesty [which] will be declared allowing refugees to return’.³⁶⁸ Dr Mamdouh al-Abadi, former deputy Prime Minister of Jordan, called for the ‘Jordanization of work and return of Syrian refugees’.³⁶⁹ King Abdullah II himself met with the Spanish

³⁶⁵ ‘How does the U.S Refugee System Work?’, *Council on Foreign Relations* (2023), [cfr.org/backgrounder/how-does-us-refugee-system-work-trump-biden-afghanistan#chapter-title-0-5](https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/how-does-us-refugee-system-work-trump-biden-afghanistan#chapter-title-0-5).

³⁶⁶ MoU Between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Republic of Rwanda, Home Office, 13 Apr.2022, updated 6 Apr.2023.

³⁶⁷ Illegal Migration Act, 2023, c.37.

³⁶⁸ ‘Jordan’s plan for Syria normalization’, *Middle East Eye* (April 2023), middleeasteye.net/news/jordan-syria-plan-normalisation-refugees-drugs-militias.

³⁶⁹ Dr Mamdouh Al-Abadi, quoted in ‘Al-'Abadi yuṭālibu bardīyyat al-'amal wa-'i'ādat al-Sūryīn ilā bilādihim’ *Jordan zad* (18 June 2023), jordanzad.com/index.php?page=article&id=555363.

Prime Minister, discussing the ‘favourable conditions’ of return of Syrians.³⁷⁰ As seen in Chapter 2.3.1, the King sets the tone for policy direction; the ‘official rhetoric’ has moved towards supporting their return.³⁷¹ Hassan Momani, Professor of International Relations at the University of Jordan, refers to the ‘fear in Jordan’s collective memory’ [from Palestinian integration] that drives the belief that the longer refugees stay, the less likely they are to return, as motivating this agenda.³⁷²

With a difficult economic climate, rising anti-immigration sentiment and the return of Syrian refugees newly on the agenda, the likelihood of more provision for any refugees, including the Sudanese and Somali refugees, diminishes. Baslan concluded that no matter how much political mobilisation there is, policy change cannot be brought amidst all these factors, showing the lack of agency amidst the wider political climate.

5.2.2 From Accommodation to Co-option

There was acknowledgement from refugees and informants alike on how close the relationship between the government and UNHCR is. Yaamin perceived that ‘they are one group’. Baslan described their relationship as ‘far too cosy’ and the ‘government culture,’ saying ‘You go to UNHCR, and you feel you [are] at a governmental institution’. Coogle stated that ‘there’s no question that the relationship... is not an adversarial one,’ and suggested that the UNHCR had become too comfortable in their role. He shared that while they have been able to offer a ‘base-line of protection’ the refugees’ situation is much more precarious now. Williams, also remarks on their relationship, referring to the ‘complicity’ of the humanitarian aid sector and ‘excessive power’ of the host government in 2023.³⁷³

Coogle shared that the UNHCR’s role in Jordan is different to UNHCR in other counties due to their lack of advocacy. Mencütek’s analysis in 2019 confirms this direction. He highlights the Jordanian government’s ‘collaborative but controlling stance’,³⁷⁴ and UNHCR’s ‘extremely close relations’ with the government compared to their position in

³⁷⁰ Ella Rennel, ‘Jordan’s King Abdullah discusses the safe return of Syrian refugees with Spanish Prime Minister’, *Middle East Beat*, (June 27, 2023), themiddleeastbeat.com/jordans-king-abdullah-discusses-safe-return-of-syrian-refugees-with-spanish-prime-minister/.

³⁷¹ Adam Coogle, cited in Isabel Derby, ‘They fled Syria’s Shattering Civil War. Now, Syrian Refugees in Jordan fear being Forced to Return’, *AP News*, (July 20, 2023), apnews.com/article/jordan-syria-refugees-civil-war-return-4a87a2f77db9e6099306db7554898062.

³⁷² Hassan Momani, cited in Derby, ‘Syria’.

³⁷³ Williams, ‘Preaches’, 21;38.

³⁷⁴ Mencütek, *Governance*, 220.

other countries.³⁷⁵ He roots this in the changes in the international climate in the West as they have been more unwilling to bear the burden of refugees (as noted), all enabling the Jordanian government to leverage its position as host of such a large number of refugees.³⁷⁶ Coogle reflected on the reasoning behind this firstly on the nature of the UNHCR as a government organisation, despite its humanitarian principles. In addition, he stated of the need of workers to protect their career, (the government's' lack of hesitation in removing those in opposition evident in the Iraq handling),³⁷⁷ and of the direct links to the government security agencies the UNHCR has, making it harder to do private advocacy.

While Lenner states that that the accommodations between international agencies such as the UNHCR and governments are common, known as 'the great compromise' of global refugee governance,³⁷⁸ it appears that in 2023 the UNHCR's role in Jordan is particularly limiting, and rather than the UNHCR 'biting their tongues'³⁷⁹ in the face of government policy, it suggests a culture of co-option is present.

These changes in the international climate and in the relationship between the UNHCR and Jordan became apparent in specific policy outcomes identified by informants.

5.3 Policy Outcomes

5.3.1 Sudanese deportations

Informants described the deportations of December 2015 as showing a shift in policy towards the Sudanese refugees. Firstly, the government's passive lack of recognition of the Sudanese shifted to active removal in the face of a perceived security threat, and secondly, in the change in relationship between the UNHCR and the government.

Fayzal, UNHCR, framed the mass deportation of Sudanese as a security concern, the gathered Sudanese 'breaching the laws of Jordan'. This view is confirmed by a UNHCR representative at the time stating that they were 'troublemakers', not representing the refugees.³⁸⁰ Suboh and Coogle criticised the government handling of the protests as they

³⁷⁵ Mencütek, 222.

³⁷⁶ Mencütek, 222;227.

³⁷⁷ See Chapter 1.2.3

³⁷⁸ Lenner, 'Tongues', 282.

³⁷⁹ Lenner, 289.

³⁸⁰ Aaron Williams, 'A Humanitarian Tragedy, One Year Later', *Foreign Affairs*, (December 2016) foreignaffairs.com/articles/middle-east/2016-12-23/humanitarian-tragedy-one-year-later.

tricked the Sudanese refugees into thinking that they were flying to Canada and the US.³⁸¹ Williams refers to the complicity of the Sudanese government in their role in the deportation of Sudanese in 2015, and the growing trade relations between Sudan and Jordan from 2014³⁸² supporting policies favouring return of the Sudanese. The refugees' continued fear of deportation has been shown in Chapter Four. With the outbreak of war in Sudan in 2023, internationally UNHCR has issued a non-return advisory. Faysal, UNHCR, said that this would protect against any further deportations of Sudanese refugees,³⁸³ but it remains to be seen for how long, and if this is honoured.

Baslan stated her shock, firstly at the mass deportation, and then at the 'quiet' after it with the lack of advocacy of the UNHCR –indicative of the close relationship between them. The government's control of the situation was apparent. Suboh stated that there was no need for the government to take a collective stance and refugees should always be assessed case by case for deportation. The Jordanian government showed that they are not afraid to break the principle of non-refoulement despite international outcry³⁸⁴ and the UNHCR were unable to prevent this.

5.3.2 Exclusion from Jordan Compact

The findings in Chapter Four show the impact of the Sudanese and Somali refugees' exclusion from the Jordan Compact on the refugees. Suboh stated that the government policy did not add up. He called for them to give the refugees the right to work, within limited sectors, as they do for many other nationalities. Coogle referred to the 'astronomical' fees for a permit, and both he and Faysal confirmed that those who did apply for a permit would have to give up their refugee status. Focus Groups raised the issue, Fabian querying why the government allowed the Sudanese and Somali refugees to remain so long without the right to work.³⁸⁵ Lenner and Turner's work show that given the relatively small number of non-Syrian refugees, it should have been possible to facilitate their access to the labour market.³⁸⁶ Concluding Observations from the CRC Committee to Jordan include recommendations to 'enable the parents of non-Syrian asylum seeking and refugee children to apply for work

³⁸¹ Williams, 'Humanitarian'.

³⁸² Williams, 'Deporting'.

³⁸³ Personal Communication, Faysal, UNHCR, 14 May 2023.

³⁸⁴ 'Jordan: World Report'.

³⁸⁵ Fabian, FG Closing Discussion.

³⁸⁶ Lenner and Turner 'Work?'

permits without the conditionality of renouncing their international protection status.’³⁸⁷ Williams shares the blame of the government with that of the ‘UN agencies, INGOs and donor-states’ who failed to abide by humanitarian principles of humanity and impartiality³⁸⁸ in excluding the ‘non-Syrians’ from the Jordan Compact. This again shows the official lack of recognition by the government, and the international community, in failing to advocate for this.

5.3.3 Increasing obstacles faced by NGOs

Due to the changing economic climate, challenges in funding and capacity by the humanitarian sector were evident. In 2022, the UNHCR only received 51% of its budget for Jordan.³⁸⁹ Fabian, NGO leader, expressed his frustration in trying to communicate to donors the need for protracted situations, it being far easier to raise funds for emergency needs.³⁹⁰ Baslan shared that the major foundation supporting Sawiyan dismantled its department supporting refugees after the pandemic, bringing their funding to an end. Chapter Four shows the more recent strains in many sectors, such as the reduced provisions of health care.

Several NGOs reported increased obstacles with registration with the government if ‘non-Syrian’ refugees are targeted. Coogler stated the process took ‘all kinds of gymnastics’, reliant on *wasta*,³⁹¹ confirming findings in literature.³⁹² Baslan shared that Sawiyan, an NGO serving Sudanese refugees, deregistered in 2023 due to the ‘nightmare’ of the approval process. Providing aid to the undocumented revealed further challenges. In one focus group, Farah, Somali representative, discussed how during Eid, an NGO was distributing aid to undocumented refugees, and the NGO fled when the police arrived due to their concerns. Other participants checked with her – did she mean the refugees, or the NGO? She said no, the NGO themselves ran! The participants laughed at the comic situation, but it reveals a significant problem with providing aid to the undocumented.³⁹³ Ghadeer, Legal Aid informant, was very concerned about confidentiality, checking with the researcher exactly what she was writing down, in part due to the fact that they were serving undocumented refugees.

³⁸⁷ Concluding Observations, para.38(b).

³⁸⁸ Williams, ‘Preaches’, 26.

³⁸⁹ ‘Funding Update’, *UNHCR*, (31 December 2022) reporting.unhcr.org/jordan-funding-2022.

³⁹⁰ Fabian, NGO leader, FGD1.

³⁹¹ A term commonly used in the Arab World to indicate a personal connection to obtain results.

³⁹² ‘Basis of Nationality’, 20-21; Mencütek, *Governance*, 220-221.

³⁹³ FGD3.

The increased politicisation of NGOs was also brought up as a topic of discussion in the focus groups, as well as by several informants. Ramzi, Sudanese representative, shared that people are not listening to the refugees due to the ‘mentality of NGO-isation’.³⁹⁴ Whilst informants, and the focus groups brought up positive changes with the One Refugee Approach Working Group, measures resulting in the inclusion of ‘non-Syrians’, and increasing refugee-led organisations (RLOs)³⁹⁵ these appear to have stalled.³⁹⁶ Ramzi shared that that refugee voices often lacked a connection to a platform where they could be heard on a political level, and government and donor voices dominate the discussion.³⁹⁷ Non-Jordanians are not permitted to form civil society bodies, and if one of the members is non-Jordanian, it requires prime ministerial consent which is difficult to obtain.³⁹⁸ As el-Abed et al.’s findings show, refugees are effectively barred from registering any non-profit organisation or association.³⁹⁹ This further indicates a tight control of the government over the humanitarian sector.

5.3.4 Exclusion from refugee registration

Most informants pointed to the halt of registration from 2019 as a key indication of the government’s policy direction, highlighting it as the biggest challenge facing the refugees. Minister of Interior Mazin al-Farrayeh defended the decision, stating that the [non-Syrian refugees] were taking advantage of the permission the government gave for those seeking medical treatment to apply for asylum, resulting in a big burden on the kingdom, which Jordan was not supposed to or required to bear.⁴⁰⁰ This encapsulates the government’s position towards non-Syrian refugees and the shift from lack of recognition to deliberate exclusion. Coogle stated that the ‘level of outrage’ that should be present from the UNHCR regarding the halt of registration is missing and further evidence of a lack of their ability to ‘push back’. When the question of the future for Sudanese and Somali refugees was

³⁹⁴ FGD2.

³⁹⁵ El-Abed et al., define RLO as ‘an organized formal or informal response initiated, led, or managed by a forcibly displaced person(s) to provide the community with humanitarian, socioeconomic, cultural and/or protection services’, ‘Refugee Communities Mobilising in the Middle East’, *LERRN*, (January 2023), 34, carleton.ca/lerrn/wp-content/uploads/LERRN_RLO_Study_Middle_East_Final_Report_may_16.pdf.

³⁹⁶ Sally, JRS; Ramzi, FG Closing Discussion.

³⁹⁷ FGD2; FG Closing Discussion.

³⁹⁸ Law of Societies (No. 51 of 2008) as amended by Law No. 22 of 2009, International Center for Not-for-Profit Law.

³⁹⁹ El-Abed et al., ‘Mobilising’, 41.

⁴⁰⁰ Video, *Al Jazeera*,

twitter.com/tamersmadi/status/1460324038757294088?s=21&t=Ui5GlohAFu4_PucLetX4ww, cited in Marta Vidal, Jordan’s ‘other’ refugees stuck in limbo’, *Middle Eastern Eye*, (July 2022), middleeasteye.net/news/jordan-other-refugees-limbo-frozen-asylum-claims.

broached, Faysal, UNHCR stated that it is down to ‘a flip of the coin’, indicative of the lack of control of the UNHCR on a policy level.

The findings therefore show that since 2016, the pendulum has ‘swung’ towards more exclusionary measures, and these measures are rooted in the historical and political legacies and memories of Jordan’s dealings with refugees and the current international political climate. These policies have a direct impact on the barriers facing Sudanese and Somali refugees, and in 2023 there seems little recourse for policy change, rather, it remains to be seen how far the pendulum continues to swing with the talk of Syrian returnees.

The findings therefore bring to light the experiences of the Sudanese and Somali refugees. Their experiences of dehumanisation and lack of agency are interwoven in the barriers that they face every day, and reflective of an increasing lack of agency and exclusion in the wider political climate influencing Jordan’s refugee regime.

CHAPTER SIX: (III) COMMUNITY-LED RESPONSES

(iii) *How are community-led responses countering the barriers the refugees face and changing their experiences?*

Despite the seemingly bleak outlook on a policy level, the research revealed many efforts by refugees, and the local community around them, to change their experiences. These over-looked, Southern-led responses reveal ‘everyday activism’⁴⁰¹ and the potential for ‘moments of solidarity’⁴⁰² as agency is exercised, and dehumanisation is resisted. The findings revealed community-led responses in the form of support networks, civic participation and individual acts of resistance.

6.1 Support Networks

6.1.1 Social environment

Creating a supportive environment appeared to be the first step for helping refugees to feel safe, accepted and human. Many NGOs created a space that promoted diversity and acceptance between the refugees and the host culture, provided community, and a safe, inclusive learning environment for the next generation. Almost half of the interviews the researcher conducted with NGOs/CBOs in Amman were faith-influenced, supporting Fiddian-Qasmiyeh’s recommendations for more research on the role of FBOs in Southern-led responses.⁴⁰³ Nakib and Ager’s findings in Irbid show that due to the centrality of faith in Jordanian society, most humanitarian organisations are faith-influenced,⁴⁰⁴ and this is likely to be reflected in Amman. Some of these centres interviewed chose not to be identified, deliberately practicing ‘invisibilisation’⁴⁰⁵ in order to provide support without needing to conform to government compliance.

Promoting diversity and inclusion: Ali, Somali representative, stated that their goals

⁴⁰¹ Johnson, ‘Solidarity’, 125.

⁴⁰² Johnson, 110.

⁴⁰³ Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, ‘Introduction: Faith-Based Humanitarianism in Contexts of Forced Displacement’, *Journal of Refugee Studies* 24, No. 3, (2011):429–439, doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fer033.

⁴⁰⁴ Shatha El-Nakib and Alastair Ager, ‘Local Faith Community and Related Civil Society Engagement’, *Report to the Henry Luce Foundation*, (2015), jlfic.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/El-Nakib-Ager-Local-faith-communities-and-humanitarian-response-in-Irbid-.pdf.

⁴⁰⁵ Semhar Haile, ‘Voices to be heard?’ in *Refuge in a Moving World*, ed. Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (London: UCL Press, 2020), 32.

at Amira Basma Community Centre were to break the chains that are around society and encourage respect for others. Many shared these goals, talking of the importance of acceptance and inter-religious dialogue, and shared successful measures, such as hiring Jordanian leaders amongst Somali and Sudanese leaders paving the way for racial reconciliation and healing.⁴⁰⁶ Sally spoke of JRS' community events that celebrate the humanity of refugees, and of the enrichment that came from the diversity in their community. To mark World Refugee Day, JRS held a 'Festival of Encounter', its aim to create 'a platform for building bridges of mutual understanding, empathy and inclusion'.⁴⁰⁷ JRS also spoke of their Civil Peace Service program, Agiomondo, to enhance social cohesion.

The researcher observed other public events contributing to this environment. Opposite the centre in Jabal Amman that the researcher was based in was a collaborative mural created by 'Out of Frame' community art project, designed to voice the narratives of marginalised communities by reclaiming space.⁴⁰⁸ Filipino and Sri Lankan migrants, Somali and Sudanese refugees, other foreigners and Jordanians alike contributed to its creation. Hala Ghenam's work on public spaces in Amman shows how they can be reclaimed as sites of public agency, such as NGO Seven Hills Skatepark's vision to embrace inclusivity and refugee integration.⁴⁰⁹

Spaces of connection: Community settings also cultivate friendship and connections. Ahmad and Mona talked of being able to mix with people, and even laugh together. Two focus groups discussed the importance of this: Amir, Somali representative, raised the need for companionship for those who are isolated.⁴¹⁰ Ruba, NGO worker, agreed, stating, that although she wasn't qualified as a counsellor, she could help with simple steps such as by listening. Pastor Yazan added that often people need a 'reset' in their life and help from others to put together a 'road map'. Maria stated the value in refugees being able to tghāyir al-jow,⁴¹¹ and get out of the house, the activity in itself of secondary importance. Selina, Health Clinic leader, discussed the value of exercise programmes such as Zumba not only

⁴⁰⁶ Ruba, NGO worker, FGD3; José; Maria, NGO worker, Key Informant Interview, 15 March 2023.

⁴⁰⁷ Lucy Lagodich, 'Second Festival of Encounter', (June 2023) *Jordan Times*, jordantimes.com/news/local/second-festival-encounter-celebrate-diversity-jordans-refugee-communities-weekend.

⁴⁰⁸ 'Out of Frame: Manilla Street', *Dalal Mitwally*, (2021), dalalmitwally.com/outside/oofmanillast.

⁴⁰⁹ Hala Ghanem, 'Public Outdoor Space and Refugees' Socio-Cultural Integration', Thesis, (2021), etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/31069/.

⁴¹⁰ FGD3.

⁴¹¹ Arabic expression meaning to change the environment/mood.

contributing to refugees' well-being, but in creating community.⁴¹² Sawiyan, the NGO Baslan co-founded, means 'together', indicative of their vision to build community with the refugees.

The cultivation of a safe, inclusive environment for the next generation: Amin, Academy Leader, stated that one of their main goals was 'to help [the children] be treated as human beings... to build [a] safe environment and love one another', combatting racism and discrimination in society. Hala, a Kindergarten teacher, stated of her NGO's aim to instil positive values, common to see children impacted by traumatised parents in their home environment.⁴¹³ She spoke of the importance of creating a safe environment and teaching them how to be emotionally intelligent and interact well with those from different nationalities. Marah, an INGO informant, spoke about the importance of refugee children mixing with other nationalities to break down barriers.⁴¹⁴ The limited research available shows that children of refugees are at a greater disadvantage due to their parents' pre-and post-migration experiences.⁴¹⁵ These efforts work at changing the experiences of the next generation.

These social environments were perceived as key in providing emotional and mental support to the refugees, countering some of the negative experiences they have faced and providing an opportunity for themselves - and their children - to feel safe, and human.

6.1.2 Community Aid

Whilst barriers to integration revealed low social bridging between communities (Chapter 4.4), support networks were apparent due to the high level of social bonding within communities. This was notable as the refugees described what happened on their arrival in Jordan. Almost every refugee spoke of being helped with accommodation by someone from their nationality. As Ahmad shared, on arrival, he asked the taxi driver to take him to the area where the Sudanese lived, and was then able to find connections to help with accommodation. Refugees acted as hosts,⁴¹⁶ as they welcomed in new arrivals to their homes. Farida shared how she finds moral and financial support within the community, such as when neighbours gathered one dinar from a range of families to help her when she lost her

⁴¹² Selina, Health Clinic leader, FGD2.

⁴¹³ Hala, NGO Kindergarten teacher, Key Informant Interview, 23 March 2023.

⁴¹⁴ Marah, INGO worker, Key Informant Interview, 28 March 2023.

⁴¹⁵ Alice Bloch, 'Reflections and Directions for Research in Refugee Studies', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 43, No.3, (2019):451-2, doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2020.1677928.

⁴¹⁶ Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 'Representations', 465-6; Jordan, 'Share', 869.

job the previous year. While Sara and Hanan stated they had minimal connections, just arriving in 2022 and due to mobility problems not leaving the house, they had received financial help from friends towards medicine, a sharing of resources natural despite such limited means. Several NGOs reported they were creating databases to facilitate sharing of resources from within the community.⁴¹⁷ This bonding social capital is evidenced in reports, talking of redistribution of resources amongst refugees.⁴¹⁸

Whilst less common, low social bridging capital evident as discussed, there were glimpses of support that transcended nationalities. The researcher observed on a visit in the community an Eritrean family where the son was being taught informally by a local Jordanian neighbour who was qualified as a teacher.⁴¹⁹ The boy proudly told the researcher on arrival that he was going to ‘school’. Once he left, his mother’s face lit up as she shared about the help he was getting. Examples like these help to break down boundaries and stereotypes, and echo Bayat’s ‘encroaching of the ordinary’⁴²⁰ as the community quietly and regularly provides resources from within.

Organisations also talked of their support of refugees with resettlement options, giving them opportunities to apply for alternative, complementary pathways to resettlement. Akel, CRP, and Sally, JRS explained their role in supporting refugees with this, such as the World University Service of Canada Scholarships and Talent Beyond Boundaries with labour pathways, and private sponsorship schemes. Baslan described Sawiyan’s transnational links, such as American lawyers that were partnered with to help find resettlement opportunities for separated refugee families.⁴²¹ These efforts provide ‘moments of solidarity’ as citizens come alongside refugees to bring change.

6.1.3 Skills development

Many refugees interviewed were learning English,⁴²² taking sewing classes or involved in other forms of skills-training. Sally described their skills-training programmes as ‘to support the idea that [the refugees’] time is not wasted’, but valuable. Focus groups discussed helping give the refugees ‘on a very human level, hope and progress’ through

⁴¹⁷ Joy, CBO leader; Amir, FGD3.

⁴¹⁸ Johnston et al., ‘Networks’, 3; Calhoun, ‘Help’, 5-6.

⁴¹⁹ Personal Communications, 18 May 2023.

⁴²⁰ Bayat, *Politics*, 14-15.

⁴²¹ Dina Baslan, ‘Mobilisation: A Mode of Survival for Overlooked Minority Refugees’, *Forced Migration Review*, (June 2023), fmreview.org/sites/fmr/files/FMRdownloads/en/rights-mobilisation/baslan.pdf.

⁴²² Note that voluntary response sampling was carried out at an English Centre, inflating the numbers studying.

skills-training.⁴²³ Bassan herself expressed that she hoped that people would be able to see beyond the refugee to the skills the refugees have as a person, reinforcing their humanity.

Most NGOs shared of refugees leading these programmes, such as in urban agriculture or hair salons,⁴²⁴ or teaching English themselves.⁴²⁵ The researcher heard of the advantage of leaders with shared culture and language, such as teachers interacting with children with their traditional play.⁴²⁶ Akel stated that all the volunteers for CRP programmes were from the community itself. Farida shared that ‘As refugees, people think ...[that] we are only receiving, but we are givers also. We contribute back to the community’. Baslan describes Sawiyan’s refugee-led English classes as a form of mobilisation for the community, enabling volunteers to become ‘facilitators of knowledge’.⁴²⁷

It was therefore evident that refugees are ‘providers of support’⁴²⁸ whether in providing aid, or skills, and many organisations are coming alongside them showing ‘moments of solidarity’ as they connected refugees to help, skills-training or simply provided a safe environment where they could feel human. When support involved integrating nationalities, whether through a social environment, aid from an unexpected source, or a mixed nationality leadership team in an NGO, it seemed particularly impactful in helping to counter dehumanising, negative experiences in society.

6.2 Civil Participation

6.2.1 Protests

Two peaceful, silent protests of up to about 100 from the Sudanese refugee community took place outside the UNHCR Khalda office during May 2023. The researcher visited the site on the date of the last protest and spoke to the security staff who stated that they were orderly and quiet, arriving at 8am for two hours.⁴²⁹ Baslan stated how they were acting with ‘extreme caution’, following a list of rules.

The reasons behind these protests were discussed in a focus group. Ramzi stated ‘This

⁴²³ Sonya, INGO worker, FGD2.

⁴²⁴ Maria, NGO worker.

⁴²⁵ José; Baslan, ‘Mobilisation’.

⁴²⁶ José; Maria; Hala.

⁴²⁷ Baslan, ‘Mobilisation’.

⁴²⁸ Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, *Representations*, 465.

⁴²⁹ Personal Communication, UNHCR Khalda, 16 May 2023.

is normal for us'. '[The Sudanese] want the freedom to protest.'⁴³⁰ Baslan stated how culturally, Sudanese are used to engaging in politics, referencing the presence of over fifty political parties in Sudan. She stated that it was a stance of solidarity of their grievances – and with the wider community against the backdrop of war in Sudan, and also a physical reminder to people that Sudanese refugees were there and an acknowledgement of their pain as a human being, in a country that 'does not recognise your suffering'.

Protesting, therefore, can also be seen as the refugees' need for their humanity to be recognised, reflective of how our dignity is found through others' attribution.⁴³¹ This is also seen in the language of human rights that was used to conceptualise their protests, signs reading: 'We see our right to life and hope but here we are not allowed this right' and; I have the right to live, and live humanely. Statements were made such as: We just want to live in dignity, and have a decent life for our children.⁴³² Comparisons can be drawn with Lucy Fiske's research, exploring how refugees detained in Australia protested 'to explore their own agency and offer support and recognition to one another' and how this helped them to 'to resist dehumanizing regimes and insist upon a recognizably human life.'⁴³³

The protests, in their very visible nature, have the ability to attract wider attention. Their publicity and actions on social media allow them to connect with the transnational diaspora and a wider network of activists. This creates an opportunity for 'moments of solidarity' as citizens are contacted. Baslan stated that the future of the Sudanese and Somali refugees lay in the role of the people, not institutions, suggesting an increase in the role of transnational diasporas in the future.

This political activism does not always show the refugee in a positive light. A refugee with agency is not necessarily a 'hero'⁴³⁴ and their voice should not be 'romanticised'.⁴³⁵ Marah, INGO informant, herself half-Sudanese, acknowledged that in the 2016 protests, both sides were to blame for what happened, refusing to paint the Sudanese solely as victims. Other acts of advocacy reflect this very human resistance. The researcher was slightly taken aback when Ibrahim told her, from his distress of the judge's stance towards him in a case,

⁴³⁰ FGD2.

⁴³¹ Arendt, *Burden*, 439.

⁴³² Placard image, *Twitter*, twitter.com/dinabaslan/status/1655829386237542402/photo/4; Placard, Video on file with researcher; Status, @manasikaballa2, twitter.com/manasikaballa2/status/1655963924335063047.

⁴³³ Lucy Fiske, 'Human Rights and Refugee Protest against Immigration', *Refuge* 32, No.1 (2016): 20, [jstor.org/stable/48649058](https://www.jstor.org/stable/48649058).

⁴³⁴ Turner, 'Biopolitics', 40.

⁴³⁵ Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 'Representations', 460.

said to the judge that he wished he would get cancer. But as Baslan stated, these actions defy the expectation that a refugee is a ‘passive receiver of aid’ who does not engage with politics.

6.2.2 Sudanese and Somali Community Representatives

Civic action can also be seen through other platforms such as the UNHCR Refugee CSCs, and other NGO community representatives. Ali, CSC Somali representative at JOHUD's Community Centre, Amira Basma, described his role as a link between the refugees and the UNHCR, helping with translation, documentation issues, and keeping the community up-to-date on policy changes. Faysal, UNHCR, also raised the important role of Community Based Protection through these CSC representatives. However, most of the refugees interviewed seemed to have little awareness of any representatives. Those that did, stated there was no benefit, Yaamin saying that there was discrimination from the leaders, perceived as acting in the UNHCR's interests only. Jordan's research also reports a lack of awareness of the Amira Basma centre, stating that it was not clear whether it was distance, transport, cost or lack of interest.⁴³⁶ This is an under-researched area, but these initial findings mirror Janmyr's research in Beirut in that there are limitations to official avenues of refugee participation.⁴³⁷

Many NGOs worked with refugee community leaders. Sally stated that it provided ‘a platform where the refugees can share their voice directly’ and a further benefit of incorporating leaders from a range of nationalities was that it ‘breaks a bit with the division in the outside world’. Baslan stated that one positive change she had seen from 2016 was the increase of representation of community leaders that have good relations with policy makers. Informants mentioned the development of the Working Group for the One Refugee Approach which incorporated refugee voices. Refugee representatives shared about the increasing amount of RLO initiatives, Ramzi stating that there were ‘more than 100’ in the Sudanese community.⁴³⁸ However, as noted in 5.3.3, limitations have been raised.

Refugees are exercising their associative rights, the Sudanese community more visibly so, in part due to their larger population size and political culture. However, there are limitations to this civic participation, with the government controlling the protests, and

⁴³⁶ Jordan, ‘Humanitarians’, 62.

⁴³⁷ Maja Janmyr, ‘Sudanese Refugees and the ‘Syrian Refugee Response in Lebanon’, *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 41 (2022): 150, doi.org/10/1093/rsq/hdab012.

⁴³⁸ FGD2.

potential limitations in the reach of CSCs or difficulties in refugees getting their voices heard on a wider platform. This appears indicative of the wider level of control of discourse in the Jordan Response and the ‘swinging of the pendulum’ to more exclusionary policies.

6.3 Individual Acts of Resistance

The findings revealed examples of ‘everyday activism’,⁴³⁹ especially noted amongst Somali women. Six of the interviews with Somalis were from female-headed households. 52% of Somali households in Jordan are female headed, compared to only 5% of Sudanese households.⁴⁴⁰ Whilst there have been studies conducted on gender dynamics in forced displacement, there is little research on the intersection with activism; traditionally their increased vulnerability or challenges have been focused on.⁴⁴¹

6.3.1 Creative Expression

Farida shared how she uses art as resistance, a way to express her emotions, but also to connect others, and raise awareness of Somalian refugees’ situations. ‘I resist through art, like art therapy, giving back to my refugee fellows. It adds meaning and purpose to my life’. Setting up an art club, she serves the community and provides space for others. Sally, JRS, talked of their creation of a space for ‘displaced talents’, such as exhibition of ‘Voices from Refugee Committees’ at Image Festival Amman, showcasing the power of storytelling through frames.⁴⁴² JRS Country Director, Tariq Rezeqallah stated that the purpose was to show the reality of human beings and express their deepest feelings and different traditions.⁴⁴³ These responses to displacement echo Fiddian-Qasmiyeh’s proposal of creative resistance ‘[providing] a space to resist expectations’, acting as a ‘host’ in itself.⁴⁴⁴

6.3.2 Individual Advocacy

Hanan shared how she visits the UNHCR, sometimes having to stay overnight and

⁴³⁹ Johnson, ‘Solidarity’, 125.

⁴⁴⁰ ‘Jordan-Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Assessment 2018’, (2019), WFP, 53, docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000106260/download/.

⁴⁴¹ Such as Jeni Klugman, ‘Gender Dimensions of Forced Displacement’, *World Bank Group*, (2022): 7, reliefweb.int/report/world/gender-dimensions-forced-displacement-synthesis-new-research.

⁴⁴² ‘Voices from Refugee Communities’ *Image Festival Amman* (May 2023), imagefestivalamman.com/Exhibitions11.html

⁴⁴³ Tanya Raghu, ‘Voices from Refugee Communities’, *Jordan Times*, (14 May 2023), jordantimes.com/news/local/%E2%80%98voices-refugee-communities%E2%80%99-exhibit-showcases-power-storytelling-through-frames.

⁴⁴⁴ Greatrick and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, ‘Performance’.

refusing to leave until she is seen, despite the cost of transport and managing a 2-year-old. Danya shared how she goes every morning to try and get funding to provide for her children, despite the negative interactions she reported from the workers and the long waits. Baslan noted that this was common amongst the Somali community. As shown, many women – and men - talked of regular trips to present their case to the UNHCR. Although all were frustrated and tired, they persisted. These trips can be seen as glimpses of ‘everyday activism’ that add up to ‘an ongoing story’ that has potential to bring political change.⁴⁴⁵

6.3.3 Economic Strategies

That many refugees are working informally, while at risk, is in itself an act of activism, of protest of their inability to access legal channels of work and desperation to provide for their families. As seen in the research, almost all refugees that are physically able to are working informally, trying not to draw attention to themselves due to the risks involved, using a strategy of ‘invisibilisation’.⁴⁴⁶ Haile states this strategic invisibility is also an ‘opportunity to humanize oneself’⁴⁴⁷ the refugees attempting to make a way to live a ‘normal life’ by working.⁴⁴⁸ Bayat’s view of activism is where seemingly ‘simple and mundane practices’ to ‘maintain a life of dignity’ can ‘shift into the realm of contentious politics’,⁴⁴⁹ and this can be seen when Sudanese refugees such as Abdul not only work illegally, but also participate in a protest to call for their right to work.⁴⁵⁰

It is therefore evident that beneath ‘macro-events of protest and mass mobilisation’ lies a ‘multitude of micro-events’⁴⁵¹ which can contribute to an ongoing story.⁴⁵² The role of female-headed households particularly warrants more research. The responsibility they hold in providing for themselves and their families could be a reason for increased activism, and with less avenues to work, more time to explore other creative ways of resisting that do not conflict with childcare.

⁴⁴⁵ Johnson, ‘Solidarity’, 125-6.

⁴⁴⁶ Johnson, 122.

⁴⁴⁷ Haile, ‘Voices’, 40.

⁴⁴⁸ Aydan Greatrick and Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, ‘The Roles of Performance and Creative Writing Workshops’, *Refugee Hosts* (2017), refugeehosts.org/2017/03/01/the-roles-of-performance-and-creative-writing-workshops-in-refugee-related-research/.

⁴⁴⁹ Bayat, *Politics*, 14-15; 58.

⁴⁵⁰ Article 6, ‘Emergency Aid’.

⁴⁵¹ A.R. Zolberg, Moments of Madness, *Politics & Society* 2, No.2 (1972): 207, doi.org/10.1177/003232927200200203.

⁴⁵² Johnson, ‘Solidarity’, 126.

Therefore, through support networks, civic participation and individual acts of resistance, we can see ‘glimpses of a deeper political activity that operates at the level of the everyday’⁴⁵³ and the ability to have impact allowing the refugees to feel human. However for this agency to translate into political change, ‘moments of solidarity’ are needed with citizens to ‘turn the volume up,’⁴⁵⁴ there is a need to ‘amplify such concerted efforts of grassroots mobilisation.’⁴⁵⁵ This can be seen in the goals of the Sudanese, using the protests to mark their presence their requests and garner attention of international community, and using Twitter as a platform, or in Sudanese and Somali representatives trying to find a ‘connection’ so their voices can be heard.⁴⁵⁶

This research will now conclude with summarising the key findings in light of the research questions, and with suggestions for further research.

⁴⁵³ Johnson, 109.

⁴⁵⁴ Johnson, 125.

⁴⁵⁵ Baslan, *Twitter*, 16 May 2023, twitter.com/dinabaslan/status/1658494296792903682.

⁴⁵⁶ FG Closing Discussion.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS

This thesis conceptualised the experiences of the Sudanese and Somali refugees as ones of dehumanisation and lack of agency, drawing from Arendt's framework of human rights and Johnson's exposition of the agency of non-citizens.

This thesis set out to answer the research question of what factors contribute towards these experiences, and how these experiences are being countered. The first sub-question identified four barriers that contributed towards these experiences: Lack of access to socio-economic rights, racism and discrimination, lack of integration and lack of legal protection. Lack of legal protection and the right to work were especially expressed by the refugees as deeply dehumanising and restrictive as they struggled to build a future or safely provide for their families. In the public sphere, racist and discriminatory treatment, barriers to *de-facto* integration and increasing pressures on service provisions resulted in further experiences of dehumanisation, and lack of access to rights in practice.

The second sub-research question addressed how the policies and agendas of Jordan's refugee response contributed to these barriers and experiences. The barriers were influenced by Jordan's historical and political legacies and memories, particularly the sensitivity of legal integration. Providing the right to work in certain fields and opening up UNHCR registration in line with Jordan's MoU were highlighted by informants as measures that could be enacted to help Sudanese and Somali refugees. But the findings revealed a shift to more exclusionary measures from 2016, particularly with the halt of registration since 2019, the recent agenda favouring the return of Syrian refugees, and the increased lack of agency of the UNHCR.

Against a backdrop of a difficult economic climate, locally and globally, Jordan understandably protects domestic interests, whilst continuing to generously host the second highest number of refugees in the world. As refugees in the Global South, the Sudanese and Somalis' position is further restricted by the limited solutions of the North-centric international refugee system amidst a climate of anti-refugee racialised sentiment. There is a need for more research on how traditional durable solutions can be expanded, and how refugee rights can be realised in a Middle Eastern context, outwith the ratification of the Refugee Convention, to see how Arab roots of hospitality can support, rather than conflict with international efforts.

Finally, the findings addressed how community-driven responses are countering the barriers the refugees face and changing their experiences. In the context of Southern-led responses, the research showed multiple ways in which the refugees, in situations of ‘overlapping displacement’,⁴⁵⁷ exerted agency and resisted dehumanisation by means of support networks, civic participation, and individual acts of resistance, and by partnering with organisations, or connecting with those further afield, have the potential to have further political impact in the context of ‘moments of solidarity’. Further research is needed on the nature of these Southern-led responses to forced displacement, especially in areas such as the role of female-headed households and faith-based organisations.

This thesis has primarily contributed to knowledge on the under-researched Sudanese and Somali refugee populations in Jordan, offering insights that can serve as a foundation for further research within the communities. It also adds to broader literature on the experiences of refugees in protracted displacement in the Global South and contributes to under-researched areas such as African identity in the Arab world, and Southern-led responses in forced displacement. As this thesis amplifies the voices of the Sudanese and Somali refugees in Jordan, the researcher hopes in some small way that this contribution itself represents a ‘moment of solidarity’.⁴⁵⁸

⁴⁵⁷ Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, ‘*Representations*,’ 460.

⁴⁵⁸ Johnson, ‘*Moments*’, 110.

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Field Research

See Appendices 4, 5 and 6 for a full list of participants and informants that were interviewed or took part in focus group discussions, and Appendix 20 for the Sudanese refugee protest Emergency Appeal document and media.

APPENDICIES

Appendix 1: Estimated total population figures of Sudanese and Somali nationals

With the suspension of refugee registration since 2019, the number of those eligible for refugee status, but unable to enrol, are not included in UNHCR figures. There has not been a Government population census since 2015. Recent estimates of current populations are shown below.

	2022/3 estimated population totals ⁴⁵⁹	2023 registered refugees and asylum seekers in Jordan. (UNHCR) ⁴⁶⁰
Sudanese nationals	10,000	5,058
Somali nationals	1000 – 4000	579

⁴⁵⁹ Somali population estimated at between 2000-4000 by CRP: ‘Somali Refugees at CRP’, (August 2022), *CRP*, collateralrepairproject.org/somali-refugees-at-crp/. and as 1000 by the Local Engagement Refugee Research Network (LERRN), who also estimate the Sudanese population size at 10,000. Oroub El-Abed et al., ‘Refugee Communities Mobilising in the Middle East’, *LERRN*, (January 2023), carleton.ca/lerrn/wp-content/uploads/LERRN_RLO_Study_Middle_East_Final_Report_may_16.pdf.

⁴⁶⁰ ‘Statistical Report on Registered Refugees and Asylum Seekers Jordan’, (15 July 2023), *UNHCR*, data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/100754.

Appendix 2: Population of refugees and asylum seekers in Jordan under UNHCR Protection

*There are also 2,307,011 Palestinians under UNRWA protection.⁴⁶¹

Country of origin	2021 ⁴⁶²			2022			2023 ⁴⁶³
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Total
Syria	336,172	336,780	672,952	329,546	331,346	660,892	659,030
Iraq	32,091	34,372	66,363	32,131	30,001	62,132	60,951
Yemen	8883	3894	12,777	8,874	3,878	12,752	12,771
Sudan	4212	1681	5,893	3,835	1,479	5,314	5,058
Somalia	330	326	656	291	303	594	579
South Sudan	14	5	19	13	5	18	n/s
Others	n/s	n/s	2334	n/s	n/s	1298	1168 inc. South Sudan
Total			760,994			752,000	739,557

⁴⁶¹ 'Jordan', *UNRWA*, unrwa.org/where-we-work/jordan.

⁴⁶² Data extracted for 2021 and 2022: 'Refugee Data Finder', *UNHCR*, accessed 28 February 2023, unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=cWf8MP/.

⁴⁶³ Data extracted for 2023 figures: 'Statistical Report on Registered Refugees and Asylum Seekers Jordan', (15 July 2023), *UNHCR*, data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/100754, no gender breakdown available.

Appendix 3: Registration form for refugee participants

The form can be viewed at this link in English and Arabic:
form.jotform.com/230723789719469

Call for research participants

Thank you for being willing to be interviewed. Your help is greatly appreciated and all information will be recorded anonymously. It will last about 30 - 40 minutes and take place at the Hope Center, 2nd Circle. Below you can select a time and date that suit you. I will send you a text message to confirm the appointment.

A bit more about the interview:

I am a student completing a master's degree in Democracy and Human Rights in the Arab World. I am focusing on the rights of the Sudanese and Somali refugees in Amman. I am conducting interviews to help me to better understand, and raise awareness of the rights of the Sudanese and Somali refugee population in Jordan. I look forward to learning about your experience of life in Jordan and what challenges and opportunities you face.

Your contribution to this study as a refugee is highly valuable and appreciated. Please note that your participation in this study is voluntary and you are welcome to miss out any question you do not wish to answer.

Thank you for your time and contribution. Laurie

The interview will take place at The Hope Center, close to 2nd circle

Nationality

Sudanese
 Somalian

Status

Refugee
 Asylum Seeker

Name

Phone Number *

Please enter a valid phone number.

Preferred Date and Time *

11/08/2023 Friday, August 11

Calendar view for August 2023. The 11th is selected. A message "No slots available" is displayed at the bottom of the calendar.

This link was sent alongside a WhatsApp voice note in Arabic and researcher's contact details.

Appendix 4: Interviews - Refugee participants

Notes:

One participant rescheduled because of Ramadan and did not respond again and was therefore not interviewed. Three that were interviewed did not meet the criteria of refugee and so were excluded - two arrived for marriage and overstayed their medical visa entry, one was born in Jordan and her parents had entered for medical reasons and not sought refugee status.

Two contacts spontaneously turned up at the centre to be interviewed. One of these was Eritrean. As a minority African refugee the researcher felt it complemented the research and so included her interview in the analysis.

Where two names are listed together, they were interviewed as a couple, both given the opportunity to respond to each question asked.

All names are pseudonyms. The first time they are referred to in the thesis, their name and nationality are given, and date of interview is provided by footnote; after that they are referred to by name.

Name.	Area of residency	Family in residence (FHH = female headed household)	Registered with the UNHCR	City and Country of origin	Route to Jordan	Interview Date / 2023	Location of Interview	Language of Interview
Hanan Pilot	Jabal Amman	1 daughter (2.5 years) FHH	Yes (2017)	Mogadishu, Somalia	→ Yemen (3 years)	14 March	Participant's home	Arabic
Layla	Jabal Amman	Husband and 5 children (12,11,4,4,2)	Yes (2018)	Darfur, Sudan	Direct	22 March	NGO Centre	Arabic
Ahmad	Jabal Amman	Wife and 4 children	Yes (2017)	Darfur, Sudan	→ Khartoum (4 years)	23 March	NGO Centre	English
Sara	Jabal Amman	With one daughter (5 children in Yemen) FHH	No (2022)	Warsheikh, Somalia	→ Yemen → Somalia → Yemen → Jordan	24 March	Participant's home	Somali / Arabic
Hana	Jabal Amman	3 Children FHH	No (2022)	Warshiekh, Somalia	→ Yemen → Somalia → Yemen → Jordan	24 March	Participant's home	Somali / Arabic
Aisha	Jabal Amman	2 girls (12,18) FHH	Yes (2012)	Somalia	→ Yemen (10 years)	25 March	NGO Centre	Arabic

Fatima	Jabal Amman	By herself FHH	Yes (2014)	Bosaso, Somalia	→ Yemen (3 years)	25 March	NGO Centre	Arabic
Rayna	Ras al Ayn	2 children and sisters 2 children (21, 20, 12, 5) FHH	Yes (2018)	Darfur, Sudan	Direct	25 March	NGO Centre	Arabic
Danya	Jabal Amman	Children 21, 18, 14 Husband remarried in Yemen FHH	Yes (2013)	Mogadishu, Somalia	→ Yemen (4 years)	25 March	NGO Centre	Arabic
Anya and Ibrahim	Jabal Amman	1 girl (4)	Yes (I – 2013, A, 2018)	Darfur, Sudan	Direct	26 March	Participants' home	Arabic and English
Bassan	Jabal Amman	Lives with brother	No (2022)	Somalian, but born in Aden, Yemen	Yemen	27 March	NGO Centre	Arabic
Mohammad	Jabal Amman	Wife and 3 children , 8, 5, 2	Yes (2014)	Darfur, Sudan	Direct	27 March	Online	English
Mona	Jabal Amman	Husband, 3 children	Yes (2011)	Darfur, Sudan	Direct	28 March	NGO Centre	Arabic
Abdul	Jabal Natheif	Wife and Aunt	Yes (2018)	Darfur, Sudan	Direct	28 March; Follow up conversation 16 th May & 22 nd June regarding protests	NGO Centre	Mainly English, some Arabic
Hafiza	Jabal Amman	Husband	Yes (2014)	Keren, Eritrea	→ Sudan	28 March	NGO Centre	Arabic
Yaamin and Isra	Jabal Amman	2, girl 5 boy 2	Yes Y (2013) I (2018)	Sudan	Direct	29 March	Participants' house	Arabic and English
Aziza	Jabal Amman	2 boys 1 girl, husband	Yes (2014)	Sudan	Direct	1 April	Refugees' house	Arabic
Hassan	Jabal Amman	2 boys 6 and 2	Yes (2014)	Sudan	→ Egypt (via Port of Aqaba)	1 April	Online	English
Ali , representative	Amman	None	Yes (2011)	Somalia (nationality , born in Sa)	Saudi Arabia → Syria → Jordan	7 May	Online	Arabic
Abdullah and Nour	Jabal Amman	2 boys, 7 and 2	No (2020)	Sudanese	Direct	22 March; 26 May follow-up conversation)	NGO Centre and participants' home	Arabic

Total:

Country	Total	Male	Female	Registered	Undocumented	FHH
Sudan	14	7	7	12	2	1
Somalia	8	1	7	5	3	6
Eritrea	1	0	1	1	0	0
Total	23	8	15	18	5	7

Appendix 5: Interviews - Key Informants

Names with * are pseudonyms. The first time they are referred to in the thesis, their name and organisation is provided, and date of interview and any other relevant matter is provided by footnote; after that they are referred to by name, and role if deemed necessary.

Reference	Name/Role	Organisation	Nationality	Nationalities served	Date
Maria* (Also functioned as Pilot)	NGO community worker	Local centre (requested anonymity)	American	Somali Yemeni	15 March
José*	NGO worker Director of English Centre	Local centre (requested anonymity)	Brazilian	Open to all but mainly Sudanese, Somali and Yemeni	19 March
Faysal*	Assistant Protection Officer, leads protection team for non-Syrian refugees	UNHCR	Jordanian	All, his team non-Syrian	19 March plus follow up conversation by text 14 May 2023 to ask for update due to current Sudan conflict
Hala*	Kindergarten teacher	Local NGO (requested anonymity)	Korean	Works with all nationalities including Sudanese and Somali	23 March
Akel*	NGO worker	Collateral Repair Project (CRP)	Somali/Chadian	All, the downtown centre specifically focuses on Sudanese and Somali	23 March
Adam Coogle	Adam Coogle, Deputy Director of MENA division	Human Rights Watch (HRW)	American	n/a	28 March
Marah*	INGO worker, Jordan team leader	INGO	Chadian/Sudanese	All Nationalities	28 March
Ghadeer* ⁴⁶⁴	INGO legal aid provider	Legal aid clinic, INGO (requested anonymity)	Jordanian	All, this clinic focuses on non-Syrians including undocumented	29 March
Joy*	CBO leader	Local centre (Requested anonymity)	American	Open to all, but demographic mainly Sudanese	30 March

⁴⁶⁴ This organisation was not willing to sign the consent form as they had very strict confidentiality agreements and were very protective of their clients, although they were willing for the researcher to make notes and gave oral consent for this information to be used. Their views will only be taken into account in this thesis in a way that will not tie them in any shape or form to their work.

Riyad Suboh	Human Rights Consultant	Freelance, currently partnering with Adaleh Centre for Human Rights	Jordanian	n/a	2 April
JRS representatives Sally*, Rania*, Josef*	3 NGO Staff from Jabal Hussein branch working in advocacy, mental health and PSS	Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS)	Italian, Jordanian, Jordanian	Open to all refugees and vulnerable Jordanians; this branch focuses on non-Syrians.	3 April
Amin*	Academy teacher and leader	Local school (requested anonymity)	Sudanese	Open to all that aren't able to register in Jordanian education system: Mainly Sudanese but all welcome.	26 April
Fiona*	Director	Health Clinic (requested anonymity)	American	Open to all but mainly Sudanese due to demographic	10 May
Ali ⁴⁶⁵	UNHCR Refugee Committee Representative	Amira Basma / Nuzha – community centre arm of JOHUD, Jordanian NGO	Somalian	Open to all but Ali focuses on Somali refugee community in his role	8 May
Dina Baslan	Human rights researcher on Sudanese and Somali refugees and activist, co-founder of Sawiyan	Sawiyan (deregistered NGO)	Jordanian	Involved in advocacy across the region for primarily Sudanese but also Somali refugees	23 May

⁴⁶⁵ This informant was interviewed due to his role as a UNHCR JOHUD representative in the Somali community, but also to gain his perspective as a Somali refugee and is included in interview numbers.

Appendix 6: Focus Group Participants, 23 May 2023

All names are pseudonyms. The first time they are referenced in the thesis, their name, role, focus group number and date is provided by footnote; after that they are referred to by name, and role if deemed necessary.

Focus Group 1

Name	Role	Nationality
Elena	NGO worker	Uruguay
Heather	Leader of CBO	American
Fabian	Leader of NGO	Brazil
Farida	Somali representative - intern in communications and advocacy, (female)	Somali, registered

Focus Group 2

Name	Role	Nationality
Akel*	CRP leader	Somali / Djibouti
Sonya	INGO leader	Unknown
Ramzi	Sudanese representative - male	Sudanese, registered
Selina	Health Clinic leader	American
Michael	CBO leader	American
Jack	NGO worker	Brazilian

*Akel was also interviewed in his role as NGO leader.

Focus Group 3

Name	Role	Nationality
Yazan	Sudanese Church Pastor Leader	Sudanese
Amir	Community representative - male	Somali, asylum seeker
Farah	Community representative - female	Somali, registered
Ruba	CBO worker	Jordanian
Adham	CBO worker	Syrian

Appendix 7: Consent Form for Refugee Interviews (English)

I am a student completing a master's degree in Democracy and Human Rights Program, at the Faculty of Law and Political Science, Université Saint Joseph, Beirut. Thank you for being willing to participate in the research for my thesis on the Sudanese and Somali refugees in Jordan.

Through this study, I aim to better understand the rights of the Sudanese and Somali refugee population in Jordan. I hope to gain valuable insight from you as a refugee in Jordan, what your experience has been, and how you perceive the challenges and the opportunities this refugee community has. Your contribution to this study is highly valuable and appreciated as it will offer the insights needed to further deepen our understanding of the refugee population in Jordan.

Please note that your participation in this study is voluntary and you are welcome to miss out any question you do not wish to answer. The protocol follows a strict confidentiality approach. None of this information will be used to directly identify you. All of the information will be kept in the strictest confidence. The collected data will be processed and analysed for the benefit of the study.

This interview will last between 30 and 40 minutes. We kindly ask for your permission to use an audio recording solely for the purpose of easing the processing and analysis of the data, after which these recordings will be completely erased.

Thank you for your time and contribution.

By signing this consent form I certify that I, _____, agree to the terms of this agreement.

Signature

Date

Signature

Date

Appendix 8: Consent Form for Refugee Interviews (Arabic)

أنا طالبة أكمل درجة الماجستير في حقوق الإنسان والديمقراطية في العالم العربي في كلية الحقوق والعلوم السياسية، جامعة القديس يوسف، بيروت. أشكركم/كن على استعدادكم/كن للمشاركة في بحث أطروحتي عن اللاجئين/ات السودانيين/ات والصوماليين/ات في الأردن.

أهدف من خلال هذه الدراسة إلى فهم حقوق اللاجئين/ات السودانيين/ات والصوماليين/ات في الأردن بشكل أفضل. كما أتطلع إلى الاطلاع على تجربتك في الحياة في الأردن وما هي التحديات والفرص التي تواجهها/ينها. إن مساهمتك قيمة وموضع تقدير في هذه الدراسة كلاجئ/ة.

تجدر الإشارة إلى أن مشاركتك في هذه الدراسة طوعية وأنه من الممكن لك تفويت أي سؤال لا ترغب/ين في الإجابة عليه. يتبع البروتوكول نهج السرية الصارمة ولن يتم استخدام أي من هذه المعلومات للتعرف عليك مباشرة. سوف يتم الاحتفاظ بجميع المعلومات بسرية تامة كما سوف يتم تجهيز البيانات التي تم جمعها وتحليلها لغرض الدراسة.

سوف تستمر هذه المقابلة بين 30 و 40 دقيقة. نطلب منك الإذن باستخدام تسجيل صوتي فقط لغرض تسهيل معالجة البيانات وتحليلها، وبعد ذلك سيتم محو هذه التسجيلات بالكامل.

شكراً لك على وقتك ومساهمتك.

أشهد بأنني من خلال التوقيع على استمارة الموافقة هذه _____ أوافق على شروط هذه الاتفاقية.

_____ التاريخ

_____ التوقيع

_____ التاريخ

_____ التوقيع

Appendix 9: Consent form for Refugee Interviews (Somali)

Waxaan ahay arday dhammaystiraya shahaadada mastarka ee Dimuqraadiyadda iyo Xuquuqda Aadanaha ee Dunida Carabta ee Kulliyadda Sharciga iyo Sayniska Siyaasadda, Jaamacadda Saint Joseph, Beirut. Waad ku mahadsaniid inaad diyaar u tahay inaad ka qayb gasho cilmi-baarista qoraalkayga ku saabsan qaxootiga Suudaan iyo Soomaalida ee Jordan.

Daraasaddan, waxaan hiigsanayaa inaan si wanaagsan u fahmo, xuquuqda dadka qaxootiga ah ee Suudaan iyo Soomaalida ee Jordan. Waxaan rajeynayaa inaan wax ka barto khibradaada nololaha Jordan iyo caqabadaha iyo fursadaha aad la kulanto. Wax ku biirintaada daraasaddan qaxooti ahaan aad bay u qiimo badan tahay waa la mahadiyay.

Fadlan la soco in ka qayb qaadashada daraasaddan ay tahay mid ikhtiyaari ah waxaa lagugu soo dhaweynayaa inaad weydo su'aal kasta oo aadan rabin inaad ka jawaabto. Hab-maamuusku wuxuu raacayaa hab qarsoodi ah oo adag. Midkoodna macluumaadkan looma isticmaali doono in si toos ah lagugu aqoonsaday. Dhammaan macluumaadka waxaa lagu hayn doonaa kalsoonida ugu adag. Xogta la ururiyey waa la habayn doonaa oo la falanqeynayaa si looga faa'iidaysto daraasadda.

Wareysigani wuxuu socon doonaa inta u dhaxaysa 30 iyo 40 daqiiqo. Waxaan si naxariis leh ku waydiisanaynaa ogolaanshahaaga si aad u isticmaasho duubista maqalka ah oo kaliya ujeedada fududaynta habaynta iyo falanqaynta xogta, ka dib duubabkan gabi ahaanba waa la tirtiri doonaa.

Waad mahadsantahay waqtigaaga iyo waxtarkaaga.

Saxiixa qaabkan waxa aan caddaynaya in aan,, ogolahay qalabkan.

Saxeexa

Taariikhda:

Saxeexa

Taariikhda:

Appendix 10: Refugee Profile

Profile

Date of arrival to Jordan:

City and Country of origin:

Route of entry to Jordan: (by air, or sea, and transit countries)

If tertiary displacement – name of country resided in and for how long:

Legal status: Refugee asylum seeker

Gender/Sex:

Age:

Family members in household:

Area of residency in Jordan:

Appendix 11: Interview Guide: Refugees (English)

Introduction

1. *Please could you tell me a little bit about your life and the situation in Jordan?*

Refugee's background and context

2. *Please could you tell me a little bit about your life before being in Jordan - the situation in your home country?*

Situation on arrival

3. *Could you tell me what happened when you first arrived in Jordan?*

Legal Status in Jordan

[If refugee:]

- 4a. *What was the process like to get your refugee status?*

[If asylum seeker]

- 4b. *Have you tried to register as a refugee? What happened?*

Integration and Role in Society

Everyday life (environment and perceptions of neighbourhood, school, work, health)

5. *Could you tell me a little about your everyday life in Jordan?*

Social Involvement

6. *Could you tell me about your relationships and your involvement in the community?*

Interaction with government officials

7. *Could you tell me a little about any interactions you have had with government officials?*

Receiving aid / interaction with UNHCR and other NGOs

8. *[if receives aid]
Could you share a bit with me about your experience of receiving aid
(what type of aid do you receive and from which organisations?)*

Outlook

Perceived challenges

9. *What would you say have been the biggest challenges in Jordan?*

Hopes / plans

10. *What are your hopes and plans for the future?*

Closing

11. *Do you have anything that you would like to add?*

Appendix 12: Interview Guide: Refugees (Arabic)

1. لو سمحت، ممكن تحكي لي شوي عن حياتك في الأردن.
2. لو سمحت، ممكن تحكي لي شوي عن حياتك قبل ما تيجي للأردن – كيف كان الوضع في بلدك، و ليش تركت بلدك؟
3. ممكن تحكي لي شو صار أول ما وصلت على الأردن؟
4. [if refugee] ممكن تحكي لي عن إجراءات كيف تحصل على “صفة لاجئ/ة”؟
[if asylum seeker] هل جريت تسجل كلاجئ؟ وشو صار؟
5. ممكن تحكي لي شوي عن الحياة اليومية في الأردن؟
6. ممكن تحكي لي عن علاقاتك ومشاركتك في المجتمع؟
7. ممكن تحكي لي شوي عن تجارب مریت بها مع الموظفين من الحكومة؟
8. هل ممكن تشاركني شوي حول تجربتك كيف بتحصل على المساعدة- شو نوع المساعدة بتحصل عليها؟
9. شو أكبر تحديات واجهتها بالأردن؟
10. شو خططتك وأحلامك للمستقبل؟
11. عندك أي إشيء بدك تضيفه؟

شكراً إلك على وقتك!

Appendix 13: Interview Guide: Refugees (Somali)

1. Fadlan. Warbixin igasii noloshaada intaad. Joogtay Urdun
2. Fadlan. Iigawaran noloshaadii. Intaadan Urdun. Imaan. Sidee ahayd noloshaadu SOMALIA markaad joogtay maxaase. ugasootagtay wadankaagii
3. Maxaad lakulantay markaas soogaartay Urdun.
4. Maxaad iiga sheegi kartaa waxyaabihii lagaa dalbaday. Si aad isaga qorto UN ka.
5. Ma iskudayday inaad iska qorto UNka maxaadse kala kulantay UNka
6. Ma iiga warami kartaa nolol maalmeed kaaga urdun.
7. Kawaran cilaaqada inka dhexaysa mushtamaca
8. Ma ilawadaagi kartaa waxyabihii aad kala kulantay . Iyo. Hadad wax gar gaara kahesho hayadaha iyo siday kusoo gaarto. Musaacadadu.
9. Wixii kuugudhibaka badnaa ee aad lakulantay
10. Maxaad kufakaraysa. Inaad kamiradhaliso mustaq balkaaga. Insh Allah
11. Waxaad jeclaan lahayd majiraan inaad kusiyaadiso.

Intaas. Oo nala wadaagto

Appendix 14: Consent Form (Key Informants)

Researcher: Laurie Korchinsky

Research: The rights of Sudanese and Somali refugees in Amman, Jordan

About the research:

I am a student completing a master's degree in Democracy and Human Rights at the Faculty of Law and Political Science, the University of Saint Joseph, Beirut, Lebanon. I am conducting my research in partnership with The University of Jordan. Thank you for being willing to participate in the research for my thesis on the rights of Sudanese and Somali refugees in Jordan. Through this study, I hope to gain valuable insight from you as representatives in the community and how you perceive the challenges and the opportunities this refugee community faces. Your contribution to this study is highly valuable and appreciated.

Terms:

- This interview will be recorded to ensure accurate recall, and a transcript will be produced.
- You are welcome to request the transcript should you wish to view and correct any information – laurieellen.korchinsky@net.usj.edu.lb
- Access to the transcript will be limited to Laurie Korchinsky and relevant academic colleagues
- Any summary interview content or direct quotations that are made available through academic outlets will be anonymised so that you cannot be identified, and care will be taken to ensure that other information in the interview that could identify yourself is not revealed
- The actual recording will be completely erased once the research is completed.

I understand that

- I am voluntarily taking part in this project. I understand that I don't have to take part and can leave at any time.
- Extracts from the transcribed interview maybe used as described above.
- I don't expect to receive any benefit or payment from my participation.
- I can request a copy of my transcript and may make edits I feel necessary to ensure the effectiveness of any agreement made about confidentiality.
- I have been able to ask any questions I might have, and I understand that I am free to contact the researcher with any questions I may have in the future.
- I have read and understood this document.

Thank you for your time and contribution.

By signing this consent form I certify that I, _____, agree to the terms of this agreement.

Printed Name

Participant's Signature

Date

Researcher's Signature

Date

Appendix 15: Interview Guide (Key Informants)

This guide was adapted according to the informant, for example, an interview focused on education, the questions were adapted to focus on education, for a human rights consultant, the questions focused on policy. The guide below served as a basis and was used for all of the NGO interviews that were not sector-specific.

Profile:

Job role:

Organisation:

Length of time in position:

Nationalities served by the organisation:

Type of services / aid provided:

Questions

[Introduction]

1. *Please can you tell me about your organisation and the services you provide?*

[NGO perspective on refugees]

2. *What do you observe as the biggest challenges and needs in the Sudanese and Somali community?*
3. *In terms of the community, what have you observed about the relationships between the different nationalities and local population?*

[Challenges/Successes of NGO]

4. *What are some of the challenges of providing these services?*
5. *What has been some of the most successful strategies you've used? Which of your services are most popular?*

[Refugee initiatives]

6. *Do you have any refugee-led projects or initiatives – could you tell me about them ?*

[Relationship with NGOs/UNHCR]

7. *Could you tell me about your relationship or interaction with the UNHCR and other NGOs in Amman?*

[Relationship with the government]

8. *Could you tell me about your relationship with the government or any interactions you have with them?*

[Future perspective / solutions]

9. *What, in your opinion, could the international community, government or society be doing to improve the rights of the Sudanese and Somali refugees?*

10. *What do you think the future holds for Somali and Sudanese refugees?*

[closing]

Do you have anything further you would like to add before we finish?

Appendix 16: Focus Group Guide

Focus Group - Tuesday 23rd May 12pm – 1.30pm, Hope Center

Structure:

Introduction (with translation) (10 minutes)

- Welcome
- Introductions
- Overview of Focus Group
- Ground rules & structure

Focus Group Discussions (2 English speaking, 1 Arabic speaking) (55 minutes)

Feedback in big group (with translation) (20 minutes)

Wrap up (with translation) (5 minutes)

Focus Group Discussion Guide:

Part 1: Read the case study below and discuss, relating to real-life examples:

[ice-breaker, bringing up discussion points] (10 minutes)

1. *What are the main challenges facing Amina?*
2. *What are her biggest needs?*
3. *How do you think she feels about her situation / how can she respond?*
4. *How can you, either as a community leader representative, or an NGO worker, provide help?*
5. *Where are the gaps – what are you not able to help with?*

CASE STUDY

Amina is from Sudan, she has three children. Her husband and most of her family died in the war.

She is registered with the UNHCR and has been in Jordan for seven years. When she entered Jordan, the police took her passport and she hasn't been able to get it back. She lives with her mother and her sister too. They receive a monthly amount from the UNHCR but struggle to pay their bills. The children go to school but she doesn't always have money for transport or uniform or books and so they miss a lot of classes.

Amina has poor mental health, having nightmares of reliving the war in the Sudan, even though it's been 7 years. She has had trouble with other refugees and Jordanians in her neighbourhood with harassment in the street and so doesn't really leave the house much and tries to keep the children inside too.

Questions: (45 minutes)

[barriers to refugees]

- 1) *As an organisation, or as a representative, what do you see as the biggest needs in the community?*

[identifying solutions to barriers]

- 2) *How are these needs being met?*
- 3) *What is out of your control?*

[challenges to organisations]

- 4) *As an organisation, or as a representative, what do you see as the biggest challenge you face in serving them?*

[identifying solutions to challenges]

- 5) *How are these challenges trying to be overcome?*
- 6) *What is out of your control?*

Please have your biggest needs and challenges written down to share in the bigger group afterwards.

Appendix 17: Consent Form for Focus Group Guide

Research consent form

Researcher: Laurie Korchinsky

Research: Sudanese and Somali refugees in Amman, Jordan

About the research:

I am a student completing a master's degree in Democracy and Human Rights at the Faculty of Law and Political Science, the University of Saint Joseph, Beirut, Lebanon. I am conducting my research in partnership with The University of Jordan. Thank you for being willing to participate in the research for my thesis on the Sudanese and Somali refugees in Jordan. Through this study, I hope to gain valuable insight from you as representatives in the community and how you perceive the challenges and the opportunities this refugee community faces. Your contribution to this study is highly valuable and appreciated.

Terms:

- This interview will be recorded to ensure accurate recall, and a transcript will be produced.
- You are welcome to request the transcript should you wish to view and correct any information – laurieellen.korchinsky@net.usj.edu.lb
- Access to the transcript will be limited to Laurie Korchinsky and relevant academic colleagues
- Any summary interview content or direct quotations that are made available through academic outlets will be anonymous so that you cannot be identified, and care will be taken to ensure that other information in the interview that could identify yourself is not revealed
- The actual recording will be completely erased once the research is completed.

I understand that

- I am voluntarily taking part in this project. I understand that I don't have to take part and can leave at any time.
- Extracts from the transcribed interview may be used as described above.
- I don't expect to receive any benefit or payment from my participation.
- I can request a copy of my transcript and may make edits I feel necessary to ensure the effectiveness of any agreement made about confidentiality.
- I have been able to ask any questions I might have, and I understand that I am free to contact the researcher with any questions I may have in the future.
- I have read and understood this document.
-

Thank you for your time and contribution.

I would like to be informed of any future meetings

By signing this consent form I certify that I, _____, agree to the terms of this agreement.

Printed Name

Participant's Signature

Date

Researcher's Signature

Date

Appendix 18: Confidentiality Agreement: Transcription Services

Confidentiality Agreement Transcription and/or Translation Services

This research is being undertaken by Laurie Korchinsky, Masters' student at the University of St Joseph, Beirut, in the Department of Political Science. The purpose of this research is to understand the experiences of Sudanese and Somali refugees living in Jordan.

As a transcriber or translator of this research, I understand that I will be hearing recordings of confidential interviews or discussions. The information on these recordings has been revealed by interviewees who agreed to participate in this research on the condition that their interview or discussion would remain strictly confidential. I understand that I have a responsibility to honour this confidentiality agreement.

I agree not to share any information on these recordings, about any party, with anyone other than the researcher of this project. Any violation of this and the terms detailed below would constitute a breach of ethical standards and I confirm that I will adhere to the agreement in full.

I, _____ transcriptionist and/or translator, do hereby agree to maintain full confidentiality in regards to any and all audio files, and oral or written documentation received from Laurie Korchinsky related to her research on the Sudanese and Somali refugees in Jordan.

Furthermore, I agree:

1. To hold in strictest confidence the identification of any individual that may be inadvertently revealed during the transcription of audio-taped or live oral interviews, or in any associated documents;
2. To not disclose any information received for profit, gain, or otherwise;
3. To not make copies of any audio files or computerized files of the transcribed interview texts, unless specifically requested to do so by Laurie Korchinsky.
4. To store all study-related audiotapes and materials in a safe, secure location as long as they are in my possession;
5. To return all audio files and study-related documents to Laurie Korchinsky in a complete and timely manner.
6. To delete all electronic files containing study-related documents from my computer hard drive and any backup devices.
- 7.

Transcriber / Translator's name: : _____

Transcriber / Translator's signature: _____

Transcriber / Translators Name of Business and Title (if applicable):

Date: _____

Appendix 19: Refugee Resettlement Figures

The percentage of Syrians resettled averaged as 0.6% between 2017 and 2022, compared to Sudanese which averaged at 6.2% and Somalis at 2.28%.

	Somalia			Sudan			Syria		
	Resettled	Popn	Percent	Resettled	Popn	Percent	Resettled	Popn	Percent
2022	20	555	3.6%	532	3336	15.6%	5264	660,892	0.8%
2021	11	601	1.8%	222	3697	6%	3778	672,952	0.56%
2020	3	665	0.45%	33	3562	0.93%	1419	662,790	0.21%
2019	31	660	4.7%	216	2996	7.2%	4843	654,692	0.74%
2018	15	680	2.2%	152	2788	5.45%	4484	676,283	0.67%
2017	6	645	0.93%	62	2567	2.42%	4473	653,031	0.68%
Average			2.28%			6.2%			0.61%

⁴⁶⁶

⁴⁶⁶ ‘Resettlement Data Finder’: Figures 2017 – 2022 of Syrians, Somalis and Sudanese, *UNHCR*, rsq.unhcr.org/en/#R1fV.

Appendix 20: Sudanese Protests, 9 and 16 May 2023

Outside UNHCR Khalda office, Amman.

Examples of protest signs:



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⁴⁶⁷ @DinaBaslan, *Twitter*, 9 May 2023, twitter.com/dinabaslan/status/1655829386237542402.

⁴⁶⁸ @manasikaballa2, *Twitter*, 16 May 2023, twitter.com/i/status/1658478857278849024.

Emergency Appeal presented to the UNHCR:

Gentlemen / High Commissioner for Refugees - Khalda Office Respected,,,
Creative Attention of the High Commissioner Dear Sons,,

Date: 5/16/2023

Subject: Emergency Appeal

After Greetings ,,,

Out of our belief and consistency with the humanitarian principles of the United Nations regarding the humanitarian aspect and asylum, we therefore appeal to you, we, Sudanese refugees, who have been present in the land of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for more than two decades, and we have faced many **problems, which are as follows:**

- 1- The outstanding issues for more than ten years have stagnated? And the owners entered into doubt about the integrity of your office in Jordan.
 - 2- The Asylum Document is considered a protection paper, as a large group of Sudanese refugees have been missing it since January 23, 2019, when the prisons were filled with them (registration stopped) until the date of writing this letter.
 - 3- Prisons are crowded with document holders, whose cases have not been resolved for years.
 - 4- Periodic reviews after the corona period and its complications for refugees.
 - 5- Public education is good despite its racist problems, and university education is a luxury.
 - 6- The deterioration and high cost of living, the prevention of work, and the insufficiency of aid, if any.
 - 7- Despite UNHCR's efforts to improve the health situation, it has become very complicated? .
 - 8- The difficulty of coexistence and compatibility with the local environment (integration with the Jordanian citizen).
- All these problems and their precise details negatively affected the Sudanese refugees in Jordan, where cases of malnutrition appeared among children and diseases as a result of cheap housing and psychological and mental stress that affected their family and social relations.

Therefore,,,

We ask your Excellency to take it into consideration and find urgent solutions for it.

Your quest for solutions, your response to our speech, and bringing about change is something we look forward to.

Please accept the utmost respect and appreciation,,,,,

Sudanese refugees in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

السادة / المفوضية السامية لشؤون اللاجئين - مكتب خلدا المحترمين ،،، التاريخ : 16 / 5 / 2023
عناية المفوض السامي لشؤون اللاجئين بالأردن المحترم ،،،

الموضوع : مناقشة طارئة

تحية طيبة وبعد ،،،

إيماناً منا وإتساقاً بالمبادئ الإنسانية للأمم المتحدة الخاصة بالجانب الإنساني واللجوء ، عليه نناشدكم نحن كلاجئين سودانيين متواجدين بأرض المملكة الأردنية الهاشمية لأكثر من عقدين من الزمان ولقد أجهنا العديد من المشاكل والتي تتمثل في الآتي :

- 1- الملفات العالقة لأكثر من عشرات السنوات راکدة ؟ وأدخل أصحابها في شك بنزاهة مكتبكم في الأردن .
 - 2- وثيقة اللجوء ، تعتبر ورقة حماية حيث يفتقدها مجموعة كبيرة من اللاجئين السودانيين منذ تاريخ 2019/1/23 ، حيث إمتلأت السجون بهم (توقف التسجيل) حتى تاريخ كتابة هذا الخطاب .
 - 3- تعج السجون بحاملي الوثيقة, سنين لم تحسم قضاياهم .
 - 4- المراجعات الدورية بعد فترة الكورونا وتعقيدها للاجئ .
 - 5- التعليم العام جيد رغم مشاكله العنصرية والتعليم الجامعي رفاهية .
 - 6- تردي وغلاء الوضع المعيشي ومنع العمل وعدم كفاية المساعدات إن وجدت .
 - 7- رغم سعي المفوضية لتحسين الوضع الصحي إلا أنه أصبح معقداً للغاية ؟ .
 - 8- صعوبة التعايش والتوافق مع البيئة المحلية (الإندماج مع المواطن الأردني) .
- كل هذه المشاكل وتفاصيلها الدقيقة إنعكست سلباً على اللاجئ السوداني في الأردن حيث ظهرت حالات سوء التغذية بين الأطفال والأمراض جراء السكن الرخيص والاجهاد النفسي والذهني الذي أثرت على علاقتهم الأسرية والاجتماعية .
- لذلك ،،،
- نطلب من كريم سيادتكم أخذها في عين الاعتبار وإيجاد الحلول العاجلة لها .
سعيكم للحلول وتجاوبكم لخطابنا هذا وإحداث تغيير شيء نترقبه .

وتفضلوا بقبول فائق الأحرار والتقدير ،،،

اللاجئين السودانيين بالمملكة الأردنية الهاشمية

⁴⁶⁹ @manasikaballa2, 16 May 2023, *Twitter*, twitter.com/manasikaballa2/status/1658473256586973186.

⁴⁷⁰ @Dinabaslan, 9 May 2023, *Twitter*, twitter.com/dinabaslan/status/1655947340791058432.

