

DECADES OF RESILIENCE

STATELESS GAZAN REFUGEES IN JORDAN

2018



مركز العودة الفلسطيني
PALESTINIAN RETURN CENTRE

The Palestinian Return Centre is an organisation in Consultative Status with the UN Economic and Social Council since 2015. The organisation focuses on the historical, political and legal aspects of the Palestinian Refugees. The organisation offers expert advice to various actors and agencies on the question of Palestinian Refugees within the context of the Nakba - the catastrophe following the forced displacement of Palestinians in 1948 - and serves as an information repository on other related aspects of the Palestine question and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. It specialises in the research, analysis, and monitoring of issues pertaining to the dispersed Palestinians and their internationally recognised legal right to return.

Decades of Resilience: Stateless Gazan Refugees in Jordan

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Front cover picture: Young Palestinian refugee in Talbich camp wearing the “key” necklace symbolising the return to homes in Palestine.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the wake of the catastrophe (*Nakba*) of 1948 and the subsequent creation of Israel as a settler state, the Palestinian people have been expelled and displaced from their national homeland. Today, the Palestinian world population is approximately 12.7 million, over 6.8 million of those being Palestinians in Diaspora.¹ The number of refugees registered under the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) is estimated to be 5.59 million. UNRWA aims at providing relief, education and humanitarian support to Palestine refugees which the agency defines as those persons and their descendants whose normal place of residence was Palestine between June 1946 and May 1948, and who lost both their homes and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict.

The term Palestine refugee refers to three distinct groups:

- 1948 refugees under UNGA Res 194² - Palestine refugees in UNRWA terminology including both registered and non-registered refugees
- 1967 refugees under UNSC Res 237³ - Displaced persons in UN terminology and used by UNRWA with particular reference to UNGA Res 2252⁴
- Palestinians who are neither 1949 nor 1967 refugees who are unable or unwilling to return to Israel or the Occupied Palestinian Territory owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion⁵

However, UNRWA's vast number of 5.59 million does not take into account Palestinians who were displaced between 1949 and the 1967 war and overlooks those refugees residing outside of UNRWA areas of operation which are restricted to the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. The 240,000 refugees in Saudi Arabia, the 70,000 in Egypt, 23,000 in Iraq, 8,900 in Libya and the 4,000 refugees in Algeria are all beyond the UNRWA mandate and its estimations.⁶



1 "The Number Of Palestinians Worldwide Has Multiplied About Nine-Fold Since Israeli Occupation Controls More Than 85% Of The Land Of Historical Palestine", PCBS, last modified 2017, accessed June 20, 2017, <http://pcbs.gov.ps/post.aspx?lang=en&ItemID=1925>.

2 UNGA Res 194 of 1948 provided for the right of return by stating that 'refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date' - UN General Assembly, 194 (III). *Palestine - Progress Report of the United Nations Mediator*, 11 December 1948, A/RES/194, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/4fe2e5672.html>

3 UNSC Res 237 of 1967 calls upon Israel to 'facilitate the return of those inhabitants who fled the areas since the outbreak of hostilities.' - UN Security Council, *Security Council resolution 237 (1967) [Middle East]*, 14 June 1967, S/RES/237 (1967), available at: [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/237\(1967\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/237(1967))

4 UNGA Res 2252 of 1967 welcomes UNSC Res 237 and endorses 'the UNRWA to provide humanitarian assistance as far as practicable, on an emergency basis and as a temporary measure, to other persons in the area who are at present displaced' - UN General Assembly, 2252. *Humanitarian Assistance*, 4 July 1967, A/RES/2252(ES-V), available at: [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/2252\(ES-V\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/2252(ES-V))

5 Susan Akram and Nidal Al-Azza, *Closing Protection Gaps: A Handbook On Protection Of Palestinian Refugees In States Signatories To The 1951 Refugee Convention*, 2nd ed. (Bethlehem: BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights, 2015). P. 6

6 Arjan El-Fassed and Laurie King, "UN Refugee Report: Most Protracted And Largest Of All Refugee Problems In The World Remains Unresolved", *The Electronic Intifada*, last modified 2017, accessed June 28, 2017, <https://electronicintifada.net/content/un-refugee-report-most-protracted-and-largest-all-refugee-problems-world-remains-unresolved>.

Numerous studies have been conducted on the livelihoods of Palestinian refugees across UNRWA's operation areas. This report aims to offer a comprehensive study of the situation of a specific stratum of Palestinian refugees which have not been extensively studied; these are the stateless Gazan refugees in Jordan. This report will firstly introduce the numbers and demographics of Palestinian refugees, specifically Gazans in Jordan. Secondly, the report looks at the status, and the resulting struggles faced by Gazan refugees. In the section titled 'Gazans and the Struggle for Documentation,' the international, regional and national law pertaining to Gazan refugees in Jordan and the legal status that they have obtained will be analysed. At the same time, this section highlights the discrepancies between domestic law and Jordan's regional and international obligations. Thirdly, the report will discuss the variety of socio-economic difficulties that result from Gazans' lack of documentation. This section, titled 'Gazans and their dismal living situations' illustrates the decaying infrastructure within the camps and the underlying factors behind the problem of intergenerational poverty among Gazan refugees, including inadequate healthcare services, restricted education and employment opportunities. The report concludes with a list of recommendations directed at the Jordanian government, UNRWA and the international community as a whole on the necessary actions to be taken to positively affect the lives of Gazan refugees.⁷

- METHODOLOGY

This report is a compilation of secondary and primary data. It includes data obtained from existing literature on the situation of Gazan refugees in Jordan including academic articles and books, newspaper articles, as well as a number of reports published by local and international NGOs and UN agencies.

Additionally, the report is supported by primary research collected through holding 11 interviews with Gazan refugees, and 4 interviews with other Palestinian refugees in Jordan.⁸⁹ The Palestinian Return Centre conducted these interviews with refugees in Jerash camp, Talbieh camp, Marka Camp, Zarqa, and Amman. Prior to conducting the interviews, the Palestinian Return Centre (PRC) explained the background of the research project and the purpose of the interviews. The interviewees were informed that they will not receive any monetary or other incentives for agreeing to be part of the research project. Moreover, the interviewees consented to being voice-recorded, and some consented to being photographed.¹⁰ We received the interviewees' consent to describe their experiences after informing them that they could terminate the interview at any point, or request to eliminate certain information from the final report. Based on their request, different names will be used for all refugees that participated in order to protect their safety.

Furthermore, to gain a better understanding of the history and legal status of Gazan refugees in Jordan, the Palestinian Return Centre also interviewed academic experts and staff of humanitarian and human rights organisations. The discussions held with Professor Jalal Al-Husseini, staff at Human Rights Watch and the United Nations Refugee Works Agency (UNRWA) Headquarters (HQ) in Amman contributed to enhancing the report.

7 Annex IV 'Local NGOs and Initiatives' provides details of the international and local NGOs operating directly in the camp or contributing to improving livelihoods in the Gaza Camp in Jerash, Jordan. We hope this section will be utilised by our readers to support the business endeavours and NGO-funded projects of the Gaza refugees in Jordan, and more specifically in the Jerash camp.

8 Please refer to Annex I for a table with information on the interviewed refugees.

9 Please refer to Annex II which includes the 'Interview Guide for Refugees'

10 Please refer to Annex III, which includes a sample of 'Consent Form' signed by the refugees, which participated in the study.



Photograph taken in the Marka Camp in Jordan | PRC October 2017

2. DEMOGRAPHICS

Jordan hosts the largest number of Palestinian refugees amongst the UNRWA areas. As of 2016, the number of registered Palestinian refugees in Jordan is 2,175,491.¹¹ Of those UNRWA registered refugees, 158,000 are refugees from Gaza or ‘Gazan refugees.’¹² The total number of Gazan refugees in Jordan including those unregistered in UNRWA is estimated to be 250,000 refugees.¹³ Most of the refugees reside in one of the ten UNRWA-recognised refugee camps in Jordan which are demonstrated in Table 1 below:

Amman New Camp (Wihdat)	Baq’a Camp	Irbid Camp	Jabal el-Hussein Camp
Jerash Camp	Husn Camp (Martyr Azmi Al-Mufti)	Marka Camp (Hitteen)	Souf Camp
Talbieh Camp	Zarqa Camp	-	-

Table 1: UNRWA-Recognised Refugee Camps in Jordan

There are three unrecognised camps by UNRWA, which are Prince Hasan, Sukhneh and Madaba. These were originally set up not as refugee camps, but as gatherings or concentrations of Palestinian refugees. While they have been later on recognised as camps by the Jordanian government, they are still deemed to be unofficial in UNRWA documents.¹⁴

¹¹ “Jordan | UNRWA”, UNRWA, last modified 2017, accessed August 20, 2017, <https://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/jordan>.

¹² “Protection in Jordan.” UNRWA. March 2018. accessed March 12, 2018. <https://www.unrwa.org/activity/protection-jordan>.

¹³ Gazans Residents in Jordan, Phenix Center | Jordan Labor Watch, March 2017 , accessed January 3, 2018, <http://www.phenixcenter.net/ar/paper/176>.

¹⁴ Åge Tiltne and Huaifeng Zhang, *Progress, Challenges, Diversity Insights Into The Socio-Economic Conditions Of Palestinian Refugees In Jordan* (Norway: Fafo, 2013), accessed June 17, 2017, P 15. https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/insights_into_the_socio-economic_conditions_of_palestinian_refugees_in_jordan.pdf



Streets of the Jerash Camp, located on a mountainous area further away from the Jerash city centre. Photograph taken in the Jerash Camp in Jordan | PRC October 2017

This report will only be focusing on the refugee camps, which host refugees originally from Gaza, these camps are the ‘1967 camps’ of Talbieh, and most prominently; Marka/Hitteen and Jerash.¹⁵

Taking into account the restricted availability of information on the situation of Gaza refugees in the camps of Talbieh and Marka/Hitteen, it will offer a more detailed in-depth study of those Gaza refugees residing in Jerash Camp. The three camps covered in this report were established in 1968 following the 1967 Six Day War. Specifically, the Jerash Camp was set up as an ‘emergency’ camp in 1968 for 11,500 refugees who had left Gaza as consequence of the war.¹⁶ Table 2 includes basic details of data collected by the Department of Palestinian Affairs and UNRWA.¹⁷

	Talbieh Camp	Marka Camp	Jerash Camp
1968 Area (km²)	0.13	0.89	0.53
Current Area (km²)	0.13	0.92	0.75
Population	9,354	54,876	30,379
Number of Families	1,870	12,053	6,593

Table 2: Details on Talbieh, Marka and Jerash Camp

¹⁵ Ibid. P. 31.

¹⁶ “Jerash Camp | UNRWA”, UNRWA, last modified 2017, accessed August 22, 2017, <https://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/jordan/jerash-camp>

¹⁷ “Statistics | DPA,” *Department of Palestinian Affairs*, last modified 2017, accessed October 19, 2017, <http://www.dpa.gov.jo/page.php?55-55>

3. GAZANS AND THE STRUGGLE FOR DOCUMENTATION

- STATUS, CLASSIFICATION AND RIGHTS UNDER THE LAW

International Law

Jordan has ratified a number of international human rights treaties, which makes it obligated to respect the basic human rights of those individuals within its jurisdiction regardless of whether or not they hold Jordanian citizenship. Table 3 indicates some of the most important treaties ratified by Jordan and relevant Articles pertaining to the treatment of Gazan refugees.

Convention/ Treaty	Date Ratified	Relevant Article
ICCPR ¹ (See Endnotes)		Article 2 (1): ‘[Each state party] undertakes to respect and to ensure to all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction the rights recognised in the present Covenant, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status’ Article 26: ‘All persons are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection of the law. In this respect, the law shall prohibit any discrimination and guarantee to all persons equal with effective protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour... national or social origin... or other status.’
ICESCR ² (See Endnotes)		Article 2 (2): ‘The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to guarantee that the rights enunciated in the present Covenant will be exercised without discrimination of any kind as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status’

Table 3: Treaties ratified by Jordan Relevant to Palestinian Refugees¹⁸

Palestine refugees under international law are regarded as being ‘de facto stateless persons’ within the meaning of the International Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness of 1961.¹⁹ A stateless person is defined by the 1954 Stateless Persons Convention as: ‘a person who is not considered as a national by any state under the operation of its law.’ Stateless persons de facto are: ‘persons who, having left the country of which they were nationals, no longer enjoy the protection and assistance of their national authorities, either because these authorities refuse to grant them assistance and protection, or because they themselves renounce the assistance and protection of the countries of which they are nationals’²⁰

18 For more information on the obligations states have towards the treatment of aliens and non-citizens please refer to: *The Rights of Non-Citizens*. Publication no. ISBN-13: 978-92-1-154175-5. November 2006. accessed January 3, 2018. <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/noncitizensen.pdf>.

19 Susan Akram and Nidal Al-Azza, *Closing Protection Gaps: A Handbook On Protection Of Palestinian Refugees In States Signatories To The 1951 Refugee Convention*, 2nd ed. (Bethlehem: BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights, 2015). P, 6.

20 UN Ad Hoc Committee on Refugees and Stateless Persons, *A Study of Statelessness, United Nations, August 1949, Lake Success - New York*, 1 August 1949, E/1112; E/1112/Add.1, P 8 -9. available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ac68c2d0.html>

Furthermore, it is important to note that Palestinian refugees fall beyond the scope of the 1951 Geneva Convention on the Status of Refugees, which has not been ratified by Jordan. Palestinian refugees residing in UNRWA areas are not offered protection under this convention as they benefit from the ‘aid and assistance’ of another UN body (UNRWA), which is in accordance to Article 1D of the Geneva Convention:

“This Convention shall not apply to persons who are at present receiving from organs or agencies of the United Nations other than the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees protection or assistance.”²¹

In addition to falling beyond the scope of the Geneva Convention, many Palestinian refugees fall between the cracks of the assistance mechanism offered by UNRWA. To start with, UNRWA’s definition of Palestine refugees is:

‘Persons whose normal place of residence was Palestine during 1 June 1946 to 15 May 1948, and who lost both their homes and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict.’²²

Following the mass influx of Palestinian due to the 1967 war, a new category of Palestine refugees started receiving aid from UNRWA. This category is classified in UN GA Res 2252 (ES-V) 1967 when it endorsed UNRWA’s actions towards displaced persons:

“To provide humanitarian assistance, as far as practicable, on an emergency basis and as a temporary measure, to other persons in the area who are at present displaced and are in serious need of immediate assistance as a result of the recent hostilities.”²³

Regional Law

Jordan has ratified a number of legal documents produced by the Arab League pertaining to the rights of Palestinian refugees, the most important one of which is the Casablanca Protocol of 1965. The significance of this protocol is that it reemphasises the continuation of Palestinian nationality despite the lack of a Palestine state. Furthermore, the protocol sets out clear obligations regarding employment, freedom of movement, and the obligation to issue travel documentation for Palestine refugees residing in the host state.²⁴ In addition to international human rights law, this protocol creates detailed and specific obligations for the Jordanian government towards its Palestinian refugee population.

1. Whilst retaining their Palestinian nationality, Palestinians currently residing in the land of ... have the *right of employment on par with its citizens*.
2. Palestinians residing at the moment in ... in accordance with the dictates of their interest, have the *right to leave and return to this state*.
3. Palestinians residing in other Arab states have the right to enter the land of ... and to depart from it, in accordance with their interests. Their right of entry only gives them the right to stay for the permitted

21 UN General Assembly, *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, 28 July 1951, United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 189, p. 137, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3be01b964.html> [accessed 30 January 2018]

22 UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), *Consolidated Eligibility and Registration Instructions (CERI)*, 1 January 2009, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/520cc3634.html> [accessed 5 March 2018]

23 UN General Assembly, 4 July 1967, A/RES/2252 (ES –V), available at: <https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/0/F7575BE79BBC6930852560DF0056FC78> [accessed 7 July 2017]

24 League of Arab States, Protocol for the Treatment of Palestinians in Arab States (“Casablanca Protocol”), 11 September 1965, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/460a2b252.html> [accessed 28 February 2018]

period and for the purpose they entered for, so long as the authorities do not agree to the contrary.

4. Palestinians who are at the moment in ..., as well as those who are residing and left to the Diaspora, are given upon request, valid travel documents. The concerned authorities must, wherever they be, issue these documents or renew them without delay.

Bearer of these travel documents residing in LAS states receive the same treatment as all other LAS state citizens regarding visa, and residency applications.

Figure 1: Provisions of the Casablanca Protocol

DOMESTIC LAW

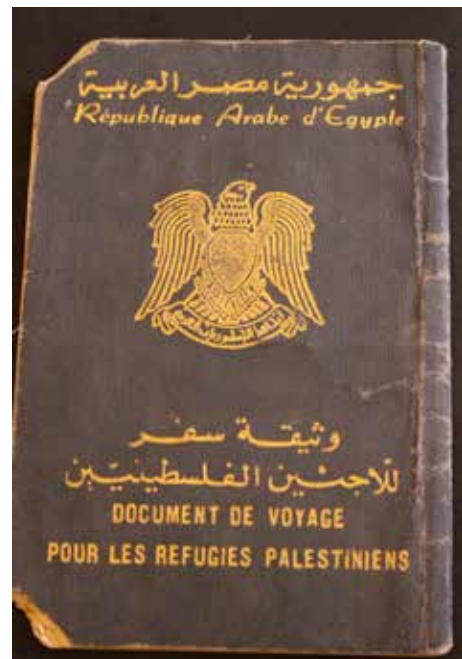
Definition

Refugees from Gaza, or more commonly known as ‘ex-Gazans’ are understood by the Jordanian government to be those who are originally from the Gaza Strip or those who may have taken refuge in Gaza in 1948 and were subsequently displaced to Jordan as a result of the 1967 war or other hostilities.²⁵

Lack of Citizenship

Unlike neighbouring Lebanon and Syria, Jordan has provided most but not all of the Palestinian refugees within its territory with full citizenship. Citizenship in Jordan is predicated by the allotment of a National Identification Number (ID). Article 3 of the 1954 Jordanian Citizenship Law states that a Jordanian national is: ‘Any person with previous Palestinian nationality except the Jews before the date of May 15, 1958 residing in the Kingdom during the period from December 20, 1949 and February 16, 1954.’²⁶ The effect of this law was that while Palestinians in both the East and the West Bank were granted Jordanian nationality easily, those Palestinians who originated from Gaza were disregarded.

Following the signing of the 1949 Rhodes Armistice,²⁷ the Gaza Strip was placed under the administrative rule of Egypt. Gazans were thus issued with Egyptian travel documents. Bilal who was interviewed by the PRC at his home in Al-Zarqa, was born in the Nuseirat refugee camp in Gaza after his family fled there from El-Lid in 1948. He carried an Egyptian travel document until he obtained a Jordanian temporary passport in 1986.²⁸ In the aftermath of the 1967 war, many Gazan refugees sought shelter in Jordan as opposed to neighbouring Egypt due to Israeli attacks on the Sinai Peninsula.



Egyptian travel document for Palestinian refugees. Photograph taken in Bilal's home in Jordan | PRC October 2017.

25 Åge Tiltne and Huafeng Zhang, *Progress, Challenges, Diversity Insights Into The Socio-Economic Conditions Of Palestinian Refugees In Jordan* (Norway: Fafo, 2013), accessed June 17, 2017, P .32 https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/insights_into_the_socio-economic_conditions_of_palestinian_refugees_in_jordan.pdf.

26 *Law No. 6 of 1954 on Nationality (last amended 1987)* [1 January 1954, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b4ea13.html>]

27 The 1949 Rhodes Armistice was a set of agreements signed between Israel, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon and Syria declaring a formal end to the 1948 war. The armistice demarcation lines agreed upon between Egypt and Israel allowed Egypt to control what is now known as the Gaza Strip.

28 Bilal. "Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan." Interview by authors. October 26, 2017. Zarqa Governorate Jordan



Photograph taken in the Marka Camp in Jordan | PRC October 2017

Refugees from Gaza thus populated Talbieh, Jerash and Marka/Hitteen refugee camps, where they form almost all the inhabitants in the Jerash camp, and a quarter of the inhabitants in the Marka and Talbieh camps.²⁹ Unlike West Bank Palestinians, they were not allocated citizenship. However, some families whom had political connections, obtained citizenship through royal decrees. The effects of not granting citizenship to Gazan refugees resulted in a discrepancy to the rights allocated to the Palestinian population in Jordan. Refusal to extend citizenship to Gazans was reaffirmed in a report published in 2002 which the Jordanian government suggested that prohibiting Gazans from obtaining citizenship was justified as a mechanism to preserve the refugee's right of return.³⁰ However, Arab host states continue to justify denying Palestinians full rights using this rhetoric of preserving the refugees' right of return. Most recently, in 2014 the Prime Minister granted certain privileges to Gazan children of Jordanian women instead of citizenship, claiming that citizenship 'might affect the demographic balance in Jordan and might lead to empty Palestine from its people.'³¹ Such claims are entirely unfounded as citizenship and the right of return for refugees are not mutually exclusive.

While 85% of Palestinians living inside camps have Jordanian citizenship, only 6% of those residing in Jerash camp do.³² However, according to the legal activist and one of the thirteen elected representatives of the 'Popular Committee for the Children of the Gaza Strip in Jordan' (PCCGS) interviewed by the PRC, the number of Ex-Gazans holding Jordanian citizenship within the Jerash camp does not exceed 2.81%.³³ When asked about the source of this data, Zeid stated that it was a survey they conducted in conjunction with UNRWA in 2007, which was renewed in 2012. However, apart from the Fafo report published in 2013, the PRC research team could not find the survey indicating these statistics. Nonetheless the data was found in:

29 Åge Tiltne and Huafeng Zhang, *Progress, Challenges, Diversity Insights Into The Socio-Economic Conditions Of Palestinian Refugees In Jordan* (Norway: Fafo, 2013), accessed June 17, 2017, P. 32 https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/insights_into_the_socio-economic_conditions_of_palestinian_refugees_in_jordan.pdf.

30 Dominique Sherab, *Making The Legal Obstacles Palestinians Face In Jordan* (Amman: Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development- Legal Aid, 2017), accessed July 4, 2017, https://ardd-jo.org/sites/default/files/resource-files/mapping_the_legal_obstacles_palestinians_face_in_jordan_en.pdf.

31 Gov't Announces Privileges for Children of Jordanian Women Married to Foreigners." Gov't Announces Privileges for Children of Jordanian Women Married to Foreigners - Jordan Vista. November 4, 2014. Accessed March 4, 2018. <http://www.vista.sahafi.jo/art.php?id=65dcc35987d5f466ab6bb9721209876600ea8f7a>.

32 Åge Tiltne and Huafeng Zhang, *Progress, Challenges, Diversity Insights Into The Socio-Economic Conditions Of Palestinian Refugees In Jordan* (Norway: Fafo, 2013), accessed June 17, 2017, P. 27. https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/insights_into_the_socio-economic_conditions_of_palestinian_refugees_in_jordan.pdf.

33 Zeid. "Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan." Interview by authors. October 27, 2017. Gaza Camp, Jerash – Jordan.



Zeid, elected representative of the 'Popular Committee for the Children of the Gaza Strip in Jordan' advocating for equal civil rights for Gazan refugees. Photograph taken in the Jerash Camp in Jordan | PRC October 2017

“Gaza Camp, Special Report.”³⁴ Despite the difference in the percentages of Palestinians within the Jerash camp holding Jordanian citizenship, the overall impression is that very few ex-Gazans in the camp have a national identification number. A consequence of this statelessness is that: ex-Gazans cannot vote, are not represented in parliament, and cannot register in a political party.³⁵

The refugees interviewed had divergent opinions regarding obtaining Jordanian citizenship. Moayad, who was born in the outskirts of the Khan Younes camp in Gaza while the Israeli army was attacking in 1967, said: ‘I don’t want the number so I can run for parliamentary elections, or to become a minister, I just want it to live, to go to the hospital, to study, to help my son who studied at university to find employment. If I want the number then its not to become ‘Jordanian,’ its for nothing but life.’³⁶ For 24 year-old Abu Ziyad, gaining a national ID is the only solution to solving the problems Gazans face: ‘Palestine does not recognise us, Jordan does not recognise us ... without an ID there is nothing, no employment opportunities, no education, no healthcare services.’³⁷ Nadine expressed a similar sentiment: ‘everything here depends on your national ID. If you have one you live, if you don’t then you’re better off begging on the street.’³⁸ On the other hand, for Abu Issam a National ID number will not change anything, he stated: ‘I just want to return. What will this document do me? With or without it, you’re sleeping, eating and living.’³⁹ Additionally, in a campaign consisting of a number of peaceful protests organised by the Popular Committee for the Children of the Gaza Strip in 2017, the committee advocated the Jordanian government to grant them a number of civil rights below as opposed to citizenship. For most of the refugees interviewed, citizenship is an unattainable feat.

34 “Special Report on the Gaza Refugee Camp.” *Gaza Jordan* (blog), 2013. Accessed February 3, 2018. <https://gazajordan.wordpress.com/مخيم-غزة-في-الأردن-تقرير-خاص/>.

35 Australian Government Refugee Review Tribunal, *Country Advice Jordan*, 2010. P. 5. <http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/4df9dfd12.pdf>

36 Moayad. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 27, 2017. Gaza Camp, Jerash – Jordan.

37 Abu Ziyad. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 27, 2017. Gaza Camp, Jerash – Jordan.

38 Nadine. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 26, 2017. Zarqa Governorate Jordan

39 Abu Issam. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 27, 2017. Talbich Camp, Amman – Jordan.

Holders of the Temporary Two-Year Passport

After disengaging from the West Bank in July 1988,⁴⁰ Jordan rendered the inhabitants of the West Bank stateless, as it had stripped them of their Jordanian citizenship. In compensation, Jordan provided them with Jordanian passports renewable every five years. The passports do not confer citizenship, as they do not include IDs or residency rights and can be used solely for the travel purposes. In addition to the temporary passport, the Inspection and Follow-Up Department of the Ministry of Interior provides Palestinians with Crossing Cards that permit them to travel between Jordan and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Palestinians from the Gaza Strip on the other hand, were issued with 2-year Jordanian passports for travel purposes. Similarly to Jordan's patrilineal nationality law,⁴¹ only males can pass on their 2-year temporary passport to their children. Additionally, if a Gazan woman with a temporary passport decides to marry a male with a Palestinian Authority passport, then she loses her Jordanian document and her right to reside in the country.⁴²



A page from the 2-year temporary Jordanian passport issued to Gazan refugees. Photograph taken in Bilal's home in Jordan: Pietro Stefanini and Maya Hammad | PRC October 2017

Origin	Residence	Kind of Passport	Family Book	Card of Crossing	Accessibility to Services
Jordan Palestinians 1948	Jordan	5-year Passport with ID	Yes	-	Full Access
Palestinians 1967/ Jerusalem	West Bank Jerusalem	5-year Passport without ID	No	Family Reunification Green Card	Work permit; university education payment in foreign fees
Gaza Palestinians	Jordan	2-year Temporary Passport	No	Family Reunification Blue Card	Work permit; university education payment in foreign fees,
West Bank Gaza	West Bank Gaza	Palestinian Authority Passport	No	Permission to Enter	Valid Residency Needed

Table 4: Palestinian Documentation and Crossing Cards, source: Fanack.com

To obtain a passport, proof of residing in Jordan since 1974 and a number of documents have to be submitted to the 'Passports Directorate of the West Bank and Gaza/ Gaza Passports Office.' In addition to the application, a legal fee of 200 JDs has to be paid, which was raised from 25 JDs in accordance to a government decision made in 2016. The new fees for passport renewal were regarded as an exorbitant amount for most Gazan refugees, and catalysed the PCCGS advocacy campaign. 'They doubled the price for citizens, but for me, the Gazan, they increased it by 8 times, why is it so?' Zeid exclaimed, 'my passport has expired a few years ago, I can't go renew it for 200 JDs because that is half of my salary... I spend on two households, mine and my parents', and I also have my university costs, how will I renew it?'⁴³

40 King Hussein made the decision to disengage from the West Bank in 1988, which meant the severance of all legal and administrative ties with the West Bank.

41 Jordan Nationality Law No. Article 3 states that a Jordanian is anyone whose: 'father is a Jordanian national.'

42 Professor Jalal Al-Husseini. "Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan." Interview by authors. October 25, 2017. Amman – Jordan.

43 Zeid. "Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan." Interview by authors. October 27, 2017. Gaza Camp, Jerash – Jordan.



Department of Palestinian Affairs – Talbieh Camp Service Committee office which carries out occasional maintenance work. Photograph taken in the Talbieh Camp in Jordan | PRC October 2017

These temporary passports allow the Jordanian government to treat their holders as foreigners and permits them under Article 19 of the specified Law No. 24 of 1973 on Residence and Foreigners' Affairs that the relevant minister may 'cancel a residence permit already granted to [the foreigner] and order him to leave the Kingdom without explanation.'⁴⁴ Cancelling permits or never issuing them in the first place often occurs due to 'security reasons' or if the person has travelled abroad.⁴⁵ In such cases where residency permits being the two-year passports are cancelled or never issued, a multitude of problems arise. For example, children born to parents whose documents have expired due to their domicile in another country may not be registered under their parents or in the country, which they were born in.

While Abu Issam's father and brothers, all Gazan refugees, obtained the two-year passport in 1996, he was denied one on account of his previous political activism. 'The intelligence refused my application, they told me to forget about it... I used to participate in many protests in the camp when I was a teenager' Abu Issam explained, 'We weren't angry at the government, we were angry at the occupation, at the death of Mohammad El Dora in his father's lap. I was imprisoned three times for being involved in the protests. The first time when I was 13.' With no documentation, Abu Issam could not legally get married, and thus in 2003 he attempted to obtain the two-year passport again but with no avail.

'They told me to go home, that I have been refused... I went to the Palestinian Embassy after, and I tried everything just so that I can get some sort of proof of identity to get married. I told the director "you represent us, just give me any sort of proof that the religious judge may accept, at the Muslim Court, so that my marriage can be legal." He gave me a paper that reads 'proof of Palestinian nationality' and till this day I live on this even though it has expired a couple of years ago. But I am too afraid to renew it, what excuse do I give them now? I am already married.'⁴⁶

Abu Issam's case is exemplary of Gazan refugees who lack relevant documentation as the paper he was provided by the Palestinian Embassy does not allow him to travel outside of Jordan, nor can it be passed down to his 3 children who currently have no identification documents other than their birth certificates. The refugees interviewed for this report hold different documents outlined in Table 5 below. For them, the systematic discrimination they face in terms of work, healthcare, education or travel has barred them from legal equality with Jordanian citizens. According to Sherab, this status has resulted in 'intergenerational

44 *Jordan: Law No. 24 of 1973 on Residence and Foreigners' Affairs*, 1 January 1973, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b4ed4c.html>

45 Australian Government Refugee Review Tribunal, *Country Advice Jordan*, 2010. P. 3. <http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/4df9d12.pdf>

46 Abu Issam. "Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan." Interview by authors. October 27, 2017. Talbieh Camp, Amman – Jordan.



Proof of Palestinian Nationality Document issued by the Palestinian Embassy to Stateless Palestinian refugees. Photograph taken in Abu Issam's home in Talbieh camp in Jordan | PRC October 2017

inequality and perpetuated a situation of statelessness.⁴⁷ In reality, stateless Palestinians await 'a better more inclusive interpretation of international conventions or [are at] the mercy of host states to better protect their rights.'⁴⁸ It remains unclear whether the Jordanian government would ever seek to align its treatment of Gazan Palestinian refugees with its obligations under human rights law and the Casablanca Protocol.

	Name	Age	Place of Residence	Occupation
2 Year Temporary Passport	Bilal	64	Zarqa	Shop Owner
	Abdullah	23	Jerash Camp	Regional Manager for NGO within the Camp
	Abu Ziyad	24	Jerash Camp	Substitute Teacher - UNRWA
	Moayad	51	Jerash Camp	Teacher – UNRWA
	Zeid	-	Jerash Camp	Multiple
	Um Malak	-	Talbieh Camp	Director of Women's Centre – UNRWA
Palestinian Authority Passport	Anas	33	Zarqa	Unemployed
	Haya	-	Zarqa	Unemployed
	Nadine	23	Zarqa	Teacher – Private School
No Documentation	Abu Issam	43	Talbieh Camp	Vocational
Children of Jordanian Mothers' Benefit Card	Omar	25	Zarqa	Architect

Table 5: Interviewees and Identification Documents Held

47 Dominique Sherab, *Making The Legal Obstacles Palestinians Face In Jordan* (Amman: Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development- Legal Aid, 2017), accessed July 4, 2017, https://ardd-jo.org/sites/default/files/resource-files/mapping_the_legal_obstacles_palestinians_face_in_jordan_en.pdf.

48 Oroub el Abed, (2005) 'Immobile Palestinians: The impact of policies and practices on Palestinians from Gaza in Jordan', in Jaber, Hana et Metral, France *Migrants et Migrations au Moyen-Orient au tournant du XXIe siècle*, Beyrouth : Institut Français du Proche Orient, 2005. P. 91

Holders of the Palestinian Authority Passport



Palestinian Authority passport held by some Gazan refugees interviewed. Photograph taken in Bilal's home in Jordan | PRC October 2017

Bilal and his family, hail from El-Lid and sought refuge in Gaza in 1948 until they moved to Jordan in 1967. The family is a unique example as it demonstrates a variety of statuses Gazans could have depending on the documents they hold, and the consequent repercussions of such differences. Bilal, the father in the family, holds a temporary two-year passport, his wife holds a Palestinian Authority passport, and three of his children: Anas, Haya and Nadine who were also interviewed by the PRC, all hold documents like their mother while the other children in the family hold a temporary two-year passport. Anas, Haya, Nadine and their mother's presence in Jordan are dependent on an annual residency permit that Bilal obtains based on the temporary Jordanian document he holds.

'Because of the different documentation and identities my family holds, it will be dangerous later on in life when I'm no longer around. Anas might not be allowed to stay. If he marries a Jordanian woman, then in the future if they have children, he will have to go and register his child in Gaza. But Gaza is blockaded. If he marries a non-Jordanian, then he will have to leave after one year, but go to where? Other countries won't allow his entry, nor can he go back to Gaza.'⁴⁹

This passport, like the two-year temporary one held by other Gazans imposes just as many obstacles on its holder in regards to obtaining employment from the private sector, as well as employment from UNRWA. Anas explained:

'I applied to work as a teacher in UNRWA. After completing and excelling in the application process they told me "priorities for employment in UNRWA schools go to Palestinian refugees holding a 2 year passport, Palestinian refugees holding a 5 year passport, and Palestinian refugees holding Egyptian documentation."⁵⁰

Haya who married a Palestinian in Gaza, moved there from 2012 till 2014 to live with him, as she could not maintain her residency in Jordan while married to a Palestinian. After discovering her husband was a drug

49 Bilal. "Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan." Interview by authors. October 26, 2017. Zarqa Governorate Jordan

50 Anas. "Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan." Interview by authors. October 26, 2017. Zarqa Governorate Jordan

addict, filing for a divorce, and experiencing two brutal incessant attacks by the Israeli army, Haya began the process of trying to return to her family in Jordan.

‘The Rafah crossing opened up, I had to issue a document called ‘No prohibition’ from the Jordanian government which indicates that Jordan permits me to visit in order to see my family. When these papers were issued, I crossed Rafah into Egypt, got on a 12 hour bus ride to reach Cairo to catch a plane to Amman. Through my father I obtained a residency for my daughter and I, if my situation wasn’t as it is, they might not have permitted me leave to remain in the country.’⁵¹

The precarious residency situation of Haya, Nadine, and Anas is a constant constraint and a worrisome threat, that one day they will be forced to leave Jordan. Anas said:

‘Today I was speaking to my cousin, he told me “why don’t you get married?” I said, “Why so that if I get a son I let him fall into the trap that I am in? And he’ll ask me: father why did you do this to me?” I use my brain. This is a tough life, and I can’t start a family in this situation. It would be a big mistake.’⁵²

Holders of the Children of Jordanian Mothers Benefits Card

Many Jordanian women including those originally Palestinian have married Palestinians and other foreigners. Based on Jordan’s patrilineal nationality law specifically law No.6 of 1954 on Nationality, last amended in 1987, these women are incapable of passing on their identity to their children. However, after a advocacy campaign by civil society, a decision was made by the government in 2015, to provide all children born of Jordanian mothers and foreign fathers with a benefit card that allows them to be treated equally as Jordanian citizens when it comes to accessing education, healthcare services, as well as employment. Nonetheless, for Gazan refugees who hold this card, discrimination is still persistent, as some official bodies of the government and enterprises do not accept the card as proof of identity.⁵³⁵⁴⁵⁵ No official statistics indicate the number of Gazans whom have been able to obtain the card on account of their mother’s citizenship.

51 Haya. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 26, 2017. Zarqa Governorate Jordan

52 Anas. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 26, 2017. Zarqa Governorate Jordan.

53 Based on an informal conversation with youth in the camp whose mothers are Jordanian citizens.

54 Omar. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. March 2, 2018. Amman - Jordan.

55 Maher Shawabkeh, “Rights of Children of Jordanian Mothers from Foreign Fathers Are Still Restricted,” Al Hayat, May 1, 2017, accessed March 2, 2018, <http://www.alhayat.com/Articles/21604888/أبناء-الأردنيات-من-آباء-أجانب-مزايهم-لا-تزال-منقوصة>.

4. GAZANS AND THE DISMAL LIVING SITUATION

- INFRASTRUCTURE

The infrastructure in the refugee camps is primarily the responsibility of the Jordanian government, however UNRWA works to improve roads, pathways, drainage as well as the garbage collection services.⁵⁶

Marka Camp

The Marka (also known as Hitteen) refugee camp's location in the city of Amman means that it fares much better than other camps as the Greater Amman Municipality works to enhance the overall infrastructure of the camp. Apart from one main road, Marka is a web of narrow pathways connecting over 2824 housing units to each other.

Houses have an average area of 100 square meters, and are mostly made out of bricks.⁵⁷ According to the Department of Palestinian Affairs, 100% of housing units within the camp are connected to drainage and sewage networks.



UNRWA women's centre for education and training in Marka camp | PRC October 2017

⁵⁶ "Camps In Jordan", [Http://Group194.Net/English/](http://Group194.Net/English/), last modified 2017, accessed August 23, 2017, <http://group194.net/english/menu/1>.

⁵⁷ Nabil Marhood, *Voices from the Camps: A People's History of Palestinian Refugees in Jordan* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2006). P. 23



Overcrowdedness in the Marka camp forces people to expand their homes upwards by adding no more than 2 floors. Photograph taken in the Marka Camp in Jordan | PRC October 2017



Main street of Marka camp | PRC October 2017



UNRWA building in the camp. Photograph taken in the Marka Camp in Jordan: Pietro Stefanini and Maya Hammad | PRC October 2017

Talbieh Camp



Due to its closeness to the capital, Talbieh camp's infrastructure and main road are in better shape than those of the Jerash camp. Photograph taken in the Talbieh camp in Jordan | PRC October 2017

The Talbieh refugee camp's official boundaries include 1313 shelters housing 810 families. Today the camp houses over 7,286 individuals and has developed very noticeable semi-urban characteristics, due to Amman's growth southwards and the establishment of an industrial park in the vicinities.⁵⁸

Nonetheless, the camp's infrastructure is of poor quality in comparison to Amman. The garbage collection point inside the camp is completely disregarded by the municipality. There is no adequate water drainage system and there is poor access to drinking water and other water services,⁵⁹ despite the website of the Department of Palestinian Affairs indicating favourable statistics. In an attempt to remedy this situation, UNRWA set up the Talbieh Improvement Project in June 2008, which aimed to look at education, health services, infrastructure, shelter, urban space and economic opportunities.⁶⁰



The alleys of Talbieh camp, which is one of the 10 officially recognised UNRWA refugee camps in Jordan. Photograph taken in the Talbieh Camp in Jordan | PRC October 2017



The alleys of Talbieh camp, which is one of the 10 officially recognised UNRWA refugee camps in Jordan. Photograph taken in the Talbieh Camp in Jordan | PRC October 2017

58 Kosta Mathey and Sylvia Matuk, *Community-Based Violence Prevention: Innovative Approaches In Africa, Latin America, Asia And The Arab Region* (Transcript Verlag, 2015). P. 244

59 Ibid, P. 248

60 Ibid, P. 246

Jerash Camp

The Jerash/Gaza refugee camp has one of the most dismal infrastructures of all Palestinian refugee camps within Jordan. The camp suffers from a stifling over-crowdedness, a reeking sewage system, and substandard housing conditions. Nonetheless, this harsh reality has not marred the image Gazans, both young and old, have of their home: ‘the whole camp is like one big family,’⁶¹ it has ‘a different essence from any other camp in Jordan; people share your hardships. The 40 boys you meet in first grade are the friends you’ll have for a lifetime.’⁶²

The camp is one of the four camps with the lowest median per capita square metres of living space.⁶³ The camp has 2,130 housing units with each at an average size of 96 square meters.⁶⁴ Moayad witnessed the construction and development of the camp as a child in the late sixties and seventies relayed his experiences.



UNRWA Camp Services Officer – Jerash Camp | PRC October 2017



One of the five UNRWA schools in the Jerash camp, four of which are operating on a double shift system | PRC October 2017

‘When we came from Gaza we used to live in tents, and then after a year, UNRWA started building one room for each family. We had twelve members in our family, and we all shared one room, and entire neighbourhoods shared one bathroom. Houses were not connected to water, there was a faucet in each neighbourhood, and my mother and other women used to go there to fill up buckets with water it was only in the 80s that houses got connected to the water system. These units that UNRWA built, had ceilings made out of asbestos, it was only in 1981 that we were allowed to have concrete ceilings... Some people were lucky; I am one of the lucky ones. I travelled to UAE, I worked as a teacher for 12 years, I was able to build a good home, educate my sons at good universities, buy good furniture. In general, it is not top-notch, but it is better than what others have. Some of us got these chances to improve; others who didn’t remained in those asbestos-zinco units. Their family growing larger and larger and they are still cramped in that tiny unit of 96m.’⁶⁵

61 Abu Ziyad. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 27, 2017. Gaza Camp, Jerash – Jordan.

62 Zeid. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 27, 2017. Gaza Camp, Jerash – Jordan.

63 Åge Tiltne and Huafeng Zhang, *Progress, Challenges, Diversity Insights Into The Socio-Economic Conditions Of Palestinian Refugees In Jordan* (Norway: Fafo, 2013), accessed June 17, 2017. P. 59. https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/insights_into_the_socio-economic_conditions_of_palestinian_refugees_in_jordan.pdf.

64 Nabil Marshood, *Voices from the Camps: A People’s History of Palestinian Refugees in Jordan* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2006). P. 23

65 Moayad. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 27, 2017. Gaza Camp, Jerash – Jordan.



A house in the Jerash camp with roof made out of rusted asbestos sheets and corrugated zinc | PRC October 2017

Houses are most often in very bad shape, with terrible living conditions despite a large-scale 2 million Euro project funded by the European Commission in collaboration with UNRWA to construct 80 shelters over two years; 55 shelters in 2014 and 25 in 2015.⁶⁶ Furthermore more than 65% of roofs are still made of rusted asbestos sheets and corrugated zinc,^{67 68} which can cause diseases such as cancer.⁶⁹ Moayad explained that:

‘Winter is a big problem, firstly these Zinco roofs are very noisy and annoying when its raining, you can’t sleep. Secondly, it is too cold. Zinco is very warm in the summer and very cold in the winter. Heating is a very big problem, diesel is too costly, Kaz produces smoke, and this causes breathing problems. Gas is too expensive and electric heating is even more so. So people resort to burning wood, and this is the biggest problem because the smoke affects children’s health, and sometimes it causes fires.’⁷⁰



Heavy bricks are placed over rooftops to prevent them from being blown away by the wind. Jerash Camp | PRC October 2017

66 *Mid-Term Review of the EU Funded Project: Improvement of Living Conditions of Vulnerable Palestine Refugees in Jerash Camp* (Donor Project Reference: ENPI/2012/309-238 ; UNRWA Project Code: PQB21). Terms of Reference between UNRWA and EU Commission, www.ipdet.org/files/tor/UNRWA_Jerash-Shelter-Rehabilitation-Project_Jordan.doc

67 Dario Sabaghi, “Born & Bred Without Rights: Gaza Strip Refugees In Jordan”, *Insight On Conflict*, last modified 2017, accessed July 22, 2017, <https://www.insightonconflict.org/blog/2015/07/born-bred-without-rights-gaza-strip-refugees-jordan/>.

68 *Mid-Term Review of the EU Funded Project: Improvement of Living Conditions of Vulnerable Palestine Refugees in Jerash Camp* (Donor Project Reference: ENPI/2012/309-238 ; UNRWA Project Code: PQB21). Terms of Reference between UNRWA and EU Commission, www.ipdet.org/files/tor/UNRWA_Jerash-Shelter-Rehabilitation-Project_Jordan.doc

69 Dario Sabaghi, “Born & Bred Without Rights: Gaza Strip Refugees In Jordan”, *Insight On Conflict*, last modified 2017, accessed July 22, 2017, <https://www.insightonconflict.org/blog/2015/07/born-bred-without-rights-gaza-strip-refugees-jordan/>

70 Moayad. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 27, 2017. Gaza Camp, Jerash – Jordan.

Additionally, these rickety roofs often do not withstand rainstorms, allow water to seep in, or are ripped away entirely by strong gusts of wind.



Jerash Camp in winter 2018 | Image Source: Gaza Camp Facebook Page

The Department of Palestinians Affairs indicates that 95% of households within the camp have proper connection to the sewage and drainage system. However, the reality on the ground tells a different story. ‘Before 2014, the sewage system was completely exposed,’ says Moayad, ‘the awful-smelling leakages we have here and there now is just a problem of inefficient work. The Swiss government provided a financial grant for the building of a proper sewage system three years ago and now the problem has almost disappeared in comparison to what it was previously.’⁷¹ ⁷² Houses are connected to a percolation pit or septic tank, which in principle ought to ensure proper treatment of waste.⁷³ The main sanitary facility consists of ‘cesspools,’ which are tanks built underground and used to collect toilet wastewater. Cesspool walls are sealed with concrete yet they have an unsealed bottom that allows seepage of wastewater.⁷⁴ However, the reality on the ground shows that there is a lot to be done to improve water and sanitation in the camp. According to the Fafo report ‘*Progress, Challenge and Diversity: Insights into the Socio-Economic Conditions of Palestinian Refugees in Jordan*’:

‘Grey water generated in the households, sometimes contaminated with leaks of sewage from old cesspools, runs along open collection ditches all around the camp and flows downstream to agricultural sites, where it is stored in small pools for irrigation use. Children play in streets with ditches and close to the pools, which results in an inflated incidence of (bloody) diarrhoea and hepatitis A’⁷⁵

Additionally, with UNRWA’s dwindling resources and subsequent labour cuts, the ten cleaners in the camp employed by UNRWA found themselves without jobs.⁷⁶ As the trash piled on the streets of the camp, the residents took it upon themselves to organise a committee for the clearance of each neighbourhood.

71 Moayad. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 27, 2017. Gaza Camp, Jerash – Jordan.

72 *Jordan – Jerash Camp WATSAN Project*. December 2014. By The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, https://www.eda.admin.ch/dam/countries/countries-content/jordan/en/JerashWATSAN-Jordan-Dec.2014_EN.pdf.

73 Åge Tiltne and Huafeng Zhang, *Progress, Challenges, Diversity Insights Into The Socio-Economic Conditions Of Palestinian Refugees In Jordan* (Norway: Fafo, 2013), accessed June 17, 2017. P. 63 https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/insights_into_the_socio-economic_conditions_of_palestinian_refugees_in_jordan.pdf

74 Sahar Dalahmeh and Almoayed Assayed, “Health Risk Assessment Of Children Exposed To Greywater In Jerash

Refugee Camp In Jordan”, *Urban Agriculture magazine*, 2017, accessed July 17, 2017, <http://admin.indiaenvironmentportal.org.in/files/Children%20Exposed%20to%20Greywater.pdf>.

75 Sahar S. Dalahmeh, Moayied Assayed and Wael T. Suleiman, “Themes Of Stakeholder Participation In Greywater Management In Rural Communities In Jordan”, *Desalination* 243, no. 1-3 (2009): 159-169.

76 Following US aid cut: 100 UNRWA employees made redundant,” Following US aid cut: 100 UNRWA employees made, January 16, 2018, accessed January 20, 2018, <http://en.royanews.tv/news/13216/2018-01-16>.

- ECONOMIC LIVELIHOODS

According to the Fafo report, Gazan refugees are three times more likely than other Palestinian refugees to live in destitute poverty, on less than 1.25 USD a day.⁷⁷ This is demonstrated by the dismal employment opportunities they have both within and outside the camps due to a number of legal obstacles. Unemployment rates in the Jerash camp specifically reached 39% (81% among women and 25% among men) compared to only 14% for Palestinian refugees in Jordan generally.⁷⁸ In fact, 52.7% of refugees within the camp have an income below the national poverty line of JD 814.

Camp	Absolute Poverty
	National Poverty Line (814 JD)
Marka	30.9%
Talbieh	27.9%
Jerash	52.7%

Table 6: Poverty Statistics in Marka, Talbieh and Jerash Camp⁷⁹

These harrowing statistics are the direct result of a number of restrictive aspects of the Jordanian labour law. To start with, the Jordanian Labour law of 1966 stipulates in Article 12 (a) that: ‘it is not permissible to engage any non-Jordanian employee except with the approval of the Minister... provided that the work required experience and capability which are not available with Jordanian employees, or if the available number therefore does not meet the need.’⁸⁰

In fact as Abdallah, who now works for an NGO operating from the camp, states there are serious legal obstacles for Gazan refugees to access the job market

‘I worked as a mechanic, as a smith, as a waiter, a carpenter, a painter, I have worked in shops and shopping malls... this is because I am not allowed to work in every profession, instead as a Gazan Palestinian I have a short list of accessibilities towards labour. And I reject this idea, because as a human I have a right to work, and no one has the right to impinge on my rights.’⁸¹

Similarly 24-year old Abu Ziyad struggled to find a job after graduating from university with a degree in Arabic and eventually resorted to working as a substitute teacher for UNRWA, since it was the only entity willing to employ him given his lack of a national ID number. ‘Wherever you go and apply they tell you where is your national ID number, and when you tell them I don’t have on they tell you then be on your way good bye.’⁸² Likewise, 25 year-old Omar, whose father is married to a Jordanian woman, stated that ‘my father was not allowed to work in public schools, he was regarded as a foreigner, he could only work at UNRWA.’⁸³

77 Åge Tiltne and Huafeng Zhang, *Progress, Challenges, Diversity Insights Into The Socio-Economic Conditions Of Palestinian Refugees In Jordan* (Norway: Fafo, 2013), accessed June 17, 2017. P. 8. https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/insights_into_the_socio-economic_conditions_of_palestinian_refugees_in_jordan.pdf.

78 “Gaza Camp, Jordan, Background Paper . The Community Development Office”. *Arabnyheter.Info*. Last modified 2013. Accessed July 3, 2017. <http://arabnyheter.info/sv/2013/08/05/gaza-camp-jordan-background-paper--the-community-development-office/>.

79 Åge Tiltne and Huafeng Zhang, *Progress, Challenges, Diversity Insights Into The Socio-Economic Conditions Of Palestinian Refugees In Jordan* (Norway: Fafo, 2013), accessed June 17, 2017. P. 250. https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/insights_into_the_socio-economic_conditions_of_palestinian_refugees_in_jordan.pdf

80 *Jordan Labour Law No (8) of 1996*. http://www.hammourilaw.com/Hammouri_Resorces/Articals/labor_law_2.pdf.

81 Abdallah. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 25, 2017. Amman – Jordan.

82 Abu Ziyad. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 27, 2017. Gaza Camp, Jerash – Jordan.

83 Omar. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. March 2, 2018. Amman - Jordan.

Additionally, many employers require proof of nationality or clearance from the General Intelligence Department (GID), prior to granting employment.⁸⁴ In January 2016, a Ministerial decision announced that Gazans will no longer be exempt from the issuance of work permits,⁸⁵ and will have to do so as they are foreign workers, in accordance with Article 12 of the labour law: ‘the non-Jordanian employee must obtain a work permit... prior to his recruitment or engagement. The period of permit may not exceed one year renewable.’⁸⁶ This decision created a general atmosphere of discontent among Gazan refugees, with many calling for the decision to be revoked. Professor Jalal Hussein described it as a big step towards emphasising the foreign status of Gazans and promoting ‘pro-Jordanian’ employment regulations, which inevitably increase unemployment amongst the Gazan population.⁸⁷ Also, the law indicates that employers are charged a fee for the issue or renewal of the work permit for every non-Jordanian employee. While informally conversing with youth from the Jerash camp, it was revealed that employers often place responsibility of paying for the work permit on the refugees themselves, an extra expense of 180 JDs, which many would rather not have to meet on a yearly basis, and many cannot even afford.

The decision on the work permits by the Ministry of Labour was followed by an announcement from the Ministry of Education declaring it impermissible for Gazans to work in private schools across the kingdom.⁸⁸ The net effect of such a decision was that many Gazan teachers lost their jobs, as schools were not willing to start the process of issuing the work permit.⁸⁹ Bilal’s 24 year-old daughter still works at a private school but faces many difficulties.

‘My daughter was ranked fifth in her university... but she can’t work in government schools or private ones because she has a temporary residency on her Palestinian Authority Passport. She got a job in secret at a private school, and she has been working for a couple of months, and do you know what her salary is? 150 a month. Exploitation! The definition of Exploitation! If she were Jordanian, her salary would have been 400, 450 JDs minimum. But, at least they’ve employed her, otherwise she would have had to obtain a permission slip from the intelligence to be able to work as a teacher.’⁹⁰

Furthermore, Gazan refugees and others without Jordanian nationality are restricted from engaging in a number of professions. These include law, engineering, medicine, nursing, pharmaceuticals and journalism among other professions because membership into these professions’ respective associations, which is mandatory, is restricted to Jordanian nationals.⁹¹ For some Gazan refugees, such obstacles destroy their dreams and splinter their aspirations. Zeid, who now settled for any vocational job available that could help him support the two households he is responsible for said:

‘I always wanted to be a nurse and I spent four years of my life studying to become one, the hospital told me that if I get an exception from the Ministry (of labour) they can employ me. When I went to the ministry, they told me if I get an exception from a hospital they can give me an exception so I can be employed. It was a useless cycle that was going no where because it was impossible for one to give me the exemption without the other, in the end I stopped trying to become a nurse, and I just worked in anything that could pay me.’⁹²

84 “Stateless Again Palestinian-Origin Jordanians Deprived Of Their Nationality”, *Human Rights Watch*, last modified 2010, accessed July 3, 2017, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2010/02/01/stateless-again/palestinian-origin-jordanians-deprived-their-nationality>.

85 “Jordan Re-instates Work Permit Fees on Gazan Refugees Resident in the Kingdom.” Palestine Refugee Platform. June 13, 2017 Accessed March 4, 2018. <http://refugeesps.net/post/1882>

86 *Jordan Labour Law No (8) of 1996*. http://www.hammourilaw.com/Hammouri_Resorces/Articals/labor_law_2.pdf.

87 Professor Jalal Al-Husseini. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 25, 2017. Amman – Jordan.

88 Gazans Residents in Jordan, Phenix Center | Jordan Labor Watch, March 2017, accessed January 3, 2018, P.3 <http://www.phenixcenter.net/ar/paper/176>.

89 Sabrin Tueimat and Ala’ Mathhar, “No Change to the Situation of Gazan Teachers Working in Private Schools,” Al-Ghad (Amman), November 4, 2016, November 4, 2016, accessed March 2, 2018, <http://www.alghad.com/articles/1230402-لا-تغيير-على-أوضاع-الغزيين-العاملين-بالمدارس-الخاصة>.

90 Bilal. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 26, 2017. Zarqa Governorate Jordan

91 “Special Report on the Gaza Refugee Camp.” *Gaza Jordan* (blog), 2013. Accessed February 3, 2018. <https://gazajordan.wordpress.com/مخيم-غزة-في-الأردن-تقرير-خاص/>.

92 Zeid. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 27, 2017. Gaza Camp, Jerash – Jordan

Likewise, Omar had to give up his academic aspirations due to the restrictive reality he faces given his identity.

‘It was my dream to study Medicine and become a neurologist. All of my old notebooks, all my notes, all the books I read it was just on this topic. And then my father sat me down. And that was the first shock I experienced as a young teenager about my Gazan identity. He told me ‘what are you doing with your life? There is no university seat available for medicine for Gazan students? Its not permitted! Don’t waste your time.’⁹³

In addition to this, residents of Gaza Camp are barred from working in the banking sector, tourism sector and face significant difficulties in establishing cooperative businesses. Despite their categorisation as ‘foreigners’ in the eyes of the government, ex-Gazans do not receive the privileges foreign investors receive when seeking to start cooperative businesses.⁹⁴

Professions restricted for foreigners including Gazans According to the Ministry of Labour			
1. Administrative and Accounting Professions	2. Written Professions (Printing, Secretary)	3. Telephone Switches and Exchange Professions	4. Warehouse Professions
5. Selling Professions	6. Décor Professions	7. Selling Fuel in Main cities	8. Electricity Professions
9. Mechanics and Car Fixing Professions	10. Drivers	11. Guards and Correspondents	12. Medical Professions
13. All Engineering and Architecture Professions	14. Hair cutting Professions	15. Educational/ Teaching Professions	16. Carriers in Fruit and Vegetable shops
17. Carriers in supermarkets and malls	18. Janitors in private schools and hotels	19. Regional offices of foreign firms	

Table 7: Professions Closed to Gazan Refugees⁹⁵

Gazans also face legal and bureaucratic obstacles in regards to licensing and ownership. For example, Gazans cannot obtain service drivers’ licenses according to Regulation No. 104 of 2008 on the Registration and Licensing of Vehicles; thus they are restricted from becoming taxi or bus drivers. Moreover, Gazans are not permitted to purchase land, commercial buildings or houses according to Law No. 40 of 195 on the Rent and Selling of Immoveable Properties⁹⁶ In fact, due to licensing regulations they are not permitted to set up small or medium enterprises outside of the camp,⁹⁷ and are only allowed to do so if they have a Jordanian partner.⁹⁸ Bilal who lives in Zarqa and runs a house appliances shop expressed the difficulties of such legal restrictions.

93 Omar. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. March 2, 2018. Amman - Jordan.

94 “Gaza Camp, Jordan , Background Paper , The Community Development Office”. *Arabnyheter.Info*. Last modified 2013. Accessed July 3, 2017. <http://arabnyheter.info/sv/2013/08/05/gaza-camp-jordan-background-paper--the-community-development-office/>.

95 “19 Professions Closed to Foreign Workers.” *Al-Rai*, February 29, 2016. Accessed July 4, 2017. <http://alrai.com/article/771531.html>.

96 Dominique Sherab, *Making The Legal Obstacles Palestinians Face In Jordan* (Amman: Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development- Legal Aid, 2017), accessed July 4, 2017, https://ardd-jo.org/sites/default/files/resource-files/mapping_the_legal_obstacles_palestinians_face_in_jordan_en.pdf.

97 “Special Report on the Gaza Refugee Camp.” *Gaza Jordan* (blog), 2013. Accessed February 3, 2018. <https://gazajordan.wordpress.com/مخيم-غزة-في-الاردن-تقرير-خاص/>.

98 Megan O’Toole, “In Pictures: Gazan Refugees Living In Limbo”, *Aljazeera.Com*, last modified 2014, accessed August 23, 2017, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/inpictures/2014/05/pictures-gazan-refugees-living-2014527122740823406.html>.

‘Do you think its registered under my name? Of course not! People can come and kick us out, because there is no legal proof that it is my property. I am not allowed to claim what is mine. My shop, which I have worked hard to open, is regarded as ‘impermissibly certified’ (Mukhalef Murakhas). The situation is difficult, its very hard.’⁹⁹



Gaza-born Bilal at his home in Al-Zarqa, Jordan | PRC October 2017

As a result of these circumstances, the job opportunities available for Gazan refugees are highly determined by the location they are in as well as the weather. Most Gazans resort to work in unorganised professions including the vocational or industrial sector¹⁰⁰ in carpentry, and blacksmithing where employees do not enjoy social security, health and safety requirements.¹⁰¹ ‘Most our sons work in labour and construction, which doesn’t happen in winter, so you find them sitting at home, with no source of income. If it rains today, then you need six days until the labourer can work again and things are properly dry’¹⁰² explained Moayad. Moreover, women were found to have higher education levels than males, and are often employed in the public sector or work for UNRWA or other NGOs in education, health and social services sectors. As for an analysis of employment opportunities based on camp, the availability of these depends mostly on the location of the camps themselves. For example, the Marka and Talbieh camps are located on the outer edges of Amman, and therefore employment centres on light industry and labour.¹⁰³ Marka camp is located in a vocational and light industrial area.¹⁰⁴ Talbieh on the other hand, is in a labour centre with residents working in public and private institutions mostly in the nearby industrial zone.¹⁰⁵ Despite these opportunities, 27.9% of families live in abject poverty.¹⁰⁶ One of the participants in the group interview held in the Talbieh camp stated that ‘there is so much unemployment, there are many factories around us but they have so many

99 Bilal. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 26, 2017. Zarqa Governorate – Jordan.

100 Åge Tiltne and Huafeng Zhang, *Progress, Challenges, Diversity Insights Into The Socio-Economic Conditions Of Palestinian Refugees In Jordan* (Norway: Fafo, 2013), accessed June 17, 2017. P. 18. https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/insights_into_the_socio-economic_conditions_of_palestinian_refugees_in_jordan.pdf.

101 Gazans Residents in Jordan, Phenix Center | Jordan Labor Watch, March 2017, accessed January 3, 2018, P4 <http://www.phenixcenter.net/ar/paper/176>.

102 Moayad. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 27, 2017. Gaza Camp, Jerash – Jordan.

103 Kosta Mathey and Sylvia Matuk, *Community-Based Violence Prevention: Innovative Approaches In Africa, Latin America, Asia And The Arab Region* (Transcript Verlag, 2015). P. 240

104 Ibid, P. 240

105 Ibid, P. 241

106 Åge Tiltne and Huafeng Zhang, *Progress, Challenges, Diversity Insights Into The Socio-Economic Conditions Of Palestinian Refugees In Jordan* (Norway: Fafo, 2013), accessed June 17, 2017. P. 250 https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/insights_into_the_socio-economic_conditions_of_palestinian_refugees_in_jordan.pdf

conditions... the Gazans can't work in the factories, and we have around seven Gazan families in our camp.¹⁰⁷ As for the Jerash camp the 13 farms in its vicinity which are owned by local Jordanian farmers, each employ 70-100 refugees, this number increases significantly during the cultivation season.¹⁰⁸ Refugees from the Jerash camp also work in vocational entrepreneurship and the production of crafts.¹⁰⁹

Efforts to mitigate the economic hardships faced by Gazan refugees, are only offered through the UNRWA cash assistance programme. According to remarks made by many refugees at the camp in January 2018, UNRWA which previously provided each refugee with an e-ration card, which entitles them to 10JDs per person every three months for food and other household items, as well as a stipend of 10JDs per person every three months, has halted these payments indefinitely in January 2018 following the US cuts on the UNRWA budget. UNRWA has not indicated when it will resume providing this aid. For many Gazan families, whose budgets are entirely dependent on the UNRWA assistance, (the upcoming months will be a terrifying search for a source of income.) Furthermore due to Gazans' foreigner status, they are not entitled to receiving any social and financial support from the National Aid Fund and the Ministry of Social Development, unlike other Palestinian refugees in Jordan. Additionally, they are also not entitled to benefit from the royal housing fund for the poor.¹¹⁰

Taking into account the various employment restrictions faced by Gazan refugees, it is important to note that such policies contravene Jordan's international and regional obligations. The Committee on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination General Recommendation XXX on Discrimination Against Non-Citizens, indicated that states are under an obligation to guarantee equality between citizens and non-citizens in the enjoyment of their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights to the extent recognised under international law and enunciated especially in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.¹¹¹ The recommendation specifically indicates that states ought to 'remove obstacles that prevent the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights by non-citizens... take measures to eliminate discrimination against non-citizens in relation to working conditions and work requirements, including employment rules and practices with discriminatory purposes or effects.'¹¹² While it is permissible for states to refuse to offer jobs to non-citizens without a work permit 'all individuals are entitled to the enjoyment of labour and employment rights, including the freedom of assembly and association, once an employment relationship has been initiated until is terminated.'¹¹³ Finally, despite the legal permissibility of requesting work permits from foreign workers, it is important to note how this act breaches Jordan's regional legal obligations. The treatment of Gazans as 'foreign workers' goes against Article 1 of the Casablanca Protocol, which reads 'Palestinians currently residing in the land of ... have the *right of employment on par with its citizens*.' This treatment also contravenes decision 8/D1 (15.12.1982) of the Arab League which states 'A Palestinian holder of Palestinian refugee travel document is to be treated equally as the citizens of the country which issued this travel document in terms freedom of residency, work and movement.'¹¹⁴

107 Zeina. "Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan." Interview by authors. October 28, 2017. Talbieh Camp, Amman – Jordan.

108 Sahar Dalahmeh and Almoayed Assayed, "Health Risk Assessment Of Children Exposed To Greywater In Jerash Refugee Camp In Jordan", *Urban Agriculture magazine*, 2017, accessed July 17, 2017, <http://admin.indiaenvironmentportal.org.in/files/Children%20Exposed%20to%20Greywater.pdf>.

109 Kosta Mathey and Sylvia Matuk, *Community-Based Violence Prevention: Innovative Approaches In Africa, Latin America, Asia And The Arab Region* (Transcript Verlag, 2015). P. 240

110 Australian Government Refugee Review Tribunal, *Country Advice Jordan*, 2010. P. 5. <http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/4df9dfd12.pdf>

111 *The Rights of Non-Citizens*. Publication no. ISBN-13: 978-92-1-154175-5. November 2006. accessed January 3, 2018. <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/noncitizensen.pdf>.

112 Ibid

113 Ibid

114 Translated by the author: *Treatment of Palestinians in Arab Countries*. December 15, 1982. Decision 8/D1 (15.12.1982) of the Arab League, <http://muqtafi.birzeit.edu/InterDocs/images/254.pdf>.

- EDUCATION SYSTEM



Poetry on the returning to Palestine decorates the walls of the UNRWA school in the Jerash camp
| PRC October 2017

The Jordanian educational system consists of ten years of mandatory basic schooling, and an additional two years of secondary education that could be either academic or vocational. Following secondary education, Palestinian refugees have the option of pursuing higher education in community colleges or universities. Gazans, as well as other UNRWA and UNHCR refugees have equal access as Jordanian citizens to the public education sector at the school level, which effectively means that a Gazan child can choose to enrol in a state school as opposed to an UNRWA school.¹¹⁵



Graffiti recreating the separation wall and nationalist symbols painted in the school courtyard. Jerash Camp | PRC October 2017

115 Dominique Sherab, *Making The Legal Obstacles Palestinians Face In Jordan* (Amman: Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development- Legal Aid, 2017), accessed July 4, 2017, https://ardd-jo.org/sites/default/files/resource-files/mapping_the_legal_obstacles_palestinians_face_in_jordan_en.pdf.

School

In terms of enrolment statistics, the Fafo report found that both early childhood education and university education have become much more common since the 1990s. However, despite this positive change children of basic-school age residing outside of camps are three percentage points more likely than those residing inside camps to attend school.¹¹⁶ Abu Ziyad lamented that ‘almost 98% of our children drop out of school after 8th grade!’¹¹⁷ According to data collected, gross and net enrolment among camp children is 96.7 percent.¹¹⁸ However, children residing in refugee camps are more likely to leave school by the time they reach the age of 15.¹¹⁹ Only 54 to 55% of those inside camps continue secondary school education.¹²⁰ Reasons for dropping out are various including, child’s lack of interest, health-factors, financial responsibility, and domestic duties such as marriage. Enrolment figures in university level education range between 14 to 19 percent among those residing in camps.¹²¹ UNRWA’s research, supported by UNICEF’s report on out-of-school children in Jordan¹²² both indicate that underachievement and school-related issues of bad treatment were identified as the most compelling reasons for dropping-out.¹²³

Additionally, despite the availability of public school education for Palestinian refugees, data shows that UNRWA is the main provider of basic schooling to Palestinian refugees inside camps, serving about nine in ten children.¹²⁴ In Jerash camp, 99% of children benefit from UNRWA’s educational services as opposed to public or private institutions,¹²⁵ this may be due to the fact that the state schools are faraway from the camp, thus discouraging parents from allowing their young children to make the trek twice a day on their own. Additionally, UNRWA operates four double shift schools,¹²⁶ and ten double shift¹²⁷ schools in Talbieh camp and Marka camp respectively. This double shift system is the result of the large number of students and the school’s lack of capacity, a problem, which is prevalent in most refugee camps in Jordan. A refugee stated:

I studied in UNRWA schools, where the number of students in one classroom was 52 students. 52 and a 40-minute lesson! So if you want to give a lesson and each one student says something, the lesson ends and you haven’t learned anything!¹²⁸

116 Åge Tiltne and Huafeng Zhang, *Progress, Challenges, Diversity Insights Into The Socio-Economic Conditions Of Palestinian Refugees In Jordan* (Norway: Fafo, 2013), accessed June 17, 2017. P. 17. https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/insights_into_the_socio-economic_conditions_of_palestinian_refugees_in_jordan.pdf

117 Abu Ziyad. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 27, 2017. Gaza Camp, Jerash – Jordan.

118 Åge Tiltne and Huafeng Zhang, *Progress, Challenges, Diversity Insights Into The Socio-Economic Conditions Of Palestinian Refugees In Jordan* (Norway: Fafo, 2013), accessed June 17, 2017, P. 168 https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/insights_into_the_socio-economic_conditions_of_palestinian_refugees_in_jordan.pdf.

119 Ibid, P. 150.

120 Ibid. P. 157.

121 Ibid. P. 152.

122 UNICEF, *Summary of Jordan Country Report on Out-of-School Children*, Middle East and North Africa Out-of-School Children Initiative (Amman, 2014), accessed August 10, 2017, https://www.unicef.org/jordan/150512_Jordan_Summary_English_Small.pdf

123 UNRWA 2013. *UNRWA school dropout: an agency wide study*, Amman: Education Department, UNRWA Headquarter.

124 Åge Tiltne and Huafeng Zhang, *Progress, Challenges, Diversity Insights Into The Socio-Economic Conditions Of Palestinian Refugees In Jordan* (Norway: Fafo, 2013), accessed June 17, 2017. P. 17. https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/insights_into_the_socio-economic_conditions_of_palestinian_refugees_in_jordan.pdf

125 Ibid. P. 156.

126 “Talbieh Camp | UNRWA”, *UNRWA*, last modified 2017, accessed June 23, 2017, <https://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/jordan/talbieh-camp>.

127 “Marka Camp | UNRWA”, *UNRWA*, last modified 2017, accessed August 23, 2017, <https://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/jordan/marka-camp>.

128 Abu Ziyad. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 27, 2017. Gaza Camp, Jerash – Jordan.



Kindergarten in Talbieh camp | PRC October 2017

Moreover, there is a striking disparity in the level of educational accomplishment between Palestinian refugees who have attended UNRWA schools and those that have attended public ones. The data collected indicates that in the age group 25 - 39, a considerably higher proportion of those who mainly attended UNRWA schools have not managed to complete basic schooling as compared with those who attended public schools: 29% versus 7%.¹²⁹

Furthermore, a higher proportion of those who attended public schools than those who attended UNRWA ones have attained post-secondary education: 16% versus 14%.¹³⁰ However, the majority of refugees interviewed had completed their secondary education, one even had obtained a masters as well as a PhD from abroad. Nonetheless the academic and professional achievements of Gazan refugees are never brought to the spotlight, as one refugee stated:

‘This camp has doctors, engineers teachers. And unfortunately they never mention it on TV, but the students who get the highest grades in the kingdom are from the Gaza refugee camp. One student got 99.81 last term and no one talked about her.’¹³¹

Also, illiteracy rates for Jerash, Marka, and Talbieh respectively are 11, 8, and 9%.¹³² Nonetheless, on average, UNRWA students in Jordan and the West Bank and Gaza achieve scores 23-80 points higher than their peers at public schools.¹³³

Pre-primary and nursery education has become increasingly more widespread in Jordan according to UNICEF. This is reflected in the data for Kindergarten enrolment, while 11 percent of Palestinian camp children were enrolled in kindergarten in 1999, 53% of them were enrolled in 2011.¹³⁴ The percentage of children aged four and five enrolled in kindergarten in Jerash, Makra, and Talbieh are approximately 48%, 59%, and 37% respectively.¹³⁵ The kindergarten visited in Talbieh camp, by the PRC team was in surprisingly good condition as it had received a recent grant to refurbish and had a significant number of students. The outside playground, which had cement flooring, was unfortunately lacking any sort of children’s toys.

129 Åge Tiltne and Huafeng Zhang, *Progress, Challenges, Diversity Insights Into The Socio-Economic Conditions Of Palestinian Refugees In Jordan* (Norway: Fafo, 2013), accessed June 17, 2017. P. 162. https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/insights_into_the_socio-economic_conditions_of_palestinian_refugees_in_jordan.pdf

130 Ibid, P. 163.

131 Abu Ziyad. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 27, 2017. Gaza Camp, Jerash – Jordan.

132 Ibid, P. 144.

133 Husein Abdul-Hamid et al., *Learning In The Face Of Adversity: The UNRWA Education Program For Palestine Refugees* (Washington: The World Bank, 2016). P. xvii

134 Åge Tiltne and Huafeng Zhang, *Progress, Challenges, Diversity Insights Into The Socio-Economic Conditions Of Palestinian Refugees In Jordan* (Norway: Fafo, 2013), accessed June 17, 2017. P. 146. https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/insights_into_the_socio-economic_conditions_of_palestinian_refugees_in_jordan.pdf.

135 Ibid, P. 149.

	Marka	Talbieh	Jerash
UNRWA Schools	7	4	4
State Schools	-	1	1
Kindergartens	15	2	4
Nurseries	2	1	1

Table 8: Educational Facilities Available in the Camps source: Department of Palestinian Affairs Website

UNRWA schools in Jordan teach the Jordanian national curriculum issued by the Ministry of Education. This is based on an agreement made back in the 1950s between UNRWA and the respective governments of its mandated-operation areas, which stipulates that UNRWA schools would teach the national curriculums of the territories they reside in. The Jordanian curriculum, like most other education systems in relatively young, post-colonial states is a political tool utilised by governments for national-building and the construction of a loyal populace. It is indisputable that ‘educational institutions provide one of the major mechanisms through which power is maintained and challenged.’¹³⁶ Consequently, in Jordan Palestinian history is ‘Jordanised’ and narrated as a tale of a Hashemite Jordan that is both saviour and ‘guardian’ of Palestine.¹³⁷ The troubling consequence of such a narrow narrative is that students ‘remain unaware of the type and nature of the struggle which the Palestinian people waged to prevent the usurpation of Palestine.’¹³⁸

Despite this obvious shortcoming of the curriculum, which curtails the development of a Palestinian national identity for the population in exile, results collected indicate that most of respondents view UNRWA’s basic education services favourably despite the lacking facilities and the overcrowded classrooms.

‘I have been to UNRWA schools in Zarqa, Ruseifeh and Jerash. The teachers were authentic. The quality of teachers was great. They developed friendships with us students. Yet when you have a teacher splitting his time between 40 students, some of them noisy, some of them who don’t care about studying, some who just want to cause problems, only 3 – 10 minutes of that 40 minute lesson is spent teaching, the rest is quieting down, trying to control the classroom. So the students would end up just counting years until they graduate from school, and schools would just hand out grades that students do not deserve, and have never earned in the first place.’¹³⁹ – Abdullah

‘When I moved from the UNRWA schools to state schools to complete my high school diploma, I noticed a great difference between them. In UNRWA schools the teacher genuinely cared about your education, he’d do anything to make sure you are learning and paying attention. In state schools, they didn’t care, there weren’t any lessons, there wasn’t any learning. No one cared if you went back home and studied. UNRWA education and teaching is so much better because at the end of the day, the UNRWA teacher cares about you. Those 52 students he had were like his children’¹⁴⁰ – Abu Ziyad

In fact, there might be an element of truth to Abdullah and Abu Ziyad’s comments as the quality control tests conducted by the Ministry of Education, and the Trends in Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) test, indicate that UNRWA students have performed better than public school students.¹⁴¹ Nonetheless,

136 Michael Apple, *Ideology And Curriculum*, 3rd ed. (New York and London: Routledge Falmer, 2004). P. Vii <http://lib.mylibrary.com/Open.aspx?id=7737&src=0>

137 Rosemary Sayigh, “What History Books For Children In Palestinian Camps?”, *Jadaliyya*, last modified 2014, accessed July 2, 2017, <http://palestine.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/18421/what-history-books-for-children-in-palestinian-cam>.

138 Ibrahim Abu Lughod, “Educating A Community In Exile: The Palestinian Experience”, *Journal of Palestine Studies* 2, no. 3 (1973): 96

139 Abdallah. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 25, 2017. Amman – Jordan.

140 Abu Ziyad. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 27, 2017. Gaza Camp, Jerash – Jordan.

141 UNRWA and UNESCO 2010. *Annual Report 2010*, Amman: Education Department, UNRWA Headquarter.

in light of US President Trump's decision to withhold aid from UNRWA, funding should go towards maintaining and improving one of UNRWA's most important services. This could occur through:

- Enlarging of classrooms
- Enhancing the double-shift system
- Tackling improper student conduct and behaviour
- Renovating school buildings and physical facilities.

- UNIVERSITY EDUCATION



Youth returning home from the school's first shift in Talbieh camp | PRC October 2017

Accessing primary and secondary education is significantly easier for Gazans than attaining a university-level education. This is due to the fact that firstly, Gazans pay the tuition allocated to non-nationals, thus fees are deemed unaffordable. Abu Ziyad, who studied Arabic at a private university paying international student tuition fees stated:

‘Of course when you study in a private university you have to pay a ridiculously large amount of money. But it is also because they regard me as a foreigner. You would have to work 3 shifts in order to be able to cover your university fees. For me, I worked while I was at university. I was a janitor, I was a sheep trader, and I used to work in vegetables and as a labourer.’¹⁴²

Secondly, given that a future in organised professions such as law or engineering is impossible due to the existing labour law, most Gazans are discouraged from university education, and do not view it as a means of bettering their future opportunities. 33-year old Anas who works at his father's home appliances shop is an example of how even educated Gazan refugees cannot find work:

‘In the family we're all educated, we all have university degrees and I have a masters in Education and Administration. I finished it 8 years ago, and you know we're not citizens here so no one in the family works, and if one of us wants to work then he'll end up finding a job in a profession that's not related to what he studied.’¹⁴³

142 Abu Ziyad. "Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan." Interview by authors. October 27, 2017. Gaza Camp, Jerash – Jordan.

143 Anas. "Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan." Interview by authors. October 26, 2017. Zarqa Governorate – Jordan

Bilal relays the experiences of Anas's older brother who also faced difficulties accessing higher education:

‘When my eldest son applied for Rufaida Institute, he got into the medical stream. When he went to register, they asked him for his national ID, he told them I don’t have any, so they threw his request at him and said “what idiot allowed you to register, you can’t work in this profession?”’¹⁴⁴

Thirdly, there are a limited number of seats for non-nationals at public universities and those are highly competitive as acceptance is ‘said to be’ determined by attaining the highest grades in the Jordanian high school exit exam (*Tawjihi*).¹⁴⁵ Abu Ziyad explained:

‘The number of Gazans universities accept is around 12 or 13 individuals spread around all the universities in Jordan through the Royal Camp Exemption (Al-Makrumah Al-Malakiyeh lil Mukhayamat) organised by the Department of Palestinian Affairs. So in the camp you’d have 1200 students who finish tawjihi in a year, and there’s nowhere for them to go. This exemption operates entirely through connections (*wastat*) and not to those who have the grades and deserve it. Last year one student got 99.7%, can you expect what course was available for her because she’s Palestinian? She got English Literature. Can you see how deep-rooted this unfairness is?’¹⁴⁶

For a Gazan student to be selected for one of the non-national seats and still pay the subsidised tuition fee allocated for Jordanian citizens, he/she must apply through three different mechanisms:

1. Royal Camp Exemption

- ‘This exemption allocates 5% of all university seats to camp residents, after which they are distributed according to the population density of each camp.’¹⁴⁷ The problem with this mechanism is that it ignores the fact that the majority of Palestinian refugees resident in camps other than the Jerash camp, are actually Jordanian citizens and thus their university tuition fees are much more bearable.

2. Palestine Embassy Exemption

- This exemption provides 350 seats for Palestinian students, and there is no indication that Gazan refugees are prioritised given their lack of citizenship, but have to compete with Palestinians both inside and outside of Jordan.¹⁴⁸ Bilal’s youngest daughter, 23 year-old Nadine studied at Hashmiyeh University through the Embassy’s exemption programme.¹⁴⁹

The non-exemption alternatives are to either enrol in an expensive private university or pay the tuition fees of non-nationals in public universities, both of which are deemed unaffordable by most Gazans.

144 Bilal. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 26, 2017. Zarqa Governorate – Jordan

145 Oroub el Abed, ‘Immobile Palestinians: The impact of policies and practices on Palestinians from Gaza in Jordan’, in Jaber, Hana et Metral, France *Migrants et Migrations au Moyen-Orient au tournant du XXIe siècle*, Beyrouth : Institut Français du Proche Orient. 2005.

146 Abu Ziyad. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 27, 2017. Gaza Camp, Jerash – Jordan.

147 “Special Report on the Gaza Refugee Camp.” *Gaza Jordan* (blog), 2013. Accessed February 3, 2018. <https://gazajordan.wordpress.com/مخيم-غزة-في-الاردن-تقرير-خاص/>.

148 Dominique Sherab, *Making The Legal Obstacles Palestinians Face In Jordan* (Amman: Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development- Legal Aid, 2017), accessed July 4, 2017, https://ardd-jo.org/sites/default/files/resource-files/mapping_the_legal_obstacles_palestinians_face_in_jordan_en.pdf.

149 Nadine. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 26, 2017. Zarqa Governorate Jordan



Marka camp health clinic | PRC October 2017

- HEALTHCARE SERVICES

The medical sector in Jordan boosts a mix of governmental, semi-governmental and private providers and is known region-wide for its high quality treatment. For Gazans the fees they must pay are equal to those paid by foreigners for health services in public hospitals and face more restrictions in eligibility for health insurance schemes. Gazans have access to the Jordanian public health care system with a subsidised cost that the Ministry of Health indicates to be 15-20% of the total fee,¹⁵⁰ however ‘for many this is still unaffordable.’¹⁵¹



The only UNRWA health centre in the Jerash camp | PRC October 2017

The majority of camp inhabitants make use of the UNRWA health care services, such as the UNRWA Health Clinics, which are free of charge. However, these clinics are considered to offer very basic services that do not meet the plethora of different health needs residents of the camps have. Abdullah described them as ‘very basic. I only remember using them when I got flu and when I had to fix my teeth. My teeth were never fixed, and my flu was never healed.’¹⁵²

150 Jordan. Ministry of Health. Ministry of Health Strategy 2018 - 2022. Accessed March 3, 2018. http://www.moh.gov.jo/EchoBusV3.0/SystemAssets/PDFs/PDFs_AR/Strategies_AR/2018-2022_استراتيجية_وزارة_الصحة_للأعوام.pdf.

151 Michael Vicente Pérez, “Human Rights And The Rightless: The Case Of Gaza Refugees In Jordan”, *The International Journal of Human Rights* 15, no. 7 (2011): 1031-1054.

152 Abdallah. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 25, 2017. Amman – Jordan.

Further, Abu Issam said:

'I recently got a daughter, I went to the Totanji Hospital in Sahab. It's a government hospital which are usually cheaper than private ones. When my wife gave birth, I paid them 300, when I gave them my papers, and they saw that I was Gazan, they asked me for an additional 660. In the private hospital where my wife gave birth to our older son, I had paid 600... and yet here at the government hospital I paid more, when I specifically chose it expecting a lower price!¹⁵³

UNRWA also provides a stipend to cover the costs of treatment in government hospitals, in which it covers 75% of the cost of treatment with a budget of 100JDs for refugees with a normal economic status, it covers 95% of the treatment with a budget of 200JDs for refugees living in extreme poverty.¹⁵⁴

'I had to do an operation for my cornea, this is of course not covered in UNRWA. A private hospital asked me for 3500 JDs, but how could I afford to pay this when I have my children's expenses to attend to? I don't get access to healthcare services by the government, or to health insurance... I had to pay everything from my own pocket.'¹⁵⁵ – Bilal

Outside camps, ex-Gazans have the lowest enrolment in a health scheme at 30 percent. Inside camps, only 17 percent of the ex-Gazans are insured,¹⁵⁶ and only 12 percent of those residing in the Jerash camp have insurance coverage.¹⁵⁷ However, ex-Gazan Children under the age of six like all Jordanians have public health insurance and are treated free of charge at governmental health facilities.¹⁵⁸¹⁵⁹

Vulnerable Groups

Multiple studies have indicated the prevalence of intimate partner violence in the Middle East, most recently Al-Modallal et. al conducted one specifically focusing on Palestinian refugee women in Jordan. The different types of intimate partner violence (IPV) found include:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual
- Economic control

The results gathered indicated that among the women investigated in the study 78 percent experienced one form of intimate partner violence or more.¹⁶⁰ 'The most-reported type of IPV to which the participants were victims was control by the partner (73.7%), followed by economic violence, reported by 53.3%, and emotional IPV, reported by 50.3% of the women.'¹⁶¹ In their concluding remarks they stated that 'women

153 Abu Issam. "Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan." Interview by authors. October 27, 2017. Talbieh Camp, Amman – Jordan.

154 Gazans Residents in Jordan, Phenix Center | Jordan Labor Watch, March 2017, accessed January 3, 2018, P. 4, <http://www.phenixcenter.net/ar/paper/176>

155 Bilal. "Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan." Interview by authors. October 26, 2017. Zarqa –Governorate Jordan

156 Åge Tiltne and Huafeng Zhang, *Progress, Challenges, Diversity Insights Into The Socio-Economic Conditions Of Palestinian Refugees In Jordan* (Norway: Fafo, 2013), accessed June 17, 2017. P. 100. https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/insights_into_the_socio-economic_conditions_of_palestinian_refugees_in_jordan.pdf

157 Ibid, P. 101.

158 Government of Jordan 2004. Art. 27, Regulation No.83 on Civil Health Insurance of the Year 2004.

159 Government of Jordan 2007. Instruction No. 11 on the Treatment of ex-Gazans in Ministry of Health Health Centres and Hospitals of the Year 2007.

160 Hanan Al-Modallal et al., "Prevalence Of Intimate Partner Violence Among Women Visiting Health Care Centers In Palestine Refugee Camps In Jordan", *Health Care for Women International* 36, no. 2 (2014): P. 142, accessed July 2, 2017, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07399332.2014.948626>.

161 Ibid, P. 142.

living in refugee camps could be especially vulnerable and victimised [and that] socioeconomic conditions, family traditions, personal beliefs are factors that could foster these women's vulnerability.¹⁶² No specific data covered the category of Gazan refugees.

According to UNRWA, rates of behavioural, emotional and physiological symptoms of distress are as high as 35 to 40 percent among Palestine refugees, particularly for children residing in camps.¹⁶³ Haya, who had spent time in Gaza during the 2012 and 2014 attacks, said the following about psychological services: 'even in Gaza, don't believe what you see on TV about what UNRWA does. They tell you we want to improve children's psychology, and they bring them for just one day to play some games after the war and then forget about them.'¹⁶⁴

According to UNRWA, approximately 15% of registered refugees have a disability.¹⁶⁵ UNRWA takes persons with disabilities to be 'those who have long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments, which in interaction with various barriers hinder their full participation in society on an equal basis with others.'¹⁶⁶ There is a specific link between disability and poverty. While living in poverty, people are more at risk of acquiring a disability because of a limited access to health care, clean water and the lack of safe living conditions may cause health issues and impairments.¹⁶⁷ UNRWA contributes to the protection of the rights of Palestine refugees with disabilities by ensuring that its programmes and services are provided in accordance with international human rights standards appropriate for people with disabilities as has been outlined in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.¹⁶⁸ UNRWA operates a Learning Support Programme in Jordan which helps students requiring additional learning support by providing them with tailored teaching methods. There are also some Disabled Centres in a few of the camps.

162 Ibid, P. 146.

163 *Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Framework*. June 2017. UNRWA, P. 1 https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/content/resources/mental_health_and_psychosocial_support_framework_final

164 Haya. "Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan." Interview by authors. October 26, 2017. Zarqa Governorate –Jordan

165 *Disability Inclusion Guidelines*. 2017. UNRWA, P.1 https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/content/resources/disability_inclusion_guidelines.pdf.

166 Ibid, P. 5.

167 Ibid, P. 2.

168 Ibid, P. 3.

5. RIGHT TO RETURN



Symbols of the homeland decorate the walls of Jerash camps | PRC October 2017

Tackling the issue of citizenship with refugees, inevitably brought to the fore, the Palestinian right of return and the government-constructed mutually exclusive relationship between this right and citizenship. For most of the refugees interviewed, the right of return is an undeniable right.

‘It is sacred as Palestine will always be our nation... We Palestinians, we are the sons of resilience, and a people of strength. We stood against the Israelis for 52 days with no electricity, no water, and we were resilient. Our families are standing strong against the enemy there, and we stand with them in spirit from here. No matter what happens, and how long it lasts, one day we will return.’¹⁶⁹
– Abu Ziyad

‘In my birth certificate it says Khan Younes, and this is something I am very proud of. I left Khan Younes when I was one years old, and so I don’t remember any of it and I have never returned to it, but I am nostalgic towards it. The issue of the right of return is sacred for all sons of Palestine. It is sacred as Al-Kaba, as Jerusalem, as Mohammad PBU, and Issa PBU... Even if we don’t have anything in Gaza, I will return anywhere in Palestine.’¹⁷⁰ – Moayad

These Gazans dispelled the notion that citizenship and the right of return are mutually exclusive. ‘Omar explained that ‘there is absolutely no relationship between Jordanian citizenship and the right of return. It has something to do with political relationships.’¹⁷¹ Abu Issam continued: ‘whatever they do, however they pressurise us we still live, and grow, and teach our children that Palestine is their home and that one day they will return. Jordan is our country as well, but Palestine is the Motherland.’¹⁷²

169 Abu Ziyad. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 27, 2017. Gaza Camp, Jerash – Jordan.

170 Moayad. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 27, 2017. Gaza Camp, Jerash – Jordan.

171 Omar. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. March 2, 2018. Amman - Jordan.

172 Abu Issam. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 27, 2017. Talbieh Camp, Amman – Jordan.

Bilal recalled his experiences when he fled Gaza with his family: ‘the Israelis on the bridge to Jordan, let us sign a paper that said ‘I will never return to Gaza, you have left so you have no right to return.’¹⁷³ Professor Jalal Hussein explained that such papers were part of an Israeli policy to empty Gaza that also included passing out money to lure people into leaving as well as paying for transportation.¹⁷⁴ Moreover, Professor Hussein was of the view that Gazans are ‘hostages and victims of the rhetoric used to express the right of return.’¹⁷⁵ He suggested that the Jordanian exclusion of Gazan refugees from any naturalisation process is not necessarily due to fears of resulting change in social demographics, and is more about the government’s dislike of Gaza’s Nasserist and Anti-Hashemite mentality which propelled many of them to join the PLO’s side in Black September.¹⁷⁶ In fact, while walking around the camp with refugees, they informed the PRC team that many of the remnants of the military days could still be found in the mountain forests surrounding the camp.

In contrast to the positive statements on the right of return expressed by the majority of refugees interviewed, Abdullah a 23 year-old refugee offered an entirely different perspective. He believed the rhetoric of the right of return has perpetuated helplessness and an attitude of dependency among the generations of the refugee community.

‘The right of return is a myth that brainwashes the youth. It makes them think that this is not our country we won’t live here forever... People use it as an excuse for the situation that they are in. They use it as a justification for their attitude towards work, and they can use it because they have alternatives from charities and NGOs. It’s not just the system’s creators that are the abusers, it’s also the system’s beneficiaries that are abusing it.’

When discussing the complexity of their legal status, lack of citizenship, and the right of return, Gazan refugees find themselves teetering on the edges between Palestine and Jordan. Excluded from attaining Jordanian citizenship, Gazans do not feel an affinity with Jordanians and at times can feel excluded from the wider Palestinian community. The fragmentation facing the Palestinian polity was resented by refugees:

‘I am not accredited as a Palestinian even from the Palestinian Authority. I’m stateless. Even if I want to access Palestine, people inside Palestine won’t be welcoming me as a cousin. Palestinians themselves will be calling me ‘hey Jordanian.’ The Palestinian Embassy doesn’t represent me, I don’t elect, I don’t contribute to anything inside the country... The Palestinian Authority should include everyone, anywhere. This is a tragedy that hasn’t been perpetuated just by Zionists, but by Palestinians themselves and the international system.’¹⁷⁷

‘No matter how long we spend in land that isn’t ours, we will always feel like there is something missing. Even the people of the land that you are staying in, they perceive you differently.’¹⁷⁸ – Zeina

‘Palestine doesn’t recognise us. Jordan doesn’t recognise us, and yet we try our best to maintain our right to return.’¹⁷⁹ – Abu Ziyad

173 Bilal. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 26, 2017. Zarqa Governorate – Jordan.

174 Professor Jalal Al-Husseini. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 25, 2017. Amman – Jordan.

175 Ibid

176 Ibid

177 Ibid

178 Zeina. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 28, 2017. Talbich Camp, Amman – Jordan.

179 Abu Ziyad. “Situation of Gazan Refugees in Jordan.” Interview by authors. October 27, 2017. Gaza Camp, Jerash – Jordan.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



Young boys rest outside their home in Talbieh camp | PRC October 2017

This report has attempted to document the resilience of Palestinian refugees from Gaza in Jordan, and voice the struggles they experience because of their statelessness. It is clear that in its discriminatory treatment of Gazan refugees, the Jordanian government contravenes its regional as well as international legal obligations. Given the restrictions Gazans face in regards to ownership as well as within the labour market and higher education institutions, a vicious cycle of inter-generational poverty persists amongst the community. The crumbling infrastructure within camps, and the inadequate healthcare facilities and other services provided by UNRWA only perpetuate Gazans' dismal living situations.

Therefore, based on the information gathered within this report, the PRC presents the following recommendations as a means of improving the livelihoods of Gazan refugees, who are denied many of their basic human rights on account of their lack of Jordanian citizenship.

1. Jordan to meet its international and regional legal obligations towards its refugee population in general and the Gazans in specific
 - Abiding by the ICCPR, ICESR, CERD, CEDAW
 - Abiding by the Casablanca protocol
2. Jordan to mitigate the costs of passport renewal for Gazan refugees
 - Reducing the cost of renewal from 200 JDs to 50 JDs, so that the increase in price is equal to the increase applied for Jordanian citizens.
 - Institutionalising a mechanism that would permit payment of the renewal fee in instalments, this could possibly be achieved through an e-service
 - Increasing the duration of the temporary passport to five years but keeping the cost of renewal
3. Allow Gazans with Palestinian Authority passports with either parent being a two-year temporary passport holder, leave to remain in the country following the demise of that parent

4. Ensure that Gazans specifically, and all other individuals with the Children of Jordanians Benefit Card enjoy the rights such a card provides them with
 - The Government should reaffirm the legitimacy of the card as a substitute for proof of identity throughout all governmental departments and directorates and subsidiary organisations.
 - The Government should reiterate and enumerate the various benefits to be allocated to holders of the card in all sectors not just health and education.
5. Given the weakened role of UNRWA, Jordan, with the support of the international community ought to take a more active role in the maintenance of Palestinian camps in terms of infrastructure and basic services such as cleaning
6. In terms of employment and economic livelihoods the following suggestions could be implemented in line with Jordan's obligations under the Casablanca Protocol and the subsequent decisions of the League of Arab States
 - Change the law on ownership and licensing to permit Gazans to own property as well as licensed enterprises
 - Open all closed and syndicate-membership professions to Gazan refugees
 - Mitigate the effects of the work permit requirement
 - Revoke the decision to oblige Gazan refugees to obtain a work permit, in light of their precarious economic situation
 - Ensure that employers are bearing the cost of the work permit instead of the refugees themselves
 - Reduce the cost of the work permit fee
 - Provide employment opportunities for Gazans
 - Include the employment situation of Gazan refugees in the upcoming National Employment Strategy, as they are holders of a temporary Jordanian passport
 - Create a quota within existing national employment programmes for Gazan refugees specifically
 - Encourage investment and the creation of factories and other businesses around the Jerash camp
7. In terms of education the following suggestions could be implemented
 - Ensure that cities and areas with camps are prioritised as locations for new schools to meet the problem of over crowdedness
 - Ensure easier access into higher education for Gazans
 - Revoke their 'foreign student' status, and apply the Jordanian tuition fees on Gazan students in line with the Casablanca Protocol
 - Rearrange the Royal Camp Exemption so as to create a set quota for female and male Gazan refugees
8. In terms of health care services the following suggestions could be implemented
 - Ensure that applications are in line with Jordan's obligations under the Casablanca protocol
 - Create a quote for Gazan refugees within the Royal exemption programme that is offered to those suffering from serious illnesses and are in need of significant medical care

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8. ANNEX

- ANNEX I – INTERVIEWEES TABLE

The following Table provides information on the refugees, which have been interviewed for the purposes of this report.

	Refugee Name	Status & Legal Documentation	Place of Residence
1	Abdullah	Gazan Refugee – Temporary 2 Year Passport	Zarqa Governorate
2	Abu Ziyad	Gazan Refugee – Temporary 2 Year	Jerash Camp
3	Abu Issam	Gazan Refugee – No Documentation	Talbieh Camp
4	Anas	Palestinian from Gaza – Palestinian Authority Passport	Zarqa Governorate
5	Bilal	Gazan Refugee – Temporary 2 Year Passport	Zarqa Governorate
6	Farah	Palestinian Refugee – Jordanian Citizen	Talbieh Camp
7	Haya	Palestinian from Gaza– Palestinian Authority Passport	Zarqa Governorate
8	Hisham	Palestinian Refugee – Jordanian Citizen	Talbieh Camp
9	Moayad	Gazan Refugee – Temporary 2 Year Passport	Jerash Camp
10	Nadine	Palestinian from Gaza– Palestinian Authority Passport	Zarqa Governorate
11	Omar	Gazan Refugee – Temporary 2 Year, Children of Jordanian Mothers Benefit Card	Zarqa Governorate
12	Thaer	Palestinian Refugee – Jordanian Citizen	Talbieh Camp
13	Um Malak	Gazan Refugee – Temporary 2 Year	Talbieh Camp
14	Zeid	Gazan Refugee – Temporary 2 Year	Jerash Camp
15	Zeina	Palestinian Refugee – Jordanian Citizen	Talbieh Camp

- ANNEX II – INTERVIEW GUIDE

Interviewees

Targeted Individuals:

1. Gazan Refugees with Temporary Two Year Passport
2. Gazan Refugees with No Documentation
3. Gazan Refugees with Children of Jordanian Mothers Benefit Card
4. Gazan Refugees with Palestinian Authority Passports
5. Palestinian Refugees with Jordanian citizenship

Interview Questions

Preliminary Questions

1. Where are you from in Palestine?
2. Where were you born?
3. When did you or your family come to Jordan?
4. What legal documentation do you have, and how did you obtain it?
5. If different, what legal documentation do your family members have, and how did they obtain it?

Living Conditions in the Camp

1. What are living conditions like in the camp?
2. What is the infrastructure like?
3. What are houses made out of?
4. Do you own or rent your house?
5. If it is rented, how much is the rent per month?
6. If it is owned, under whose name is it registered?
7. How many individuals live with you in your house?
8. How many rooms does the house have?

Employment

1. What are the economic opportunities within the camp?
2. Do you work?
3. If so, what is your profession, how do you provide for the family?
4. What are the restrictions you have faced when seeking employment given your documentation and lack of citizenship?
5. If not, do your family members work?

UNRWA Services (Cash, Health, Education)

1. Are you registered with UNRWA?
2. Do you receive in any cash assistance from UNRWA?
3. Have you used UNRWA Health Services, are you satisfied with what they deliver?
4. How was your experience at UNRWA School, are you satisfied with the education and teaching?

Health

1. If unsatisfied with UNRWA's health centres, have you ever used public health services?
2. What are the restrictions you have faced when utilising public health services given your documentation and lack of citizenship?

Education

1. Did you continue your secondary education?
2. Did you attend university?
3. What is the mechanism for Gazan refugees to access higher education in Jordan?
4. What are the restrictions you have faced when seeking higher education given your documentation and lack of citizenship?

Right of Return and Responsibility

1. What does the right of return mean to you, would you want to return?
2. Who is responsible for Gazan refugees; UNRWA, the Palestinian Authority, the Jordanian Government, or the British Government given the Balfour Declaration?
3. Would you want to obtain citizenship from the Jordanian Government?

- ANNEX III – CONSENT FORM

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH STUDY

STUDY TITLE:

Palestinian Refugees in Jordan from Gaza

INVESTIGATORS:

Pietro Stefanini and Maya Hammad

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE:

You are being asked to take part in a research project, which is being organised by the Palestinian Return Centre (PRC), an NGO based in London, UK with United Nations ECOSOC special consultative status. The purpose of this research project is to learn more about the Palestinian refugee issue in Jordan, specifically that of Gazan refugees. As a member of the Palestinian society in Jordan, you are in a position to provide us with insight into the situation, and we would appreciate it if we could interview you.

PROCEDURES:

The format of the interview will be a discussion, preferably in a closed room. We expect that the interview will take approximately 1-2 hours. With your permission, we will audiotape the interview solely for the purposes of accurately transcribing the conversation. With your permission we would also like to take photographs. The audiotapes and photographs, as well as the transcription will be stored securely at the Palestinian Return Centre in the UK. The photographs will be used in online publications and to present our research at various events in the UK Parliament and the United Nations.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND RISK:

There is some risk involved if, for example, you divulge confidential information. Therefore, if you wish pseudonyms to be used to protect your privacy and confidentiality, we will be happy to do so. Alternately, if you wish to be quoted by name on anything in particular we are also happy to accommodate this request. There is also the risk of discomfort when discussing topics that could bring to mind distressing or emotional memories. Please know though that you do not have to answer any questions or discuss any topics that make you feel uncomfortable.

WITHDRAWAL OF PARTICIPATION:

Should you decide at any time during the interview or discussion that you no longer wish to participate, you may withdraw your consent without prejudice.

COSTS AND BENEFITS:

There are no costs involved with participation, and also no direct benefits to you. However, your participation will contribute to a greater awareness of the infrequently reported problems facing Palestinian refugees in Jordan. Since the final report will be produced in the form of a policy recommendation, your participation might help to bring greater attention to the issues facing Jordan.

SIGNATURE:

I confirm that the purpose of the research, the study procedures, the possible risks and discomforts as well as benefits have been explained to me. All my questions have been answered. My signature below indicates my willingness to participate in this study.

Participant Signature

Date

Participant Name

I agree to be audio-taped

Yes

No

I agree to be photographed

Yes

No

I would like my name to be used

Yes

No

Signature of Person Obtaining
Consent

Date

- ANNEX IV – LOCAL NGOs AND INITIATIVES

Organisation Name	Description
	<p>One Love is a grassroots group of volunteers who come from different nationalities, religions, and backgrounds working towards enhancing all aspects of the lives of Gazan Refugees in the Jerash camp. They have recently opened up the very first Training and Vocational Centre in the camp to empower youth and women. (onelovegc1@gmail.com)</p>
	<p>The Orenda Tribe is a lifestyle brand that offers high quality and socially responsible apparel, with designs created from the art of children living in refugee camps and less fortunate communities. Proceeds from merchandise sale go towards funding art activities in refugee camps. The Orenda Tribe runs a number of art sessions within the camp and other projects that are aimed at enhancing the camp as a whole, one of which was a school beautification project. (https://www.theorendatribe.com)</p>
	<p>The Sitti Social Enterprise employs women from the refugee camp to create olive-oil based soap using a traditional cold press method from Nablus, Palestine. The women earn a monthly stipend, which is above the camp's minimum wage and helps boost the women's self-esteem as they contribute economically to their households and community as a whole. (https://sittisoap.com)</p>
	<p>SEP Jordan is an ethical fashion and accessories brand with a social impact focus. It produces hand-embroidered products made with the cross-stitch technique prominent in Palestinian culture and traditional wear. The business employs more than 300 women from the Gaza Camp to design, create and embroider accessories and clothing that is then sold on the SEP website, and other stores. Profit is then reallocated to the camp development and go towards SEP-organised projects such as English, Yoga or Health classes. (https://sepiordan.com)</p>
	<p>Basmitak Hat'allim is a non-profit organisation established by a number of Jordanian university students which now includes more than 300 members. The organisation focuses solely on helping families in the Gaza refugee camp achieve economic independence, through providing financial and non-financial support to develop their entrepreneurial ideas and skills. The organisation also focuses on education for the camp's youth, providing health services for the camp's residents, and has recently launched an camp infrastructure rehabilitation project to improve the living conditions for Gazan refugees. (info@basmitak.com)</p>



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