

# Religion and Social Justice for Refugees: Insights from Cameroon, Greece, Jordan, Lebanon, Malaysia and Mexico



Bridging Voices  
UCL-Yale  
Research Report

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On the way to Jarash, Jordan (c) Fiddian-Qasmiyeh

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The researchers included: Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, Hanaa Dahdal, Leonie Harsch, Bayan Itani, Mohammad Abu Iyad, Reem El-Khatib and Yousif M. Qasmiyeh (Lebanon); Zareena Grewal, Frances Fagan, Maysan Haydar, Susan Aboeid and Patrick Sullivan (Greece); Unni Karunakara and Veena Pillai (Malaysia); Alastair Ager, Shatha El-Nakib, Sura Al-Mahasis, Rania Al-Saheb and Rahmeh Abu Shweimeh (Jordan); Louisa Lombard and Faouzi Kilembe (Cameroon); Catherine Panter-Brick, Mark Eggerman and Melanie León (Mexico and USA); and Anna Rowlands and Lyndsey Stonebridge (interviews with NGO and Faith-Based Organisations (FBO) representatives and with legal experts).

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The report's main author is Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh based on individual research reports submitted by lead researchers for each country team. The individual country case-studies have been brought together for cross-case analysis in a number of fora throughout the course of drafting this project-wide report. A Project Workshop convened by the 'Religion and Social Justice for Refugees' project, in May 2019, brought together members of the research teams with diverse participants from research, policy and practice to discuss the project-wide findings and broader implications. We thank the participants for their contributions to the Workshop, and Aydan Greatrick and Suriyah Bi for their comprehensive notes of the proceedings.

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Tools and prayer beads in Baddawi camp (c) Fiddian-Qasmiyeh

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Baddawi camp, Lebanon (c) Fiddian-Qasmiyeh

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Religion can, has, and does play a key role in motivating and framing diverse forms of support for refugees and asylum-seekers around the world.

This report draws on over 300 in-depth interviews conducted with refugees, members of local host communities and locally-based organisations in towns, cities and camps in Cameroon, Greece, Malaysia, Mexico, Lebanon and Jordan to examine the roles that members of local faith communities, faith leaders and faith-based organisations can play in promoting social justice for refugees. This includes a particular focus on the roles played by individuals and communities who have themselves experienced displacement.

As the research findings attest, the promotion of social justice for refugees can range from offering humanitarian assistance, to diverse acts of advocacy, activism, and solidarity, all within political and social contexts that are often compromised and precarious. The findings also evidence a disconnect between what policy makers and practitioners assume that ‘refugees need’ and what different groups of refugees themselves consider to be essential requirements, as prerequisites to dignity and justice. The report presents and analyses these findings, tracing the implications of this project for future research in this field, and laying the foundations for a Policy Brief that will be published in 2020.

### Reflections on Researching Religion in Relation to Displacement

Focusing on the actual and potential roles of religion in promoting social justice does not entail dismissing the severity of the persecution, violence and discrimination that people experience on religious grounds, whether in countries of origin, in countries of first asylum or in countries of transit or of resettlement.

Cycles of violence, insecurity, marginalization and discrimination often continue or emerge in refugees’ country of asylum, including forms of violence that are linked to religion in different ways. Research must be grounded on a deep awareness of these intersecting processes and the precarious situations that people inhabit, navigate and respond to throughout different stages and spaces of displacement.

Whether studying experiences of persecution and/or ways of navigating and responding to precarity, the significance of religion to people’s lives must be viewed and examined *in relation to* various intersecting identity markers (including ethnicity, race, gender and sexuality) and structures of inequality and opportunity (including xenophobia, patriarchy, and homophobia).

Examining the diverse needs, rights and priorities of refugees around the world must involve being attentive both to refugees’ complex identities and the diverse power structures that create situations of violence and prevent people from finding solutions to their own problems.

## Section One: Hosts, Refugees and Refugee-Hosts as Responders in Contexts of Precarity and Structural Violence

Locally-based actors - including communities, families, households and individuals for whom faith is significant in different ways - are key responders in situations of displacement. The people who 'provide for' refugees are often themselves either refugees or the descendants of earlier generations of migrants or refugees.

Religious community and ritual are often a source of support and comfort for refugees. In the Greek and Lebanon cases explored in this project, religious rights are not only conceived of in terms of accommodating the living: in both cases, the right to be buried as a Muslim emerges as a refugee right which must be fought for.

In Greece and Lebanon, members of refugee communities collect and distribute material support for other refugees, whether to ensure a dignified burial, or to provide food baskets to break the fast during the holy month of Ramadan.

Humanitarian responses that emphasize rights-based dignity in life could learn from local, refugee-led initiatives to ensure dignity in death too.

Acknowledging, and appreciating the ways that refugees and refugee-hosts promote social justice must take place in conjunction with acknowledging the responsibilities and duties that should be upheld by international actors, including states, UN agencies and INGOs.

Structural barriers can prevent people from practicing their religion and developing their own ways of responding to and managing life (and death) in displacement. For instance, for many Rohingya and Afghan interviewees in Malaysia a major concern was the absence of religious infrastructure *within* the refugee community.

An important question that arises here and in relation to the right to be buried as a Muslim is: Is there a duty for state and non-state actors to actively support the development and maintenance of an 'infrastructure' for refugees to be able to practice their faith? Alternatively, is the duty limited to protecting people's right to practice their faith?

## Section Two: From Fatalism to Structures of Mutual Support

Documenting the ways that refugees support other refugees does not seek to either claim that all refugees support other refugees, or to dismiss or ignore the diverse processes of exclusion, violence and hostility that exist within and across refugee groups.

However, the research confirms that tensions, hostility, violence and exclusion are not *inevitable* in contexts of displacement and diverse refugee hosting environments. Solidarity can and does emerge across different lines. It is important to identify which structures, policies and programmes create and reproduce tensions, and to examine when and how such tensions emerge in processes of displacement and hosting.

At the US-Mexico border, the expression of mutual support and solidarity was often contingent on the logistics of humanitarian response and on personal experiences. Faith-based organizations opened their doors to offer shelter, in solidarity with migrants, but had to triage beneficiaries based on family status or need, given the scarcity of resources to provide food and shelter. Migrants variously reported a general distrust of each other, or conversely, narrated how fellow migrants became a critical source of support when facing a fear of detention, theft or other forms of violence.

For refugees from the Central African Republic interviewed in Cameroon, a key priority was to convey their experience of flight, and for the intent listener to bear witness. With refugees directing the focus of the interviews, research can become part of a wider effort to create solidarity in the midst of migration and upheaval. As became clear in the research in Cameroon, having a story to tell is also a mode of faith: faith in the power of a story to emotionally connect people and organize experience in the midst of flux.

Whether explicitly or implicitly, narratives from refugees' and hosts' faith traditions play a role in framing the ways that the presence, needs and rights of refugees are understood and responded to.

Religious interpretation is not only used to underpin perceived obligation for hosting but also to define its limits. In Jordan, for instance, interviews with refugees from Syria and with Jordanian hosts drew on stories from the Qur'an to explain the imperative to respond, but also to determine the limits of their response.

Normative religious injunctions may not lead believers to uphold the principles of their faith in practice, and yet they are often an important part of the broader landscapes of displacement, a point which requires further consideration.

### Section Three: Public and Private Dimensions of Response

Acts of kindness and solidarity may be viewed as 'private' acts which should not be disclosed to others. Discrete modes of supporting refugees are often grounded in religious belief and practice.

Amongst other things, this raises the question of how to reconcile many local actors' preference for discretion with the increasing desire to better understand the roles played by local actors, including those motivated by religion, in promoting social justice for refugees.

Interviewees in Jordan expressed a deep connection with religion, and yet public discussion of religious sentiments and principles was seldom openly acknowledged.

Organizational interviews conducted in Jordan generally supported the view that religion was appropriately contained (and, implicitly, controlled) within a private religious discourse detached from the secular humanitarian language that was the *lingua franca* of professional, technical response.

Public discussions of religious sentiments and principles may be limited due to a sensitivity that states may be monitoring religious activities in the context of the perceived role of religious rhetoric and affiliation in ongoing insecurity and conflict.

At the same time, donors and international partners often expect discussions of refugee assistance to take place in 'professional' terms, in ways that marginalise reference to religious motivations, activities and contexts unless very explicitly prompted to address these.

## Section Four: Institutionalized Responses to Refugees

There is a complex relationship between religion, social justice and institutionalized responses to refugees, from the local to the international.

Research on the Mexico-US border with faith-based organisations, members of law enforcement, refugees and migrants, identified multiple meanings of solidarity, and diverse ways of expressing solidarity. These range from interviewees evoking and embodying a religious, sacred sense of solidarity on the one hand, and a secular, nationalistic language of solidarity on the other; both highlight a conceptualization of solidarity as standing together and readiness for collective action.

Listening to the voices of refugees and migrants is a prerequisite to bear witness both to their experiences of violence and discrimination, to their modes of responding to their own situations, and to their determination to participate in the broader projects of creating solidarity in the midst of displacement.

Migrants and refugees develop their own definitions of justice and how they believe that justice can be achieved. Different groups of migrants and refugees – such as people deported from the US, and female migrants – develop different definitions of justice, identify different paths for action, and hold different entities responsible for carrying out justice.

A theme arising throughout the report pertains to the centrality of faith and religion in processes of displacement. Greater attention must be given to the varying ways that religion is adopted, imposed, rejected, and negotiated as a key marker of identity by different stakeholders, including members of refugee, host and refugee-host communities.

An ongoing question is where the work between refugees and FBOs fits within current international refugee, humanitarian, and human rights law. The dynamic between law and faith is complex and both historically and geographically contextual.

Faith-based organizations on the US-Mexico border are coalescing to change the negative discourse around immigration, work for social inclusion, and engage in effective advocacy.<sup>i</sup> In this regard, more attention must be paid to how faith-based organizations intersect with the state, multinational institutions, and other NGOs, including with respect to the extent of their social, political, and financial commitments.

Interviews conducted with lawyers working from within a largely Judeo-Christian framework point to the need to continue re-contextualizing refugee and human rights law by considering how legal traditions which are developed in relation to diverse religions have re-framed understandings of law and faith.

Ongoing engagement seeks to reconfigure the relationship between the law, politics and the rights of people who have been persecuted, including through explicit engagement with Islamic principles.

## Conclusion

Approaching social justice through a faith lens allows us to recognise how faith traditions may be embodied, practiced and embedded in diverse ways and spaces, in relation to, and sometimes in opposition to, xenophobic and hostile forces and structures.

States and human rights frameworks have failed to offer meaningful protection to refugees, and a wide range of actors, including refugees themselves, faith-based organisations and local communities, have sought to fill the gaps that have not only been left by states, but have been created and manufactured by them.

Local and transnational actors are creating diverse ways of conceiving moral obligations towards one another in processes of displacement and of hosting, whilst attempting to hold state and international authorities accountable for their political failures.

Refugee-led, faith-inspired responses to displacement offer an important counter-narrative to the intersecting discourses of crisis and of burden, which often reproduce one dimensional representations of refugees (including in particular Muslim refugees) alternately as passive victims in need of rescue, as transnational objects unfit for European or North American citizenship, and as a political and social threat.

A key challenge is the importance of giving due acknowledgement to the work that is taking place on the local, neighbourhood and community level that is so often invisible, while simultaneously being attentive to the politics and potential risks underpinning the nature and rate of disclosure.

Acknowledging that humanitarianism is a response to systemic, political failures, highlights the importance of one of the foundational approaches underpinning this report: to focus on the ways that religion can promote social justice for refugees by addressing structural barriers that reproduce inequalities, exclusion, violence and marginalisation.

A theme arising throughout the report pertains to the centrality that is, can and should (or should not) be given to religion in processes of displacement. Greater attention must be given to the varying ways in which religion is imposed, adopted, rejected, and negotiated as a key marker of identity by different stakeholders affected by and responding to displacement, including members of refugee, host and refugee-host communities.





A view from the road, Jordan (c) Fiddian-Qasmiyeh

## RELIGION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR REFUGEES: INSIGHTS FROM CAMEROON, GREECE, JORDAN, LEBANON, MALAYSIA AND MEXICO

### Introduction

Religion is often identified as a cause of conflict, persecution and displacement. However, it is also increasingly recognized by UN agencies, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), politicians, academics and members of civil society organisations that religion plays a key role in motivating and framing diverse forms of support for refugees and asylum-seekers around the world.<sup>1</sup> This report brings together research findings from a multi-sited project funded by the British Council which examined the roles that religion plays in promoting social justice for refugees.

The project team conducted primary research in Cameroon, Greece, Jordan, Lebanon, Malaysia and Mexico in 2018-2019 to examine the roles that local faith communities, faith leaders and Faith Based Organisations (FBOs)<sup>2</sup> can play in supporting refugees. This included over 300 interviews with members of refugee and host communities, and of locally-based organisations.

The broader study that this report draws upon focuses on how different individuals, groups and organisations:

- support refugees' access to diverse forms of assistance<sup>3</sup> and protection;
- lobby in favor of refugee rights on local, national and international levels;
- and challenge xenophobia and discrimination against different groups of refugees on the basis of real or ascribed religious identity.

In this regard, social justice for refugees can range from offering humanitarian assistance, in terms of basic food and shelter, to diverse acts of advocacy, activism, and solidarity, all within political and social contexts that are often compromised and precarious.

This project is particularly relevant and urgent given two intersecting process of politicization: that of religion in debates and policies regarding refugees, and that of migration in debates and policies regarding religion.<sup>4</sup> This politicization takes numerous forms, acting as a justification for hostility or preferential treatment toward refugees who are perceived to belong to a given faith.<sup>5</sup> This politicization also intersects with other politicized markers of identity, such as nationality, race and class.

As such, this report examines the significance of religion and politics in relation to social justice for refugees and the racialization and politicization of refugees and refugee response.



The original cemetery in Baddawi refugee camp, Lebanon (c) Fiddian-Qasmiyeh

## Structure of the Report

The first section of this report provides an outline of the methodology underpinning the study, highlighting the challenges encountered throughout the research process; the importance of engaging critically with researchers' positionality; and the project's commitment to intersectional analysis. The main body of the report is structured around four themes which draw upon empirical examples from the field research:

- the implicit and explicit significance of religion in relation to local responses to displacement in contexts of precarity and structural violence, including refugee-led responses;
- the relationship between religion and advocacy for refugees, leading to the development of different forms of mutual support;
- the role of religion in public and private dimensions of refugee response;
- the position of religion and solidarity in relationships between local, national and international level actors.

The report concludes with a synthesis of the key implications of this study for research. This lays the foundations for a 2020 Policy Briefing which will draw out the policy relevance of the research.



A mural in Baddawi camp wishing passersby a Ramadam Kareem (c) Fiddian-Qasmiyeh

## Methodology and Research Approach

To document lived experiences, perceptions and modes of responding to the needs and rights of refugees, over 300 in-depth interviews were conducted in towns, cities and camps across Cameroon, Greece, Jordan, Lebanon, Malaysia, and Mexico with refugees, members of host communities and locally-based organisations, as summarized in Table 1:

TABLE 1	Research Team
<p><b>Cameroon:</b> 25 interviews with refugees from Central African Republic, their hosts and local aid providers in Cameroon.</p>	<p>Louisa Lombard and Faouzi Kilembe.</p>
<p><b>Greece:</b> 52 interviews and participant observation with refugees from Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Syria and Yemen and faith-based and secular service providers in Athens and Lesbos.</p>	<p>Zareena Grewal, Patrick Sullivan, Frances Fagan, Maysan Haydar and Susan Aboeid.</p>
<p><b>Jordan:</b> Interviews and participant observation with 90 Iraqi, Palestinian and Syrian refugees from Syria, with 90 Jordanian and Palestinian members of the host communities in Irbid, Jerash and Zarqaa, and with 30 faith-based and secular local aid providers in these three sites.</p>	<p>Alastair Ager, Shatha El-Nakib, Sura Al-Mahasis, Rania Al-Saheb and Rahmeh Abu Shweimeh.</p>
<p><b>Lebanon:</b> Interviews and participant observation with 90 Iraqi, Kurdish, Palestinian and Syrian refugees from Syria, with 90 Iraqi, Lebanese and Palestinian members of the host communities in the Hamra neighbourhood of Beirut, Baddawi refugee camp, and Jebel-Al-Baddawi, and with 30 faith-based and secular local aid providers in these three sites.</p>	<p>Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, Hanaa Dahdal, Leonie Harsch, Bayan Itani, Mohammad Abu Iyad, Reem El-Khatib and Yousif M. Qasmiyeh.</p>
<p><b>Malaysia:</b> 19 interviews with Afghan and Rohingya refugees and 8 with FBO service providers in Kuala Lumpur and Penang.</p>	<p>Unni Karunakara and Veena Pillai.</p>
<p><b>Mexico and the Mexico-US border:</b> Interviews and participant observation in El Paso and McAllen (Texas, USA), Tijuana (Baja California, Mexico), with 21 migrants (from Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, and Nicaragua) and 33 personnel of faith-based and secular organisations involved in the migrant crisis on the US border.</p>	<p>Catherine Panter-Brick, Mark Eggerman and Melanie León.</p>

Interviews with refugees and host communities explored local narratives regarding the roles of religion, faith-based communities and civic organisations in supporting refugees, and experiences in accessing public and legal services. Sampling was attentive to gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and religious affiliation. We sought both refugee and host perspectives, acknowledging that interlocutors may have very different views on the significance and roles of religion and faith-based actors.

In addition, we examined how international, national, municipal and local level policy-makers and practitioners working in/on humanitarian situations perceive and address the relationship between religion and displacement in relation to these geopolitical regions. The Mexico-US border research team, for instance, participated in a structured Border Awareness programme, led by a faith-based organization. This included immersion with life in migrant shelters, visits to federal courts and detention facilities, and interactions with Border Patrol, US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers, collective advocacy organisations, as well as with Mexican and Central American migrants and US deportees. This provided a unique immersion into the issues generated by border migration affecting local communities and border security. In the US, UK and Greece, interviews were conducted with FBO representatives and leading scholars and practitioners of international refugee law. These interviews examined how religious traditions vis-à-vis asylum have been drawn on (in particular, although not exclusively, by FBOs) at national, regional and international levels to engage with the formation and implementation of law and to engage in shaping public opinion to promote refugee rights and social justice for refugees.<sup>6</sup>

Overall, the case-studies were selected to explore the situations of, and responses both *to* and *by* members of protracted refugee communities in countries with majority Muslim and Christian host communities across the major refugee-producing and refugee-hosting regions around the world. The research was primarily conducted in major cities and towns rather than in refugee camps.<sup>7</sup> On the one hand, this is because displacement is increasingly urban in nature: most refugees around the world do not live in refugee camps.<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, this is because of the project's interest in assessing the roles played by local communities and local authorities with whom both recently displaced and protracted refugees interact. At the time of the research, the refugee communities interviewed were all facing major risks such as forced repatriation, travel bans, push-backs (*refoulement*), denial of legal status, and/or deportation measures. This provides an important opportunity to explore the roles that religion can play in supporting refugees in complex situations of precariousness.

Case-studies were selected to exemplify responses to *support* and *by* members of protracted refugee communities. The research was primarily conducted in major towns and cities rather than in refugee camps<sup>9</sup> given that displacement is increasingly urban in nature<sup>10</sup> and given an interest in documenting host-refugee relations. In 2019, at the time of the research, the refugee communities selected for this study were facing major risks - such as forced repatriations, travel bans, push-backs (*refoulement*), denial of legal status, and/or deportation measures -, providing an important opportunity to document faith-based responses in complex situations of precariousness.

Each of the case-studies referred to in this report were led by a member of the Bridging Voices project team. Field interviewers included US and UK based researchers, citizens and long-term residents of the countries of interest, as well as researchers who themselves have refugee backgrounds. Given the team’s overarching commitment to developing ethical relationships, researchers contributed to all steps of data collection, analysis and dissemination.<sup>11</sup> Such an approach is essential for academic and humanitarian structures to engage with the urgent need to decolonize research processes and knowledge production.<sup>12</sup>

### *Research Challenges*



The research team and colleagues at the Bridging Voices Workshop, Yale, May 2019

The research teams experienced several challenges in the course of fieldwork which are important to acknowledge and reflect upon.

#### *Positionality, access and content*

When conducting interviews in Cameroon, for instance, it was clear that not all researchers were viewed equally by all prospective interviewees. In a situation dominated by international NGOs, both international and national service providers tend not to prioritize speaking with an African researcher.<sup>13</sup> In contrast, refugees and hosts engaged more readily in the research process.<sup>14</sup> This is an important reminder of the structural inequalities that may prevent locally-situated, racialized researchers with in-depth knowledge of the situations under study from being able to conduct research in their own right. It is, in turn, an important reminder of the need to identify ways of challenging these inequalities.<sup>15</sup>

In turn, the research conducted by differently-positioned members of the Refugee Hosts team in Beirut (Lebanon) led to other dynamics, as discussed by one of the Lebanese researchers, Bayan Itani.<sup>16</sup> In Beirut, the members of a well-known local Islamic organization turned down a request to be interviewed by a German researcher “who is easily identifiable as a foreigner and non-Muslim,” while the organization’s General Manager accepted to be interviewed by a visibly-Muslim interviewer with a surname that could be readily identified as Sunni Muslim.<sup>17</sup> In other contexts, Itani notes,

“this equation worked the other way around: the potential interviewees we contacted mentioned that they would not accept the presence of a Muslim interviewer, and with physical attributes such as a headscarf – aside from my family name – it was not possible to take part in these.”<sup>18</sup>

Likewise, in Greece, the lead researcher notes that while her Muslim background had been helpful in earlier projects,<sup>19</sup> it was more complex during her research in Lesbos and Athens. In some interviews, Zareena Grewal notes that was necessary to highlight other team members' linkages to Christian organisations as a means of building trust as part of the process of gaining informed consent. Other interviewees, including converts to Christianity, were reluctant – and ultimately unwilling - to be interviewed by a researcher with a Muslim background.<sup>20</sup> At the same time, the researcher's political position on the occupation of Palestine and the rights of Palestinian refugees was as significant as her religious identity in the context of the research in Greece.<sup>21</sup>

These examples from Cameroon, Lebanon and Greece demonstrate that intersecting identity markers, racialization processes and both religious and political identity and belief - real and imputed - can variously impede or facilitate access to different interlocutors.

At the same time, the *content* of interviews may also be framed by interviewees' perceptions of researchers' identity, beliefs and opinions. This was noted by one of the visibly-Muslim Lebanese researchers involved in the research in Beirut:

“... many Syrian interviewees that I met apologized before mentioning negative feedback about Lebanese nationals. On the other hand, some Lebanese potential interviewees showed willingness to participate if they could criticize Syrians freely. In interviews with Muslim figures, where religious motives were listed as reasons to support refugees, the interviewees noted that Christianity and other religions also call for such support. The question that we raise here is: does the presence of a non-Muslim interviewer contribute to such feedback? And, if this interview was conducted only by a Muslim, would we still hear this?”<sup>22</sup>

Itani concludes, with reference to the combination of differently positioned researchers across religion, nationality and legal status (which also included a Syrian researcher), by asserting that: “This is why the hybridity of a research team is always an asset.”

Indeed, documenting when and to whom people respond positively or turned down requests to be interviewed, and being attentive to the roles of researchers' positionality in relation to what is said and what is withheld, unveils important aspects of the situated politics of knowledge production in research encounters. It also demonstrates the ways that such encounters take place within broader socio-political structures.

This, furthermore, raises broader methodological questions which are worthy of further critical attention. These questions include whether and how the composition of research teams reproduces rather than challenges structural inequalities that may prevent certain (often racialized) researchers with in-depth knowledge of the situations under study from being able to conduct research in their own right.

### ***Barriers to Access: National and International Dynamics***

In the context of Cameroon, a further barrier to identifying willing interlocutors relates to CAR refugees in that country having reportedly been told by UNHCR that they should

not talk to any outsiders - researchers or journalists. As a result, it was not easy to find interlocutors.

For those who did want to speak, the main issue that they wanted to convey was their experience of flight: they wanted to recount what they had endured, with someone listening intently and, in so doing, bearing witness. In this way, the research facilitated a form of solidarity in the midst of migration and upheaval; it was refugee interlocutors themselves who made that happen.

In the context of Malaysia, FBO representatives were also hesitant to speak with researchers, but for different reasons, related to the political climate in the country. As a secular country with a Sunni Muslim majority population hosting large numbers of refugees from Muslim-majority countries (including Rohingya refugees from Myanmar and Afghan refugees), concerns have been raised around the motivations and nature of non-Muslim FBOs providing services to Muslim beneficiaries. Amongst other things, this is because of a fear of proselytization. In effect, a number of Christian FBO service providers declined to participate in the study, due to sensitivities around research vis-à-vis religion and refugees.

Indeed, refugees in Malaysia raised concerns during their interviews that faith-based NGOs were engaging in what they perceived as proselytization, for example teaching English through faith-based songs. One of the FBO interviewees indicated that partnerships and relationships with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) were terminated due to the FBO's perceived proselytization actions. Proselytization by organisations providing humanitarian assistance in conflict and disaster situations around the world has been vocally denounced as directly violating the international humanitarian principle of impartiality, and Principle 3 of the Red Cross Code of Conduct which asserts that "Aid will not be used to further a particular political or religious standpoint."<sup>23</sup> Indeed, it was due to awareness of these and other specific religious issues and concerns present in Malaysia that local IRB review was obtained in Malaysia (in addition to the project-wide IRB approval granted by Yale University). With Malaysia in the process of strengthening its research ethics infrastructure, and due to the significance of these concerns, obtaining this local IRB review delayed this case-study by 2 months.

Similar sensitivities needed to be negotiated in other settings, including in both Lebanon and Jordan where - with somewhat different dynamics - the role of religion in public life needs to be discussed with caution. The establishment of trust through local interviewers with knowledge of these sensitivities proved crucial in these circumstances.

### ***Acknowledging Persecution and Discrimination on Religious Grounds***

These brief reflections also act as a poignant reminder that focusing on the actual and potential roles of religion in promoting social justice, this report does not aim to dismiss the severity of the persecution, violence and discrimination that people experience on religious grounds, whether in countries of origin,<sup>24</sup> in countries of first asylum or in countries of transit or of resettlement. Such dynamics and forms of violence have been extensively discussed, and the research in Cameroon, Malaysia, and Greece clearly documented



diverse forms of violence that are variously linked to religion, both within and across religious denominations, sects and schools of *fiqh*.<sup>25</sup>

In Cameroon, for instance, Muslim refugees from Central African Republic recounted that their homes had been ransacked and destroyed because their religion made them suspect to the people who had previously been their neighbours. Equally, in Malaysia, the majority of the Rohingya refugees and the Afghan refugee interviewed for this project cited religious persecution as a major reason underpinning their decision to leave their country of origin to seek asylum.

As members of a Muslim minority based in Rakhine State (Myanmar), Rohingya refugees have experienced persecution by members of Myanmar's Buddhist factions, having been prevented from accessing education, health services and many career opportunities until violence and sometimes torture led them to flee the country and seek protection in neighbouring countries, including Muslim-majority Malaysia. For a Shi'a Muslim Afghan refugee interviewed in Kuala Lumpur, the experience of persecution has continued into Malaysia (where the Shafi'i tradition of Sunni Islam is the country's official religion and where Shi'a Islam is prohibited). Interviewees reported that in Malaysia they have faced diverse forms of persecution, including in local mosques; they indicated that most Shi'a Muslims keep to themselves in Malaysia to avoid conflict and discrimination.

In turn, some refugees in Greece also narrated their decision to leave their countries of origin in terms of religious persecution. In some cases, including those of Syrian Sunni Muslims, these individuals were part of a religious majority in their country of origin, but had experienced persecution, or held a well-founded fear of being persecuted, by the state or by groups such as ISIS. At times, the risk of being persecuted was linked to their actual or perceived religious identity. At other times, the risk was due to their political activity, either real or imputed precisely by virtue of their being identified as members of the religious majority. Such cases highlight that claims for international protection may be grounded upon both religious and political persecution, and that these may indeed be mutually constitutive.

In other instances, including Shi'a Hazara refugees from Afghanistan, interviewees in Athens explained that they had made their decision to leave their country of origin because they are members of historically persecuted ethnic and/or religious minorities. Others explained that they had been introduced to Christianity by American missionaries, and had recently converted, which meant that they no longer felt safe in their country of origin. While Shi'a Afghans in Malaysia lamented the absence of a mosque where they would be able to pray together, an Afghan community of evangelical Christians had established a secret church in Athens – the research team was able to learn about the history of the community and its financial relationship to evangelical groups in the US.

Throughout the research in Greece, it was notable that even secular NGOs permitted American evangelical groups to operate in their spaces, in direct contradistinction from the nature of interactions observed in, and framing, the research in Malaysia.

Nonetheless, irrespective of their self-ascribed religious identities, beliefs and practices, once in Greece, many interviewees narrated their experiences as racialized religious minorities.<sup>26</sup> These accounts ranged from frustration over having their identities as Muslims over-emphasized in their encounters with service providers (examples of microaggressions), to racist violence such as physical beatings and destructive home intrusions. Indeed, although certain states have developed (widely critiqued) policies that prioritize the granting of refugee status and resettlement opportunities for certain religious minority groups from the Middle East,<sup>27</sup> “persecuted religious minorities do not automatically become accepted members of the new country’s religious majority, even when they share that religion.”<sup>28</sup>

As these examples from Malaysia and Greece clearly demonstrate, persecution and the restriction of people’s rights do not end after refugees have left their country of origin. Instead, cycles of violence, insecurity, marginalization and discrimination often continue or emerge in the country of asylum,<sup>29</sup> including forms of violence that are linked to religion in different ways. This project is based on a deep awareness of these intersecting processes and the precarious situations that people inhabit, navigate and respond to throughout different stages and spaces of displacement.

### ***Attention to Structural Inequalities and Intersectionality***

Building upon the above, it is also important to stress that our research views and examines the significance of religion to people’s lives *in relation to* various identity markers *and* structures of inequality and opportunity. Indeed, the project is underpinned by a commitment to intersectionalist analysis that is sensitive to the importance of identity markers including ethnicity/race, religion, gender, sexuality, and age on the one hand, and diverse power structures and systems of inequality, exploitation and violence on the other.

### **TEXT BOX 1: Intersectionality in Studies of Displacement<sup>30</sup>**

Intersectionality as a concept and analytical framework originated in the 1980s and early-1990s when Kimberlé Crenshaw first developed it as a means of exploring and explaining the overlapping experiences of oppression and marginalization faced by African American women by virtue of their race and gender in a society characterized by everyday, institutionalized racism and patriarchy.<sup>31</sup>

In the context of displacement studies, intersectionality refers to the recognition that experiences of displacement are framed by a range of intersecting and overlapping identity markers (including race and ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and age) and by a range of power structures (such as racism and xenophobia, Islamophobia, patriarchy, and homophobia). Importantly, the relative significance of these identity markers and related power structures shift across time and space, including in processes of displacement. This can help us understand – perhaps even predict – that individuals and social groups may be vulnerable to, or at risk of, different forms of violence throughout different stages of their journeys to secure international protection.

Indeed, experiences of persecution and violence linked to religion, whether in countries of origin or countries of asylum, must be viewed through an intersectionalist lens. This is because such experiences and fears are *constituted* by the intersection of religion with other identity markers and structures of inequality and violence. In the cases above, these include the intersections between a refugee's religion and sect - being a Sunni or Shi'a Muslim refugee in Malaysia, or a Sunni or Shi'a Muslim or Christian refugee in Greece -, ethnicity, and the ways that religious and political identities and beliefs are imputed (including through processes of racialization and "reading through the skin"<sup>32</sup>), irrespective of a person's 'actual' identities and beliefs.<sup>33</sup>

It is also essential to recognise that religion (and in particular Islam) has become a 'super-category' of identity in relation to displacement in the contemporary era. Indeed, in certain geopolitical contexts, the figure of the refugee has become synonymous with the figure of the Muslim (refugee=Muslim), just as regional identity has been collapsed into one homogenous religious marker (Middle Eastern = Muslim) irrespective of the heterogeneity of religious identity, belief and practice across such regions and within Islam per se.<sup>34</sup>

Throughout such processes, refugees may be forcibly interpellated 'as' Muslims in a process which may itself be a form of epistemic violence. For instance, a number of research participants in Greece expressed frustrations that they were assumed to be Muslim and that Islam was being over-emphasised to the detriment of diverse identity markers and identifiers which were rendered invisible (such as self-identifying as queer, secular, Christian). These processes of interpellation, and of centralizing and marginalizing specific identity markers must themselves be interrogated and critically examined; so too must their implications on diverse scales (from individual to collective to international).

Alongside this recognition of the multifaceted and changing significance of religion, ethnicity and regional background, the project has been attentive to the significance of gender, sexuality and age throughout processes of displacement. For instance, in Malaysia, interviewees often discussed women's rights, exploring the relationship between religious beliefs and the rights of women and girls, including discussions about child marriage, family planning and access to education. Among members of both the Rohingya and Afghan community, interviewees often conflated religion and culture,<sup>35</sup> with interviewees noting that religious scholars often support practices of child marriage that were illegal both in their home country and in Malaysia.

During interviews, it was mentioned that religious educators within their communities were self-professed or only partially educated. Interlocutors in Malaysia felt that this lack of qualified religious authority adds to the difficulty of better understanding which practices are traditional and cultural, which practices are religiously prescribed, and which are politically and/or ideologically promoted and required. Female interviewees in particular strongly stated that they felt that improved religious expertise would give women and girls opportunities for education. Interviewees highlighted their belief that better religious education in general, and greater opportunities for women and girls to be able to access education in particular, would help reduce the prevalence of the practice of child marriage. In turn, in Greece, a Syrian Sunni Muslim interviewee explained that their particular risk

of persecution in Syria was related not only to their (real or imputed) political activity – as noted above - but also due to having a queer member of the family. In Lebanon, a number of interviewees referred to the particular vulnerabilities of LGBTQI Syrian refugees outside of Syria. For instance, one NGO representative in Beirut noted that “being an LGBTQI individual puts [Syrian refugees] at an increased vulnerability because they could be stopped, especially if they represent someone who is queer, if they look queer. This could be very dangerous and will affect their security.” They further clarified that “when they are Syrian, people might ask them for their papers and documents. They would not ask a Lebanese individual and put them through that.”

In this context, Syrian refugees who are, or are identified by others as, LGBTQI are at particular risk, including of detention and potentially deportation to Syria if they do not have residence rights in Lebanon. Here, it is not an identity marker – self-ascribed or imposed by others – which leads to vulnerabilities (as essentialist approaches to vulnerability often assume). Instead, it is the intersection of diverse identity markers (here Syrian + refugee + perceived queer) in the context of specific structures of inequality and policies: it is a combination of xenophobia, homophobia and transphobia, *and* state policies which create vulnerabilities precisely by constituting Syrians as ‘irregular’ migrants liable to detention and deportation.<sup>36</sup>

A commitment to intersectional modes of analysis also requires us to acknowledge the disconnect that often exists between policy makers’ and practitioners’ assumptions of ‘what refugees need’ and what different groups of refugees consider to be essential requirements, as prerequisites to dignity and justice.

## TEXT BOX 2:

### Intersectionality and Reconceptualizing ‘Basic Needs’ in Displacement<sup>37</sup>

‘Basic needs’ in humanitarian situations are often intimately related to the religious identity and belief system of refugees, with local conceptualizations of ‘basic needs’ often transcending secular organizations’ perceptions.<sup>38</sup> For instance, UNFPA noted that many Muslim IDP women affected by the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami held that headscarves were essential to maintain their dignity and were a prerequisite to be able to access other services in public spaces.<sup>39</sup> In essence, even if aid packages were to be delivered to the community, women (here veiled Muslim women) would be unable to access aid in dignity – here, the hijab was a basic needs item.

Basic needs and dignity must also be viewed in relation to the importance that displaced people may give to celebrating key rituals pertaining both to life, and to death. Indeed, being able to bury a loved one with dignity can be as, if not more, important than what the international community often assumes to be the ‘immediate’, emergency needs for food and shelter. However, international agencies have often been reluctant, or have even ‘resisted’, displaced people using tarpaulin ‘officially’ designated to be used for ‘living spaces’ to be used as mosques or temple spaces, or even to bury loved ones instead.<sup>40</sup>

In essence, examining the diverse needs, rights and priorities of refugees around the world must involve being attentive both to refugees' complex identities and the diverse power structures that create situations of violence and prevent people from finding solutions to their own problems.

Indeed, the disjuncture between different groups of refugees' priorities, and what international stakeholders prioritize on their behalf, emerged across many of the project's case-studies. So too did the diverse ways that religion can support refugees in navigating complex situations of precarity in their quest for social justice.

## Section 1: Hosts, Refugees and Refugee-Hosts As Responders in Contexts of Precarity and Structural Violence

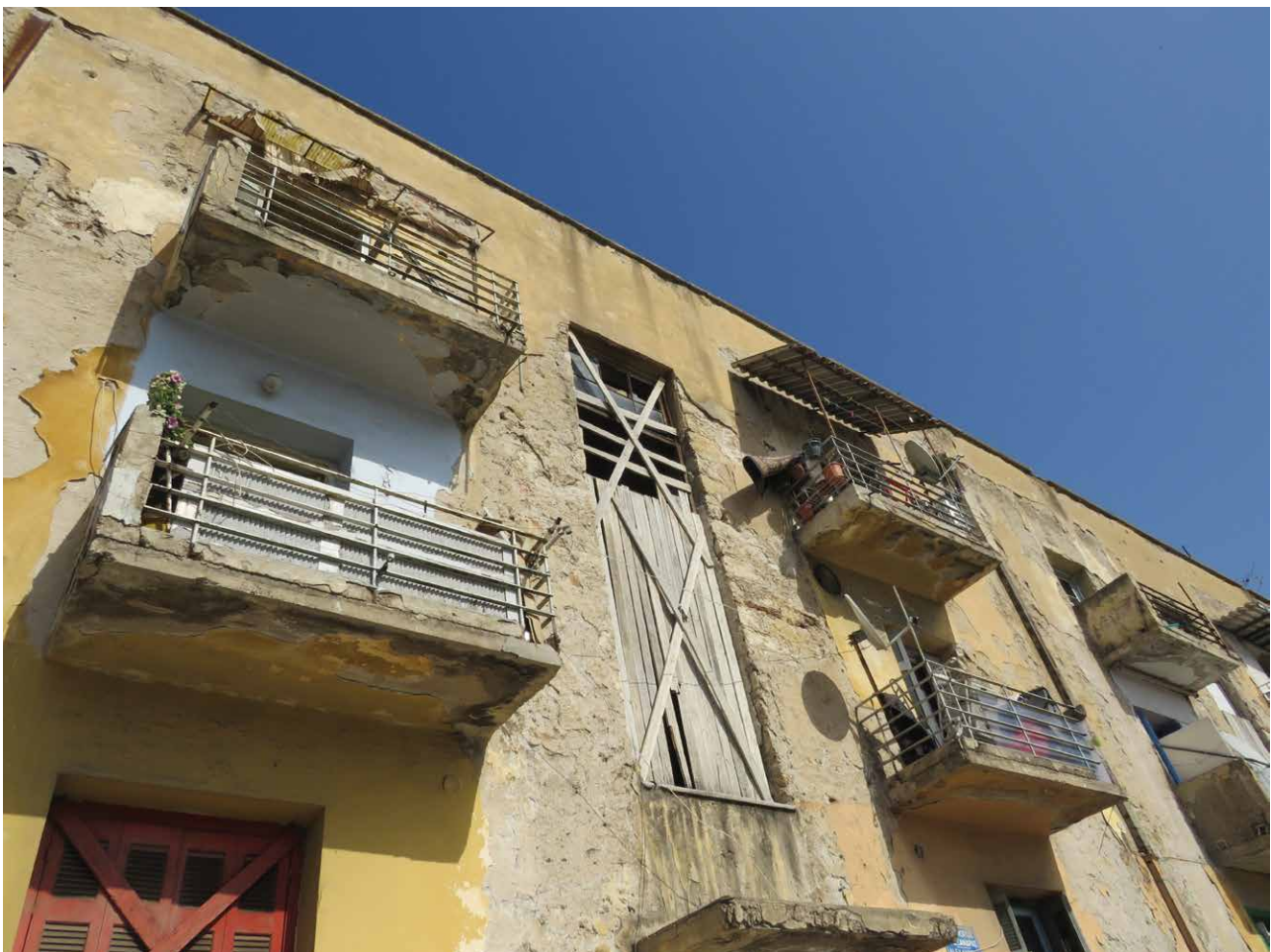
It is increasingly recognized that locally based actors are key responders in situations of displacement.<sup>41</sup> This includes communities, families, households and individuals for whom faith is significant in different ways. Importantly, in spite of the rhetoric of 'crisis' that has been extensively invoked in contemporary popular and media accounts of displacement (and equally extensively critiqued by historically- and geographically-situated analyses),<sup>42</sup> displacement is frequently protracted in nature. Indeed, all the cases explored in this project having long histories. These long histories and the protracted nature of displacement – and of hosting - have diverse implications, as we now discuss with reference to migration in and from Central and North America, the Middle East/ Mediterranean, and Sub-Saharan Africa.

For instance, the research conducted on the Mexico-US border coincided with the increased media attention paid to people from across Central America hoping to cross into the US, and the US policy of forced family separation, which precipitated a humanitarian crisis covered in the international news. The team's visit to Tijuana coincided with the sharp rise of the family separation of asylum seekers at the US-Mexico border. During interviews, migrants expressed fear and indignation at the prospect of being separated from their children, and rationalized risking separation as a "lesser of two evils" between staying in their countries of origin and seeking a better life in the US, with relatives whom they knew would take them in.

The very real crises *created* by these policies of detention, family separation and deportation, are thus taking place against a backdrop of long-standing migration routes and journeys across and through Mexico, with diverse tensions on the Mexico-US border having existed for at least a century.<sup>43</sup> This highlights the need to historically situate analyses of forced migration. In effect, although there are many important gaps in service provision across the Mexico-US border, an important aspect of the humanitarian landscape on the border is the strong and long-standing presence of civic society and legal organizations, collaborating with faith-based organizations, to provide more holistic support to migrants. We return to this humanitarian landscape, and the role of religion therein, in Section 2. Long histories of migration and of religious encounters were regularly discussed in interviews across the project's field sites. In Greece, the theme of religious tolerance and

acceptance emerged frequently throughout interviews with refugees and with those who provide for them in different ways. These people regularly drew on historically-grounded references to a shared culture or civilization between Greeks and Turks or Arabs. This history, including a history of earlier processes of migration and displacement in the region, has many implications for the present. For instance, a city with a Greek Muslim majority population which borders Turkey has become the site for a Muslim graveyard established by a group of Afghan refugees. When a young boy died suddenly in one of the camps, the Afghan refugee community pooled its resources to ensure he received a proper religious burial and could be buried in this Muslim graveyard.

In this instance, as in the case of Lebanon explored below,<sup>44</sup> religious rights are conceived of not merely in terms of accommodating the living: the right to be buried as a Muslim is imagined as a refugee right which must be fought for. Refugees in Greece regularly described how their faith and their religious practice was a source of strength as they endured extreme stress. Providers also talked about the ways that religious community and ritual was often a source of support and comfort for refugees. Importantly, as this example, and many others from the research in Lebanon, Cameroon, Jordan and Mexico also indicate, the people who ‘provide for’ refugees<sup>45</sup> are often themselves either refugees or the descendants of earlier generations of migrants or refugees.



Refugee housing project from the 1920s in Ambelokopi, Athens (c) Fiddian-Qasmiyeh



On the way to school, Baddawi refugee camp, Lebanon (c) Fiddian-Qasmiyeh

### TEXT BOX 3:

#### Overlapping displacement and refugee-refugee humanitarianism<sup>46</sup>

The term ‘overlapping displacement’ is used here to refer to two tempo-spatial dynamics. First, refugees and internally displaced person (IDPs) have often personally and collectively experienced secondary and tertiary displacement. Second, refugees are increasingly experiencing overlapping displacement in the sense that frequently they physically share spaces with other displaced people.

The implication of these intersecting processes is that, precisely because displacement is increasingly urban and protracted, refugees share spaces for longer periods of time both with local host communities, and with other displaced people themselves. This means, *inter alia*, that, over time, refugee groups often become members of the communities that subsequently offer protection and support to other groups of displaced people, including through processes of ‘refugee-refugee humanitarianism.’

Although not all refugees express feelings of solidarity and trust towards other refugees, it is increasingly recognized that, over time, “refugees often become members of the communities that subsequently offer protection and support to other groups of displaced people”.<sup>47</sup>

While attentive to the dangers of idealizing community-based protection in situations of extreme precarity, it is nonetheless the case that “refugee-refugee relationality” and “refugee-refugee humanitarianism” are becoming topics and dynamics of great academic and policy relevance.<sup>48</sup> Such attention must be situated within the context of the broader politics of the responsibility to protect and uphold the rights of the displaced. Acknowledging the roles played by local actors, including refugees, must not be viewed as a way of shifting (or keeping) the ‘burden’ of refugee protection onto local communities and organisations.<sup>49</sup> This point was clearly stressed by the member of the host community in Baddawi camp, Lebanon:

“I think it is a public responsibility... It is the responsibility of the UN and all organizations and institutions with humanitarian titles... When the local community is destitute and poor, it is mostly not responsible for offering relief to anyone and it only has some secondary roles, and this is in itself an achievement. I appreciate what the local community has done in relation to the capacities of the others: it is significant work and deserves to be appreciated.”

Palestinian from Nahr el-Bared resident in Baddawi Camp since 2007.

Noting that the legal responsibility to offer protection ultimately lies with *host* states (with that responsibility at times being *delegated* by states to UN agencies), as an indictment of the current state of humanitarian assistance, a Syrian refugee living in Baddawi camp stressed that:

“I think that the roles [of providing assistance] should be limited to *government* organizations only. As for the local community, the most it can do is to treat displaced people well.”

Acknowledging, and appreciating the “significant work” undertaken by refugees and refugee-hosts must take place in conjunction with the acknowledgement of the responsibilities and duties that should be upheld by international actors, including states, UN agencies and INGOs.



An evening stroll in Baddawi camp, Lebanon (c) Fiddian-Qasmiyeh



The interviewees cited above reside in an urban Palestinian refugee camp which was established in the 1950s and whose residents have been ‘hosting’ refugees arriving from Syria since 2011. These refugees include not only displaced Syrians, but also Palestinian and Iraqi refugees who had been living in Syria at the outbreak of the conflict and who have found themselves refugees once more.<sup>50</sup> In the context of Baddawi camp, Palestinians are simultaneously refugees and hosts, and urban camps are spaces that are shared between not only different generations of refugees, but also refugees with different nationalities and countries of origin.

Furthermore, this is also not the first time that the Baddawi camp and its refugee inhabitants have welcomed ‘new’ refugees, as it also hosted more than 15,000 ‘new’ Palestinian refugees who were internally displaced from the nearby Nahr al-Bared refugee camp when it was destroyed during fighting in 2007. With an estimated 10,000 refugees from Nahr al-Bared still residing in Baddawi camp, these ‘internally displaced refugees hosted by refugees’ have become part of the established Baddawi community hosting ‘newly’ displaced refugees from Syria,<sup>51</sup> highlighting the complex histories of displacement and hosting in situations of extreme precarity.

In Baddawi camp, diverse local-level rituals are organized by, with and for different groups of refugees. For instance, before and during every Ramadan, local groups of Baddawi camp residents collect donations, including through *zakat*, to prepare and distribute *iftar* food baskets with which particularly vulnerable families can break their fast. These donations, collected by, from and for refugees are distributed to families with particularly precarious livelihoods, irrespective of their place of origin or how long they have lived in



Abu Diab's hands, Baddawi camp (c) Fiddian-Qasmiyeh

Baddawi: this includes long-term Baddawi residents, internally-displaced-refugees from Nahr el-Bared camp, and refugees from Syria alike.

A further example echoes the case of Greece discussed earlier. The cemetery has been at the core of Baddawi from the camp's birth in the 1950s. As time has passed, and as wars have led to new arrivals, the cemetery has outgrown its original space. There are now five cemeteries in Baddawi camp, with Syrians, Palestinians, Iraqis and Kurds now sharing the same soil. Abu-Diab, the only grave-digger in Baddawi camp, speaks of the pragmatics of dying: "I dig for the living, and I dig for the dead."

"To live and maintain life, to keep the dignity of the dead and the solace of those who remain."<sup>52</sup>

The cases of Greece and Lebanon alike remind us that humanitarian responses that emphasize rights-based dignity in life could learn from such local, refugee-led initiatives to ensure dignity in death too.<sup>53</sup>

Such examples of refugee-led, religiously motivated responses to other refugees *and* hosts force us to re-think the assumptions widely held in practitioner and policy circles that refugees are passive recipients of aid, or that international practitioners 'know' what refugees need and should prioritize (see Text Box 2). Through the broader empirical research gathered by the Refugee Hosts research project in Lebanon and Jordan, and through research conducted in Greece as part of this project, we are instead able to account for the diverse roles played by refugees in responding to the needs of other displaced peoples. This emphasizes the need to recognize how past individual, familial and collective experiences of displacement can contribute to important forms of resilience, as well as motivations for hosting, that are overlooked and – subsequently – under-engaged with by international humanitarian responses.<sup>54</sup>

The case of Malaysia offers an important counter-point to these examples of refugee-led support mechanisms and rituals, with many Rohingya and Afghan interviewees revealing that a major concern was the fact that there was no religious infrastructure *within* the refugee community. Rohingya interviewees lamented that no formal religious education was offered to the population, noting that self-proclaimed religious scholars would often take the helm and organize religious schools or talks; while some interviewees considered that this was be a positive initiative, others found this problematic. As noted above, for Shi'a Muslim refugees in particular, not being able attend the mosque or share in communal prayers was difficult, drawing attention once again to the structural barriers that can prevent people from practicing their religion and developing their own ways of responding to and managing life (and death) in displacement.

An important question that arises here and in relation to the right to be buried as a Muslim being conceptualized as a right to be fought for, is as follows: Is there a duty for state and non-state actors to actively support the development and maintenance of an 'infrastructure' for refugees to be able to practice their faith? Alternatively, is the duty limited to protecting people's *right* to practice their faith?

## Section 2: From Fatalism to Structures of Mutual Support

In documenting the ways that different groups of refugees support other refugees in the cases of Lebanon and Greece, it is not our intention to either claim that all refugees support other refugees,<sup>55</sup> or to dismiss or ignore the diverse processes of exclusion, violence and hostility that exist within and across refugee groups. Instead, we aim to demonstrate that tensions, violence and exclusion are not *inevitable* in contexts of displacement and diverse refugee hosting environments.

There has long been a fatalistic view of refugee reception and cohabitation, which assumes an inevitable teleology ‘from hospitality to hostility’, as exemplified in Derrida’s notion of *hostipitality*. Indeed, in hosting situations characterised by intense precarity and overlapping displacement, it has been argued that the inherent conditionality of hospitality is underpinned by the paradox that to offer welcome is ‘always already’ to have the power to delimit the space or place that is being offered to the Other.<sup>56</sup> The resulting hierarchies and tensions towards ‘new arrivals’ have often been presented not only as common, but also potentially as *inescapable*.

Such a view builds on an often-held assumption that refugees will always be rejected by members of established host communities. It also builds on the assumption that heterogenous groups of refugees sharing a particular space will be hostile towards one another on the basis, for instance, of nationality, religion or ethnicity. Both based on these assumptions, and in response to actual contestation between groups, international actors often introduce policies and programmes to foster ‘social cohesion’ in these spaces,<sup>57</sup> with varying effects.

In Greece, for instance, service providers in Moira camp in Lesbos assumed that there would be competition and tensions between different groups of refugees: for instance, between Iraqis and Afghans, between Sunnis and Shi’a. Service providers expressed a perception that competition, or ‘fighting’, between groups is self-evident, and designed delivery processes on the basis of this assumption: rather than delivering the same item to all camp residents on the basis of need, they decided to deliver items on separate days on a nationality-by-nationality basis: “we can’t have a line for strollers – if there is a queue there will be a fight” reported one service provider.

Far from tensions either being inevitable, or such delivery processes *avoiding* tensions, such an approach in fact *manufactured* a feeling of being marginalized and excluded amongst those people who were not amongst the first set of recipients: Kurdish women in the camp complained that they were unable to receive a stroller because they had only arrived for ‘Arabs’. This led to the perception that some refugees were being prioritized over others on the basis of their ethnicity or nationality, prompting scuffles in the camp.

In spite of the ‘self-evidence’ of the narrative of the inevitability of conflict, research in the City Plaza squat in Athens revealed not only an absence of tensions based on religious, ethnic and/or nationalist lines of difference,<sup>58</sup> but instead different forms of solidarity. These included solidarity on political lines: political solidarity<sup>59</sup> in this anarchist squat existed

across national and religious lines, defying external observers' assumptions that it would be impossible for Muslims to work peacefully with leftists. As Grewal has written elsewhere of this situation:

“If the values of some strains of Islam seem an odd fit with Marxism, the organizers insist that religious and ethnic differences have not been a source of conflict for the residents; nor, as one might expect, does one find residents debating differences in political ideology or gender norms. There is plenty of mundane conflict, but most of the daily bickering is chore-wars. ‘Damn Europe!’ curses a young Syrian man in a short documentary about City Plaza. ‘I came for freedom and stability but I’m washing dishes.’”<sup>60</sup>

Indeed, a key factor emerging in such assumptions is precisely the extent to which Muslimness or religiosity is overexaggerated by external observers and becomes the overarching frame of reference, erasing recognition of not only the potential for, but reality of, solidarity across political lines.



Preparing food in Baddawi camp (c) Fiddian-Qasmiyeh

Indeed, our research documenting refugee-refugee relationality and solidarity in Greece and in Lebanon demonstrates that hostility and rejection are not inevitable, that solidarity can emerge across different lines, and that it is urgent for us to trace and examine alternative modes of encounter that transcend and resist the fatalistic invocations of hostility.<sup>61</sup> One important way of doing so is by focusing on which structures, policies and programmes create and reproduce tensions, and to examine when and how such tensions emerge in processes of displacement and hosting.

In Baddawi camp, for instance, different groups of refugees who fled the same conflict receive differing forms of assistance and different access to durable solutions depending

on their nationality. On the one hand, Palestinians from Syria only receive limited assistance from UNRWA and can only access UNRWA-run educational and health services which are increasingly under-funded and under strain.<sup>62</sup> On the other hand, non-Palestinian refugees from Syria (including Syrians, Iraqis, Kurds) are registered with UNHCR and are entitled to a wider range of services and programmes. Most importantly for many residents in the camp, non-Palestinian refugees from Syria have the possibility of being referred by UNHCR to be resettled to a third country. Palestinian refugee families who have resided in the camp since the 1950s remain stuck in the camp, observing the different forms of assistance and possible resettlement options that are being provided to new arrivals.<sup>63</sup>

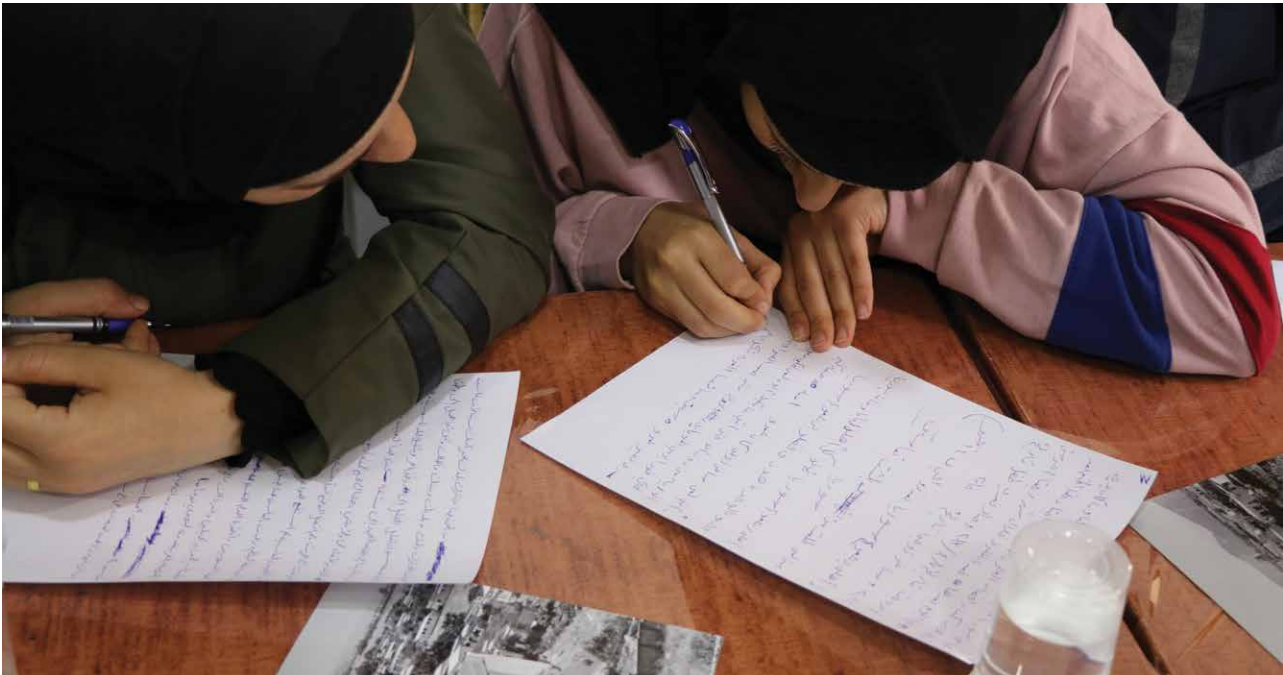


Participants attending a Refugee Hosts writing workshop, Jordan (c) Fiddian-Qasmiyeh

Some of these internationally-funded assistance programmes have also created tensions since their implementation. For example, the arrival of refugees from Syria had initially led to a dynamic growth of the camp economy, and yet the introduction of World Food Programme (WFP) food vouchers led to heightened tensions within the camp. This is because refugees from Syria holding WFP vouchers could only spend these in (Lebanese) shops *outside* of the camp, and not in Palestinian, Syrian and Kurdish-run shops in the camp. Such bifurcated structures and external interventions are thus *creating* tensions in this refugee camp, rather than such tensions being inevitable.<sup>64</sup>

As in Greece and Lebanon, refugees and migrants interviewed in Mexico described experiencing feelings and acts of solidarity throughout the country, particularly with FBOs and the Mexican poor. However, migrants in Mexico also reported general distrust of other migrants, citing thefts, jealousy, and quarrels in migrant shelters.<sup>65</sup> Others, primarily women traveling with children, narrated the ways that they were able to overcome their initial scepticism of fellow migrants to become critical support systems, living together,

sharing economic resources and childcare duties, and providing much-needed emotional support and encouragement. Nonetheless, even when such feelings of mutual support and solidarity did emerge, fear of possible detention and violence at the hands of hostile actors made this solidarity highly contingent, framed as much by its proximity to structural violence, and distrust of state and non-state officials, as well as other refugees.<sup>66</sup>



Workshop participants in Jordan (c) Fiddian-Qasmiyeh

Similarly, Central African refugees in Cameroon both engaged in but also questioned rhetoric that positioned refugees-as-cause and as scapegoats. Refugees and hosts alike reported negative stereotypes about refugees: the refugees steal, the refugees cause crime to go up. However, even those people who named a rise in crime as a problem admitted that the refugee-as-cause explanation was as much stereotype as truth, and acknowledged that as often as not, the person apprehended would be a Cameroonian rather than a refugee from CAR. Throughout their comments, interviewees reflected a form of pragmatism and a willingness to discuss, as opposed to an ideological agenda to push, or an insider/outsider distinction to be steadfastly maintained.<sup>67</sup> Importantly, a major theme emerging in the interviews both with refugees from CAR and their hosts was that they insisted that they had helped themselves by working together. They agreed that Cameroonians had been generous in helping the Central Africans now in their midst. There was a common understanding that times were tough, and that people should accommodate each other and find ways to work together, and even help each other. In part this was because people often shared a sense of regional belonging: a logic of neighbourly care, even across religious lines.

Indeed, as noted earlier, for those refugees from CAR who participated in the study, a key priority was to convey their experience of flight, and for the intent listener to bear witness. In this way, and with refugees directing the focus of the interviews, the research itself became part of a wider effort to create solidarity in the midst of migration and upheaval.

Importantly, as is recognized in the broader literature, drawing on different stories and narratives – including stories from refugees’ respective faith traditions – are often key ways through which refugees (and hosts) make sense of and respond to their experiences, tracing ways to navigate their complex and often violent and dangerous situations in displacement.<sup>68</sup> As became clear in the research in Cameroon, having a story to tell is also a mode of faith: faith in the power of a story to emotionally connect people and organize experience in the midst of flux. Both Christian and Muslim refugees from CAR frequently stated that their faith is an anchor that had helped them make it through turbulent times.

In the context of Jordan, interviews with refugees from Syria and with Jordanian hosts also drew on stories from the Qur’an to explain both the imperative to respond, but also to determine the limits of their response. When invited (but, see below, seldom otherwise) many interviewees pointed to religious obligation as a basis for providing (and indeed, receiving) practical assistance to those fleeing the conflict in Syria. Reference was commonly made amongst Muslim participants to the *hadith* in the Qur’an that talks of the Prophet being hosted in the town of Medina when seeking refuge.

One young woman reflected on how her school teacher had addressed discrimination and conflicts in the initial period of migration: “She reminded us when the Prophet - peace be upon him - emigrated to Al-Madinah and how the people of Al-Madinah welcomed them and shared everything with them. After that, we felt ashamed that we treated them in this way.” Christian interviewees in Jordan also drew on sacred scripture to explain the moral basis for engaging with refugees, reinforcing findings from earlier in the crisis: “We are explicitly instructed in the Bible ‘Do not forget to do good and to share with others’”, reported a church leader in Irbid engaged in supporting food distributions to Syrian refugees.<sup>69</sup>

However, religious interpretation was not only used to underpin perceived obligation for hosting but also to define its limits. For example, one participant reflected on the archetype of hosting in Medina to suggest: “it’s important to note that the people of Mecca didn’t overstay their welcome. They were hosted temporarily until they were able to get their lives in order and become independent”. In turn, another interviewee suggested that “religion has always instructed us to host those in need *especially if we have language and religion in common*” (emphasis added). In contrast, another, reflected on the *hadith*: “The believers – in their mutual kindness, compassion and sympathy – are as one body. When one of the limbs suffers, the whole body responds to it with wakefulness and fever.”<sup>70</sup> In so doing, the interviewee observed that “it is important to note that the Prophet said believers not just Muslims. Anyone who believes should receive kindness, compassion and sympathy. Even if he is Buddhist!”

As traced in these examples from Mexico, Cameroon and Jordan, whether explicitly or implicitly, narratives from refugees’ and hosts’ faith traditions have played a role in framing the ways that the presence, needs and rights of refugees are understood and responded to. Normative religious injunctions may not lead believers to uphold the principles of their faith in practice, and yet they are often an important part of the broader landscapes of displacement, a point which requires further consideration.



Workshop participants, Jordan (c) Fiddian-Qasmiyeh

### Section 3: Public and Private Dimensions of Response

An important element that arises in terms of how religion can frame responses to refugees, is also significant in methodological terms, when viewed through the frame of what Fiddian-Qasmiyeh refers to as the ‘politics of undisclosed care.’ She uses this term to reflect on the extent to which acts of kindness and solidarity may be viewed as ‘private’ acts which should not be disclosed to others.<sup>71</sup> This private dimension of assistance, in the sense of acts undertaken, was described by one interviewee in Baddawi camp as “only for God’s sake”. This point, in line with the Qur’an (2:271)<sup>72</sup> and *hadith*,<sup>73</sup> was stressed by diverse interviewees in Lebanon, refugees and refugee-hosts alike:

*“We collected clothes... offered food and cash to refugees, but I hope you don’t mention this except for reasons related to your research, because we do this only for God’s sake.”*

Palestinian from Nahr el-Bared, resident in Baddawi camp since 2007, emphasis added

*“Those people who offer assistance without disclosing their names deserve respect.”*  
Syrian refugee living in Baddawi camp, emphasis added

*“Be like the good tree that gives its fruits and does not ask who took them.”*

Kurdish refugee from Syria living in Baddawi camp, emphasis added

This discrete mode of supporting refugees is as strongly grounded in religious belief and practice as it is a powerful counterpoint to the international humanitarian system’s long-standing preference for hypervisible logos and public announcements of action. Amongst other things, this raises the question of how to reconcile many local actors’ preference for discretion – whether for religious, or safety and security reasons in precarious situations where displacement and religion are hyper-politicised - with the increasing desire to better understand the roles played by local actors, including those motivated by religion, in promoting social justice for refugees.<sup>74</sup>



#### TEXT BOX 4:

#### Observing without caring? Caring without being observed?<sup>75</sup>

Where providing material aid, distributing *iftar* baskets, and supporting people in times of loss and mourning are increasingly ‘visible’ and ‘legible’ as forms of response, a related question is what is perceived as a response and as an *acceptable* form of response by different actors. During his reflection on the roles that Baddawi camp residents have played since the arrival of refugees from Syria, a 37-year old Syrian man who has lived in Baddawi since 2011 shared his view that:

“I think that the biggest part of the local community does not care about this and their role does not transgress the limits of observing.”

In a protracted displacement situation such as Baddawi camp which is characterised by extreme precarity, clearly not all residents are providing material assistance to refugees from Syria, whether because they don’t ‘care’ or are themselves in need of assistance. However, while it might not be denominated an ‘adequate’ response to the needs of refugees, even ‘not caring’ is itself a form of response.

Irrespective of the presence or absence of material exchange or the ‘provision’ of aid, Baddawi camp residents clearly are responding in different ways, whether it is “observing” the situation of people from Syria, “accepting” the presence of refugees from Syria, offering “moral support” and ensuring that their children “are well among their foreign neighbours,” as a Kurdish refugee from Syria who has lived in Baddawi since 2012 argued in his interview:

“It is enough that they allowed us to live among them despite this great population pressure. In my view, the local community is not interested in providing us with assistance. All they have to do is accept our presence in these areas and to offer us moral support. For me, it is enough that my Palestinian neighbour greets me every morning and that I go to work being sure that my children are well among their foreign neighbours.”

While the concept of the ‘neighbour’ in Arabic is an ambivalent one – demarcating proximity and charity on the one hand, and yet invoking antagonism on the other, as explored by Qasmiyeh<sup>76</sup> - what is pertinent in this context is this interviewee’s usage of the phrase “it is enough” not once but twice to refer to co-presence, everyday encounters and ‘being well’ in a shared space. Here, the question of whether ‘observing’ without ‘caring’ can be conceptualised ‘as’ a response shifts to whether it can be viewed as an *acceptable* or *sufficient* form of response: what is the relative significance – from the perspective of different interlocutors – of the provision of material goods, spiritual support, conviviality, ‘caring’ and sharing space? Who determines what ‘is enough’ in such a situation of overlapping precarity? Is it sufficient, as Yousif M. Qasmiyeh and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh have been exploring as part of Refugee Hosts, for response to be framed around ‘being-with’ and ‘being-together’<sup>77</sup> (following Jean-Luc Nancy)?

In addition to the ‘private’ dimension of locally-led assistance and the ‘politics of undisclosed care,’ research in Jordan confirms another way in which the public-private divide is of particular relevance to examining the role of religion in supporting the needs and rights of refugees. In essence, notwithstanding the deep connection with religion expressed by interviewees across Jordan - and all other fieldsites - public discussion of religious sentiments and principles are seldom openly acknowledged. Indeed, the organizational interviews conducted in Jordan generally supported the view that religion was appropriately contained (and, implicitly, controlled) within a private religious discourse detached from the secular humanitarian language that was the *lingua franca* of professional, technical response.

This was clear sensitivity to the state’s monitoring of religious activity in the context of the perceived role of religious rhetoric and affiliation in ongoing insecurity and conflict in the region. However, assumptions about how donors and international partners expected to discuss refugee assistance in ‘professional’ terms also marginalised reference to religious motivations, activities and contexts unless very explicitly prompted to address these.

#### TEXT BOX 5:

#### The Languages of Religious and Secular Humanitarianism in Jordan<sup>78</sup>

In Jordan, the Jordan Hashemite Charity Organization for Relief and Development (JHCO) was charged by the Jordanian government with coordinating the aid response to the influx of Syrian refugees.<sup>79</sup> While it is notable that the majority of refugees from Syria live in non-camp urban and peri-urban spaces throughout the region,<sup>80</sup> the JHCO established Za’atari refugee camp, delivering aid and overseeing partnerships with major UN agencies including UNICEF, OCHA, UNHCR, and WFP, and with a range of Islamic and Christian FBOs including Islamic Relief, Latter Day Saints, and the Lutheran World Federation.<sup>81</sup>

Importantly, although the English version<sup>82</sup> of the JHCO’s website makes no reference to Islam, the Arabic version<sup>83</sup> notes that the organization was established in ‘The Arab and *Islamic* world’ in 1990 and that the JHCO supports projects which ‘deepen the concepts of justice and equality at the national, Arab, *Islamic* and international levels’.<sup>84</sup> The absence (or erasure) of the Islamic referent in the English language version of the official JHCO website<sup>85</sup> is particularly relevant in light of the securitization frameworks which have typically been applied in analyses of Islamic faith-based humanitarianism.

Publicly distancing itself from the Islamic referent, in addition to stressing its roles in providing assistance and establishing partnerships ‘regardless of their religion, origin or creed,’<sup>86</sup> are all means of asserting the JHCO’s official commitment to internationally recognized humanitarian principles. This can be seen as supporting the organization’s broader declarations that it is: “making great strides to becoming an *international* humanitarian organization.”<sup>87</sup>

## Section 4: Institutionalized Responses to Refugees: Linking the Local to the International



In the streets of Baddawi camp (c) Fiddian-Qasmiyeh

This final section of the report turns to the complex relationship between religion, social justice and institutionalized responses to refugees through a multiscalar framework, from the local to the international.

In Cameroon, two main types of institutional response to refugees can be found. The first are international aid organizations, including UNHCR and circa nine INGOs, two of which are explicitly Christian in foundation but rely on secular funding sources and operate according to ‘international humanitarian principles.’ The second are innumerable churches and mosques that organize the collection and distribution of donations for refugees and other needy people on special occasions and holy days/holy periods. Both sets of actors have recognized that in a context of shared precariousness, using migration status to decide who will receive aid and who will not, will foster tensions and grievances. As a result, and in line with a broader trend in humanitarian operations since at least the 1960s,<sup>88</sup> they give to everyone, to the best of their budgetary abilities. In a sense, they de-politicize the aid and make it more of a technocratic problem. While this is an aid-world tendency that has been extensively criticised for failing to address the inherently political causes and nature of displacement situations, and the structural inequalities that create vulnerabilities amongst both refugee and host populations, in this case this depoliticization can be seen to serve a useful purpose.<sup>89</sup>

The international humanitarian system has long acknowledged (since at least the 1960s) the benefits of framing responses to displacement not in terms of responding to ‘their’ problem (or to ‘them’ as ‘the problem’), but as responding to ‘our’ shared situation. It is invariably the case that people do a lot to help each other, including based on empathy and solidarity, and yet it is also the case that, as the number of displaced people and migrants rises, the overarching amount of aid available decreases: the same pot is ladled out, with smaller portions for each. In the early context of displacement in

Cameroon, UNHCR provided free medical care to both refugees and members of the local communities among whom refugees had settled; in 2019, UNHCR could only provide free care to children under the age of five, because they no longer had the funds.

### TEXT BOX 6:

#### FBOs and the promotion of human rights amongst refugees and hosts in Mexico<sup>90</sup>

In Mexico, La 72 is a migrant and refugee shelter founded in 2011 by the Franciscan order in Tenosique, Tabasco. A parallel research project has documented different ways in which it has developed means to promote respect and support for diversity and inclusion across age, gender, sexual orientation and religious denominations. However, “challenges regarding local host acceptance and support of migrants and refugees remain a major stumbling block.” To address local host community resistance to support migrants and refugees, with the shelter responded in the following way:

“To combat the stigma and often legitimate fear of prosecution by authorities for supporting migrants and refugees, La 72 established the School of Human Rights in order to engage and support host communities along the Gulf Route. Each community maintains a small chapel and church community group, which are part of the central parish based in Tenosique. The School draws upon this already established religious-based network to organize host communities and to equip them with knowledge and skills to offer basic support for migrants in transit. Through this network, La 72 educates host communities on human and legal rights and draws on religious principles to teach and inspire School participants [...].

In addition to supporting host communities in the provision of basic humanitarian aid to passing migrants, the School of Human Rights also enhances the resilience of local host communities through information sharing and legal training, including guidance on how to engage with local authorities. As one School participant expressed:

“Now we are able to protect ourselves and to tell [Migration authorities] that they cannot enter our property because it is *our property*. And we have the backing of La 72 and the human rights, and with that we are able to protect ourselves.” (emphasis added).

It may also provide a sense of purpose and fulfilment in engaging with migrant populations for those who may previously have been reluctant or afraid of doing so.”

In Mexico,<sup>91</sup> the research team focused on the relationship between FBOs, state service, border law enforcement and migrants. In particular, the team examined *how people on the border express solidarity on the issue of forced migration*, seeking to clarify what solidarity means, how is it expressed in different social spaces, and what challenges people face in the process. Throughout the research, the concept of solidarity emerged as a relevant

analytic to better understand the social, moral, and legal frameworks of humanitarian work. Specifically, the research in Mexico explored how faith-based organizations and law enforcement groups each portray crisis and solidarity on the border, tracing the ways that solidarity is present in images and actions, as well as articulated in words.

For example, the iconography of both faith-based organizations and US law enforcement groups portray a vivid humanitarian and political emergencies - as migrants cross the border, militaries enforce border security. For FBOs, solidarity lives in images on walls and in shared experiences, such as making and serving food together. For refugees and migrants, it is expressed in a shared history, through the actions of people and what is left behind: a sense of suffering and sacrifice. In contrast, law enforcement agents exhibit a different form of solidarity – one rooted in patriotism, service, and professionalism.<sup>92</sup> We can contrast here a religious, sacred sense of solidarity with a secular, nationalistic language of solidarity, both highlighting the need to stand together and be ready for collective action.



The mosque in Jebel Al-Baddawi, Lebanon (c) Fiddian-Qasmiyeh

In Tijuana,<sup>93</sup> where many people arrive at and attempt to cross the border, FBOs triage the influx of migrants in order to serve either men alone, women and children alone, children and youth alone, LGBT migrants, families recently arrived in the area, North-South migrants (deported from the US) or South-North migrants (seeking asylum). They organize themselves into a coordinated network of multiple faith-based organizations, stepping in where state support is inadequate or non-existent. With limited resources, shelters impose strict codes of behaviour, with a view to maintaining respect, order, and discipline. Like solidarity, faith is idiosyncratic to people, and their organizations – one can profess to be an atheist, even as one works to serve migrants in a faith-based organization, and Christian shelters have been shifting their meal-times to accommodate Muslim refugees in the fasting-month of Ramadan. The landscape of faith-based organizations is far more

diverse than one might have expected. Explicit discourses of faith range from thoughtful homilies during Catholic mass to Evangelical sermons and public conversion testimonies. What is brought to the fore, in expressions of faith, is a normative value structuring the logic of one's behaviour and social interactions. We see a strongly-professed faith in humanity, in the values of human dignity, commitment, hospitality, and service: it is a guiding force anchoring the work done on behalf of migrants, refugees and deportees. One interlocutor stated simply: "the church had stepped in where no else did - when the government hadn't stepped in, the church did." Another asserted: "faith is how I uphold someone else's dignity in the decisions that I make."

In such a context, how can social justice be conceptualized, and enacted, on the Mexico-US border? In terms of humanitarian assistance, FBOs on the Mexico-US border have transitioned from providing food and shelter ("a blanket and a taco") to active roles in advocacy and collective action. In taking on this broader role, FBOs intersect with the police, with border patrols and immigration officers, and with the state. This advocacy and lobbying work includes the promotion of human rights and equity in the everyday lives of migrants, including practical assistance with securing legal documentation and social integration through work placements. One interlocutor stated:

"Justice is about the basics of life and shelter, but it's also giving people a voice in the world, too. We give people an opportunity to be heard, and listening to them will cause us to be a voice for them. Be a voice for the voiceless."

While social justice advocates aim to challenge the structures that silence those voices,<sup>94</sup> listening to the voices of refugees and migrants is a first step to bear witness to experiences of violence and discrimination. It is also a prerequisite to create solidarity in the midst of displacement.

In this regard, it is important to reflect on how migrants themselves believed justice could be achieved. For example, many migrants defined justice as the ability to live a life free of violence in their countries of origin, and/or the right to be safe and legally admitted to a host country after forced displacement. For instance, Mexican and Central American migrants often criticised the violence in their communities of origin, the corruption of local institutions that proved incapable or unwilling to guarantee them justice and safety, and the violations of due process, discrimination, and inhumane treatment at the hand of the U.S. immigration system.

Related to this is the question of where the work between refugees and FBOs fits within current international refugee, humanitarian, and human rights law. The work on this strand of the research project suggests three presentations of this problem in the context of international refugee law and Judeo-Christian traditions, as summarized in Text Box 7.

### TEXT BOX 7: Refugee Law, human rights, or the hospitality of faith?<sup>95</sup>

The orthodox view is that international refugee law offers a frame of ‘burden sharing’ for states. Conservative in nature, pro-state rather than pro-refugee, this nonetheless can accommodate FBO and community work quite easily in a by-and-large workable division of labour whereby refugee law does the work of protecting states, and FBOs and communities focus on care, asylum, and integration.

The opposite view of this is that precisely because of the non-progressive nature of refugee law, many communities and FBO deliberately distance themselves in order to put refugees first. From this perspective, community and FBOs turn away from the law in favour of a theological universalism (‘Everyone who is here is from here’), whilst noting that this itself can also be read as the first humanitarian principle: ‘humanity’. Whilst this move can also remove refugee agency, in favour of a view of passive suffering, it can also be bolder in holding positions of non-conditional asylum. (While historical analysis points to the extent to which refugees are not meant to be the *subjects* of global human rights but, rather, objects of humanitarian assistance, it is equally the case that many humanitarians do believe that refugees have a *right* to receive assistance, at least in theory acknowledging agency in this way).

A third, more nuanced, position begins not with the separation between law and community, but with the assumption that all law, including international, refugee, humanitarian, and human rights law, is determined by how communities bring their own interpretation to it. From this view, there is no strictly secular/theological division that can clearly demarcate matter of law from politics, ethics, or faith. Jewish and Christian laws, for example, are themselves founded on notions of banishment and asylum, and these foundations did not disappear with the advent of secular international law.

The dynamic between law and faith is therefore complex and both historically and geographically contextual. On the one hand, the ethical-theological-historical imperatives that always haunt the law can be activated against conservative state-centric refugee law: this is why, for example, human rights law is often used by legal activists to challenge refugee law (such as in push-backs in the Mediterranean, for example), and the increasing trend to criminalize solidarity around the world. On the other hand, this latent theological foundation of international refugee law can be weaponized as part of a larger geopolitical ‘war of civilizations’ where the figure of the ‘Christian fleeing persecution’ is contrasted with the ‘suspicious Muslim refugee’.

Questions around agency, faith, refugee and human rights law, in other words, are highly complex. Findings from the initial interviews conducted with lawyers working from within a largely Judeo-Christian framework thus point to the need to continue re-contextualizing refugee and human rights law by considering how legal traditions which are developed in relation to diverse religions other than Christianity and Judaism have re-framed understandings of law and faith.<sup>96</sup>

Since the 2000s there has been increasingly vibrant engagement in documenting and promoting the rights of forced migrants in Islam.<sup>97</sup> This has included tracing the nature and content of traditional frameworks promoting such rights. This includes not only the right for people to flee persecution but also asserts the duty of people to *seek* and be *granted* asylum,<sup>98</sup> and the importance in Islam of “giving people rights *in the right way*,” to uphold their dignity and agency. In addition, analyses have traced how these traditional frameworks have been, or rather have largely failed to be, adopted and enacted by nation states. The fact that Muslim scholars were not included in the development of key ‘international’ or postcolonial ‘national’ legal and politico-legal structures means that the rights of forced migrants in Islam have remained largely absent in state and international responses to displacement worldwide. This absence has led organisations such as Islamic Relief to precisely “outline the principles that can form the foundations of a future protection framework.”<sup>99</sup> Such ongoing engagement seeks to reconfigure the relationship between the law, politics and the rights of people who have been persecuted, through explicit engagement with Islamic principles.

It seeks to do so whilst recognizing the extent to which states around the world are increasingly introducing restrictions and political strategies that currently prevent many of these principles from being put into action. These restrictions and strategies range from travel bans and deportation regimes, to journalists and humanitarian workers being killed, to humanitarians and solidarians being criminalised, to the introduction of finance laws and countering violent extremism policies, all of which are having, and will continue to have, wide-ranging effects.<sup>100</sup>



Refugee housing project from 1900s, Athens (c) Fiddian-Qasmiyeh

While both states and human rights frameworks fail to offer meaningful protection to refugees, a wide range of actors, including refugees themselves, faith-based organisations and local communities, have continued to seek to fill the gaps that have not only been left by state, but have been created and manufactured by them. A key challenge in this regard is the importance of giving due acknowledgement to the work that is taking place on the local, neighbourhood and community level that is so often invisible – noting that giving greater visibility may be one way of changing the narrative, which is often depicted as military movements, conflict and people in pain – while simultaneously being attentive to



the politics and potential risks underpinning the nature and rate of disclosure. Acknowledging that humanitarianism is itself emblematic of failure, being required when the political has failed, requires us to return to one of the foundational approaches underpinning this study: to focus on the structural barriers that create and reproduce inequalities, exclusion, violence and marginalization. The words of many of our project’s research participants echo in this space:

“the roles [of providing assistance] should be limited to *government* organizations only.”

Syrian refugee living in Baddawi Camp.

“it is a public responsibility... It is the responsibility of the UN and all organizations and institutions with humanitarian titles...”

Palestinian from Nahr el-Bared resident in Baddawi Camp.

“Where are the human rights?” Sultan asked [in Greece], his voice shaking with anger. “We only depend on God. We don’t depend on any NGO or organization. We are dead to the world.”<sup>101</sup>

Like many members of host communities and faith-based organisations, refugees themselves act to support members of their own and other communities precisely because states and international organisations are failing and *refusing* to do so. The invocation of depending on God emerges precisely as a direct critique of the failure of political systems.<sup>102</sup> Far from a fatalistic response to such conditions of manufactured precarity and restrictionism, local and transnational actors alike are creating diverse ways of conceiving



A woman waters flowers in Baddawi refugee camp, North Lebanon (c) Fiddian-Qasmiyeh

moral obligations towards one another, mapping and embodying different ways of 'being with' and 'being together' (following Jean Luc Nancy) in processes of displacement and of hosting, whilst attempting to hold state and international authorities accountable for their political failures.<sup>103</sup>

## Conclusion

This report has explored a number of key research findings from Cameroon, Greece, Jordan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mexico, and the USA which help us understand some of the different ways that religion can and does play a role in supporting refugees.

While conceptualizations of 'social justice' are complex, this report has pointed to several ways that religion can be seen to play an important role. These include shaping how individuals and communities perceive, (re)define and act to protect their 'basic needs' and rights in times of crisis and displacement. We have also noted the powerful roles that faith narratives, traditions and customs play in enabling solidarity and mutual support, shaping both experiences of refugee-led support, or 'refugee-refugee humanitarianism'.<sup>104</sup> Likewise, approaching social justice through a faith lens allows us to recognise how faith traditions may be embodied, practiced and embedded in diverse ways and spaces, in relation to xenophobic state and immigration structures.

The first section of the report explored the implicit and explicit significance of religion in relation to local responses to displacement in contexts of precarity and structural violence, centralizing the responses developed by different groups of refugees themselves. In particular, it documented the ways that refugees in Greece and Lebanon have developed and implemented refugee-led, faith-inspired responses to their own precarious situations. In so doing, they offer an important counter-narrative to the intersecting discourses of crisis and of burden, which often reproduce one dimensional representations of refugees (including in particular Muslim refugees) alternately as passive victims in need of rescue, as transnational objects unfit for European or North American citizenship, and as a political and social threat.

The second section of the report further built upon the cases of Greece and Lebanon to explore the ways that individuals and communities move beyond, and resist fear of, and distrust amongst, refugees. By challenging fatalistic assumptions of hostility and rejection towards and between refugees, this section identified a range of structures and programmes that *create* tensions between groups. It concurrently suggested the importance of acknowledging the development of different forms of mutual support and solidarity across different identity lines. Examples from CAR, Lebanon and Jordan then highlighted the importance of faith in underpinning acts of mutual support. Here, faith-based teachings laid down in holy texts, sermons or similar, establish norms of hosting and hospitality that must be more substantially understood and engaged with in contexts where refugees are increasingly living in urban areas, and in relation to diverse hosts, including established citizens and other refugees. As a whole, the cases explored in



A Syrian coffee vendor on the outskirts of Baddawi camp (c) Fiddian-Qasmiyeh

the first two sections of the report challenge us to think beyond narratives that interpret faith in contexts of displacement as something to be mistrusted, leading only to negative outcomes, violence or suspicion.

The third section of the report subsequently explored public and the private dimensions of faith-based responses. Whilst faith-based values may inspire charitable acts or mutual solidarity, they may also be characterised by and performed with discretion, as forms of ‘undisclosed care’. This contrasts with the approach taken by formal international humanitarian actors, including some faith-inspired ones, whose funding and accountability structures require that they are internationally recognized as visibly responding in order to also be perceived to be effective. By contrast, faith-inspired forms of mutual and ‘discrete’ response pose a challenge to how academics and practitioners both engage with and account for such models of support. This prompts several ethical questions relating to the right to ‘disclosure’<sup>105</sup> which must be considered more fully when thinking through what ‘engagement’ with local faith responses to displacement would look like.

The final section of the report then examined the position of religion and solidarity in relationships between local, national and international level actors. Through a close focus on the Mexico-US case-study, this section demonstrated the diverse expressions of faith and solidarity in responding to a massive influx of migrants and refugees across the border. In this context, the notions of solidarity and social justice become contested, with different communities bringing their own meanings to lived experiences, legal rights, histories and faith-traditions. Accounting for the complex relationships that exist between local, national and international actors in diverse settings requires us to think critically about how we conceptualise well-established norms of ‘justice’ and humanitarianism,

given that - across all our sites - how these are understood and expressed vary significantly.

Indeed, one of the key themes arising throughout the report, and the multisited research it builds upon, is the importance of complementing an acknowledgement of the ways that displaced people both provide and receive different forms of material aid, with a focus on the ways that limited and precarious spaces are shared and how people live with and alongside each other in conditions of structural inequality. Shifting attention from material assistance towards non-material forms of support, in turn raises questions about how different people and institutions conceptualise social justice: who decides what counts as 'a response', and as an 'adequate' response. How do different actors – refugees, migrants, members of local communities, organisations on different scales – assign significance to and evaluate different forms of support, including material and spiritual support, sharing space, conviviality and 'being together'?

A related theme pertains to the centrality that can and should (or should not) be given to religion, including the risk of enacting different forms of epistemic violence by forcibly interpellating refugees 'as' Muslims or over-emphasising religious identity to the detriment of other identifiers which may be rendered invisible (such as self-identifying as queer or secular). These processes of interpretation and representation, and of centralizing and marginalizing specific identity markers must themselves be interrogated. Greater attention must be given to the varying ways in which religion is negotiated as a key marker of identity by refugee and host communities, as well as other markers of identity, including gender, sexuality and ethnicity.

A focus on relationality must trace connections and modes of encounters and support between different groups of refugees, but must also consider forms of violence and oppression between members of what may be perceived to be a 'common' religious tradition.

In the cases of refugees from Muslim-majority Middle Eastern states seeking sanctuary in Muslim-majority states (Lebanon and Malaysia) *and* in Christian-majority states (Greece), we highlighted the extent to which different communities were characterised by Islamophobia and the rejection of ('the wrong kind of') Muslims.

The case of Rohingya refugees – members of a Muslim minority persecuted in Myanmar – who have sought sanctuary in neighbouring Muslim majority states, demonstrates that solidarity has been elusive, with diverse narratives, including a number linked to religion, used by the Malaysian state to justify the exclusion of refugees from Myanmar. The persecution and discrimination of Rohingya people in their country of origin has continued in their country of asylum where they are Muslim minorities within a Muslim majority state. As an emerging area of interest, discrimination within and between followers of different Muslim sects and schools of *fiqh* requires further attention. By contrast, in the case of Mexico, Christian teachings on faith, hospitality, and social justice tend to provide the core tenets that drive local communities to come, spontaneously and repeatedly, to the aid of dispossessed migrants and refugees.

Future research should continue to trace not only such modes of relationality but also the ways in which spaces and sites are rooted in spatio-temporal terms:<sup>106</sup> refugees in Greece include Palestinians and Syrians who previously resided (amongst other places) in Baddawi refugee camp (Lebanon); Palestinians, Syrians, Afghans were amongst the interviewees who participated in this study in Greece, Lebanon and Jordan; Cameroonians and Muslims from many nationalities were among the people seeking asylum on the Mexico-US border; and the Malaysian state funds a ‘Learning Centre’ for Palestinian and Syrian refugees in Baddawi refugee camp<sup>107</sup> while failing to provide protection to refugees from Myanmar in its own territory. The journeys and trajectories of people affected by displacement are multidirectional, characterized by diverse processes of enforced ‘immobility’ and ‘stuckedness’ as well as push-backs and deportations. Far from being isolated ‘cases’, these displacement situations are deeply interconnected, and “mutually constitutive” in diverse ways across time and space.<sup>108</sup>

In conclusion, the multisited framework underpinning our project enabled us to identify the importance of historical and geographical specificities, whilst also highlighting diverse commonalities of experience. These commonalities point to the ways that persecution, violence and diverse forms of social *injustice* are linked to similar systems and structures of inequality and exploitation. These include states that not only fail to protect refugees and migrants, but also create precarity and risk across time and space. It is against this backdrop that we find non-state actors acting in ways designed to fill the gaps created by states, and seeking to hold states accountable for their responses.



A man prays on the route to Baddawi camp (c) Fiddian-Qasmiyeh

- <sup>1</sup> Kammer, Fred. et al (2017). Recovering the human face of immigration in the US South. University of Florida, Program for Immigration, Religion & Social Change. Introduction, pp.1-2 [2 p] <http://www.loyno.edu/jsri/sites/loyno.edu/jsri/files/Recovering%20human%20face-0317-final%20final-carUFL.pdf>
- <sup>1</sup> While this has always been the case, it has been in the 2000s that the role of religion has been officially acknowledged by the UNHCR, as exemplified by the 2012 UNHCR High Commissioner’s Dialogue on Faith and Protection, and its 2013 UNHCR document, *Welcoming the Stranger*. See. Ager, A. and Ager, J. (2015) *Faith, Secularism and Humanitarian Engagement: The place of religion in the support of displaced communities*. New York: Palgrave.
- <sup>2</sup> A faith-based organization (FBO) can be defined as “any organization that derives inspiration from and guidance for its activities from the teachings and principles of faith or from a particular interpretation or school of thought within a faith” - Clarke, G. and Jennings, M. (Eds) (2008) *Development, Civil Society and Faith-Based Organizations: Bridging the Sacred and the Secular*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, p. 6.
- <sup>3</sup> As we indicate below, attention to religion, through an intersectionalist lens, also enables us, or requires us, to reconceptualise what is identified and provided as a ‘basic need’ – see Text Box 2.
- <sup>4</sup> It is also relevant to note that in some geopolitical contexts, religion ‘is’ the foundation of politics and political power structures.
- <sup>5</sup> Refugee Hosts (2018) *Local Faith Community Responses to Displacement in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey: Emerging Evidence and New Approaches*, UCL Migration Research Unit Report, pp. 13-15, <https://refugeehosts.files.wordpress.com/2018/06/rh-local-faith-report.pdf>; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2014) *The Ideal Refugees: Gender, Islam and the Sahrawi Politics of Survival*, Syracuse University Press.
- <sup>6</sup> These interviews were undertaken by Anna Rowlands and Lyndsey Stonebridge in 2019, and are complemented by interviews completed in Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, the UK and selected European countries by members of the Lebanon and Jordan research team and by Anna Rowlands (in Turkey, with Aydan Greatrick).
- <sup>7</sup> The exceptions are Moira camp on the island of Lesbos (Greece) and Baddawi refugee camp (Lebanon), although even the latter camp is ‘urban’ in nature. On the latter, see Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2016) ‘Refugee-Refugee Relationality: Hospitality and ‘Being With’ Refugees,’ *Refugee Hosts*, <https://refugeehosts.org/2016/12/14/refugee-refugee-relationality-hospitality-and-being-with-refugees/>.
- <sup>8</sup> UNHCR (2017) “UNHCR Diagnostic Tool for Alternatives to Camps: 2017 Global Results,” available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/uk/59b2a6f07>.
- <sup>9</sup> The exceptions are Moira camp on the island of Lesbos (Greece) and Baddawi refugee camp (Lebanon), although even the latter camp is ‘urban’ in snature. On the latter, see Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2016) ‘Refugee-Refugee Relationality: Hospitality and ‘Being With’ Refugees,’ *Refugee Hosts*, <https://refugeehosts.org/2016/12/14/refugee-refugee-relationality-hospitality-and-being-with-refugees/>.
- <sup>10</sup> UNHCR (2017) “UNHCR Diagnostic Tool for Alternatives to Camps: 2017 Global Results,” available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/uk/59b2a6f07>.
- <sup>11</sup> See Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2019) ‘Reflections from the Field: Introduction to the Series’, *Refugee Hosts*, <https://refugeehosts.org/blog/reflections-from-the-field-introduction-to-the-series/>.
- <sup>12</sup> Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. and Daley, P. (2018) “‘Conceptualising the South and South-South Encounters,” in Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. and Daley, P. (Eds) *The Handbook of South-South Relations*, Routledge, 1-28; Tuhiwai Smith, L. (1999) *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed Books; Mignolo, W.D. (2015) “Foreword: Yes, We Can.” In: H. Dabashi, *Can Non-Europeans Think?* London and New York: Zed Books, pp. viii–xl.ii.; Panter-Brick C, Kurtz J, Dajani R (2018). ‘What strong partnerships achieve: Innovations in research and practice,’ *Humanitarian Exchange*, 72:15-19.
- <sup>13</sup> Or, indeed, a researcher who is racialized by interlocutors as ‘African’ irrespective of their ‘actual’ nationality.
- <sup>14</sup> In Lebanon, a number of refugees from Syria and members of the host community expressed a preference to speak with either an unveiled or veiled researcher, depending on their own identity and their assumptions regarding the beliefs of the researchers - see Itani, B. (2019) ‘Positionality and Research on Local Responses to Displacement,’ *Refugee Hosts*, <https://refugeehosts.org/2019/06/21/the-importance-of-identity-reflections-from-fieldwork-in-hamra-beirut/>.
- <sup>15</sup> On the urgent need to develop ‘not only new epistemologies but also healthy working conditions conducive to dynamic and critical research practices’ see Hanafi, S. (2018) “Postcolonialism’s after-life in the Arab world: toward a post-authoritarian approach,” in Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. and Daley, P. (Eds) *The Handbook of South-South Relations*, Routledge, 76-85. In contrast, on ‘the impossibilities for such an intention’ to decolonize research’ see Habashi, J. (2018) “Creating indigenous discourse: history, power and imperialism in academia, Palestinian case,” in Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. and Daley, P. (Eds) *The Handbook of South-South Relations*, Routledge, 112-124.

- <sup>16</sup> Itani, B. (2019) 'Positionality and Research on Local Responses to Displacement,' *Refugee Hosts*, <https://refugeehosts.org/2019/06/21/the-importance-of-identity-reflections-from-fieldwork-in-hamra-beirut/>.
- <sup>17</sup> Itani, B. (2019) 'Positionality and Research on Local Responses to Displacement,' *Refugee Hosts*, <https://refugeehosts.org/2019/06/21/the-importance-of-identity-reflections-from-fieldwork-in-hamra-beirut/>.
- <sup>18</sup> Itani, B. (2019) 'Positionality and Research on Local Responses to Displacement,' *Refugee Hosts*, <https://refugeehosts.org/2019/06/21/the-importance-of-identity-reflections-from-fieldwork-in-hamra-beirut/>.
- <sup>19</sup> Grewal, Z. verbatim contributions to the UCL-Yale Bridging Voices Workshop on 10 May 2019; also see Grewal, Z. (2013) *Islam Is a Foreign Country: American Muslims and the Global Crisis of Authority*, New York University Press.
- <sup>20</sup> Whilst the social taboo and political pressures that arise in relation to conversion can make it a challenging topic for researchers to approach, it can also be observed that conversion can itself be a way to reject and/or cope with perceived and/or experienced oppression, much like 'lower-caste' individuals converting en masse to Buddhism and Christianity in certain contexts. There is an opportunity for further research to examine how displacement affords some people with the opportunity to break from their faith and at times instrumentalize it for assistance and better chances of resettlement.
- <sup>21</sup> In the context of Greece, one of Grewal's interlocutors is reported to have asked a left Zionist faith-based organization: "We know you think that Syrians are refugees, but what about Palestinians?" This is a powerful reminder of the extent to which not all refugees are viewed or responded to equally by different audiences, with Palestinian refugees excluded from the so-called international refugee regime, and diverse processes that position Palestinians as what Fiddian-Qasmiyeh refers to as 'a-refugees' whose very existence is denied or who are not considered to be worthy of humanitarian or political support. See Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2015) "Conflicting Missions? The politics of Evangelical humanitarianism in the Western Sahara and Palestine-Israel," in A. Horstmann and J-H Jung (Eds.) *Building Noah's Ark: Refugee, Migrant and Religious Communities*, New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 157-179, p. 176.
- <sup>22</sup> Itani, B. (2019) 'Positionality and Research on Local Responses to Displacement,' *Refugee Hosts*, <https://refugeehosts.org/2019/06/21/the-importance-of-identity-reflections-from-fieldwork-in-hamra-beirut/>.
- <sup>23</sup> Many have also argued, on a more pragmatic level, that "the activities of Evangelical groups which combine assistance with a missionary message can have repercussions on all faith-based humanitarian organizations" (Ferris, E. (2005) 'Faith-based and secular humanitarian organizations,' *International Review of the Red Cross*, 87(858): 311-325, p. 317), leading to increased suspicion and potentially violence towards non-Evangelical Christian agencies (De Cordier, B. (2009) 'Faith-based aid, globalisation and the humanitarian frontline: an analysis of Western-based Muslim aid organizations,' *Disasters*, 33(4): 608-628, p. 620). In the context of our research project, these suspicions also extended towards academic researchers, as noted in this section. See Olivo-Ensor, M. (2003) 'Disaster Evangelism: Religion as a Catalyst for Change in Post-Mitch Honduras,' *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters*, 21(2): 31-50.
- <sup>24</sup> Indeed, facing a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of religion is one of the five grounds listed in the 1951 Geneva Convention on the Status of Refugees – see UNHCR (2004) *Guidelines on International Protection: Religion-Based Refugee Claims under Article 1A(2) of the 1951 Convention and/or the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees*, HCR/GIP/04/06, 28 April 2004.
- <sup>25</sup> Violence was also ever present in refugee and migrant narratives in Mexico, from gang violence, political instability, narco-trafficking, to domestic violence. While not linked to religion by interviewees, violence and persecution are the primary reasons underpinning refugees' and migrants' decisions to leave their country of origin. Refugees and migrants also universally shared stories of corruption and collusion between the police and military and organized crime and gangs, especially throughout Central America and Mexico. Police harassment in Tijuana and other border towns was also identified as a major concern among refugees and migrants.
- <sup>26</sup> As Joshi notes, the process of the *racialization of religion* pertains to the process whereby "a set of phenotypical features... comes to be associated in the popular mind with a given religion and/or with other social traits." Joshi, K. Y. (2016) "Racialization of Religion and Global Migration," in Saunders, J.B., Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. and Snyder, S. (Eds) *Intersections of Religion and Migration: Issues at the Global Crossroads*, New York: Palgrave 2016, 123-149.
- <sup>27</sup> In the United States, for instance, the Lautenberg Amendment prioritizes the granting of asylum and facilitation of resettlement for religious minorities from Iran, via a reduction in the evidentiary standard for their claims for refugee status. See Bruno, A. (2015) *Refugee Admissions and Resettlement Policy*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service. For a critique of the increased political commitment expressed by (Christian) politicians in the U.S. and European states to resettle Christian minorities from the Middle East, see Saunders, J. B., Fiddian-

- Qasmiyeh, E. and Snyder, S. (2016) “Introduction: Articulating Intersections at the Global Crossroads of Religion and Migration”, in Saunders, J.B., Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. and Snyder, S. (Eds) *Intersections of Religion and Migration: Issues at the Global Crossroads*, New York: Palgrave, 1-46.
- <sup>28</sup> Saunders, J. B., Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. and Snyder, S. (2016) “Introduction: Articulating Intersections at the Global Crossroads of Religion and Migration”, in Saunders, J.B., Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. and Snyder, S. (Eds) *Intersections of Religion and Migration: Issues at the Global Crossroads*, New York: Palgrave. Such was the case of three Christian Syrian refugee families who applied for asylum in Texas (United States) in November 2015 (in the aftermath of the Paris bomb attacks) and yet who were placed in immigration detention rather than offered sanctuary in the United States. Dart, T. (2015) ‘Syrian who Fled War only to Arrive amid US Refugee Panic Mystified by Hostility,’ *The Guardian*, December 17, 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/dec/17/christian-syrian-refugee-i-thought-america-would-accept-me>.
- <sup>29</sup> Also see Fiddian, E. (2006) ‘Relocating: The Asylum Experience in Cairo,’ *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, 8(2): 295-318.
- <sup>30</sup> Source: Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2017) Presentation to the 2017 UNHCR High Commissioner’s Dialogue on Protection Challenges, December 2017, available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/uk/events/conferences/5a745f4f7/presentation-dr-elena-fiddian-qasmiyeh-university-college-london-high-commissioners.html>.
- <sup>31</sup> See Crenshaw, K., (1991) ‘Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color,’ *Stanford Law Review* 43(6), 1241–1299.
- <sup>32</sup> Drawing on Sara Ahmed, cited in Saunders, J. B., Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. and Snyder, S. (2016) “Introduction”, in Saunders, J.B., Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. and Snyder, S. (Eds) *Intersections of Religion and Migration: Issues at the Global Crossroads*, New York: Palgrave, 1-46, p. 18.
- <sup>33</sup> This invocation of ‘intersections’ is in line with the legal process of assessing an asylum claimant’s ‘nexus’ to the five grounds of persecution delineated in the 1951 Geneva Convention, as these grounds “are not mutually exclusive and may overlap”. See UNHCR (2012) *Guidelines on International Protection NO. 9: Claims to Refugee Status based on Sexual Orientation and/or Gender Identity within the context of Article 1A(2) of the 1951 Convention and/or its 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees*, HCR/GIP/12/09, 23 October 2012. Para 40.
- <sup>34</sup> Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2016) “The faith-gender-asylum nexus: an intersectionalist analysis of representations of the ‘Refugee Crisis’”, in Mavelli, L. and Wilson, E. K. (Eds) *The Refugee Crisis and Religion: Secularism, Security and Hospitality in Question*. Rowland and Littlefield International.
- <sup>35</sup> Processes of conflating religion with culture are common across diverse situations, including in refugee status determination procedures – see Akram, S. M. (2000) ‘Orientalism Revisited in Asylum and Refugee Claims’ *International Journal of Refugee Law*, 12(1): 7-40; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2014b) ‘Transnational Abductions and Transnational Jurisdictions? The politics of “protecting” female Muslim refugees in Spain,’ *Gender, Place and Culture*, 21(2): 174-194.
- <sup>36</sup> Likewise, politicized notions of queer identity also make it difficult for queer people of faith to seek support, fearing and/or encountering hostility from ‘secular’ LGBTQ rights groups, humanitarian workers and other queer refugees who treat faith with scepticism and/or fear. See Giametta, C. (2014) ““Rescued” subjects: The question of religiosity for non-heteronormative asylum seekers in the UK,” *Sexualities*, 17(6), 583–599; Greatrick, A. (2019) “Coaching Queer”: Hospitality and the categorical Imperative of LGBTQ Asylum Seeking in Lebanon and Turkey,” *Migration and Society*, 2: 98-106.
- <sup>37</sup> Source: Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2017) Presentation to the 2017 UNHCR High Commissioner’s Dialogue on Protection Challenges, December 2017, available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/uk/events/conferences/5a745f4f7/presentation-dr-elena-fiddian-qasmiyeh-university-college-london-high-commissioners.html>.
- <sup>38</sup> Refugee Hosts (2018) “Local Faith Community Responses to Displacement in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey: Emerging Evidence and New Approaches” *UCL Migration Research Unit*, pg. 16, available at: <https://refugeehosts.files.wordpress.com/2018/06/rh-local-faith-report.pdf>.
- <sup>39</sup> Discussed in Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. and Ager, A. (Eds) (2013) *Local Faith Communities and the promotion of resilience in humanitarian situations*, RSC Working Paper 90, Oxford: Refugee Studies Centre, February 2013.
- <sup>40</sup> Discussed in Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. and Ager, A. (Eds) (2013) *Local Faith Communities and the promotion of resilience in humanitarian situations*, RSC Working Paper 90, Oxford: Refugee Studies Centre, February 2013; and Wilkinson, O. and Ager, J. (2017) *Scoping Study on Local Faith Communities in Urban Displacement: Evidence on Localisation and Urbanisation*, available at: <https://www.geog.ucl.ac.uk/research/research-centres/migration-research-unit/pdfs/Scoping%20Report%20typeset.pdf>.
- <sup>41</sup> El Nakib, S. and Ager, A. (2015) *Local Faith Community and Related Civil Society Engagement in Humanitarian Response with Syrian Refugees in Irbid, Jordan: Report to the Henry Luce Foundation*, New York: Columbia



- University, Mailman School of Public Health, April 2015, 6–7, <http://jilifc.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/El-Nakib-Ager-Local-faith-communities-and-humanitarian-response-in-Irbid-.pdf>.
- <sup>42</sup> Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2019) ‘Looking Forward: Disasters at 40,’ *Disasters*, 43(S1): S36-S60; Crisp, J. (2015) ‘Syria’s refugees: a global responsibility,’ *OpenDemocracy* 50.50. 29 June. <https://www.opendemocracy.net/jeff-crisp/syria%E2%80%99s-refugees-global-responsibility> (last accessed on 14 January 2019); Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2016) ‘Representations of displacement from the Middle East and North Africa’. *Public Culture*. 28(3): 457–473; de Haas, H. (2016) ‘Refugees: a small and relatively stable proportion of world migration’. 22 August, <http://heindehaas.blogspot.com/2016/08/refugees-small-and-relatively-stable.html> (last accessed on 14 January 2019); Ferris, E. (2017) ‘Unpacking the numbers on global refugees.’ Brookings blog. 20 June. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2017/06/20/unpacking-the-numbers-on-global-refugees/> (last accessed on 14 January 2019).
- <sup>43</sup> It is notable that the ‘migrant caravan’ was depicted as exceptional, and yet “Every year around Easter for the past decade, a caravan of migrant rights activists and Central American migrants travel through Mexico to raise awareness of what migrants experience during their journeys” – see: <https://www.france24.com/en/20190206-five-things-know-about-migrant-caravans-crossing-mexico>.
- <sup>44</sup> Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. and Qasmiyeh, Y. M. (2017) ‘Refugee-Refugee Solidarity in Death and Dying,’ *Refugee Hosts*, <https://refugeehosts.org/2017/05/23/refugee-refugee-solidarity-in-death-and-dying/>.
- <sup>45</sup> In Mexico, it is notable that people working in migrant support shelters include those who have ‘failed’ to cross the Mexico-USA border, or who have been deported – evidence provided by Catherine Panter-Brick at the Bridging Voices Workshop on 10 May 2019.
- <sup>46</sup> Source: Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2016) ‘Refugee-Refugee Relationality: Hospitality and ‘Being With’ Refugees,’ *Refugee Hosts*, <https://refugeehosts.org/2016/12/14/refugee-refugee-relationality-hospitality-and-being-with-refugees/>.
- <sup>47</sup> Point raised by Prof Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh during statement to UN High Commissioner’s Dialogue on Protection Challenges 2017 (available at <https://www.unhcr.org/uk/events/conferences/5a745f4f7/presentation-dr-elena-fiddian-qasmiyeh-university-college-london-high-commissioners.html>), drawing on Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2017) ‘Refugees helping refugees: how a Palestinian camp in Lebanon is welcoming Syrians,’ *The Conversation*, 3 January 2017. Available at: <https://theconversation.com/refugeeshelping-refugees-how-a-palestinian-camp-in-lebanon-is-welcoming-syrians-48056>. Also see: [www.refugeehosts.org](http://www.refugeehosts.org).
- <sup>48</sup> The terms are Fiddian-Qasmiyeh’s – for ‘refugee-refugee relationality’ see Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2016) ‘Refugee-Refugee Relationality: Hospitality and ‘Being With’ Refugees,’ *Refugee Hosts*, <https://refugeehosts.org/2016/12/14/refugee-refugee-relationality-hospitality-and-being-with-refugees/>; For ‘Refugee-Refugee Humanitarianism’ see Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2016) ‘Refugees Hosting Refugees,’ *Refugee Hosts*, <https://refugeehosts.org/2016/09/28/hybrid-host-communities-in-contexts-of-overlapping-displacement/>.
- <sup>49</sup> Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2018) ‘The Localisation of Aid and Southern-led Responses to Displacement: Beyond instrumentalising local actors,’ *Refugee Hosts*, <https://refugeehosts.org/2018/04/17/the-localisation-of-aid-and-southern-led-responses-to-displacement/>.
- <sup>50</sup> See Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2012) ‘Invisible Refugees and/or Overlapping Refugeeedom? Protecting Sahrawis and Palestinians Displaced by the 2011 Libyan Uprising,’ *International Journal of Refugee Law*, 24(2): 263-293; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2015) ‘Refugees helping refugees: how a Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon is welcoming Syrians,’ *The Conversation*, 4 November 2015.
- <sup>51</sup> Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2016) ‘Refugee-Refugee Relationality: Hospitality and ‘Being With’ Refugees,’ *Refugee Hosts*, <https://refugeehosts.org/2016/12/14/refugee-refugee-relationality-hospitality-and-being-with-refugees/>.
- <sup>52</sup> Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. and Qasmiyeh, Y. M. (2017) ‘Refugee-Refugee Solidarity in Death and Dying.’ *Refugee Hosts*, <https://refugeehosts.org/2017/05/23/refugee-refugee-solidarity-in-death-and-dying/>.
- <sup>53</sup> As noted by Quan Tran in her contribution to the Bridging Voices Workshop on 10 May, there is an important resonances with the Vietnamese case, in South East Asia, where people who died in camps were also buried there (also see Tran, Q. T. (2012) ‘Remembering the Boat People Exodus: A Tale of Two Memorials,’ *Journal of Vietnamese Studies*, 7(3): 80-121). As in the case of Nahr el-Bared camp cemetery in North Lebanon documented by Qasmiyeh and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (2013), these burial sites in South East Asia also became sites of memory, pilgrimage sites (see Qasmiyeh, Y. M. and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2013) “Refugee Camps and Cities in Conversation,” in J. Garnett and Harris, A. (Eds) *Migration and Religious Identity in the Modern Metropolis*, Farnham: Ashgate, 131-143). As Tran noted in the Workshop, this raises questions about how we can make room for these sorts of assistance, and dignifying human lives, where death and the space of death become a space of reconstitution both for those who have passed away and the communities that these refugee bodies live and die in?

- <sup>54</sup> See Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2017) Presentation to the 2017 UNHCR High Commissioner’s Dialogue on Protection Challenges, December 2017, available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/uk/events/conferences/5a745f4f7/presentation-dr-elena-fiddian-qasmiyeh-university-college-london-high-commissioners.html>.
- <sup>55</sup> On the limits of response and ‘caring’ for refugees from Syria in Baddawi camp, see Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2019) ‘The Poetics of Undisclosed Care,’ *Refugee Hosts*, <https://refugeehosts.org/2019/05/21/the-poetics-of-undisclosed-care/>.
- <sup>56</sup> As argued by Jacques Derrida (2000), and discussed in Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2016) ‘Refugee-Refugee Relationality: Hospitality and ‘Being With’ Refugees,’ *Refugee Hosts*, <https://refugeehosts.org/2016/12/14/refugee-refugee-relationality-hospitality-and-being-with-refugees/>; and in Berg, M. and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2018) ‘Introduction: Encountering Hospitality and Hostility,’ *Migration and Society*, 1: 1-6.
- <sup>57</sup> See Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2016) *Promoting the successful integration of refugees/forcibly displaced people in situations of Protracted Forced Displacement*, Commissioned DfID Rapid Review, UK Department for International Development, March 2016 (on file with the author).
- <sup>58</sup> The inevitability of tension along such lines of difference as ethnicity, religion and nationality are common in the thinking and programming of international humanitarian responses, and yet are markedly absent in the context of Zareena Grewal’s research in Athens.
- <sup>59</sup> It is notable that tensions and solidarity are not mutually exclusive, and, indeed, expressions of solidarity can be deliberate efforts to overcome tensions.
- <sup>60</sup> Grewal, Z. (2018) ‘A Successful Alternative to Refugee Camps: A Greek Squat Shames the EU and NGOs,’ *Refugee Hosts*, <https://refugeehosts.org/2018/01/26/a-successful-alternative-to-refugee-camps-a-greek-squat-shames-the-eu-and-ngos/>. Notably, as discussed by Grewal in the Bridging Voices workshop on 10 May, this piece was originally posted on *The Atlantic* with the title ‘Muslim Refugees Team Up With Anarchists in an Effort To Shame Greece,’ as if the fact that Muslim refugees would themselves be anarchists or leftists were unimaginable.
- <sup>61</sup> Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2016) ‘Refugee-Refugee Relationality: Hospitality and ‘Being With’ Refugees,’ *Refugee Hosts*, <https://refugeehosts.org/2016/12/14/refugee-refugee-relationality-hospitality-and-being-with-refugees/>.
- <sup>62</sup> As UNRWA is held hostage by the UN state system, a key question is whether and how civil society and communities, groups and individuals implicitly and explicitly inspired by or motivated by religious step in to compensate for Palestinian refugees’ reduced access to services.
- <sup>63</sup> Other ways that resettlement can create tensions and hierarchies across different groups of refugees were also highlighted by Moustafa Bayoumi in his presentation at the Bridging Voices workshop on 10 May 2019. In his reflections, Bayoumi noted that the Muslim community in Kingston, Canada has been responsible, through community-based private partnerships, for bringing refugee families to Canada via resettlement, but has believed that the amount of government sponsorship – \$18,000 per family – was too low to properly support people. As such, families resettled privately by members of the Muslim community in this Canadian city have received \$40,000 per year, creating inequality as a result. As noted in the text above in relation to Greece and Lebanon, interventions – whether by the state, UN agencies, NGOs and/or community members – may challenge, and even disrupt refugee-refugee relations and conviviality, creating differences and hierarchies between refugees in a way that demonstrates that systems and processes can create tensions, rather than such tensions being inevitable or organic. Also see Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2016) ‘Refugee-Refugee Relationality: Hospitality and ‘Being With’ Refugees,’ *Refugee Hosts*, <https://refugeehosts.org/2016/12/14/refugee-refugee-relationality-hospitality-and-being-with-refugees/>.
- <sup>64</sup> As discussed throughout the Bridging Voices Workshop held in Yale on 10 May 2019, the ultimate manufacturer of tensions is often the state system itself, which not only creates refugees but also *wants* to create refugees and will exploit the refugee creation system that it has already made. Most poignantly, the statements, policies and programmes made and implemented by Donald Trump reflect the desire to create a ‘refugee problem’ and tensions between hosts and refugees, and different groups of refugees, as what one workshop participant referred to as a ‘naked political power grab.’
- <sup>65</sup> Another dimension of fear is also identifiable in the following reflection written by Melanie León on the research she conducted as part of the Mexico case-study:
- “Disinformation fuels fear and uncertainty as refugees and migrants navigate travel through multiple countries and weigh their options for regularization in both Mexico and the U.S. Refugee and migrant decision-making and migratory plans are highly unstable and contingent, changing with every bit of new information learned, social relations forged, interactions with state agents, loss of economic resources, and family pressures. Refugees and migrants also expressed fear of dying in the desert while attempting to cross the U.S.-Mexico border and/or contracting a deadly pulmonary infection as a result of being held in the asylum processing holding area nicknamed the *hielera*“icebox”.”

- <sup>66</sup> This was made particularly evident by Melanie León's presentation during the Bridging Voices workshop, during which an example was shared relating to the experience of solidarity during train journeys across Mexico. The arrival of hostile actors often made wider migrant-refugee solidarity less forthcoming, given that many individuals were reportedly fearful of the consequences of 'speaking up' for those who were detained along the route. Evidence shared by Mexico research team during Bridging Voices Workshop, Yale, 10 May 2019.
- <sup>67</sup> While in the US and in Europe national sovereignty and/or belonging have frequently been adjudicated through refugees, in Cameroon this dynamic has not been visible to the same extent. However, there is important variation in this regard, since Nigerian refugees have been targeted by the Cameroonian military, while refugees from the Central African Republic have not.
- <sup>68</sup> Kidwai, S. (2017) 'Engaging with faith values to reshape responses to the Global Forced Migration Crisis' *Refugee Hosts*, <https://refugeehosts.org/2017/05/18/engaging-with-faith-values-to-reshape-responses-to-the-global-forced-migration-crisis/>; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2019) 'The Poetics of Undisclosed Care,' *Refugee Hosts*, available at: <https://refugeehosts.org/2019/05/21/the-poetics-of-undisclosed-care/>; also see Parsitau, D. S. (2011) 'Role of Faith-Based Organizations among Internally Displaced Persons in Kenya,' *Journal of Refugee Studies* 24(3): 493-512.
- <sup>69</sup> El Nakib, S. and Ager, A. (2015) *Local Faith Community and Related Civil Society Engagement in Humanitarian Response with Syrian Refugees in Irbid, Jordan: Report to the Henry Luce Foundation*, New York: Columbia University, Mailman School of Public Health, April 2015, 6–7, <http://jlfic.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/El-Nakib-Ager-Local-faith-communities-and-humanitarian-response-in-Irbid-.pdf>.
- <sup>70</sup> مَثَلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي تَوَادُّهِمْ وَتَعَاطُفِهِمْ: مَثَلُ الْجَسَدِ، إِذَا اشْتَكَى مِنْهُ عَضْوٌ: تَدَاعَى لَهُ سَائِرُ الْجَسَدِ بِالسَّهْرِ وَالْحُمَّى
- <sup>71</sup> Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2019) 'The Poetics of Undisclosed Care,' *Refugee Hosts*, <https://refugeehosts.org/2019/05/21/the-poetics-of-undisclosed-care/>.
- <sup>72</sup> "If you disclose your Sadaqaat (almsgiving), it is well; but if you conceal them and give them to the poor, that is better for you." (Qur'an 2:271).
- <sup>73</sup> One of the groups whom Allah will shade on the Day of Judgement include those "...who gives in charity and hides it, such that his left hand does not know what his right hand gives in charity."
- <sup>74</sup> An important example of the tension between researchers wanting to 'document' the role of religion vis-à-vis displacement on the one hand, and people's preference for silence and withholding their stories, emerges in the above-mentioned example of converts from Islam to Christianity who were reluctant, and ultimately refused, to be interviewed for the project in Greece. On approaches to researching through silence and the politics of withholding stories, see Perl, G. (2019) 'Migration as survival: Withheld stories and the limits of ethnographic know-ability,' *Migration and Society*, 2:12-25.
- <sup>75</sup> Source: Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2019) "The Poetics of Undisclosed Care," *Refugee Hosts*, available at: <https://refugeehosts.org/2019/05/21/the-poetics-of-undisclosed-care/>.
- <sup>76</sup> Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. and Qasmiyeh, Y. M. (2018) 'Refugee Neighbours and Hospitality,' *Refugee Hosts*, <https://refugeehosts.org/2018/03/20/refugee-neighbours-hostipitality/>.
- <sup>77</sup> Other key concepts and forms of relationality discussed in this regard include 'accompaniment' (in the Jesuit sense of being next to and 'with' a person, even if being unable to actively change their situation) as explored by Rochelle Davis in her presentation at the Bridging Voices workshop on 10 May; solidarity as 'standing together' and 'being ready for collective action,' as discussed by Catherine Panter-Brick in her presentation on the Mexico-USA case-study at the Bridging Voices workshop on 10 May; and Melanie León's account – in her presentation at the Bridging Voices workshop on 10 May - of a Guatemalan woman who, in their interview, shared the deep importance of 'being hugged' by fellow migrants in Mexico.
- <sup>78</sup> Source: Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. and Pacitto, J. (2019) "Southern-Led Faith-based Responses to Refugees: Insights from the Global North" in Schewel, B. and Wilson, E. (Eds.) *Religion and European Society: A Primer*. Wiley.
- <sup>79</sup> IRIN (2012) 'Jordan: Civil society at heart of Syrian refugee response.' Retrieved from: <http://www.irinnews.org/printreport.aspx?reportid=95273> (accessed 27 August 2012).
- <sup>80</sup> Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2016) 'Representations of displacement in the Middle East.' *Public Culture* 28 (3): 457–473.
- <sup>81</sup> The Jordan Hashemite Charity Organization for Development: Syria Response: [www.jordankorea.gov.jo/content/jordan-hashemite-charity-organizatio-relief-development](http://www.jordankorea.gov.jo/content/jordan-hashemite-charity-organizatio-relief-development) (accessed 1 July 2014).
- <sup>82</sup> English version: [www.jhco.org.jo/?q=content/about-us](http://www.jhco.org.jo/?q=content/about-us) (accessed 4 February 2013). Notably, the website officially notes the title of the JHCO as the 'Jordanian Hashemite Charity Organization' and 'the Jordanian Hashemite Charity Organization for Relief and Development', but under two tabs (<https://en.jhco.org.jo/SubDefault.aspx?PageId=186&MenuId=111> and <https://en.jhco.org.jo/SubDefault.aspx?PageId=186&MenuId=112>) refers to the organization as the 'Jordanian Charity Organization for Arab and Islamic Relief, Development and Cooperation'.

- <sup>83</sup> Arabic version: <http://www.civilsociety-jo.net/en/search.aspx?q=jhco> (accessed 4 February 2013).
- <sup>84</sup> Fiddian-Qasmiyeh's translation, emphasis added.
- <sup>85</sup> Equally interestingly, an English language summary of JHCO's aims on the web-based *Comprehensive Guide to Civil Society Organizations in Jordan* reads: 'Conveying the message of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in Arab communities and showing it, fostering the relations between the people of Jordan and Arab and *Islamic* communities, deepening solidarity and cooperation at Arab and *Islamic* levels, through combating poverty, sickness and ignorance, in addition to contributing to the dissemination of Arab and *Islamic* culture in the international arena' (emphasis added). See: <http://www.civilsociety-jo.net/en/index.php/specia-commissions/201-jordan-hashemite-charity-organisation-jhco> (accessed 4 February 2014).
- <sup>86</sup> The Jordan Hashemite Charity Organisation for Development: Syria Response. [www.jordankorea.gov.jo/content/jordan-hashemite-charity-organization-relief-development](http://www.jordankorea.gov.jo/content/jordan-hashemite-charity-organization-relief-development) (accessed 1 July 2014).
- <sup>87</sup> The Jordan Hashemite Charity Organisation for Development: Syria Response. [www.jordankorea.gov.jo/content/jordan-hashemite-charity-organization-relief-development](http://www.jordankorea.gov.jo/content/jordan-hashemite-charity-organization-relief-development) (accessed 1 July 2014, emphasis added). Such a strategic representation of Self is common in refugee (and indeed non-refugee) situations, in which certain characteristics – such a religious identity – are variously magnified or minimized during interactions with diverse audiences to ensure a continuation of support and assistance. See Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2011) 'The pragmatics of performance: Putting 'faith' in aid in the Sahrawi refugee camps,' *Journal of Refugee Studies* 24 (3): 533–54 and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2014) *The Ideal Refugees: Gender, Islam and the Sahrawi Politics of Survival*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.
- <sup>88</sup> Linking development and humanitarian response, and interweaving programmes for refugees and hosts, have taken place since at least the 1960s (see Crisp, J. (2001) 'Mind the gap! UNHCR, humanitarian assistance and the development process,' *UNHCR New Issues in Refugee Research*, WP 43), including in the form of the UNHCR's 'integrated zonal development approach', followed by its 'refugee aid and development' strategies of the 1980s, the upsurge of interest in the 'relief-to-development' continuum in the 1990s (Borton, J. (1994) 'The Upsurge of Interest in the 'Relief-Development Continuum': What Does It Mean?' *HPN*, 09/1994), and the widespread official institutionalisation of diverse 'development assistance programmes' in the 1980s and 1990s (UNHCR (2005) *Handbook for Planning and Implementing Development Assistance for Refugees (DAR) Programmes*. Geneva: UNHCR).
- <sup>89</sup> As noted below, humanitarian assistance is emblematic of failure: it operates where the political has failed.
- <sup>90</sup> Source of indented text: <http://www.globalcrrf.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Mexico-Case-Study.pdf>.
- <sup>91</sup> The following pages documenting the Mexico case-study were drafted by the Mexico-USA project lead, Catherine Panter-Brick, with additional extracts by Melanie León.
- <sup>92</sup> More broadly, it is relevant to note different conceptualisations of solidarity, such as Durkheimian notions of mechanical and organic solidarity, and Singer's notions of evolving altruism.
- <sup>93</sup> In Tijuana, the team spoke to staff at Catholic and evangelical Christian shelters, orphanages, and shelters run by the Salvation Army, the American Friends Services Committee (Quaker), and the YMCA, interviewing volunteer staff, directors, lawyers, psychologists, social workers, educators, priests, nuns, and pastors. The team also interviewed a wide range of migrants from Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, and Nicaragua, living within and outside shelters, including young men, women traveling alone or with children, transwomen, and deportees from the US. They also observed everyday life in migrant shelters, Catholic and evangelical services, and advocacy rallies, and the asylum-seeking process at border crossing points.
- <sup>94</sup> Ie. Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2019) 'Looking Forward: Disasters at 40,' *Disasters*, 43(S1): S36-S60;
- <sup>95</sup> Source: Lyndsey Stonebridge's Bridging Voices research summary.
- <sup>96</sup> It may also be particularly important to consider the ways in which laws are being, or can be, reframed through a humanist, rather than faith-based, frame.
- <sup>97</sup> For instance, see Kidwai, S. (2014) *The rights of forced migrants in Islam*. Islamic Relief, and earlier work by the Organization of the Islamic Conference, including 'Enhancing Refugee and IDP Protection in the Muslim World: OIC Ministerial Conference on the Problems of Refugees in the Muslim World', working document no. 1, 2006, and *Ashgabat Declaration of the International Ministerial Conference of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation on Refugees in The Muslim World*, 2012. Earlier scholarly reflections include Abd Al-Rahim, M. (2008) 'Asylum: A Moral and Legal Right in Islam,' *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 27(2): 15–23; Agha, S. N. (2008) 'The Ethics of Asylum in Early Muslim Society,' *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 27(2): 30–40; Elmadmad, K. (1999) 'The Human Rights of Refugees with Special Reference to Muslim Refugee Women,' in Indra, D. (ed.) *Engendering Forced Migration: Theory and Practice, Refugee and Forced Migration Studies*. New York: Berghahn Books, 261–271; Elmadmad, K. (2008) 'Asylum in Islam and in Modern Refugee Law,' *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 27(2): 51–56; Manuty, M. N. (2008) 'The Protection of Refugees in Islam: Pluralism and Inclusivity,' *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 27(2): 24–29;

- Munir, M. (2011) 'Refugee law in Islam,' *Journal of Social Sciences*, 4(2); Muzaffar, S.A.F. (2001) 'Practicable Ideals? A Proposal for Revitalizing the Rights of Forced Migrants in Islam,' *Journal of Refugee Studies* 14(3): 250–275; Qasmiyeh, Y. M. (2011) 'Review of Refugee Status in Islam: Concepts of Protection in Islamic Tradition and International Law,' *Journal of Refugee Studies*; Türk, V. (Ed.) (2008) 'Special Issue: Asylum and Islam', *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 27(2); Zaat, K. (2007) *The Protection of Forced Migrants in Islamic Law. UNHCR New Issues in Refugee Research*, Research Paper no. 146.
- <sup>98</sup> Kidwai, S. (2014) *The rights of forced migrants in Islam*. Islamic Relief. Pp. 7-8. In this sense, remaining in one's place of origin can be conceived as having relinquished one's own right to migrate. Other key rights delineated in Islam include the right to family integrity, and the right not to be separated from relatives, while key duties include the duty to pay alms - including *sadaqaat* and *zakat* -, and the respective right for people – including travelers - to seek charity.
- <sup>99</sup> Kidwai, S. (2014) *The rights of forced migrants in Islam*. Islamic Relief.
- <sup>100</sup> On the unequal effect of financial laws and CVE policies on Islamic organisations, see pages 15-16 of Abdulaziz, S., El Ella, O., Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E., Hansen, E., Le Roux, E., Poirier, M.C., Riera-Cézanne, J., Stawski, H., Wilkinson, O., and Wilson, E. K. (2016) *Gender, Religion and Humanitarian Responses to Refugees*, MRU Policy Brief, September 2016, <http://www.geog.ucl.ac.uk/research/research-centres/migration-research-unit/pdfs/Low%20Res.Gender%20Religion%20and%20Refugees.MRU%20PB.pdf>.
- <sup>101</sup> Grewal, Z. (2018) 'A Successful Alternative to Refugee Camps: A Greek Squat Shames the EU and NGOs,' *Refugee Hosts*, <https://refugeehosts.org/2018/01/26/a-successful-alternative-to-refugee-camps-a-greek-squat-shames-the-eu-and-ngos/>.
- <sup>102</sup> As explained in detail by Zareena Grewal in her contribution to the Bridging Voices workshop on 10 May 2019. Noting that refugees are acting in these ways to fill gaps created by political systems is not to say that in places where states do meet their obligations that there is no room or need for hospitality or solidarity.
- <sup>103</sup> In addition to the Human Rights School established by La 72 in Mexico (see Text Box 6), a further 'success story' shared by Rochelle Davis in her contribution to the Bridging Voices workshop on 10 May 2019 outlined the ways that providing legal training to police officers in Jordan about the rights of Iraqi refugees led to increased awareness of refugee rights and consequently fewer arrests, and Iraqis' fear of the police reportedly decreased. As Davis stressed in her contribution, we often underestimate local attempts to deal with legality, and yet such attempts – like many other local level responses documented elsewhere in this report – provide insights into the ways that local actors can, and do, respond in ways that can lead to a greater sense of security and wellbeing for people with displacement and refugee backgrounds.
- <sup>104</sup> 'Refugee-Refugee Relationality: Hospitality and 'Being With' Refugees,' *Refugee Hosts*, <https://refugeehosts.org/2016/12/14/refugee-refugee-relationality-hospitality-and-being-with-refugees/>.
- <sup>105</sup> For more on this topic, see Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2019) 'The Poetics of Undisclosed Care,' *Refugee Hosts*, <https://refugeehosts.org/2019/05/21/the-poetics-of-undisclosed-care/>.
- <sup>106</sup> On the constitutive connections between different refugee hosting spaces, through the lens of a 'rhizoanalysis', see Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2018) 'Shadows and Echoes in/of Displacement: Temporalities, spatialities and materialities of displacement,' *Refugee Hosts*, <https://refugeehosts.org/2018/11/19/shadows-and-echoes-in-of-displacement/>; and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2019) "Memories and Meanings of Camps (and more-than-camps)," in Cox, E., Durrant, S., Farrier, D., Stonebridge, L. and Woolley, A. (Eds) *Refugee Imaginaries: Contemporary Research Across the Humanities*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- <sup>107</sup> On Malaysia's support in Baddawi refugee camp, see Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2018) 'Internationalism and Solidarity,' *Southern Responses to Displacement*, <https://southernresponses.org/2018/04/02/internationalism-and-solidarity/>, and, more broadly on Malaysian-Palestinian solidarity and humanitarianism, see Pacitto, J. and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2013) *Writing the 'other' into humanitarian discourse: framing theory and practice in South-South responses to forced displacement*, UNHCR New Issues in Refugee Research, Research Paper No. 257. Available from <https://www.unhcr.org/51efd7c49.pdf>, pp. 22-23
- <sup>108</sup> See Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2018) 'Shadows and Echoes in/of Displacement: Temporalities, spatialities and materialities of displacement,' *Refugee Hosts*, <https://refugeehosts.org/2018/11/19/shadows-and-echoes-in-of-displacement/>; and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2019) "Memories and Meanings of Camps (and more-than-camps)," in Cox, E., Durrant, S., Farrier, D., Stonebridge, L. and Woolley, A. (Eds) *Refugee Imaginaries: Contemporary Research Across the Humanities*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.



Baddawi camp, Lebanon (c) Fiddian-Qasmiyeh

# Bridging Voices

## UCL-Yale

### Research Report

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