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# The Past, Present and Future of Transnational Conflict in Jordan: A Study of Syrian Refugees in the Hashemite Kingdom

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*The Past, Present and Future of Transnational Conflict in Jordan:  
A Study of Syrian Refugees in the Hashemite Kingdom*

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Abstract

In this paper I am considering the numerous effects that hosting refugees can have on a host country. These effects can be seen when examining a host country's health, economic, educational, and security sectors. In addition, many cases of refugee flows are associated with conflict contagion, which may cause a refugee population to become militarized. After reviewing the relevant literature on these topics, I study how these possible effects unfold in the context of the Syrian refugees currently escaping to Jordan from their civil war. The Kingdom of Jordan and its people are significantly affected by the increased stresses that have been seen in all services as a result of more than 500,000 Syrian refugees. Additionally, the transnational threats of Syrian opposition fighters operating from within Jordan and the potential of Syrian government reprisals against Jordan are significant and growing threats that must be considered. Through a qualitative analysis of secondary sources, I examine these threats and make conclusions as to how Jordan's current course of action may affect the country and its population in the long term.

## Introduction

There is a robust literature on the transnational effects of conflict in neighboring countries and the consequences of hosting refugees. The Middle East is largely overlooked in this literature, and Jordan in particular presents an outstanding but difficult case to study due to its historic and constant supply of refugees, as well as its unstable geographical neighbors.

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is a small, middle-income country in the Middle East, with an official population of nearly seven million people. The country has been ruled by a hereditary monarchy, since the 1921, when the British authorities carved out Transjordan from historical Palestine and installed Hashemite rule under their own mandate. To the surprise of many observers, Jordan has maintained regime stability despite being surrounded on virtually all sides by conflict. Today, Jordan is neighbored by Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories to the West, Syria to the North, Iraq to the East, and Saudi Arabia to the South. Very shortly after achieving independence from British Mandate rule in 1946, Jordan was involved in the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, which resulted in Jordan's annexation of the West Bank area of Palestine as well as East Jerusalem, territories originally designated by the UN Partition Plan to become part of a proposed Palestinian state.

Some scholars believe that because Palestinians held Jordan's King Abdullah I responsible for their loss of Palestine to the new state of Israel, he was assassinated shortly thereafter. Along with this annexation came hundreds of thousands of Palestinians who either fled their homes and towns or were forcibly expelled by Jewish militias. Jordan was the only Arab country to grant immediate citizenship to most of the Palestinians it received. Those eligible for citizenship were those who claimed Palestinian residency before May 15, 1948 and were residing in Jordan between December 20<sup>th</sup>, 1949 and February 16, 1954. Today, those

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Palestinians and their descendents have become a sizeable portion of Jordan's population, with estimates placing their numbers between a third and more than half of Jordan's population.

Another influx of Palestinian refugees occurred after Jordan's crushing defeat in the 1967 Six-Day War, which resulted in the loss of the West Bank and East Jerusalem to Israel. In its weakened military state after the Six-Day War, Jordan's state institutions and basic control over the country fell into jeopardy when radical Palestinian militias destabilized the Jordanian monarchy. With Jordan's tacit approval, these groups had been orchestrating attacks against Israel from within Jordan. However, Jordan's reluctance to further aid their fight against Israel's occupation of Palestine led to their frustration and eventual attempt at taking power. This conflict culminated in the 1970 event known as Black September, a relatively short civil war in Jordan that claimed more than 3,000 lives and resulted in the complete and forcible expulsion of all militant organizations from Jordanian territory. Then-Prime Minister of Jordan, Wasfi al-Tal, was essential to Jordan's internal response to ensuring that the remaining Palestinian population was pacified within Jordan. Presumably as a result of his actions, he was assassinated the next year in Egypt while attending a conference. The numbers of Palestinians taking refuge in Jordan has increased incrementally as a result of other events such as the 1987 Palestinian "Intifada" and Iraq's 1991 invasion of Kuwait. Additionally, the US invasion of Iraq in 2003 drove hundreds of thousands of Iraqis to seek safety in Jordan, many of whom are still in Jordan. To date, Jordan has received more than 500,000 Syrian refugees since the start of the Syrian civil war in 2011. Estimates by the UN and other agencies predict that the number of Syrian refugees in Jordan will exceed one million before the end of 2013.

As this brief historical survey reveals, the conflicts that have continuously surrounded Jordan throughout the last six decades have forced Jordan's involvement in regional conflicts in

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numerous different ways. Hosting the multitudes seeking refuge from these dangers has been an ongoing struggle for this small, dynamic constitutional monarchy, and has also been a source of domestic conflicts and external threats for nearly the entirety of the country's existence.

Judging by the events surrounding this regional haven, the pattern shows no sign of cessation or change in the future. I will attempt to determine, using qualitative analysis of secondary sources, if the multifaceted ways that Jordan has become involved in the current Syrian civil war will once again breed domestic conflict within the kingdom. The first section of the paper presents a comprehensive literature review on hosting refugees and transnational conflict. The second section includes the qualitative analysis of secondary sources and applies the insights of the existing debates found in the literature to the case of Jordan and its current population of Syrian refugees. The third section summarizes the findings and proposes recommendations for scholars and policy makers.

## **Section I: Literature Review**

Early studies on interstate conflicts, civil wars and refugees have primarily focused on them as separate issues, under the assumption that they each occur separately from one another in a vacuum. More recently, researchers have begun to examine them as connected, intertwined social problems. This section will provide a review of relevant literature, starting with the effects of hosting refugees, and continuing to the effects of transnational conflict.

### **General Effects**

There is a significant collection of literature that has expanded in recent years discussing the benefits of hosting refugees. In her study of the effects of hosting refugees on western

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Tanzania, Karen Jacobsen concedes that refugees impose many burdens on their host countries, ranging from security and the economy to the environment, but she counters that refugees can also represent a significant source of resources. The presence of refugees can bring international humanitarian assistance, economic assets, and human capital with them to the host country. Jacobsen refers to these material, social, and political resources as “refugee resources,” which “potentially represent an important state building contribution to the host state” (Jacobsen 2002a, 578). The difficulty, Jacobsen discovers, in the state actually taking advantage of these refugee resources, lies in overcoming hindrances of distance and extending the state’s bureaucratic reach to outlying areas. Jacobsen argues that overcoming these hindrances can create an opportunity to “boost the state’s capacity in those areas and strengthen its presence at the periphery of its territory,” because “refugee resources and security threats push the state towards a level of activity in border areas that did not previously exist” (Jacobsen 2002a, 578). Jacobsen concludes that the presence of refugees can increase the overall welfare of the host community, both through “international assistance ‘trickling out’ into the host community and through the economic activities of refugees contributing to the host community’s standard of living” (Jacobsen 2002a, 580).

In the first substantial effort at quantifying the effects of a refugee population on their host country, Beth Elise Whitaker (2002) studies the realities of western Tanzania hosting nearly 1.3 million refugees from Rwanda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) between 1993 and 1998. The sudden increase of population – by more than 50% in the regions that hosted the majority of the refugees – presented researchers at the time with an opportunity to observe these effects in real time. Whitaker makes the determination to focus not just on whether the host community itself would benefit, but to “disaggregate the question: who benefits and who

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loses from refugee influxes and why?” (Whitaker 2002, 340). Through the study of a variety of factors, ranging from food prices to labor, the environment, trade prices, infrastructure, crime, education, health, and social aspects, Whitaker finds that “the distribution of burdens and benefits was not uniform throughout western Tanzania” (Whitaker 2002, 344).

She argues that socio-economic class, as characterized by education, health, wealth, and other factors, was one of the biggest causes of disproportionate advantage/disadvantage. “Wealthy hosts especially were able to take advantage of economic opportunities and expand upon their wealth during that period.” Because of their pre-existing wealth, they were in a good position to use existing funds and capital to establish or expand businesses catering to the newly expanded population. Whitaker observes that “poor Tanzanians, on the other hand, were not able to benefit in the same ways and became worse off during the refugee presence” (Whitaker 2002, 347). In order to enhance the positive effects of hosting a refugee camp, Whitaker makes several recommendations that will help to minimize the negative effects while still helping the local population. According to Whitaker, establishing smaller camps, approximately 20,000 refugees, near local villages is essential. She posits that allowing refugees to farm small plots of land, enjoy shared markets, and freedom of movement, could enable refugees to contribute to the local economy in more significant ways than simply buying aid supplies in bulk (Whitaker 2002, 355). Encouraging these types of policies could have a multiplying effect for the economy, as observed by Jacobsen (2002a).

## **Livelihoods**

Whitaker refers to the presence of refugees in a community impacting the livelihoods of members of the host community. Livelihoods, as Jacobsen discusses in another of her works, are defined as “the means used to maintain and sustain life” (Jacobsen 2002b, 98). Jacobsen here



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goes beyond “refugee resources” to include household assets, capital, social institutions, networks, and strategies. Attempting to study “livelihoods in conflict,” she emphasizes “the need to reduce vulnerability and risks that are a result of conflict,” and measures how these livelihood methods and strategies also impact the host community (Jacobsen, 98). Jacobsen’s express goal in this effort is to determine how to maintain and support “human security” in these difficult types of situations. She defines human security as “economic, civil, and political security – a situation in which people can pursue livelihoods without violent conflict” (Jacobsen 2002b, 96). She refers to pursuing a livelihood in conflict as “the availability, extent and mix of *resources*, the *strategies* used to access and mobilize these resources, and the *goals* and changing priorities of refugees” (Jacobsen 2002b, 99, author’s emphasis).

Although Jacobsen differentiates refugee livelihoods because they are a vulnerable population and therefore more susceptible to challenges and changes, she insists that both the refugee and host livelihoods will have mutual benefits if they are permitted to intermix in the economy. Jacobsen determines that the refugee policies of the host government and that government’s willingness to cooperate with international organizations such as the United Nations High Council on Refugees will significantly affect the livelihoods of both the host community and the refugees themselves. The choices made by policy-makers will have a direct impact on whether refugees will be allowed to pursue livelihood strategies at all, or if they can even leave the refugee camp to begin with. Jacobsen finds that Income Generating Programs (IGPs) for refugee populations, access to farming, and freedom of movement in the local economy are important in supporting the human security of the refugees in these situations.

Jacobsen also discusses how the implementation of IGPs affects the host community and the refugee populations themselves. IGPs “are intended to enable refugees to attain ‘self

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sufficiency' by providing economic inputs and training for livelihood activities like agriculture, service provision, or trade" (Jacobsen 2002b, 110). Jacobsen notes that some host governments do allow refugees to farm or participate in income-generating activities, but because IGPs are sometimes associated with integration, a weary population may not wish to allow them to be promoted for the refugees. Host countries generally prefer refugee stays to be short, and host governments tend to resist programs that promote integration. This preference is enacted through policy regarding refugees, and represents one of the biggest factors preventing refugees' pursuit of livelihoods. Because of host government policies, refugees often have limited standards of protection and physical security; their freedom of movement and settlement can be restricted; and they can be restricted from property rights and employment opportunities.

## **Health**

Jacobsen notes that health concerns are one of the main reasons commonly cited by governments as a reason to not keep their borders open constantly to refugees (Jacobsen 2002a, 579). Javier E Baez (2008) sees the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide and resulting refugee flow into Kagera, Tanzania as an opportunity to study the health consequences of hosting refugees. Specifically, Baez focuses on short and long term causal effects of hosting refugees on the health outcomes of local children. According to Baez, the risks to the host population during times of regional strife could include "disease outbreaks, food and land scarcity, unsafe drinking water, overburdened school and health care facilities, environmental degradation, crime, and other concerns" (Baez 2008, 2). Baez notes that these conditions are particularly dangerous for young children, and that these combined problems could affect early childhood development.

To conduct his study, Baez uses data from household surveys conducted yearly in Kagera, Tanzania between 1991 and 1994, and again in 2004. The Kagera Health and

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Development Survey (KHDS) contains information on “household demographics, education, health, anthropometrics, household activities, household and individual expenditures, local markets, among others, as well as questionnaires at the community, school, and health facility level” (Baez 2008, 11). Through his analysis, Baez finds a worsening of children’s anthropometrics, 15-20% higher rates of infectious diseases, and an increase of about seven percent in child mortality under the age of five, among other concerning factors. Baez notes that this burden of hosting refugees decreased average height in early adulthood by nearly two centimeters and lowered literacy rates by more than eight percent. He concludes that “despite any potential benefits this enormous population movement may have brought to these regions, ...in the case of young children, they were largely outweighed by its negative impacts” (Baez 2008, 25).

Baez notes the dangers that can potentially affect refugee camps and their surrounding host areas, and cites the Benaco refugee camp in Kagera, Tanzania. At one point in the 1990’s, the camp hosted more than 400,000 refugees, and suffered from many problems, including “water and food scarcity, lack of waste collection, epidemics (bloody dysentery, malaria, pneumonia, meningitis, and measles), malnutrition and an increase in criminal activities” (Baez 2008, 9). Whitaker notes that when refugees entered Tanzania, “local health facilities quickly became over-stretched,” and that “after the establishment of hospitals in the camps, refugees continued to use district and regional facilities as referral hospitals” (Whitaker 2002, 343). The refugee presence was also correlated with an influx of diseases such as high-fever malaria, intense dysentery, skin diseases in children, and sexually transmitted diseases, such as HIV/AIDS.

Despite implementing numerous regulations to curb harmful or disruptive behavior from refugees, many of the families displaced into Tanzania settled outside of camps and utilized resources and areas usually used by locals. According to Baez's historical account, the "villages close to refugee camps were not isolated from the massive arrival of migrants and host communities were frequently exposed to the increased presence of refugee settlements" (Baez 2008, 10). This exposure to the problems of the refugee population posed serious risks to the health and well-being of the host population. Baez notes that it could create an "unfavorable health environment" that would "adversely affect the health status of parents as well as the amount and quality of other forms of investment in children such as health care, calorie consumption and parents' time spent with children" (Baez 2008, 25).

## **Environment**

Studies examining the impact of hosting refugees on the host country's environment are especially important when considering how Jordan is being affected. Adrian Martin's 2005 study on environmental conflict and refugee host communities examines how "issues of resource scarcity interplay with social processes, stimulating well-known triggers of violence." He notes that "environmental scarcity acts as an indirect cause of conflict by amplifying/triggering traditional causes of conflict such as ethnic difference" (Martin 2005, 330). Martin states that the resource demand associated with an influx of refugees concentrated in one location can dramatically increase after settlements are created, "leading to accelerated conversion of forest to agricultural land, collection of firewood, extraction of surface and ground waters, fishing and hunting (Martin 2005, 332). Concurrently, "the assimilative capacity of environments can be stretched by the additional wastes produced, and this can exacerbate threats to human health." Martin cites UNHCR's 1996 *Environmental Guidelines*, which identify six categories of

environmental impact as a result of hosting refugees. Those categories include: “natural resource degradation; irreversible impacts on natural resources; impacts on health; impacts on social conditions; impacts on local populations; and economic impacts” (Martin 2005, 332). Martin emphasizes that environmental changes due to hosting refugees seems guaranteed to evoke a social response from the hosting population. In discussing why refugees cause environmental problems, he asserts that the chief cause is sheer numbers. “Population increase, especially when it occurs so rapidly, places additional stresses on local resources” (Martin 2005, 332). The utilization of scarce resources and the creation of waste, multiplied by the number of refugees, can create a huge strain on the host society.

Martin notes in his evaluation of Environment-Conflict Relations that “where unproductive intergroup conflicts occur [regarding resources], they tend to manifest themselves as conflicts over ethnicity, class and other existing social fault-lines” (Martin 2005, 333). He cites the social psychology of intergroup conflicts, suggesting “that social identity groups become less permeable... under conditions that foster perceptions of relative deprivation and threats to self-esteem” (Martin 2005, 334). Martin’s paper utilizes a theoretical approach to study a resource management regime in a case study that takes place in an Ethiopian refugee camp. Upon studying these “participatory environmental management programs” through the case study, Martin finds that management regimes that strive to be participatory and inclusive for both the refugee and host communities could help them to avoid unproductive resource conflicts.

Whitaker notes that the presence of refugees in Tanzania “negatively affected local access to environmental resources” (Whitaker 2002, 342). Existing environmental problems such as deforestation, water shortages, and environmental degradation were compounded by the influx of refugees. “Refugees used 65 percent more wood on average than local Tanzanians. ... Water

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resources were also depleted during the refugee presence, and several rivers were diverted from host villages to refugee camps” (Whitaker 2002, 342). She also notes that while villages that were closer to refugee camps could take better advantage of refugee labor and trade opportunities, “hosts were also more affected by the negative consequences... including environmental degradation...” (Whitaker 2002, 349).

In her 2008 research for UNHCR on the environmental impact of hosting refugees, Leah Berry highlights the importance of fostering a good relationship between the host and refugee communities. She notes a “growing acceptance” by UNHCR and organizations that work with refugees “that the presence of refugees often leads to environmental degradation and natural resource depletion both within and around the settlements” (Berry 2008, 1). Acknowledging this reality is a recent addition to UNHCR protocols. Her case study of Tanzania’s refugee flows from the 1990’s shows that “without doubt, the environmental degradation...has created problems between the refugees and the local communities” (Berry 2008, 17). In examining the lives of the host community around the refugee population, she finds that they noticed changes such as “deforestation, soil erosion and depletion of water resources,” in addition to brush fires and illegal poaching” (Berry 2008, 14). She concludes by suggesting to the managers of future refugee situations that they work hard to prevent environmental degradation, investigate the causes of degradation when it happens, and implement more projects to assist refugee hosting areas. Berry also finds that the conflict resolution meetings held in Tanzania between members of the refugee and host populations were effective and recommended that they be used regularly in all refugee situations (Berry 2008, 18).

## **Education**

The host country's education system is frequently cited as one of the resources strained by the refugee population's presence. Whitaker notes that "during the influx, border area schools were damaged when refugees slept in classrooms, burned desks as firewood, and filled latrines" (Whitaker 2002, 343). In discussing the different livelihood strategies of host communities, Jacobsen highlights that "different communities had different levels of education... before the refugees arrived. The communities that were already better educated and had surpluses of food and cash crops grown locally were in a good position to benefit from the newly increased local market" (Jacobsen 2002b, 354). In contrast, communities with lower levels of education struggled to reap the benefits of the refugee presence. In regards to the refugees themselves, Jacobsen notes that education or professional skills are often some of the inherent human capital resources that they bring with them into their new environment (Jacobsen 2002b, 100). Utilizing these skills in the host environment and economy could aid the host country's overall development.

Jacobsen recommends including programs for refugees such as vocational training and access to educational institutions in order to support their livelihoods in their new community. This kind of training and capacity building could make them less dependent on aid. She further states that in many countries, access to school education is one of many civil and social rights denied to refugees, sometimes as a means to discourage the refugees from attempting to settle permanently in the host country (Jacobsen 2002b, 101). Although their study mainly focuses on the security implications of refugee-host conflict, it is important to discuss a work by Peter Kirui and John Mwaruvie (2012), who note that in Kenya, local Somalis who immigrated to Kenya before the refugees feel that refugees are treated better than them because they get humanitarian

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assistance from organizations like UNHCR. “Refugees are given food, medical attention, and education among other social services. The majority of Kenyan Somalis cannot afford this and therefore view the refugees (who are also Somalis) as enemies who are taking ‘Milk and Honey’ while they starve” (Kirui and Mwaruvie 2012, 165).

## **Food**

Following a similar trend, David Saah and Jennifer Alix-Garcia also study the effects of refugee inflows in Tanzania, with their work focusing primarily on the effect of refugee camps on nearby markets. Saah and Alix-Garcia see inconclusive results from other researchers looking at the same subject, and proceed to use “variations in refugee policy and food over time to examine the impact of proximity to refugee camps and aid on prices of Tanzanian agricultural goods” (Saah and Alix-Garcia 2009, 150). Their effort shows an increase in price for goods in markets that were closer to refugee camps, and they observe that the effect was larger for areas around Rwandan refugees than it was for those around Burundian refugees. Saah and Alix-Garcia suspect that this phenomenon could have been the result of the differences in diet between these groups, or perhaps “because of the relatively smaller and slower nature” of Burundi refugee influx (Saah and Alix-Garcia 2009, 168). They use a statistical model to study the effects of food aid and refugees on local market prices, and find that “in the context of the model, these price increases are explained by the increase in demand for these products by the incoming refugees. The effect of food aid is limited to aid-related goods” (Saah and Alix-Garcia 2009, 160).

Whitaker notes that agriculture was “the primary occupation of more than 90 percent of the residents of western Tanzania and the large majority of refugees,” and that sudden population increases was shown to affect food security as a result of the influx (Whitaker 2002, 341).



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Refugees in Tanzania also “used a variety of strategy to gain access to [crops], including trading, purchasing, and stealing.” Whitaker reports that prices “skyrocketed” for locally grown staples as a result of the refugee influx, especially for local staples such as cooking bananas. Returning to class differences, Whitaker observes that poor Tanzanians “were not able to benefit in the same ways [as wealthy Tanzanians] and became worse off during the refugee presence” (Whitaker 2002, 348). Tanzania experienced high inflation rates at that time, which increased prices of basic supplies. If farmers were growing surplus supplies, they benefitted from the increased demand. On the other hand, subsistence farmers had to rely on food purchases to meet basic needs.

## **Trade and Labor**

Whitaker also notes that local subsistence farmers in Tanzania were unable to hire refugee laborers “because they did not have sufficient disposable funds or crops to pay the refugees” (Whitaker 2002, 347). In addition, sub-subsistence farmers were unable to sell their excess labor during the refugee influx. The refugees were willing to work for far less than local Tanzanians would, and as a result, “the wage paid to a casual laborer dropped by 50 percent in many areas” (Whitaker 2002, 348). For those that could afford to pay refugees for their labor, those living in “villages closer to camps were better able to take advantage of [cheap] refugee labor” (Whitaker 2002, 349). Interactions such as trade and employment were also greatly affected by government policy. According to Whitaker, “during the height of the refugee presence in Ngara and Karagwe districts in 1994 and 1995, there were few restrictions on the mobility of refugees and hosts. Tanzanian – and refugee-owned businesses – thrived.” After that point, the Tanzanian government carefully controlled the movement of refugees within the country, severely limiting employment and trade between refugees and hosts.

## **Crime and Violence**

Much of the literature on the effects of hosting refugees focuses on the direct and indirect dangers of hosting refugees that can or could result in violence and insecurity for the country and the community or region hosting them. Jacobsen suggests that refugee resources may, in some cases, be unable to help the development of the host country due to the insecurity of the refugee hosting area (Jacobsen 2002a, 578). She describes refugee flows as a “challenge to one of the key principles of state sovereignty: the control of borders and of non-citizens in the country,” and identifies issues such as “cross-border raids and the import of conflict from the sending country” as some of the most serious problems (Jacobsen 2002a, 586). Undefended and/or lawless refugee camps are also associated with security problems. Jacobsen notes that petty and organized crime, theft of resources intended for refugee consumption, recruitment of young men into militias or crime syndicates, political radicalism and militancy are listed as chronic problems for many host countries (Jacobsen 2002a, 586).

Some of the problems facing host communities, governments, and staff of refugee camps include ascertaining the identities of refugees, crime, military recruitment, and political control of the camp. Jacobsen observes that “host states have difficulty keeping refugees inside camps or designated areas, and most countries have large numbers of refugees living outside camps in both rural and urban areas” (Jacobsen 2002a, 587). She reports that some camp authorities attempt to separate combatants and criminals from refugees, but she warns that in some cases, this could increase the public perception that all refugees are potentially problematic.

Jacobsen identifies three sets of challenges that result from what she calls “the double impact of resource and security threats”:

- Increased demand on the state bureaucracy to manage the denser population and aid agencies in regions where the state is absent or weakly represented
- Increased demand on the state apparatus to control and manage contested refugee resources, either for its own state-building purposes or to ensure that its citizens benefit from these resources
- Increased demand on the state's security apparatus to control its border and address security threats posed by the spillover of conflict and troublemakers entering with refugees

In order to counter these challenges, Jacobsen concludes that the state has to make sure that the international community sees the refugees as its responsibility in order to maintain assistance levels, ensure that refugee assistance benefits its citizens and the state itself, ensure that the state is not sidelined by relief agencies or risks losing legitimacy, and be seen by its citizens to be actively involved in bringing benefits and addressing security problems (Jacobsen 2002a, 588). Despite these challenges, Jacobsen maintains that in host countries undergoing state-building activities, refugee resources represent significant potential to enhance those activities.

In many cases of protracted refugee situations, the host country sees an increase in crime. In her study of the effect of the refugee influxes on Tanzania, Whitaker notes that Tanzania's "criminal justice system was also overburdened; according to government records, refugees at times represented as many as 75 percent of jail inmates" (Whitaker 2002, 343). She also suggests that in cases where local residents have access to enter the refugee camp freely, the camps tend to become "associated with problems such as drunkenness, prostitution, and sexual promiscuity," and that "crime rates rose sharply, especially for murder, armed robbery, and illegal possession

of firearms” (Whitaker 2002, 345). These problems can significantly contribute to local crime and can create a negative impression of the refugee population on the host community.

In studying the effectiveness of policies designed to limit violence in and around refugee camps in Kenya, Jeff Crisp (2000) examines two refugee-populated areas of Kenya. Crisp notes that while it is “impossible to quantify the amount of violence that takes place in and around Kenya’s refugee camps,” one can determine that the level appeared at that time to be rising. Reports from that time indicated that “frequent outbreaks of violence and unrest occur without warning,” and that the security situation was deteriorating (Crisp 2000, 601). Crisp refers to the responses of refugees in these areas discussing the issues confronting them while living in the camp. Rather than demanding to return home or to receive education for their children, they relented that “their safety is under constant and serious threat;” one individual remarked that “it is of no advantage for us to get a full ration from UNHCR if our lives are always at risk from insecurity” (Crisp 2000, 602). Some of the specific sources of insecurity that refugees faced in that situation included domestic and community violence, conscription into rebel groups and militias, abuse from camp-based justice systems, sexual abuse and violence, theft and armed robbery, clan-based violence, and violence between refugees and the local population (Crisp 2000, 602-610). Crisp cites an internal 1998 UNHCR report which notes “a persistent climate of suspicion” between refugees and local populations.

Kirui and Mwaruvie return to the issue of hosting refugees in Kenya, twelve years after Crisp’s earlier work, and determine that many of the same issues remain prevalent. They begin their study looking at the general security problem of hosting refugees, noting that “the presence of refugees in many third world host states is further compounded by armed groups of exiles actively engaged in warfare with political objectives” (Kirui and Mwaruvie 2012, 162). This

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participation can invite military retaliation and complicate the host state's relations with its neighbors. These poisoned relations could advance to aggression if not handled carefully. Further, Kirui and Mwaruvie warn that proximity to a failed state such as Somalia invites other serious problems such as arms proliferation. They find that "lethal modern weapons smuggled into Kenya from Somalia have placed firepower into the hands of Kenyan and Somali bandit gangs" (Kirui and Mwaruvie 2012, 166). They also cite Gil Loescher's 1992 paper for the International Institute for Strategic Studies, *Refugee Movements and International Security*. Loescher highlights that in many cases refugees are seen only as a humanitarian problem for the international community to deal with, which can neglect their potential as a political problem. Loescher notes "the presence of refugees accelerates existing internal conflicts in the host countries. During the 1980's for example, the proliferation of arms following the influx of three million Afghans contributed to a resurgence of Pathan conquest in Pakistan" (Loescher 1992, 6).

## **Transnational Effects**

Militarization of Refugees. One of the biggest externalities of civil wars, and one that contributes to the creation of rebel sanctuaries, is the threat of the militarization of a refugee population that fled from a civil war in a neighboring country. In her working paper for the *Rosemarie Rogers Working Paper Series*, Sarah Kenyon Lischer describes some of the conditions that can lead to the militarization of a refugee population. She notes that militarization can occur "due to the presence of soldiers or militant exiles (including war criminals) who live near the refugee populated area and interact with the refugees" (Lischer 1999, 3). In conditions where refugees or exiles are permitted to store arms and train outside the camp but still interact with the people and services of the camp, the population of the camp can become militarized. Rebels might hide among the refugees, and could bring arms or cause militarization of the

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refugee flow. Citing the example of a mass exodus of ethnic Albanians from Kosovo in 1999, Lischer recalls a UNHCR official expressing concern “that the Serbs would target the refugee camps because ‘the refugee population and the KLA [Kosovo Liberation Army] are closely linked,’” and additional reports that the KLA forcibly conscripted refugee men into the rebel army (Lischer 1999, 3).

Depending on the circumstances, militarized refugees may be a threat to their home state, but she also cites examples where they pose a threat to the host country, such as Liberia, Sudan, and Rwanda. Although scholars discussing the militarization of refugees acknowledge that not all refugees become hostile or violent, they all stress that some refugee populations do develop violent or militarized tendencies under certain conditions. Stedman and Tanner’s 2003 book, *Refugee Manipulation* is cited as claiming that militarized refugees are present in about 15% of refugee crises. In another Lischer paper from 2003, she notes that “refugee relief can feed militants; sustain and protect the militants’ supporters; contribute to the war economy; and provide legitimacy to combatants” (Lischer 2003, 82). A militant or rebel groups’ choice to intentionally use refugees can help with recruitment or conscription, as well as accessing aid and benefits from international donors and groups. Lischer has grouped refugee-related political violence into several different categories, including violence between refugees and the receiving state and between refugees and the sending state.

Transnational Conflict. Idean Salehyan and Kristian Gleditsch were the first scholars to “systematically examine the effects of refugees on the likelihood of conflict in refugee-recipient states” (Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006, 338). They argue that international refugee migration can often link conflict in one country to conflict in neighbors. Through the migration of refugees, social networks can expand to other states, potentially “physically extending rebel networks

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across space through their geographical mobility” (Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006, 341). These networks could be operating explicitly against their home country or could be importing “conflicts, arms, and ideologies from neighboring states that facilitate the spread of conflict” (Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006, 342). Refugee flows can also change the ethnic balance in a country, which can cause local discontent toward both the refugees themselves and the government that allowed them in. They find that countries that experience an influx of refugees from neighboring states are significantly more likely to experience civil wars themselves” (Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006, 338).

In his 2011 book, *Rebels Without Borders*, Idean Salehyan discusses rebel sanctuaries in neighboring states, and the conditions in which these situations occur. The usual advantage of force held by the contested regime is very constrained by the state’s internationally recognized borders, and when rebel groups choose to operate outside of those borders, they are able to more easily evade repression and reprisal. Safely outside of the state’s reach, these apparently weak actors “have a significant advantage against geographically constrained states, whose power and authority are defined by a particular sovereign space” (Salehyan 2009, *Rebels Without Borders*). Using the data in the Armed Conflict Database, Salehyan finds that 55 percent of rebel groups since 1945 have utilized territory outside of their target state’s borders, either for mobilizing and organizing or to sustain their activities and recruit. He notes that “a large share of research on civil conflict treats nation-states as hermetically sealed, independent units,” but that transnational rebels (TNRs) “complicate this neat picture by bridging the internal/external divide.” Salehyan specifies that TNRs are more likely to gain access to external territory if that neighboring state is too weak to prevent access. He concurs with previous researchers that TNRs often use refugee camps for supplies and recruits.

Salehyan continues that international rivalries can be fueled by support of rebel organizations, and weak states may be dragged unwillingly into international disputes. Accusations of harboring militants may lead to cross-border attacks or other types of retaliation from that neighbor. He elaborates that support of TNRs can take many forms, including deliberately hosting rebel bases, financial support, or other in-kind sources of support. Salehyan notes that “hosting rebel organizations is indicative of preexisting conflict between states, although support for insurgency will exacerbate international tensions.” He goes on to clarify that “all forms of support... are likely to provoke international tension, but providing sanctuary to TNRs is particularly likely to spark a military confrontation between states.” Through his quantitative study of militarized interstate disputes (MIDs) and rebel external bases, he finds that in 83 percent of cases with external bases and MIDs coinciding, “the presence of rebels was cited as a major factor” (Salehyan 2011, *Rebels*).

Conflict Contagion. In her study on the spread of refugees and the contagion of civil wars, Forsberg (2009) hypothesizes that “a state receiving refugees from a state with internal armed conflict is more likely to experience onset of armed conflict” (Forsberg 2009, 11). She notes that previous studies that found migration to cause conflict may have conflated conflict in general with the internal competition over scarce resources in the host country, and not necessarily because of factors related to conflicts in the refugees’ home country. Forsberg compares her research to Salehyan and Gleditsch’s 2006 paper but notes that they only “sum up the total number of refugees hosted from all neighboring states. Then it is not possible to determine from which neighboring state the source of conflict spread emanated, if such a process indeed transpired” (Forsberg 2009, 17). Forsberg evaluates the impact of hosting refugees over time. She suggests that “the effect of refugee flows appears to be conditioned upon the level of



repression in the host state” and that “refugee flows are associated with the contagion of civil conflict, only when the host state is characterized by low levels of state repression” (Forsberg 2009, 28). Conversely, she asserts that countries with high levels of state repression may be able to prevent or minimize conflict contagion through the use of force, despite receiving refugees from a neighbor in conflict.

Alex Braithwaite (2010) examines how states are able to resist the “infection” of conflict contagion because of state capacity and stability. Braithwaite argues that the risk of conflict contagion diminishes when the state has higher capacity to exert control over its territory and people (Braithwaite 2010, 311). Braithwaite describes this kind of state capacity in reference to conflict contagion as the state’s “ability to block and/or peacefully absorb the artifacts of civil conflict... these include flows of refugees of war, weapons and illicit materials” (Braithwaite 2010, 313). Conversely, he states that a state with a low level of capacity would have difficulty generating effective countermeasures to such threats. He notes that “interstate contiguity, long shared boundaries, and proximate conflict arenas in neighboring countries” are factors that could help prove the spillover effects of international conflicts (Braithwaite 2010, 312). He also finds that the flow of refugees between states could act as a precursor to spreading conflict across that boundary (Braithwaite 2010, 313).

In a forthcoming article in the *Journal of Politics*, Braithwaite and Jessica Maves discuss how autocratic institutions fare when exposed to the risk of conflict contagion. They counter previous studies explaining contagion “as a consequence of the spill-over of conflict externalities and/or patterns of emulation between kin groups across borders” and assert that those studies are incomplete (Maves and Braithwaite 2013, 2). Rather, Maves and Braithwaite suggest that countries most susceptible to cross-national demonstration effects are those that have no political

maneuvering room left to satisfy increasing opposition demands. Internal opposition demands in this case are potentially inspired by rebels' employment of violent strategies in neighboring states. Their study specifically focuses on 140 cases of autocratic governments, and in particular those with an elected legislature. In their analysis, autocracies are coded as "those regimes in which at least one of the following conditions is not met: both the legislature and the executive are elected, multiple political parties outside the influence of the regime exist and compete in these elections, and executive power has been handed over peacefully between parties as the result of elections" (Maves and Braithwaite 2013, 14). They find that while having a legislature generally reduces the likelihood of conflict onset in an autocratic state, that effect is reversed in the event that a neighboring state is experiencing civil conflict.

In studying another aspect of civil war contagion, intervention, Jacob D. Kathman examines the threats that neighboring third parties experience in close proximity to a civil war. "Destruction, regime stability, even state survival are threatened by the prospect of civil war infection" (Kathman 2010, 989). He argues that these third parties are motivated to intervene in neighboring civil wars out of self-preservation. In examining all civil wars since World War II from the Correlates of War State System Data (2005), he generates a measure of every state's yearly likelihood of being infected by a neighboring civil war. He describes intervention as a force of influence. It could include either military or economic activities, covertly or overtly, but it is "targeted at the authority structures of the government with the aim of affecting the balance of power between the government and opposition forces" (Kathman 2010, 989). This could be motivated by ties of allegiance, stopping costly hostilities, or stabilizing the region.

Although Kathman notes that "a disproportionately large percentage of interventions, about one-third, are undertaken by contiguous states" (Kathman 2010, 992), the majority of

neighbor states choose not to intervene (1007). In his major hypothesis, Kathman speculates that “as a potential intervener’s likelihood of being infected by a contiguous civil war increases, the potential intervener’s likelihood of intervening in the conflict also increases” (Kathman 2010, 993). This suggests that the longer a neighboring conflict continues, the higher the potential for the country in question to intervene for the sake of its own interest will continue to rise.

## **Section II: Qualitative Analysis**

### **Introduction**

In discussing the relationship between the governments that host refugees and the United Nations High Council on Refugees (UNHCR), Michael Kagan finds evidence of what has become a “UN surrogate state” in many of these situations. In his 2012 paper, he studies how this phenomenon has taken shape in the Middle East, where most countries hosting refugees observed “a de facto shift of responsibility from sovereign governments to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR)<sup>1</sup> to directly administer refugee policy.” Kagan finds this shift to be an anomaly, albeit one that offers tremendous advantages to some host governments. Countries such as Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria have existing UN refugee bureaucracies that have long since eased the enormous burden of hosting refugees, both through UNHCR, and for the case of Palestinians, UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees in the Near East). Jordan serves as a prime example of this phenomenon. Despite this independence of administration, these countries are still at risk during times of neighboring conflict. Kagan writes

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<sup>1</sup> UNHCR literally stands for “United Nations High Council on Refugees.” However, in their own documentation and goods, such as tents and supplies, they clearly identify themselves in public as “The UN Refugee Agency.” In public, the agency itself seems to self-identify as both, and in Kagan’s article he uses both.

that UNHCR has found that “in general, Arab states are accustomed to hosting large numbers of foreigners but are not open to offering permanent integration to them absent exceptional political calculations.” Although Jordan did grant immediate citizenship to many Palestinians due to Jordan’s initial occupation and annexation of the West Bank during the exceptional political situations surrounding the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, Jordan now tends to follow this model as well.

Most Arab governments have a tendency to allow migrants as temporary guests rather than explicit asylum-seekers, which takes the responsibility away from the host government and shifts it to agencies such as UNHCR, foreign governments, and non-government organizations. UNHCR notes that “shifting responsibility for refugee populations to UN agencies can provide a ready explanation for the otherwise contradictory facts of long-term residence and the non-integration of refugees in Arab states. In the absence of a foreign state of origin or employment sponsor that can take responsibility for the migrants, visibly attaching a group of foreigners to the UN can serve to explain why they cannot be, and need not be, integrated to the host community,” (Kagan, 9). This, among other complex factors, helps to explain why Jordan continues to refuse entry to several thousand Syrian-Palestinians, as well as many single males and many people without documentation, according to human rights monitoring organizations such as Human Rights Watch. It is reported that the majority of them have been refused entry into Jordan outright, but there is a separate camp in Jordan that is only housing Syrian-Palestinians, and contains at least 2,000 refugees there. Human Rights Watch notes that “such a policy violates the international law principle of nonrefoulement, which forbids governments

from returning refugees and asylum seekers to places where their lives or freedom would be threatened.”<sup>2</sup>

Jordan was forever changed by the massive integration of Palestinians following the events of 1948 and 1967. One could infer from this language that the Jordanian government seemingly wants to avoid having such a large integration to happen again. In light of Jordan’s prior experience with the integration of Palestinian refugees from 1948-onward, the government of Jordan (GOJ) has sought to limit the duration and scope of future refugee flows. “Jordan reached an agreement with UNHCR in 1997 establishing a basis for UNHCR’s office in the country, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 1998, as well as a temporary agreement in 2003 that was specific to Iraqi refugees,” (Kagan 10). Jordan also made new arrangements with UNHCR to delineate its responsibilities with regards to the current influx of Syrian refugees. A key feature of these MOUs between Jordan and UNHCR indicate clearly that Jordan is a “transit country only,” describing the presence of refugees as a “sojourn.”

## **General Effects**

Jacobsen (2002a) talks about one of the positive results of having to take care of a refugee population is that it would extend the state’s bureaucratic reach to outlying areas, to the periphery, which relates to the previously discussed issue of state capacity. Prior to the Syrian uprising, the Mafraq governorate, which hosts Jordan’s massive and growing Za’atari refugee camp<sup>3</sup>, was relatively quiet. Since the uprising, Mafraq city has turned into a bustling city with a large presence of foreign aid workers and journalists visiting and working there, not to mention the growing refugee population. This kind of growth and expansion is consistent with Jacobsen’s

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<sup>2</sup> Human Rights Watch. “Jordan: Obama Should Press King on Asylum Seeker Pushbacks.” Human Rights Watch website. 21 March, 2013. <http://www.hrw.org/news/2013/03/21/jordan-obama-should-press-king-asylum-seeker-pushbacks>.

<sup>3</sup> Luck, Taylor. “Syrian influx to Jordan rises as second camp grows,” *Jordan Times*, 15 April, 2013. <http://jordantimes.com/syrian-influx-to-jordan-rises-as-second-camp-grows>.

assertions. The infrastructure, economy, bureaucratic structures, and security have all had to be significantly improved in order to maintain such fast growth, thus strengthening an outlying area of the country that was previously neglected. Jordan has a very long border with Syria (375 km, or 233 miles) that is normally unmonitored outside of official crossing points, and until a massive demining effort was heavily saturated with land mines. The dangers of the proximate civil war and humanitarian concerns of protecting refugees force Jordan to patrol the border areas much more heavily than in the past.

In addition to patrols, the Jordanian military is taking steps to add more monitoring equipment to the lengthy border. According to Gen. Mishaal Zaben, Jordan's Army chief of staff, Jordan will be installing more "cameras, radar and sophisticated early detection equipment to help prevent smuggling and infiltrations across the border and assist Syrian refugees as they cross into Jordan." The equipment will "significantly bolster Jordan's defenses along the border with Syria," he said.<sup>4</sup> This is a significant upgrade to an outlying area of the country that had previously been neglected. The intense fighting near the Syrian side of the border has created a high-tension situation in Jordan, requiring increased patrols to protect both Jordanian towns and the refugees attempting to cross the border.<sup>5</sup>

Jacobsen's (2002b) conclusions about refugee livelihoods are difficult to prove or apply in Jordan, as refugees' options for income generating activities and their livelihoods in general are severely limited in Jordan's urban host communities. Consumer prices for most goods have increased since the Syrian crisis began, but rents have increased significantly. In many areas that have larger populations of Syrian refugees, average rents have more than doubled. Estimates

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<sup>4</sup> Associated Press, "Jordan aid to rebels raises tensions with Syria," *Ammon News*, 5 April, 2013. <http://en.ammonnews.net/article.aspx?articleNO=20591>.

<sup>5</sup> Luck, Taylor. "Syrian jihadists' gains near border place Jordan on 'high alert,'" *Jordan Times*, 24 March, 2013. <http://jordantimes.com/syrian-jihadists-gains-near-border-place-jordan-on-high-alert>.

show that as many as 80% of Syrians in Jordan are living outside of the refugee camps, either renting apartments or staying with relatives. The biggest problems that urban refugees both face and cause are exacerbated because many of them do not register with UNHCR, which would enable them to secure additional UN assistance and access local services. However, according to a report by the International Rescue Committee, “many refugees remain reluctant to register because they fear retribution should the Syrian government become aware they fled.”<sup>6</sup>

Rapid increases in demand and prices for rent and goods and services in and near the refugee hosting areas have elevated the situation in Jordan into what the UN would consider to be a “protracted refugee situation.” To make matters worse, the “refugee resources” that Syrians brought with them to Jordan have long since been depleted. Many refugees now face an additional burden in paying rent once the limited-term housing assistance from charitable organizations dries up. According to an official with the International Catholic Migration Commission, “A lot of the Syrian refugees living in urban areas have been evicted because they couldn’t pay rent anymore, so some have gone back to the refugee camp and others have gone back to Syria. They had no choice.” Some urban refugees have been able to receive one-time cash payments for things like clothes and rent, but those funds dry up quickly, and work is scarce. There are no Income-Generating Programs for Syrian refugees, and in the current economic climate, the Jordanian government fears that publicizing these kinds of programs within Jordan could create a negative response from a Jordanian public tired of high unemployment rates.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> International Rescue Committee. “Syria: A Regional Crisis – The IRC Commission on Syrian Refugees.” International Rescue Committee, 2013. <http://www.rescue.org/sites/default/files/resource-file/IRCReportMidEast20130114.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> UNHCR. News Stories. “Syrians in Jordan: A community of refugees flowers in the desert.” UNHCR website. Accessed 20 April, 2013. <http://www.unhcr.org/51407d7f9.html>.

## Health

As discussed in the previous section, Jacobsen (2002a) describes health concerns as being one of main reasons governments don't want to have open border policy toward refugees. Syria has become a textbook example of a war zone, and it has all of the conditions and problems that one would expect with regard to health. The Jordanian government and its citizens are rightfully wary of letting these problems come in with the victims. The literature (Jacobsen 2002a, Baez 2008) warns of the potential health problems surrounding refugees and the problems that can develop within and around refugee camps. Disease outbreaks, epidemics, and malnutrition are warned of by all of the literature when they discuss potential health problems in relation to hosting refugee populations. Bloody dysentery, malaria, pneumonia, meningitis, measles, sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, and skin diseases are just a short list of what could be seen and spread easily. Health services are already reporting outbreaks of measles and other problems starting to surface within the refugee population.<sup>8</sup> One of the biggest problems sure to impact developing countries receiving refugees is the overburdening of healthcare facilities and supplies. The costs of this healthcare is becoming too much for Jordan's government to bear. Jordan's Ministry of Health says that it "spends half of its budget on medical care for Syrians alone and needs about \$350 million in emergency funding to sustain the country's public-health-care system past April, 2013."<sup>9</sup> Large numbers of refugees come into Jordan critically wounded and requiring intensive medical care to recover.

In general, refugees fleeing from a war zone are bound to arrive with severe injuries and health problems, and they have to be treated. As the numbers of refugees passes 500,000 and on

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<sup>8</sup> Malkawi, Khetam. "13 cases of measles detected among Syrian refugees," *Jordan Times*, 17 April, 2013. <http://jordantimes.com/13-cases-of-measles-detected-among-syrian-refugees>.

<sup>9</sup> Luck, Taylor. "In Jordan, tensions rise between Syrian refugees and host community." *Washington Post*, 22 April, 2013. [http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle\\_east/in-jordan-tensions-rise-between-syrian-refugees-and-host-community/2013/04/21/d4f5fa24-a762-11e2-a8e2-5b98cb59187f\\_story.html?hpid=z3](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/in-jordan-tensions-rise-between-syrian-refugees-and-host-community/2013/04/21/d4f5fa24-a762-11e2-a8e2-5b98cb59187f_story.html?hpid=z3).



its way to 1.2 million by the end of the year, Jordan's healthcare facilities are reportedly in crisis-mode.<sup>10</sup> In their January, 2013 report, IRC determined that gaining access to medical care in Jordan is now a bigger problem for Jordanians and refugees alike.<sup>11</sup> Many of these refugees have serious and life-threatening war wounds, chronic illnesses and other medical needs, and have already flooded the few hospitals and clinics where they can receive free services.<sup>12</sup> The costs are significant and health workers reported to IRC that the sheer volume of refugees is filling hospital beds "faster than they can find them." Aid agencies are also beginning to respond to calls for psychological and social support within the refugee communities. The refugees escape the violence and destruction of Syria, where there are reports of atrocities being committed and sexual violence being employed against the population, and they then find themselves in a crowded, sometimes desperate situation where domestic abuse is flourishing in the wake of their escape. In the wake of reports indicating that sexual violence is being employed in the Syrian civil war, Syrian women in particular are in need of counseling services and are starting to receive them.<sup>13</sup>

## Education

In line with the findings of the previously discussed literature (Jacobsen 2002b, Whitaker 2002, Baez 2008), Jordan's education system has been overburdened by the influx of Syrian refugees into the host communities. As stated before, 80% of Syrian refugees in Jordan are living in urban environments rather than in the camps, and the majority of refugees are women and

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<sup>10</sup> Luck, Taylor. "Syrians pour into Jordan as 'healthcare crisis looms,'" *Jordan Times*, 9 April, 2013. <http://jordantimes.com/syrians-pour-into-jordan-as-healthcare-crisis-looms>.

<sup>11</sup> International Rescue Committee. "Syria: A Regional Crisis – The IRC Commission on Syrian Refugees." International Rescue Committee, 2013. <http://www.rescue.org/sites/default/files/resource-file/IRCReportMidEast20130114.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup> Rowling, Megan. "Syrian refugees struggle to access healthcare in Jordan," *AlertNet*, 17 January, 2013. <http://www.trust.org/alertnet/news/syrian-refugees-struggle-to-access-healthcare-in-jordan/>.

<sup>13</sup> Abuqudairi, Areej. "Syrian refugee women in need of psycho-social support," *Jordan Times*, 14 April, 2013. <http://jordantimes.com/syrian-refugee-women-in-need-of-psycho-social-support>.

children. Although in some areas there have been reports of wait-lists to get into local schools, Jordan's education ministry says that "Syrians already residing in host communities across the country [are] free to register their children in standard public schools."<sup>14</sup> To accommodate this additional pressure on Jordan's education system, the government has changed some schools in areas with high concentrations of Syrian refugees to work in double-shifts, teaching girls in the morning and boys in the afternoon.<sup>15</sup>

Estimates place the number of Syrian students registered at schools in Jordan in the tens of thousands, but there is no available data on how many of them are actually attending. Many Syrian parents are wary of setting down roots for their children, hoping that they can return to Syria soon. UNESCO is working together with the Jordan Ministry of Education and its local partners promote educational opportunities for Syrian refugees and the young Jordanians affected by the Syrian refugee crisis.<sup>16</sup> UNESCO Jordan director, Anna Paolini, says that "Conflict and displacement can have a devastating impact on the educational prospects of displaced persons as well as burden the education systems of neighboring host communities," and that "UNESCO plays an active role in promoting education as a key tool in preventing conflict and rebuilding lives in emergency and post-conflict situations." In addition to promoting opportunities, they are working to build teachers' capacities and "offer demand-driven informal and non-formal education programmes and vocational skills development opportunities for Syrian youth inside the refugee camps and for Jordanian and Syrian youth in urban areas."

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<sup>14</sup> Luck, Taylor. "Jordan to Open School for Syrian Refugees," *Jordan Times*, 5 August, 2012.

<http://jordantimes.com/jordan-to-open-school-for-syrian-refugees>.

<sup>15</sup> Gittleson, Ben. "Syrian Refugees, Children Struggle in Jordan." *Al-Monitor*, 2 December, 2013. <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2012/al-monitor/syrianrefugeesjordan.html>.

<sup>16</sup> UNESCO, "UNESCO/EU €4.3 million project for young Syrian refugees in Jordan." UNESCO website.

[http://www.unesco.org/new/en/amman/about-this-office/single-view/news/supporting\\_the\\_futures\\_of\\_young\\_syrian\\_refugees\\_in\\_jordan/](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/amman/about-this-office/single-view/news/supporting_the_futures_of_young_syrian_refugees_in_jordan/). Accessed 20 April, 2013.

Without programs such as these, Jordan's education system would be considerably less effective for both the local and refugee populations.

## **Environment**

Virtually all of the literature on the general effects of hosting refugees cites the use and overuse of scarce resources as a source of conflict between the host and refugee communities. For example, Whitaker (2002) predicts that existing resource problems will be compounded by the presence of refugees. Since Jordan is the 4<sup>th</sup> most water-scarce country on earth<sup>17</sup>, it may be the archetypal case for this problem. Jordan's water resources have been used more than they have been replenished almost every year since the 1980's. Jordan's public water utilities are only able to provide roughly a third (150 cubic meters) of the suggested international water standards (500 cubic meters) per person per year. Adding half a million people to Jordan's existing 6.7 million citizens, in addition to Jordan's large groups of other immigrants, is putting an expectedly big strain on Jordan's environment and water supplies. The Mafraq governorate, which hosts the Za'atari refugee camp, has more than doubled in size since the Syrian refugee crisis began, and is experiencing bigger and more frequent resource problems because of it, including delays, disruptions, and limited amounts of water service to virtually all sectors.<sup>18</sup>

The water infrastructure in the northern parts of Jordan is deteriorating faster than expected. Additionally, there have been shortages of equipment and staff to deal with these issues, and many wells are inoperable or too saline. The Mafraq Water Directorate notes that the main aquifer is suffering from over-extraction. They are also concerned about higher pressures on the sewage network and worry that wastewater could pollute the aquifer. Nearly one million

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<sup>17</sup> Oxfam, "Syrian refugee influx adding to Jordan's water worries." Oxfam Conflict & Emergencies blog, 22 March, 2013. <http://blogs.oxfam.org/en/blogs/13-03-22-syria-refugees-adding-jordan-water-worries>.

<sup>18</sup> Namrouqa, Hana. "Parched summer lies ahead for Mafraq residents." *Jordan Times*, 19 March, 2013. <http://jordantimes.com/parched-summer-lies-ahead-for-mafraq-residents>.

gallons, roughly three to four thousand cubic meters, is delivered to Za'atari every day. As a result, water delivery to households in the host community has seen shortages and longer delivery wait times, and farmers have experienced crop losses. Oxfam has observed<sup>19</sup> that local Jordanians are blaming the refugee influx for these problems, and recent protests<sup>20</sup> outside the sprawling, nine square mile refugee camp have shown that some Jordanians are ready for the Syrians to go back to Syria. Adrian Martin (2005) would classify this type of protest activity as an “unproductive intergroup conflict.” Martin describes examples of productive conflicts as including participatory discussions that involve representatives from all parties involved. These kinds of participatory management programs do not appear to have happened in Jordan despite the country’s pre-existing severe water scarcity problems. The shortages and limitations in service currently being experienced could ignite new inter-group conflicts between the refugee and host populations.

Even public schools in the area have suffered water shortages in the last year and have had to resort to buying water from water tanker delivery trucks every week. One principal, Suad Shdeifat, notes that “it is our moral responsibility to host our Syrian brothers and sisters, but the crisis in Syria is taking its toll on our daily life and our most basic human right, which is water.”<sup>21</sup> Organizations such as MercyCorps are working to build wells into a non-renewable aquifer that lies deep below Za'atari, and expect that it will provide water for at least 65,000 refugees in the camp, but it is unknown how long these supplies will last. In addition to their efforts inside the camp, MercyCorps is also working in coordination with the US Agency for

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<sup>19</sup> Oxfam, “Syrian refugee influx adding to Jordan’s water worries.” Oxfam *Conflict & Emergencies* blog, 22 March, 2013. <http://blogs.oxfam.org/en/blogs/13-03-22-syria-refugees-adding-jordan-water-worries>.

<sup>20</sup> Luck, Taylor. “Security personnel, refugees injured in Zaatari protest.” *Jordan Times*, 20 April, 2013. <http://jordantimes.com/security-personnel-refugees-injured-in-zaatari-protest>.

<sup>21</sup> Namrouqa, Hana. “Parched summer lies ahead for Mafraq residents.” *Jordan Times*, 19 March, 2013. <http://jordantimes.com/parched-summer-lies-ahead-for-mafraq-residents>.

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International Development on a US \$20 million grant to help rehabilitate host community water networks in areas most affected by the Syrian refugee crisis.<sup>22</sup>

## **Economy, Trade, Labor, and Prices**

Jacobsen describes how one of the main refugee resources, humanitarian aid, “trickles” into host communities. This aid can consist of money, food aid and non-food aid, which could include material and personnel “intended to provide for the medical, shelter, security, educational, and repatriation/resettlement needs of refugees” (Jacobsen 2002a, 581). She notes that measuring the economic impact of hosting refugees is notoriously difficult, but finds that “since host communities are not economically homogenous, the effects of these changes will vary for different groups. Inevitably, some groups will be marginalized, and others will gain disproportionately” (Jacobsen 2002a, 586). The costs of caring for the rapidly expanding population have been very high. Jordanian Foreign Minister Nasser Judeh commented that “about \$600 million was spent by the government on taking care of refugees as of last year, with only one-third coming from international donors,” with the cost of running just the Za’atari refugee camp up to \$2.5 million per day.<sup>23</sup> The World Food Programme (WFP) manages extensive food voucher systems for refugees who are registered with UNHCR. Those registered receive 24 Jordanian Dinars (JOD) per person per month, which equals about \$34USD per person.<sup>24</sup> Oxfam estimates that the vouchers account for between 10% and 75% of refugee food purchases, depending on what part of Jordan in which they are living. Oxfam also notes an extreme disparity in the ratio of urban refugees’ income and expenditures. CARE Jordan

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<sup>22</sup> Freij, Muath. “US grants addition \$20m for water security in north.” *Jordan Times*, 21 January, 2013. <http://jordantimes.com/us-grants-additional-20m-for-water-security-in-north>

<sup>23</sup> Bozkurt, Abdullah. “Jordan uneasy as Syrian refugees pressure economy.” *Today’s Zaman*, 3 March, 2013. <http://www.todayzaman.com/news-308609-jordan-uneasy-as-syrian-refugees-pressure-economy.html>.

<sup>24</sup> Oxfam. *Executive Summary of the Integrated Assessment in Host Communities*. PDF report from Oxfam website. March 2013. <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=1926>.

estimates that the average income shortfall is 185 JOD per month, about \$261USD.<sup>25</sup> They found that many spend more than twice what they bring in from vouchers, in-kind assistance, and odd-jobs. This has resulted in an emerging debt crisis for many Syrian refugees, with many of them owing several hundred Dinars to friends, family, or local businesses, with little means to repay them.

In regard to the economy, trade, and labor, the findings reflected in the literature review accurately predict how the situation in Jordan is playing out. People who were already well-off before the Syrian crisis – those with capital and companies to run – are better off now than they were before. Conversely, the people who were already struggling before the Syrian crisis find themselves with an even more difficult situation. The unemployment rate remains high (12.8%) in the country despite increases in GDP and demand. Because refugees are willing to work for far less than locals, current estimates place the number of Syrians working in Jordan at more than 160,000, bringing the estimates for the total number of foreign laborers in Jordan to as high as 700,000.<sup>26</sup> Recent estimates by the Mafraq Labor Department show that 90% of Syrians working in Mafraq governorate are doing so illegally.<sup>27</sup> Jordan's past refugee flows provide a unique opportunity for comparison and allow for a deeper understanding of their effects on the country. Jawad Anani, an economist and president of Jordan's Economic and Social Council notes that

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<sup>25</sup> CARE Jordan, "Syrian Refugees in Urban Jordan: Baseline Assessments of Community-Identified Vulnerabilities Among Syrian Refugees Living in Irbid, Madaba, Mufraq, and Zarqa." CARE Jordan, April 2013. <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=1922>.

<sup>26</sup> Hazaimah, Hani. "Around 160,000 Syrians work illegally in Jordan," *Jordan Times*, 17 March, 2013. <http://jordantimes.com/around-160000-syrians-work-illegally-in-jordan>.

<sup>27</sup> Petra, "Around 90% of Syrian labourers in Mafraq work illegally." *Jordan Times*, 24 April, 2013. <http://jordantimes.com/around-90-of-syrian-labourers-in-mafraq-work-illegally>.

“while Iraqis came [after the 2003 US invasion of Iraq] to Jordan with investments and were effectively job creators, Syrians are arriving as job-takers.”<sup>28</sup>

With few exceptions, the majority of Syrian refugees both inside and outside the camp are not permitted to seek legal employment, however there are reports that more than 160,000 Syrians are working inside Jordan without proper documentation. This poses “a challenge to strategic plans to combat unemployment among young Jordanians” (Hazaimah, 2013). Syrian refugees are not able to work legally in all professions. Additionally, they are restricted from working in any border areas, including in farm areas in the Jordan Valley.<sup>29</sup> Many take loans from shop keepers and landlords and are in serious debt. Others find under-the-table jobs as day laborers and farmers, but work long hours and get paid well under market rate.” Oxfam notes that the vast majority of Syrian refugees who do find employment are men. IRC also reports that commodity prices are up and wages are down. These impacts are exacerbating an already tense relationship between the host and refugee communities.

Some Jordanian business owners readily admit that they prefer to hire Syrians, particularly in areas of the economy that many Jordanians do not want to work in. “Syrians are devoted and hard working,” one car wash owner said.<sup>30</sup> “I do not have any problem hiring anyone as long as they respect their job and do their job efficiently.” In these types of jobs in Jordan, owners complain that Jordanians often have the “habit of quitting without notice.” The wage paid to casual laborers has reportedly dropped by 50% in some places. “According to the Labour Ministry, Syrians who are caught working illegally in Jordan are given two warnings

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<sup>28</sup> Luck, Taylor. “In Jordan, tensions rise between Syrian refugees and host community.” *Washington Post*, 22 April, 2013. [http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle\\_east/in-jordan-tensions-rise-between-syrian-refugees-and-host-community/2013/04/21/d4f5fa24-a762-11e2-a8e2-5b98cb59187f\\_story.html?hpid=z3](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/in-jordan-tensions-rise-between-syrian-refugees-and-host-community/2013/04/21/d4f5fa24-a762-11e2-a8e2-5b98cb59187f_story.html?hpid=z3).

<sup>29</sup> Omari, Raed. “Farm owners hit out at gov’t over recruitment ban.” *Jordan Times*, 21 April, 2013. <http://jordantimes.com/legal-guest-workers-demanding-higher-wages-after-recruitment-ban>.

<sup>30</sup> Hazaimah, Hani. “Thousands of Syrians find jobs in ‘abandoned sectors’ in Jordan,” *Jordan Times*, 21 February, 2013. <http://jordantimes.com/thousands-of-syrians-find-jobs-in-abandoned-sectors-in-jordan>.

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before they are subject to fines but not deportation. The ministry attributed this “leniency” to the fact that Syrians cannot be deported back to Syria due to the ongoing violence.” While prices in most areas have not expanded in the ways witnessed by Baez in Tanzania, there have been noticeable price increases in Jordan. The World Food Program cites recent estimates by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization that the average “food basket” costs have gone up about 8 percent in the last year, to about 130 Jordanian Dinars, or \$183 per month.<sup>31</sup>

## Crime and Violence

Tales of a dismal existence are usually all one hears and reads about coming from the Za’atari refugee camp, just outside of Mafraq, Jordan. Za’atari was the first camp built specifically for the Syrian refugee influx, and has now grown to more than twice its intended size. A second camp has been built in Zarqa to accommodate tens of thousands more, and has recently begun to take in new refugees. The camp was built on top of a barren desert, and because of short-sighted actions like bulldozing the land to make it even instead of rocky, “the slightest wind [creates a sandstorm],” sometimes causing more than 150 children per day to go to the hospital with respiratory problems.<sup>32</sup> During heavy rainstorms in the winter, the dusty ground turned to mud, and floods destroyed many tents. Aside from many women and children, the camp is also home to thousands of single young men, some of whom are perceived to exploit any opportunity to “agitate and throw stones and even jeopardize the aid they are receiving.”<sup>33</sup> As the numbers in Za’atari have swelled, safety and security have degenerated, with theft, fires and riots commonplace. Residents say there is palpable tension in the air; aid workers have been attacked,

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<sup>31</sup> World Food Program. “Syrian Refugees and Food Insecurity in Iraq, Jordan and Turkey: Secondary Literature and Data Desk Review – Syria.” World Food Program website, February, 2013.

<http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/ena/wfp256922.pdf>.

<sup>32</sup> IRIN News, “In Brief: How (not) to build a refugee camp in the desert,” *IRIN News*, 23 October 2012.

<http://www.irinnews.org/report/96619/In-Brief-How-not-to-build-a-refugee-camp-in-the-desert>.

<sup>33</sup> IRIN News, “JORDAN: Tempers flare as heavy rain pounds camp,” *IRIN News*, 8 January, 2013.

<http://www.irinnews.org/Report/97197/JORDAN-Tempers-flare-as-heavy-rain-pounds-camp>.



even hospitalized, and journalists beaten.<sup>34</sup> The cumulative effects of more than two years of these kinds of events happening has made the Jordanian population wary about allowing additional Syrians to enter Jordan.

There have been continual reports of theft of UNHCR, UNICEF, and other agencies' materials, with the sum of the thefts totaling hundreds of thousands of dollars. Items small and large have made their way out of the camp via smugglers and into the surrounding communities.<sup>35</sup> There are frequent protests in Jordan's Za'atari camp. The protests are often about living conditions, but are also in response to Jordan's perceived inaction in helping the Syrian opposition, as well as protests by Syrians in Amman regarding the West's failure to aid the opposition. Protests seeking to have the Syrians returned to Syria are also starting to appear in the conflict's third year, with some of the more recent protests becoming increasingly violent.<sup>36</sup> There have also been protests outside the entrance to Za'atari by Jordanians. Jacobsen warns that "an initial welcoming response to refugees can evolve into resentment and threats against them if the community perceives the refugees to be causing more problems than benefits" (Jacobsen2002a, 591). This seems to be the current state of affairs.

Crime within Za'atari has been steadily increasing and changing in nature. UNHCR has been actively increasing the security presence in and around the camp to mitigate such problems as drug trafficking and prostitution, among other problems emerging recently. Because of the size of the refugee population in the camp, more than 140,000 people in a space initially designed for less than half that total, aid agencies have begun to refer to it as Jordan's de facto

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<sup>34</sup> IRIN News, "Despite new police presence, security concerns persist at Syrian refugee camp," *IRIN News*, 3 April, 2013. <http://www.irinnews.org/Report/97778/Despite-new-police-presence-security-concerns-persist-at-Syrian-refugee-camp>.

<sup>35</sup> Hazaimah, Hani. "UNHCR Reacts to Syrian Refugee Smuggling Allegations." *Jordan Times*, 5 March, 2013. <http://jordantimes.com/unhcr-reacts-to-syrian-refugee-smuggling-allegations>.

<sup>36</sup> Luck, Taylor. "Security personnel, refugees injured in Zaatari protest." *Jordan Times*, 20 April, 2013. <http://jordantimes.com/security-personnel-refugees-injured-in-zaatari-protest>.

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fourth-largest city.<sup>37</sup> Because refugees flow into areas far from urban centers, such as the Za'atari camp for Syrian refugees, policing such a far-flung area can be a difficult task. The threat of rebel groups attempting to operate in the same area creates a big challenge for the state security apparatus. Jordan has made significant efforts to keep Syrian army and police defectors separate from the general Za'atari camp population. It has been reported that the camp does not include anyone from those groups. There are reportedly “about 2,000 former soldiers, including senior officers, [who] were settled at the Rachi camp.... Soldiers who have defected can leave their families at Za'atari and visit from time to time with special permission from the Jordanian authorities.”<sup>38</sup>

There has been virtually no public discussion about the whereabouts or activities of defectors that have remained in Jordan.<sup>39</sup> Defectors are not allowed to return officially again to Jordan if they go back to Syria.<sup>40</sup> This policy is a direct effort to prevent the Syrian opposition from organizing and operating from Jordanian territory. Such organizing has become a threat to Jordan in the past, but another concern that the Jordanian government wants to avoid is the potential threat of Syrian “ sleeper cells ” infiltrating the country with the intent to cause harm to Jordan or assassinate defectors. Jordan has already seen arms and ammunition find its way from Syrian battlefields and into the hands of Jordanian extremists desiring to cause disruption in the capital and harm to Westerners and upset the stability and sovereignty of the Jordanian government.

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<sup>37</sup> Gavlak, Dale. “UN, Jordan to tackle crime in Syrian refugee camp,” *Yahoo! News/Associated Press*, 13 March, 2013. <http://news.yahoo.com/un-jordan-tackle-crime-syrian-refugee-camp-121806254.html>

<sup>38</sup> Bozkurt, Abdullah. “Jordan uneasy as Syrian refugees pressure economy.” *Today's Zaman*, 3 March, 2013. <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-308609-jordan-uneasy-as-syrian-refugees-pressure-economy.html>

<sup>39</sup> Halaby, Jamal, Gavlak, Dale. “Syria Defectors Live in Secret Desert Camp in Jordan,” *Huffington Post*, 28 August, 2012. [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/08/28/syria-defectors-jordan\\_n\\_1837452.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/08/28/syria-defectors-jordan_n_1837452.html)

<sup>40</sup> Al-Samadi, Tamer. “Syrian Military Defectors Face Cold Welcome in Jordan.” *Al-Monitor*, 13 July, 2012. <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/en/contents/articles/politics/2012/07/800-syrian-army-personnel-includ.html>

There are also concerns about the movement of fighters in the opposite direction. The Jordanian Salafist movement has been vocally supportive of the rebellion against the Syrian regime and actively encourages young Jordanians to fight alongside the rebel groups in Syria. In light of Jordan's history of transnational rebels and current international law, the trafficking of weapons across the Jordanian border is illegal, and it is the government of Jordan's responsibility to enforce it. One of the more prominent crime problems associated with the civil war has been the frequent movement of Jordanian Salafist fighters back and forth across the border.<sup>41</sup> The Salafist movement claims that there are more than 500 Jordanians fighting in Syria<sup>42</sup>, and estimate that at least 35 have died.<sup>43</sup> Jordan is actively enforcing its laws regarding the border, and continues to arrest Jordanians that they apprehend attempting to enter illegally into Syria.

Because the Za'atari refugee camp is subject to a closed security system, there are only very restricted movements between the camp and the surrounding communities. Syrians need to be "sponsored" by a Jordanian to be allowed to leave, and Jordanians need special permits to enter the camp for any reason. This locked-down situation does alleviate many issues that Jordan would historically worry about, such as the militarization of the refugee population and the scourge of illicit activities between Jordanians and the refugee population. Even with security having been reinforced in recent months, there are still attacks on aid workers, riots planned by the younger members of the refugee population at night, and dangerous conditions for women, particularly in poorly lit areas at night. Beginning in March 2013, the Jordanian police have taken over camp management, under the umbrella of a new entity known as the "Syrian Refugee

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<sup>41</sup> Luck, Taylor. "Jihadists seized along Syrian border," *Jordan Times*, 15 April, 2013. <http://jordantimes.com/jihadists-seized-along-syrian-border>.

<sup>42</sup> Ammon News. "Salafis: 500 Fighters from the Tendency in Syria." *Ammon News* website. 8 April, 2013. Translated to English. <http://www.ammonnews.net/article.aspx?articleno=149509>

<sup>43</sup> Jordan Times. "Jordanian Jihadist Killed in Syria." *Jordan Times*, 27 March, 2013. <http://jordantimes.com/jordanian-jihadist-killed-in-syria>.

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Camp Directorate.” They are attempting to make significant new strides in security enforcement. The Jordanian government is making requests to the UN Security Council for action to highlight the “burdens and difficult humanitarian conditions” facing the country because of the refugee influx.<sup>44</sup>

## Transnational Effects

Kirui and Mwaruvie (2012) warn that proximity to a state like Somalia invited serious problems for Kenya. Today, Somalia is regarded by many as a “failed state,” which could be defined as a state’s inability “to provide basic services” such as “protection from external threats, rule of law, and basic social services. Cojanu and Popescu (2007) insist that “there is no agreement on the definition of state failure,” but refer to Zartman (1995), who define’s failure as occurring when “the basic functions of the state are no longer performed” (Cojanu and Popescu 2007, 115). They warn that these situations are linked to problems like “humanitarian catastrophes; mass migration; environmental degradation; regional instability; energy insecurity; global pandemics; international crime; the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and, of course, transnational terrorism” (Cojanu and Popescu 2007, 114). There are now observations that Syria may be on the road to becoming a failed state.<sup>45</sup> Despite continuous,<sup>46</sup> adamant claims by the GOJ that Jordan is only taking a neutral, humanitarian position on the Syrian civil war,<sup>47</sup> there has been a stream of reports documenting close security cooperation between the GOJ, Western governments, and the Syrian opposition. Additionally, the GOJ has been implicated in

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<sup>44</sup> Luck, Taylor. “Jordan to request UN Security Council ‘action’ on Syrian refugee crisis.” *Jordan Times*, 22 April, 2013. <http://jordantimes.com/jordan-to-request-un-security-council-action-on-syrian-refugee-crisis>.

<sup>45</sup> Warrick, Joby. “Jordan’s Abdullah urges diplomatic action to end Syrian conflict.” *Washington Post*, 26 April, 2013. [http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/jordans-abdullah-urges-diplomatic-action-to-end-syrian-conflict/2013/04/25/67f95f32-adbc-11e2-a986-ec837b1888b\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/jordans-abdullah-urges-diplomatic-action-to-end-syrian-conflict/2013/04/25/67f95f32-adbc-11e2-a986-ec837b1888b_story.html).

<sup>46</sup> Luck, Taylor. “Jordan downplays tensions with Damascus,” *Jordan Times*, 17 March, 2013. <http://jordantimes.com/jordan-downplays-tensions-with-damascus>.

<sup>47</sup> Hazaimah, Hani. “Gov’t Reiterates ‘Neutral Position’ Over Syrian Crisis.” *Jordan Times*, 4 March, 2013. <http://jordantimes.com/govt-reiterates-neutral-position-over-syrian-crisis>.

facilitating the transfer of weapons and military supplies across its border with Syria.<sup>48</sup> As a result of these activities, the Syrian regime has begun to more openly accuse the Jordanian government of interfering in its internal affairs, and has gone so far as to warn that Jordan could be engulfed in the fire of their conflict.<sup>49</sup>

In his 2011 book, *Rebels Without Borders*, Idean Salehyan notes that it is easier and more likely that transnational rebels (TNRs) will access territory in a neighboring country if that country's government is weak. That government may not wish them to do so, but in many cases they lack the capacity to prevent it, and can become ensnarled in international disputes. This can be observed in Jordan's past dealings with the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). Jordan's army was severely weakened in the aftermath of the 1967 Six-Day war as a result of suffering a crushing defeat by Israel. The PLO took advantage of this situation in a climate of Palestinian radicalization, and public opinion that Jordan was not doing enough to combat Israeli occupation. Although Jordan initially was complicit in allowing PLO cross-border operations into Israel, the reprisals and hot-pursuits into Jordanian territory led to a desire in Jordan for these operations to cease.

Rather than stop, the PLO doubled-down its efforts and attempted to create a shadow government within Jordan, leading to a brief civil war in the Hashemite Kingdom, which climaxed in the "Black September" of 1970. More than 3,000 people died in this conflict, which became a short civil war. Most of the casualties were members of the PLO, who relocated their headquarters thereafter to Lebanon. Jordan's current handling of the Syrian refugees, defectors,

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<sup>48</sup>Chivers, C.J., Schmitt, Eric. "Saudis Step Up Help for Rebels in Syria With Croatian Arms." *New York Times*, 25 February, 2013. [http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/26/world/middleeast/in-shift-saudis-are-said-to-arm-rebels-in-syria.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/26/world/middleeast/in-shift-saudis-are-said-to-arm-rebels-in-syria.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0).

<sup>49</sup> Agence France-Presse, "Assad says fire of Syria could spread to Jordan," *Jordan Times*, 18 April, 2013. <http://jordantimes.com/assad-says-fire-of-syria-could-spread-to-jordan>.

and the border, reflects the hard-earned wisdom of this experience.<sup>50</sup> Despite the strain placed by the refugee presence on Jordan's scarce resources, Jordan is a stronger country than it was during that time, with better technology and better information systems. The Palestinians that came into Jordan following *al-Nakba*, the Palestinian exodus of 1948, were given full Jordanian citizenship without question. While there were refugee camps, they had freedom of movement, which enabled the PLO to operate in and around the camps and blend in with the population, utilizing its resources. The limitations placed on the Syrians coming into Jordan show that from the beginning of the Syrian conflict, the Jordanian government has actively sought to limit the potential for these kinds of events to happen again.

Although many countries have now called for Bashar Al-Assad to step down since the start of the Syrian government's crackdown on dissent after the beginning of the uprising, Jordan's King Abdullah II was the first Arab leader to call for him to relinquish power.<sup>51</sup> This action was important because it gave the rest of the Arab world an opening to begin publicly speaking out against the Assad regime. Despite ongoing insistence from the GOJ regarding its neutrality and desire for a political solution to the crisis,<sup>52</sup> there have been multiple reports over the last year that Jordanian military and intelligence services have been involved in directly aiding other Arab governments with the transport and transfer of weapons and aid to the Syrian

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<sup>50</sup> OnWar. "Black September in Jordan 1970-1971," OnWar Armed Conflicts Events Data, <http://www.onwar.com/aced/data/bravo/blacksept1970.htm>.

<sup>51</sup> Bakri, Nada. "King of Jordan Becomes First Arab Leader to Tell Syria's Assad to Quit." *New York Times*, 14 November, 2011. [http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/15/world/middleeast/king-of-jordan-calls-on-syrias-assad-to-quit.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/15/world/middleeast/king-of-jordan-calls-on-syrias-assad-to-quit.html?_r=0).

<sup>52</sup> Hazaimah, Hani. "Gov't Reiterates 'Neutral Position' Over Syrian Crisis." *Jordan Times*, 4 March, 2013. <http://jordantimes.com/govt-reiterates-neutral-position-over-syrian-crisis>.

opposition.<sup>53</sup> While some of this can be dismissed by the regime as speculation, the high-level sources in the reporting would suggest that there is some truth to these events now.

Evidence collected by the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project has indicated that the GOJ purchased more than 230 tons of Croatian weapons and ammunition for \$6.5 million, and now those same weapons are appearing on Syrian battlefields.<sup>54</sup> These efforts are believed to be coordinated, and at least partially funded, by the Saudi government, but the Jordanian armed forces have been actively aiding the movement and delivery of these weapons to the Syrian border.<sup>55</sup> Rather than allow the Syrian opposition to operate freely in Jordanian territory, the GOJ is also reportedly allowing Western intelligence agencies to train specific groups of Syrian rebel fighters on Jordanian soil.<sup>56</sup> Salehyan would probably say that the Jordanian government has gone just about as far as it can in terms of supporting the Syrian opposition without physically joining in the fight against Assad. In light of recent advances and improvements in the tactics and supplies of the rebel groups, and a desire by outside observers to see the conflict come to an end sooner, these trainings of former members of the Syrian army and police are reportedly increasing and accelerating.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Chivers, C.J. “Arms Airlift to Syria Rebels Expands, With Aid From C.I.A.” *New York Times*. 24 March, 2013. <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/25/world/middleeast/arms-airlift-to-syrian-rebels-expands-with-cia-aid.html?pagewanted=all>

<sup>54</sup> O’Huiginn, Dan. “Croatia Shipped Arms to Jordan.” Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project. 29 March, 2013. <https://reportingproject.net/occrp/index.php/en/ccwatch/cc-watch-indepth/1905-croatia-shipped-arms-to-jordan>.

<sup>55</sup> Chivers, C.J., Schmitt, Eric. “Saudis Step Up Help for Rebels in Syria With Croatian Arms.” *New York Times*, 25 February, 2013. [http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/26/world/middleeast/in-shift-saudis-are-said-to-arm-rebels-in-syria.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/26/world/middleeast/in-shift-saudis-are-said-to-arm-rebels-in-syria.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0).

<sup>56</sup> Associated Press. “US training Syrians in Jordan to boost anti-Assad forces, stem extremist sway, officials say.” *Washington Post*. 26 March, 2013. [http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2013-03-26/politics/38020567\\_1\\_syrian-rebels-free-syrian-army-arab-governments-and-turkey](http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2013-03-26/politics/38020567_1_syrian-rebels-free-syrian-army-arab-governments-and-turkey).

<sup>57</sup> Luck, Taylor. “U.S., Jordan stepping up training of Syrian opposition,” *Washington Post*, 3 April, 2013. [http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle\\_east/us-jordan-stepping-up-training-of-syrian-opposition/2013/04/02/e51831d2-9ba1-11e2-a941-a19bce7af755\\_story.html?hpid=z2](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/us-jordan-stepping-up-training-of-syrian-opposition/2013/04/02/e51831d2-9ba1-11e2-a941-a19bce7af755_story.html?hpid=z2).

A small contingent of about 150 members of the United States military has been working in Jordan for months<sup>58</sup> to prepare for the consequences of the possible expanded use of Syrian chemical weapons. This contingent is about to be replaced by a new US Army headquarters unit of more than 200 specialists, scheduled to build a new headquarters inside a Jordanian military installation, and to prepare for the worst case scenarios for the aftermath of Syria's civil war.<sup>59</sup> There are reports that this new contingent will be working to prepare for a possible force of 20,000 or more in the event that the US decides to intervene in Syria in coordination with the Jordanian military.<sup>60</sup> Jordan's General Intelligence Directorate (GID), the US, and some Arab Gulf allies are reportedly collaborating on intelligence matters in relation to the Syrian crisis.

The Syrian government has previously made vague statements about its neighbors interfering in the conflict, but recent months have seen more specific threats and warnings coming from Damascus. In an April, 2013 interview with a local Syrian news channel, Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad made his warnings much more explicit than previous statements about his geographic neighbors. In the interview, he suggests that "The fire will not stop at our borders; all the world knows Jordan is just as exposed [to the crisis] as Syria."<sup>61</sup> This statement represents a new level of accusation directly at Jordan and its complicity with several forms and sources of foreign intervention in Syria. As the previous literature shows, intervention of any kind, let alone hosting militants or assisting them in any way, can become the cause of a new conflict. Bashar Al-Assad is referring openly to Jordan's seeming inability or unwillingness to

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<sup>58</sup> Business Insider. "US Troops in Jordan are Preparing a Chemical Attack Defense against Syria." *Business Insider*. 12 October, 2012. <http://www.businessinsider.com/us-troops-are-in-jordan-to-help-it-defend-against-a-syrian-chemical-attack-2012-10>

<sup>59</sup> DeYoung, Karen. "Pentagon sending additional troops to Jordan," *Washington Post*, 18 April, 2013. [http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/pentagon-sending-additional-troops-to-jordan/2013/04/17/06ec052e-a7a8-11e2-b029-8fb7e977ef71\\_story.html?hpid=z3](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/pentagon-sending-additional-troops-to-jordan/2013/04/17/06ec052e-a7a8-11e2-b029-8fb7e977ef71_story.html?hpid=z3)

<sup>60</sup> Cloud, David S. "Step toward possible military intervention in Syria." *Los Angeles Times*, 17 April, 2013. <http://articles.latimes.com/2013/apr/17/world/la-fg-us-jordan-troops-20130418>

<sup>61</sup> Agence France-Presse, "Assad says fire of Syria could spread to Jordan," *Jordan Times*, 18 April, 2013. <http://jordantimes.com/assad-says-fire-of-syria-could-spread-to-jordan>.



prevent Salafist fighters from entering Syria, and he alludes to “a bid to invade Syria with forces coming from the outside, of different nationalities.” This elevated level of rhetoric highlights the new increased risks that Jordan is taking on by intervening in Syrian affairs. These risks have begun to manifest more frequently for Jordan’s towns and villages along the Syrian border, such as Ramtha, as the conflict has grown more deadly in places like Daraa.<sup>62</sup> Whether or not that intervention is in Jordan, and the region’s, best interest, it is still an intervention in another country’s sovereign affairs and risks a potentially violent and dangerous response from the now-isolated Alawite regime.

Al-Assad also is beginning to publicly call out the impunity with which he believes Syrian rebels are crossing into Syria from Jordan, noting that he “cannot believe that hundreds of [rebels] are entering Syria with their weapons while Jordan is capable of arresting any single person with a light arm for going to resist in Palestine.” He alludes to Jordan’s complicated and bloody history with the violent resistance movements against Israel, and Jordan’s strict enforcement of safety on its border with Israel, in comparison to what he perceives as a complete freedom of movement for Syrian rebels. This reflects a belief within the Syrian regime of Jordan’s complicity with the Syrian rebellion, despite official reports from Jordan that it is not supporting or hosting the training of rebels, and instead prefers to push for a political solution. The whole region has been feeling the effects of Syria’s civil war. Tensions have also risen along Israel’s once-quiet border with Syria along the Israeli occupied Golan Heights. The government of Israel reportedly asked the government of Jordan for permission to use their airspace to

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<sup>62</sup> Omari, Raed. “Stray shells from Syria causing ‘sleepless nights’ for Ramtha residents.” *Jordan Times*, 30 April, 2013. <http://jordantimes.com/stray-shells-from-syria-causing-sleepless-nights-for-ramtha-residents>.

conduct an air attack on Syria's chemical weapon sites in 2012, which was denied.<sup>63</sup> Recent reports, however, allege that under pressure from US President Barack Obama, Jordan has made corridors of its airspace open to Israeli drones to spy on, and potentially attack, Syrian positions.<sup>64</sup> Jordan has vehemently denied this coordination with Israel, both to assuage Jordanian opposition to anything involving Israel and to continue attempting to convince the Syrian government of their neutrality. All of the above listed actions are based on information from sources who claim to have accurate information. Whether or not they are true, if the Syrian government believes that they are happening, Jordan is still at risk from Syrian reprisals.

### **Section III: Conclusion and Recommendations**

The study of the impact of hosting refugees is multifaceted. A refugee flow can have significant potential, and the policies of the host government determine exactly what happens to that potential upon arrival. That potential could be manifested in both positive and negative ways, depending on how the host country treats the refugee population and how they are viewed by the host population. Jordan is understandably apprehensive about the possibility of a new refugee population integrating into the Jordanian melting pot, but for the sake of the livelihoods of both the refugees and Jordanians, it is the opinion of this researcher that the GOJ must significantly change their approach to how they treat the refugee population. Because they could be in Jordan's communities for a long time, there are many things that Jordan, UNHCR, and the

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<sup>63</sup> Goldberg, Jeffrey. "Israel Asked Jordan for Approval to Bomb Syrian WMD Sites." *The Atlantic*. 3 December, 2012. <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/12/israel-asked-jordan-for-approval-to-bomb-syrian-wmd-sites/265818/>.

<sup>64</sup> Malbrunot, Georges. "La Jordanie ouvre son ciel aux drones israéliens." *Le Figaro*, 21 April, 2013. <http://www.lefigaro.fr/international/2013/04/21/01003-20130421ARTFIG00211-la-jordanie-ouvre-son-ciel-aux-drones-israeliens.php?page=&pagination=2>. Originally published in French, translated to English. This is cited by other news agencies as the original source of the information.

mesh of NGOs operating within Jordan must address in order to mitigate the current problems plaguing Syrian refugees and their host communities and to avoid worse problems in the future.

Because the vast majority of Syrian refugees in Jordan are living in urban environments, they are unable to take full advantage of services from UNHCR and NGOs working in Jordan. These entities need to do much more to access these vulnerable populations and help to keep them afloat in this protracted situation. These refugees' livelihoods are further threatened because the vast majority of them are unable to seek gainful employment legally. There is a complete absence of Income-Generating Projects available to the refugee population. There are several reasons for this, ranging from political opposition from Jordanians to a desire to keep the refugees isolated from potential militarization. Despite these reasons, there must be considerations to keep this extremely vulnerable population alive and well. Without opportunities for income-generation, their immediate futures are in serious jeopardy. Oxfam reports that the Jordanian authorities are not in favor of supporting IGPs for Syrian refugees living in host communities because they are "concerned that this may take away income and opportunities from Jordanians" (Oxfam 2013b, 7). This opposition represents a huge obstacle to Syrian livelihoods, but also a delicate political problem for the Jordanian government. At this point, they have decided to put Jordanian interests ahead of their humanitarian obligations to the Syrian people.

Even if these organizations and institutions attempt to ensure the well-being of the urban refugee population, there are significant funding gaps that put this work at risk. In 2012, the UN High Council for Refugees made an international plea for aid for Syrian refugees and internally displaced persons of \$1.5 billion dollars. By April, 2013, they have only received half of that

amount, and the shortfalls are having real effects on the ground.<sup>65</sup> UNHCR is now “struggling to afford simple things like lighting and blankets in some of the refugee camps, let alone sufficient security measures in the increasingly insecure Za’atari camp in northern Jordan.” If they do not receive new funding, UNHCR said it will have to reduce the healthcare coverage it provides to current refugees, making it “simply impossible for UN agencies to provide food, clean water, schooling, shelter and healthcare for new refugees who keep streaming in.” Refugees are expensive, but when they are placed in a protracted situation in an area where they have limited movement and no opportunities to generate income, the international community must come through to support them through this difficult time. Because of the donation-supported model that UNHCR must operate on and the extremely high costs of managing and caring for such a vast and growing humanitarian disaster, refugee support operations of this scale are always going to be operating from month-to-month. Estimates of the cost of one year of hosting refugees in Jordan alone easily exceed US \$1 billion.

In regard to Jordan’s physical security and managing the threat of conflict and transnational rebellion, Jordan’s leadership is walking a very fine line. Virtually everything in the literature on exacerbating the risks of conflict contagion is reportedly being done by the Jordanian government. The public denials of Jordanian officials are required to avoid open conflict, but to the close observer, Jordan has been engulfed in a massive proxy war on all sides, and its government is making calculated choices about how to emerge from this neighboring conflict in the best security situation possible for Jordan. The leadership of Jordan decided long ago that the risks of staying out of the conflict exceeded those of intervention. It is clear from these actions that aside from the risk of the conflict physically coming over the border, that the

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<sup>65</sup> IRIN News, “Promised aid funding for Syria reaches half-way point.” *IRIN News*, 18 April, 2013. <http://www.irinnews.org/Report/97877/Promised-aid-funding-for-Syria-reaches-half-way-point>.

Jordanian regime fears the possible demonstration effect that the Syrian civil war may have on the local opposition if Jordan stays out of the conflict.<sup>66</sup> Jordan's local chapter of the Muslim Brotherhood, politically active as a party called the Islamic Action Front (IAF), may see an opportunity to change the balance of power in Jordan's autocratic regime. The IAF has long been a proponent for reform and acted as a loyal opposition. Recently, it has criticized the regime's current reform efforts as not doing enough. While IAF has not by any means called for the removal of the Hashemite regime, the literature discussing the potential demonstration effect for opposition groups neighboring a civil conflict predicts that its role as the largest opposition group in Jordan could be influenced by the demonstration effect of Syria's civil war. While a militarized IAF is a far-fetched conclusion, there may be a fear in Jordan's halls of power that observing the opposition in a neighboring country take up arms may provide the IAF or others with an inspiration.

In addition to the Muslim Brotherhood, there is also concern that Jordan's Salafist movement could feel empowered by its efforts to assist the opposition in Syria and turn its sights on the Jordanian regime. There is a real possibility that the demonstration effect, especially so local, could be strong in Jordan. The country's efforts at securing the border have largely been targeted at preventing a mass flow of Jordanian fighters into Syria in order to avoid the appearance of outward support of the opposition to President Bashar al-Assad. Jordan's leadership is deeply concerned about the possibility of these fighters gaining experience and developing an ideology that would encourage them to use their skills against the Jordanian government in the future.

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<sup>66</sup> Al-Samadi, Tamer. "Jordan: frustration and fear besieging the street and Brotherhood awaiting a decisive outcome in Syria." *Al-Monitor*, 3 April, 2013. <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/politics/2013/04/jordan-brotherhood-fears.html>

There are too many unanswered questions about Jordan's tacit and direct involvement in opposing the Syrian regime. However, many of them might be answered in the coming weeks and months, as Jordan's already-close security cooperation with Israel and the United States is becoming even closer and more active. The Arab rumor mills are spinning wildly with theories of joint expeditionary interventions, buffer areas in southern Syria, Patriot missile batteries in Jordan<sup>67</sup>, and no-fly zones. These possibilities represent some of the furthest extremes that Jordan and its international partners could take into intervening in this neighboring conflict. While the possibilities for long-term security benefits for Jordan and Israel are tempting, there are conversely frightening possibilities of retaliation coming from Syria that could have dire repercussions inside Jordan. In the event that a large-scale US-led intervention is planned and originates from Jordanian territory, it is bound to bring with it local unrest from the Jordanian people. The recently-announced group of American soldiers bound for Jordan has already produced an outcry from local opposition parties.<sup>68</sup> Even further, the specter of an invasion of Syria from Jordan is sure to conjure an even bigger negative response locally, potentially reviving Jordan's earlier protest movements that occurred during the Arab Spring. Any potential invasion of Syria, especially from within a neighboring country, will serve to confirm Assad's public paranoia that there is a Western conspiracy against him and bolster his anti-imperialist credentials.

The events unfolding indicate that Jordan's concerns for its own security may drive it to cooperate with the US and Jordan's regional partners in potentially intervening in the Syrian conflict. In the eyes of the Syrian government, any action taken by Jordan to interfere with its

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<sup>67</sup> Middle East Monitor, "Jordanian source: Washington will deploy 'Patriot' on the border with Syria." *Middle East Monitor*, 19 April, 2013. <http://www.middleeastmonitor.com/news/middle-east/5790-jordanian-source-washington-will-deploy-qpatriotq-on-the-border-with-syria>.

<sup>68</sup> Ali, Anas. "Protesters reject US military presence in Jordan." *Ammon News*, 26 April, 2013. <http://en.ammonnews.net/article.aspx?articleNO=20708>.

civil war will be considered intervention. After two years of constantly worrying about its northern security, Jordan may have decided that intervening in some ways may shorten the conflict and minimize the potential risks of allowing a prolonged civil war in Syria. Although the US is extremely wary<sup>69</sup> of becoming enmeshed in another messy Middle East war, United States and European intelligence agencies have all but confirmed that there have been uses of chemical weapons in Syria.<sup>70</sup> In light of this discovery, the US is becoming much more likely to start supplying the Syrian opposition with military aid and is reportedly reconsidering previously discarded options of intervention.<sup>71</sup>

Because of these developments, it is becoming more evident that events have been set into motion that Jordan no longer has true control over. Large percentages of Jordan's population may be truly opposed to allowing US intervention to operate from Jordan, but the fact remains that the scope and nature of this conflict is changing and growing each day. The more involved Jordan becomes in any potential or current intervention, the more likely it is that Jordan will suffer negative consequences as a result of it. Studying events as they evolve is obviously difficult – there are far too many variables and too many things happening in the shadows to really know what is happening. The only thing that is clear is that the further Jordan involves itself with this conflict, the greater the chances that it will itself become infected by it in seriously harmful ways.

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<sup>69</sup> Ackerman, Spencer. "Pentagon Chief Warns that War in Syria Could Be 'Lengthy and Uncertain,'" Wired magazine's *Danger Room* blog, 17 April, 2013. <http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2013/04/syria-hagel/>.

<sup>70</sup> Whitlock, Craig. "U.S. intelligence agencies: Assad used chemical weapons 'on a small scale.'" *Washington Post*, 25 April, 2013. [http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle\\_east/us-intelligence-agencies-assad-used-chemical-weapons-on-a-small-scale/2013/04/25/208346aa-adc0-11e2-98ef-d1072ed3cc27\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/us-intelligence-agencies-assad-used-chemical-weapons-on-a-small-scale/2013/04/25/208346aa-adc0-11e2-98ef-d1072ed3cc27_story.html).

<sup>71</sup> DeYoung, Karen. "Obama moving toward sending lethal arms to Syrian rebels, officials say." *Washington Post*, 30 April, 2013. [http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/obama-preparing-to-send-lethal-arms-to-syrian-opposition-officials-say/2013/04/30/3084d0d4-b1a6-11e2-bbf2-a6f9e9d79e19\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/obama-preparing-to-send-lethal-arms-to-syrian-opposition-officials-say/2013/04/30/3084d0d4-b1a6-11e2-bbf2-a6f9e9d79e19_story.html)

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