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THE BLUE STATE: UNRWA'S TRANSITION FROM RELIEF TO DEVELOPMENT
IN PROVIDING EDUCATION TO PALESTINIAN REFUGEES IN JORDAN

by
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A thesis submitted to the faculty of The University of Mississippi in partial fulfillment of
the requirements of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College.

Oxford, Mississippi
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“An expenditure for education by UNRWA should not be regarded as relief any more than is a similar expenditure by any Government or by UNESCO. On the contrary, it is an investment for the purpose of developing the potential of a human being, which in the last analysis is the most valuable and most priceless asset possessed by any country.”

– *John H. Davis, UNRWA Director Report 1959-1960*

ABSTRACT

THE BLUE STATE: UNRWA's Transition from Relief to Development in Providing Education to Palestinian Refugees in Jordan

Often referred to as the “Blue State”—due in part to its association with the United Nations’ trademark blue branding—the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has evolved since its creation in 1949 to become both a symbol of the Palestinian cause and an inimitable public service provider across its five areas of operation, especially in regards to education. In the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan alone, the UNRWA education program educates more than 120,000 students in 169 schools with results comparable with, if not often superior to, Jordanian government schools.

The UNRWA regime in Jordan stands in contrast to conditions faced by refugee populations elsewhere—where host governments often attempted to “silo” refugees into encampments and impede their access to education, work, and movement, the majority of Palestinian refugees in Jordan—including those educated by UNRWA—do not face such limitations on their livelihoods. While UNRWA’s immediate response to Palestinian displacement was focused on direct relief efforts, its current state can be described as one which promotes development amongst Palestinian refugees in Jordan.

This thesis seeks to answer the question: *Why have UNRWA’s organizational priorities shifted from providing relief to promoting development through education in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan?* In order to answer this question, international conventions pertaining to refugee protection, regional agreements, Jordanian domestic policy, UNRWA reports, and previous scholarship on the topic are examined and analyzed for connections between regional developments, Jordan’s domestic policy, and UNRWA’s organizational priorities since the Agency became operational in 1950. As a result of this exploration, it is argued that a combination of factors have caused the transition from relief to development in this case: the length of the conflict in Palestine without resolution, the salience of “right of return” politics in Jordan and the Arab world generally, UNRWA’s status as an international, politically neutral state-like actor forced to achieve its goals through cooperation with stakeholders, and Jordan’s status as a “refugee rentier state.”

CHAPTER 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction & Research Question

The 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees defines a refugee as an individual who has crossed an international border “owing to well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion.”¹ As of 2019, there are 79.5 million displaced people worldwide, 26 million of which are formally considered refugees under the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the “guardian” of the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol.² Per capita, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan hosts the second largest number of refugees globally, including 750,000 UNHCR-registered refugees of 57 different nationalities, in addition to approximately two million Palestinian refugees exclusively registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).³

The necessity of UNRWA’s existence as a relief agency is evident; however, unlike the UNHCR, UNRWA has no inherent legal authority, enabling Statute, or executive committee.⁴ For this reason, UNRWA’s status as a subsidiary of the United

¹ United Nations, “1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees” (1951), https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/atrocities-crimes/Doc.23_convention%20refugees.pdf.

² “Figures at a Glance.” United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), accessed September 21, 2020, <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/figures-at-a-glance.html>.

³ Elizabeth Turnbull, “Jordan Remains Second Largest Refugee Host Globally--UNHCR,” *Jordan Times*, July 28, 2019, <https://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/jordan-remains-second-largest-refugee-host-globally---unhcr>.

⁴ Susan Akram, “UNRWA and Palestinian Refugees,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Refugee and Forced Migration Studies* (Oxford University Press, 2014).

Nations General Assembly in conjunction with multilateral conventions reinforcing its activities in Palestinian refugee assistance are crucial to UNRWA's efficacy. Cooperation and assistance on the part of the relevant authorities in the Agency's five areas of operation—the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria—are also essential to the provision of services. While the ambiguity of the Agency's mandate and its precarious funding scheme have posed difficulties to UNRWA throughout its history, these two factors have also contributed to the persistence of UNRWA as the primary entity providing relief and assistance to Palestinian refugees in the region.

In recent years, UNRWA's reputation has become increasingly associated with its role in educating Palestinian refugees. As of 2016, the Agency administers 169 schools in Jordan, educating over 120,000 students.⁵ UNRWA's education program has been heralded as a resounding success since its expansion in the late 1950s, especially in its efforts at retaining Palestinian identity in displacement and pursuing livelihoods for Palestinian refugee youth.

Education plays a crucial role in development for refugee communities. Often in the immediate aftermath of conditions causing displacement, forced migrants are herded into “humanitarian silos:” encampments, usually in remote areas, where migrants encounter “strict prohibitions on socio-economic activity.”⁶ These encampments are designed to provide immediate relief to displaced populations, with little consideration given to the impact that siloing vulnerable populations has on their livelihoods. Both international agencies and host countries play a role in siloing. The endless “care and

⁵ UNRWA Jordan, “Where We Work” (United Nations Relief and Works Agency, 2020), <https://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/jordan>.

⁶ Alexander Betts and Paul Collier, “Why Denying Refugees the Right to Work Is a Catastrophic Error,” *The Guardian*, March 22, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/mar/22/why-denying-refugees-the-right-to-work-is-a-catastrophic-error>.

maintenance” model of camp administration allows humanitarian organizations to justify their funding without having to find sustainable solutions for refugee populations. The same model allows host countries to receive international assistance to ease the financial burden of hosting refugees without being forced to navigate the internal politics of integrating refugees into their education systems and labor force.

Antithetical to siloing is development, through which refugees are allowed and encouraged to pursue education, cultivate skills, and participate in the labor market. Given the protracted nature of the Palestinian refugee issue, especially in Jordan, communities of Palestinian refugees have progressed to living beyond the “humanitarian silos” common in the immediate aftermath of displacement. The majority of Palestinian refugees live in urban areas and their former encampments have evolved into quasi-cities of their own. Such a shift in circumstances coupled with developments in Jordan and the Middle East generally have necessitated changes in UNRWA’s and the Jordanian government’s strategies in educating the Palestinian refugee population. UNRWA’s operations in Jordan have expanded greatly, particularly in education, and the number of Palestinian children enrolled in Jordanian government schools, both with and without UNRWA support, continues to grow. However, much is still unknown about exactly what strategic changes both entities have undergone to ensure quality education to the Palestinian refugee population or the respective rationales behind those changes.

This thesis will first seek to establish the distinct roles that international organizations and host governments play in providing education for refugees. However, as these roles have changed over time, this thesis will focus on explaining why the

strategies that these UNRWA employs to provide refugee education have shifted from providing relief to promoting development.

The Palestinian refugee issue in Jordan offers a unique case study in refugee development as a large portion of Palestinian refugees in Jordan have Jordanian citizenship but are currently still entitled to UNRWA registration cards until their right of return to Palestine is realized. It is also a unique case because while most host governments work with the UNHCR on refugee issues, the Palestinian refugee issue in Jordan is handled solely by UNRWA and the Jordanian government. The period of time that has passed since the initial exodus of Palestinians has seen major developments in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict itself, international refugee policy, and Jordanian domestic policy. This thesis will investigate these changes and how they have affected the education UNRWA provides to Palestinian refugees in Jordan.

1.2 Hypothesis

I hypothesize that, generally, changes in refugee education strategies among international organizations and host governments stem primarily from the length of time refugees spend in a host country and the severity of the crisis, which increases both the supply of and demand for educational resources. The longer the length of time a refugee population spends in a host country, the more likely it is that the population will demand more educational resources from the state. Similarly, as a refugee issue in a host country becomes more protracted, host governments and international organizations alike are more likely to use this time to improve and streamline their delivery methods in

supplying education to refugee populations through enhanced funding mechanisms and more sophisticated policies.

In the case of Jordan and Palestinian refugees specifically, I expect to find that as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has continued on unabated, both UNRWA's and the Jordanian government's policies toward Palestinian refugees have evolved toward assimilating refugees into Jordanian society as their right of return remains unrealized. However, I also expect to find that the transition from relief to development has not occurred equally or to the same extent amongst different groups of Palestinian refugees due to discrepancies in their relative political power in Jordan. Namely, I expect to find that refugees arriving after 1967 and those hailing from Gaza have not received the same degree of accommodation that those arriving after 1948 from the West Bank did due to differences in Jordanian policy regarding them.

1.3 Methodology & Limitations

I use qualitative research methods to answer my research question. I utilize both primary and secondary sources—the latter including previous scholarship on UNRWA, its education program, and the legal status of Palestinians in Jordan, and the former including newspaper articles, international conventions, United Nations General Assembly resolutions, bilateral agreements, speeches made by Jordanian kings, and UNRWA Commissioner-General reports. Through an analysis of these materials, I test my hypothesis and formulate an answer to my research question.

1.4 Overview of Subsequent Chapters

In chapter two, international conventions, multilateral agreements, United Nations General Assembly resolutions, and Jordan's domestic policies are synthesized to glean the obligations settled upon refugee-hosting states generally, and Jordan specifically. This chapter seeks to contextualize the following chapters within the international refugee protection regime. It also discusses compliance issues and reveals the protection gaps present within these texts, which elucidates the roles the Government of Jordan and UNRWA play in filling them.

Chapter three tracks Jordan's evolution as a host state to Palestinian refugees since the onset of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This chapter utilizes primary and secondary sources to construct a clear picture of the conditions under which Palestinians have lived in Jordan and the Jordanian government's motivations in policymaking as it relates to the Palestinian population within its territory.

Chapter four details UNRWA's history as an agency, with specific regard to its education program and its expansion since the Agency's creation in 1951. I seek to explain how and why the UNRWA education program has come to be the Agency's main priority and largest expenditure as a result of the shifting circumstances facing Palestinian refugees since the beginning of their displacement. This chapter utilizes a combination of primary and secondary sources to construct this explanation. Specifically, scholarly articles about UNRWA's history and the efficacy of its education program are analyzed, as well as annual reports from UNRWA's Commissioner-Generals and Directors acquired from the United Nations' archives. This chapter does not focus specifically on UNRWA's operations in Jordan per se, but critical junctures in UNRWA's history that relate to those operations are explored in detail.

In chapter five, I analyze the information collected and presented in chapters three and four in order to construct an argument that addresses my research question. I engage with the primary and secondary source materials utilized in previous chapters to make connections between UNRWA's mission and operations, Jordanian domestic policy, and the "international dimension" of refugee protection. In doing so, I construct an argument as to why UNRWA's transition from relief to development has relied so heavily on education and how the UNRWA education program has managed to succeed and persist in Jordan specifically.

In chapter six, I conclude my thesis by reiterating my findings from chapter five and introducing related topics in need of further exploration.

CHAPTER 2: INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION & LEGAL FRAMEWORK

In order to better understand the respective roles that UNRWA and the Government of Jordan play in protecting, integrating, and educating Palestinians within the Kingdom, it is necessary to first look to the provisions made in international law and other bodies within the international system for refugee protection. Various international conventions provide a basic framework for the rights entitled to all people, including refugees, as well as for special protections afforded to vulnerable populations.

In regards to Palestinian refugees specifically, resolutions rendered by the United Nations General Assembly and the League of Arab States provide further clarification as to the status of displaced Palestinians as well as the basic rights and protections accorded to them in the region. These coupled with the international conventions elucidate Jordan's obligations as a refugee-hosting state, especially in regards to education. Jordanian domestic law provides an even clearer picture of the rights afforded to Palestinians within its territory as well as the gaps between the services and protections the state provides and those required by international law, which UNRWA ostensibly aims to fill.

2.1 International Conventions

The 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees defines a refugee as an individual who has crossed an international border "owing to well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social

group, or political opinion.”⁷ The Convention holds that refugee-hosting states are obligated to allow refugees to seek gainful employment, access courts, and move freely within the state’s territory. Additionally, states party to the convention are obligated under Article 20(1) to afford refugees the same treatment in regards to education as they would to their nationals and, under Article 20(2), treatment “as favourable as possible” in regards to education beyond the elementary level.⁸ Though the number of states party to the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol is limited, certain rights protected under the agreements are recognized as principles of customary international law, such as the principle of non-refoulement.⁹

Irrespective of refugee status, Article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) recognizes the right of every child to basic education and the responsibility of contracting states to make elementary education “compulsory and available to all,” secondary education “available and accessible to every child,” and higher education “accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means.”¹⁰ The convention also obliges signatories to encourage regular school attendance and to reduce drop-out rates. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) makes similar provisions for education. Article 26(1) holds that “everyone has the right to education” that is “free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages.”¹¹ Articles 26(2) and 26(3) mandate that such education “shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to

⁷ The United Nations. 1951. “Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees.” Entered into force 22 April 1954. www.unhcr.org/en-us/3b66c2aa10.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ “Non-refoulement” is the practice of not forcing refugees to return to a country where they are likely to experience danger or persecution.

¹⁰ The United Nations. 1989. “Convention on the Rights of the Child.” Treaty Series 1577 (November): 3.

¹¹ UN General Assembly, "Universal Declaration of Human Rights," 217 (III) A (Paris, 1948). <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>.

the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms” and that parents have the right to choose “the kind of education that shall be given to their children.”¹²

The UDHR implies that the rights laid out within it are “stateless,” meaning that they are meant to be enjoyed by every person regardless of nationality, or lack thereof.¹³ However, while nationality is in itself a right protected under the Convention, it is also a necessary pathway to the realization of other rights in a world organized around borders and bureaucracy. While the aforementioned conventions represent a concerted effort toward defining the most basic rights and protections meant to be enjoyed by all people, including refugees, the unique position of Palestinian refugees and the protections they have access to in diaspora are more clearly elucidated in multilateral agreements specific to them and the region they primarily reside in.

2.2 Multilateral Agreements & Resolutions

Apart from its initial proposal for the partition of Palestine allowing the establishment of the State of Israel, the United Nations General Assembly’s (UNGA) most influential attempt at answering the “Palestine Question” and the resulting refugee issue can be found in Resolution 194 (III). In a decision rendered after the 1948 Arab-Israeli War which displaced upwards of 700,000 Palestinians, paragraph 11 of the resolution resolves that:

“...the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable

¹² Ibid.

¹³Gabbay, Shaul. “The Status of Palestinians in Jordan and the Anomaly of Holding a Jordanian Passport.” *Journal of Political Sciences & Public Affairs* 2, no. 1 (February 5, 2014): 113–19. <https://doi.org/10.4172/2332-0761.1000113>.

date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible.”¹⁴

While this paragraph is interpreted differently by the various parties concerned, the text of Resolution 194 has been heralded by members of the Palestinian diaspora and their Arab host governments alike as proof of the refugees’ international recognized “right of return” to Palestine. Despite developments in the region and the implications for Israeli policy toward Palestinians, the right of return was upheld by later General Assembly resolutions, which established UNRWA¹⁵ and allowed for its expansion “without prejudice to paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III).”¹⁶

Resolution 194 is crucial to understanding Arab states’ policies toward Palestinian refugees broadly. Arab states’ initial welcoming reception of Palestinian refugees was influenced by their understanding that they would be acting as temporary hosts for displaced Palestinians awaiting the realization of their right to return to Palestine.¹⁷ This initial response on the part of Arab states is illustrated in the League of Arab States’ (LAS) 1965 Protocol for the Treatment of Palestinians in Arab States, also known as the Casablanca Protocol. The Protocol provides for the right of Palestinians residing in an Arab state to employment “on par with its citizens,” the right to “leave and return to this state,” and to be “given, upon request, valid travel documents” according the same status

¹⁴ United Nations General Assembly, “UNGA Resolution 194,” A/RES/194 (III) § (1948), <https://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/C758572B78D1CD0085256BCF0077E51A>.

¹⁵ United Nations General Assembly, “UNGA Resolution 302,” A/RES/302 (IV) § (1949).

¹⁶ United Nations General Assembly, “UNGA Resolution 1315,” A/RES/2452 (XXIII) (A-C) § (1958).

¹⁷ Abbas Shiblak, “Residency Status and Civil Rights of Palestinian Refugees in Arab Countries,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 25, no. 3 (1996): 38.

in visa and residency applications “as all other LAS state citizens.”¹⁸ With regard to Resolution 194, it is important to note that all of these rights were afforded to Palestinians “whilst retaining their Palestinian nationality.”¹⁹

It goes without saying that despite these early efforts at providing adequate civil and residential rights to Palestinian refugees while preserving their refugee status and right to return, the obligations laid out in the Casablanca Protocol were not implemented fully or consistently across LAS member states. Today, the status of Palestinian refugees residing in Arab states varies widely across the region. In fact, in 1991 the League of Arab States passed Resolution 5093, which recommended that member states refer to their own rules and laws in implementing policy regarding Palestinian refugees. However, there seems to be disagreement amongst analysts as to whether the resolution revoked the Protocol entirely or merely “weakened the legal obligations embodied in it.”²⁰

Given that the protection offered by the aforementioned UNGA and LAS resolutions is flimsy at best, it is necessary to look to Jordan’s domestic policy toward Palestinian refugees with regard to the provided international and regional context. In analyzing both Jordan’s purported obligations as a host state and the laws they have informed in reality, the gaps that UNRWA intends to fill, especially in terms of education, are revealed.

2.3 Jordan as a Refugee-Hosting State

¹⁸ League of Arab States, “Protocol for the Treatment of Palestinians in Arab States” (1965), <https://www.refworld.org/docid/460a2b252.html>.

¹⁹ League of Arab States, “Protocol for the Treatment of Palestinians in Arab States” (1965), <https://www.refworld.org/docid/460a2b252.html>.

²⁰ Jalal Al Hussein, “The Arab States and the Refugee Issue: A Retrospective View,” *Israel and the Palestinian Refugees*, 2007, 435–64.

While Jordan is not party to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees or its 1967 Protocol, the 1998 Memorandum of Understanding between Jordan and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) provides the legal framework under which Jordan hosts its substantial refugee population. While Palestinian refugees are not protected by the UNHCR, it is fair to say that they benefit from the provisions made in the agreement. The Memorandum provides that Jordan recognizes the definition of a refugee present in the Convention, the principle of non-refoulement, and that refugees should receive treatment according to internationally accepted standards.²¹ However, in regards to children's education, Jordan is party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and is thus obligated to honor its mandate as to the right of children to education.

Jordan's domestic law on nationality also makes provisions for Palestinians who are eligible for Jordanian citizenship. The country's 1954 Nationality Law classifies Jordanian nationals as "any person who, not being Jewish, possessed Palestinian nationality before 15 May 1948 and was a regular resident in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan between 20 December 1949 and 16 February 1954."²² The law also affords that "any person whose father holds Jordanian nationality" and/or "any person born in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan of a mother holding Jordanian nationality and of a father of unknown nationality or of a Stateless father or whose filiation is not established" qualify as Jordanian nationals, so the descendants of Palestinian refugees arriving in

²¹ "Refugee Law and Policy: Jordan" (Library of Congress, December 30, 2020), <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/refugee-law/jordan.php>.

²² Kingdom of Jordan, "Law No. 6 of 1954 on Nationality (Last Amended 1987)," JOR-110 § (1954), <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b4ea13.html>.

Jordan between 15 May 1948 and 16 February 1954 are considered Jordanian nationals under this law.

Excluded under the Jordanian Nationality Law are: Palestinians who fled to the Gaza Strip during the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, then to Jordan during the Second Arab-Israeli War in 1967, Palestinians who resided in the West Bank between 16 February 1954 and July 1988, when Jordan formally severed administrative ties with the West Bank, and Palestinian refugees who resided in Syria prior to the onset of the Syrian Civil War, after which they fled to Jordan. Jordan's response to these groups of Palestinian refugees vary, and the implications of this omission will be further elaborated upon in the following chapter.

Jordanian citizens have access to Jordan's public education system, government health care, trade unions, and judicial system. Jordan does not make special provisions for refugees in its domestic law, so in regards to access to government services, all non-Jordanians are considered foreigners in the eyes of the law, regardless of refugee status. In public education, non-citizen children are prohibited from attending government elementary and secondary schools, although exceptions have been made in the wake of the Syrian refugee crisis. In regards to higher education, non-citizen students are required to pay significantly higher enrollment fees in order to attend Jordanian universities.²³

2.4 Compliance

²³ Gabbay, Shaul. "The Status of Palestinians in Jordan and the Anomaly of Holding a Jordanian Passport." *Journal of Political Sciences & Public Affairs* 2, no. 1 (February 5, 2014): 113–19. <https://doi.org/10.4172/2332-0761.1000113>.

Despite their supposed obligation to abide by the international conventions to which they are signatories, states—including Jordan—often renege on their agreements. In regards to the international human rights and refugee regimes, there is no legal mechanism in place to ensure compliance with international accords or to arbitrate disputes unless violations become severe enough to merit the creation of an International Criminal Court tribunal. For this reason, conventions like the UDHR and 1951 Refugee Convention are considered legally “soft,” meaning that “legal arrangements are weakened along one or more of the dimensions of obligation, precision, and delegation.”²⁴ Soft legalization, especially in regards to conventions as expansive as the UDHR, is often easier to achieve at the international level because it implies the benefit of agreement amongst a large number of states without forcing individual states to forgo much of their sovereignty. Conventions which require enforcement mechanisms or delegation to international institutions are less likely to achieve consensus amongst a large number of states.

In acknowledging that these agreements are practically merely aspirational, there remains the question of why states sign them, as even soft arrangements imply a loss of sovereignty if compliance is expected. Idealist theories of international relations hold that governments opt to abide by international human rights norms out of pure altruism; states are “swayed by the overpowering ideological and normative appeal of the values that underlie them.”²⁵ However, realist explanations for this phenomenon support a bleaker reality: states “accept international obligations because they are compelled to do so by

²⁴ Kenneth W. Abbott and Duncan Snidal, “Hard and Soft Law in International Governance,” *International Organization* 54, no. 3 (Summer 2000): 422.

²⁵ Andrew Moravcsik, “The Origins of Human Rights Regimes: Democratic Delegation in Postwar Europe,” *International Organization* 54, no. 2 (Spring 2000): 223.

great powers” in the international system.²⁶ Andrew Moravcsik’s study of human rights regimes departs from these theories in arguing that, while still acting in self-interest, newly established democracies utilize international commitments to “lock in” a domestic status quo against non-democratic adversaries.²⁷

While this theory applies most directly to democracies—which Jordan and other Arab states are not—Moravcsik expands his theory to apply to this case. Non-democratic states may accept these international obligations out of fear of future domestic political uncertainty, to prove that the government’s position is supported by foreign governments, or to encourage domestic actors to help maintain current policies.²⁸ Moravcsik provides that non-democratic leaders often identify internal actors as greater threats than external ones, so “locking in” norms at the international level provides advantages at the domestic level. In the case of Jordan, where citizens are not directly represented at the international level, the government’s established obligations to international human rights regimes provides it with some incentive for compliance, even when such compliance may displease domestic actors.

Beyond the point of initial agreement, the incentives for non-compliance are plenty. With regard to the refugee regime specifically, compliance with international law in terms of rights to free movement, employment, and education often incite discontent among host states’ citizens. However, where there is a lack of formal enforcement in the refugee regime, there are other mechanisms through which states ensure compliance by other states. Emilie Hafner-Burton argues that preferential trade agreements (PTAs) are

²⁶ Andrew Moravcsik, “The Origins of Human Rights Regimes: Democratic Delegation in Postwar Europe,” *International Organization* 54, no. 2 (Spring 2000): 221.

²⁷ *Ibid* 244.

²⁸ Andrew Moravcsik, “The Origins of Human Rights Regimes: Democratic Delegation in Postwar Europe,” *International Organization* 54, no. 2 (Spring 2000): 247.

one medium through which states create “material incentives” for states to comply with their human rights agreements.²⁹ By tying compliance with certain human rights standards to trade agreements and the supply of needed goods, powerful states force compliance with human rights conventions through coercion.

Hafner-Burton’s perspective on PTAs does not apply to the case of Jordan directly, but it does testify to the power of material incentives in ensuring compliance with “soft” law. As previously stated, Jordan is party to the UDHR, the CRC, and its own Memorandum of Understanding with the UNHCR. Jordan’s obligations to afford refugees within its territory the rights to work, movement, and education contained in these agreements is decidedly soft. However, previous arrangements with Western donor states which tied providing work permits to Syrian refugees to large foreign aid packages pressured the Jordanian government into conformity.³⁰ In essence, while the agreements outlined in this chapter do not imply practical obligation, states are still incentivized to sign them and can later be pressured into compliance through non-legal mechanisms.

2.5 Protection Gaps for Palestinian Refugees & The Role of UNRWA

Although the principles contained in the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees are crucial to understanding the international refugee regime and the multilateral agreements and resolutions that have stemmed from its authority, it is also important to recognize the ways in which Palestinian refugees are excluded from its protection. Notably, Article 1(D) of the Convention stipulates that:

²⁹ Emilie M. Hafner-Burton, “Trading Human Rights: How Preferential Trade Agreements Influence Government Repression,” *International Organization* 59, no. 3 (Summer 2005): 594.

³⁰ Victoria Kelberer, “Negotiating Crisis: International Aid and Refugee Policy in Jordan,” *Middle East Policy* 24, no. 4 (Winter 2017): 149, <https://doi.org/10.1111/mepo.12313>.

“This Convention shall not apply to persons who are at present receiving from organs or agencies of the United Nations other than the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees protection or assistance.”³¹

Because registered Palestinian refugees receive assistance from UNRWA, they are not protected by the 1951 Convention, its 1967 Protocol, or the UNHCR’s mandate. This represents a notable protection gap for Palestinian refugees. Because UNRWA is a relief and works agency, rather than a protection and assistance agency like the UNHCR, UNRWA is technically “not empowered to guarantee the safety, security, or legal and human rights of the refugees.”³² Issues and advantages relating to the ambiguity of UNRWA’s mandate will be discussed in greater detail in chapter four.

Due in part to this gap in the international protection regime, the legal obligations settled on states hosting Palestinian refugees are significantly weaker than those of other refugee populations. Some protections within the 1951 Convention are considered principles of customary international law and are expected to be respected by all states, which suggests that Palestinian refugees are protected indirectly as part of the general refugee population of host states. However, all principles of international law are “soft” and thus largely unenforceable upon sovereign states, regardless of what conventions they are party to and what refugee populations they host.

³¹ The United Nations. 1951. “Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees.” Entered into force 22 April 1954. www.unhcr.org/en-us/3b66c2aa10.

³² Abbas Shiblak, “Residency Status and Civil Rights of Palestinian Refugees in Arab Countries,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 25, no. 3 (1996): 37.

The voluntary nature of the relatively favorable Jordanian policy toward Palestinian refugees renders UNRWA's services all the more important. In the absence of the UNHCR's protection mechanism, UNRWA's role as a provider of basic services with an ambiguous mandate partially insulates Palestinian refugees from the threat of losing access to resources should Jordan enact policy that threatens the status of Palestinian refugees within its territory.

CHAPTER 3: JORDAN'S EVOLUTION AS A HOST STATE

UNRWA's provision of education to Palestinian refugees in Jordan is undoubtedly influenced by and partially dependent on Jordanian policy toward Palestinians within its territory. Understanding the internal and external factors that have contributed to changes in Jordanian policy affecting Palestinian refugees since the onset of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is crucial to discerning UNRWA's transition from relief to development through its education program and the underlying causes of that evolution. In detailing the ever-changing social and political circumstances facing Jordan since 1948, those motivations are revealed.

Jordan's involvement in the conflict and the lives of Palestinians has spanned decades, but specific instances throughout that history have served as junctures in the country's domestic policy regarding Palestinians, as well as their perception by Jordanians. Later influxes of other refugee populations—namely those fleeing Iraq and Syria—have forced changes in Jordan's political and social reception of refugees broadly, while also having implications for the country's Palestinian population. The protracted nature of Jordan's connection to and involvement with the Palestinian refugee issue has led to a set of policies that have affected various groups of Palestinian refugees differently, and those discrepancies are explored below as well.

3.1 The Arab-Israeli Wars & Influxes of Palestinian Refugees

On November 29, 1947, the United Nations General Assembly passed Resolution 181(II), also known as the “Partition Plan,” which legally partitioned Mandatory Palestine and recommended the creation of separate Arab and Jewish states on the land following the end of the British Mandate for Palestine on May 14, 1948.³³ While tensions had been rising between Jewish and Arab residents of Palestine for some time, the intervening period between the passage of Resolution 181 and the formal end of the British Mandate and Israel’s declaration of independence on May 14, 1948 saw these clashes escalate into civil war between the two communities, with little intervention from British forces.³⁴ Other Arab states, including Jordan, invaded the territory on that day, and thus began the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. The war and preceding conflicts forced 85% of the Palestinian Arab population to flee the territory, mostly to neighboring Arab countries.³⁵

As a result of the war, Jordan gained control of the territory to the west of the Jordan River, the West Bank. During the war, in December 1948, King Abdullah I called a conference in Jericho to formalize Transjordan’s annexation of the territory, and Transjordan consequently became the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.³⁶ The resolution adopted by the conference’s attendees recognized King Abdullah’s sovereignty over the West Bank while also protecting Palestinians’ right to return to their homes and “receive compensation for all losses sustained,” once the war came to an end.³⁷ In April 1950, the Jordanian government formed a commission to integrate the legal systems of the West

³³ United Nations General Assembly, “UNGA Resolution 181,” A/RES/181(II) § (1947), <https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/0/7F0AF2BD897689B785256C330061D253>.

³⁴ United Nations General Assembly, “Disposition of Agenda Items of the Second Special Session of the General Assembly, 16 April-14 May 1948” (New York, September 28, 1948), United Nations Digital Library, https://library.un.org/sites/library.un.org/files/jtp/a_special_sess-2_0_0.pdf.

³⁵ Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881-2001*, 1st Edition (New York: Vintage Books, 2001): 252-258.

³⁶ Oroub Al Abed, “Palestinian Refugees in Jordan,” *Forced Migration Online*, 2004.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

and East Banks.³⁸ As a result, members of the Palestinian elite assumed positions within the Jordanian government, strengthening ties between East Bank Jordanians and West Bank Palestinian-Jordanians.

In 1951, King Abdullah was assassinated by a Palestinian gunman while visiting Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.³⁹ While this event did not result in any substantial changes in Jordanian policy toward its Palestinian population, it sowed mistrust in Transjordanians toward the Palestinians they had previously viewed sympathetically.⁴⁰ Abdullah's successor, King Talal, was adamant about promoting unity amongst East and West Bank Jordanians, which is illustrated in his speeches and media presentations.⁴¹ These speeches can be interpreted as early efforts to unite Palestinian-Jordanians and Transjordanians and to create a common Jordanian identity amongst them, despite their differing ethnic backgrounds.

In spite of the apprehension of some Transjordanians, in 1954, Jordan passed Law No. 6 on Nationality, granting Palestinian residents of the West Bank, as well as those who had fled to the East Bank, Jordanian nationality.⁴² Pursuant to the law, Palestinians from the West Bank enjoyed full citizenship rights, including access to courts, public education, and health care. In doing so, Jordan created a new type of refugee: the

³⁸ Shaul Gabbay, "The Status of Palestinians in Jordan and the Anomaly of Holding a Jordanian Passport," *Journal of Political Sciences & Public Affairs* 2, no. 1 (February 5, 2014): 113–19, <https://doi.org/10.4172/2332-0761.1000113>.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Shaul Gabbay, "The Status of Palestinians in Jordan and the Anomaly of Holding a Jordanian Passport," *Journal of Political Sciences & Public Affairs* 2, no. 1 (February 5, 2014): 113–19, <https://doi.org/10.4172/2332-0761.1000113>.

⁴¹ Shaul Gabbay, "The Status of Palestinians in Jordan and the Anomaly of Holding a Jordanian Passport," *Journal of Political Sciences & Public Affairs* 2, no. 1 (February 5, 2014): 113–19, <https://doi.org/10.4172/2332-0761.1000113>.

⁴² Kingdom of Jordan, "Law No. 6 of 1954 on Nationality (Last Amended 1987)," JOR-110 § (1954), <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b4ea13.html>.

“refugee-citizen” or “temporary citizen.”⁴³ Refugee-citizens are formally endowed with Jordanian nationality while retaining their refugee status until the day that they have the choice to return to Palestine or remain permanent citizens of the Kingdom. This endowment stands in contrast to the Arab League’s regime of “positive discrimination,”⁴⁴ as synthesized in the Casablanca Protocol, under which Palestinians remain formally stateless in an effort to unquestionably retain their right of return.⁴⁵ While the League passed several resolutions requiring that Arab states afford Palestinians treatment equal to that of their citizens in fields not covered by UNRWA, Jordan is the only state that made such efforts to enshrine Palestinians’ rights to employment, education, and political participation in law.

The 1967 Arab-Israeli War, also known as the “Six-Day War,” saw another exodus of Palestinian refugees into Jordan. Contrary to the initial influx of refugees following the creation of the state of Israel, many of those fleeing the 1967 war were “doubly-displaced” refugees, having fled to the Gaza Strip during the 1948 war.⁴⁶ Hereinafter referred to as “Gazans,” these refugees faced vastly different treatment upon their expulsion from the newly Israeli-controlled Gaza Strip. In Jordan, Gazans were granted temporary passports valid for two years, but not citizenship rights like their counterparts hailing from the West Bank.⁴⁷ These temporary passports indicate to the relevant authorities that the Gazans are “temporary residents” of the Kingdom and serve

⁴³ Riccardo Bocco and Jalal Al Hussein, “The Status of the Palestinian Refugees in the Near East: The Right of Return and UNRWA in Perspective,” *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 28, no. 2–3 (2010): 260–85, <https://doi.org/10.1093/rsq/hdp036>.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ League of Arab States, “Protocol for the Treatment of Palestinians in Arab States” (1965), <https://www.refworld.org/docid/460a2b252.html>.

⁴⁶ Oroub El Abed, “Immobile Palestinians: Ongoing Plight of Gazans in Jordan,” *Forced Migration Review* 26 (2006): 17–18.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

as travel documents, although temporary passports are not consistently accepted by states while traveling internationally. Few countries admit their holders as they do not represent proof of citizenship in the issuing country.⁴⁸

The renewal of temporary passports is at the discretion of the state, leaving Gazans in a precarious position as any delay in renewal may result in individuals becoming wholly undocumented. These factors essentially render Gazans in Jordan stateless, without access to the citizenship and residency benefits enjoyed by Palestinian-Jordanians who migrated in 1948. It is not entirely clear why Jordan's treatment of 1967 refugees has varied so greatly from that of 1948 refugees, but it is likely that a variety of political factors inspired this discrepancy. While Jordan accepted the initial influx of Palestinian refugees with the understanding that they would soon return to Palestine following the end of the war, Israel's refusal to recognize 1948 refugees' right to return resulted in an assumption that refugees fleeing the 1967 war would also remain in their host countries for an indefinite length of time. Considering that Israel began occupying Palestinian territory in the West Bank and Gaza as a result of the Six-Day War, the likelihood of a swift return for refugees from either exodus appeared particularly slim. As there was still no resolution in sight for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict or the refugee question, Jordan's cold reception of Gazans can be interpreted as an affront to Israel and a refusal to unflinchingly accept refugees created by its wars.

⁴⁸ Oroub El Abed, "Immobile Palestinians: Ongoing Plight of Gazans in Jordan," *Forced Migration Review* 26 (2006): 17–18.

Table 3.1: Groups of Palestinian Refugees & Their Status in Jordan

Group of Refugees	Description	Status in Jordan
1948 Refugees	Palestinians who fled due to the events of 1948 and who "not being Jewish, possessed Palestinian nationality before 15 May 1948 and was a regular resident in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan between 20 December 1949 and 16 February 1954."	Full citizenship rights
Gazans/1967 Refugees	"Doubly-displaced" Palestinians who fled primarily to the Gaza Strip in 1948, then to Jordan during the Six Day War of 1967.	"Resident" status. Hold temporary passports that can be used as travel documents, but do not imply Jordanian citizenship or the rights that accompany it. Extremely vulnerable to becoming undocumented.
Refugees residing in the West Bank before 1988	Palestinians who resided in the West Bank prior to King Hussein's severance of administrative ties in 1988.	"Resident" status. Citizenship was revoked in 1988 and they now hold temporary passports that can be used as travel documents, but do not imply Jordanian citizenship or the rights that accompany it. Vulnerable to becoming undocumented.
Palestinian Refugees from Syria (PRS)	Palestinians residing in Syria prior to the Syrian Civil War when they fled to Jordan.	Highly marginalized. No citizenship rights, are largely confined to camps, cannot attend public schools or work without a permit.

3.2 The PLO & Severance of Ties with the West Bank

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was formed in 1964, but it underwent a kind of transformation following the Arab defeat in the Six-Day War. Previously a body of "Cairo-based bureaucratic nobles," the atmosphere of rage and disillusionment resulting from Palestinian losses during the war catalyzed the PLO's transformation into an "independent resistance organization devoted to armed struggle

against Israel.”⁴⁹ At this time, the PLO was based in Jordan and began to expand its influence throughout the Kingdom.⁵⁰ Witnessing the growing support for the organization, an Israeli brigade invaded the Jordanian village of Al-Karamah in March 1968, and Jordanian forces supported and fought alongside PLO fighters.⁵¹ Despite Jordan’s initial support of the PLO and its activities, this hospitality emboldened the organization to undertake more ambitious guerilla attacks without Jordanian approval.

The rapid growth of the PLO’s operations in Jordan and the reprisals brought about by its guerilla attacks against Israel represented a threat to King Hussein’s authority, resulting in several confrontations between the organization and the government during efforts to disarm the refugee camps. However, tensions mounted in September 1970 when a militant sect of the PLO hijacked four passenger aircrafts en route to Jordanian territory and landed three of them in parts of the country it deemed as “liberated territory.”⁵² ⁵³ The ensuing conflict, known as “Black September,” saw a ten day period during which King Hussein ordered an all-out offensive against the PLO, declared martial law, and formed a military government to enforce it.⁵⁴ At the end of September 1970, a Cairo-signed ceasefire between the PLO’s militant sects and Jordan went into effect, although some fighting continued as Jordanian forces asserted

⁴⁹ Shaul Gabbay, “The Status of Palestinians in Jordan and the Anomaly of Holding a Jordanian Passport,” *Journal of Political Sciences & Public Affairs* 2, no. 1 (February 5, 2014): 113–19, <https://doi.org/10.4172/2332-0761.1000113>.

⁵⁰ Changrok Soh, Yoonjeong You, and Youngsoo Yu, “Once Resolved, Stay Resolved? The Refuse Policy of Jordan toward Palestinian Refugees,” *Journal of International and Area Studies* 23, no. 1 (June 2016): 1–16.

⁵¹ Oroub Al Abed, “Palestinian Refugees in Jordan,” *Forced Migration Online*, 2004.

⁵² Changrok Soh, Yoonjeong You, and Youngsoo Yu, “Once Resolved, Stay Resolved? The Refuse Policy of Jordan toward Palestinian Refugees,” *Journal of International and Area Studies* 23, no. 1 (June 2016): 1–16.

⁵³ Shaul Gabbay, “The Status of Palestinians in Jordan and the Anomaly of Holding a Jordanian Passport,” *Journal of Political Sciences & Public Affairs* 2, no. 1 (February 5, 2014): 113–19, <https://doi.org/10.4172/2332-0761.1000113>.

⁵⁴ Oroub Al Abed, “Palestinian Refugees in Jordan,” *Forced Migration Online*, 2004.

dominance. There is no official count of those killed during the carnage, but estimates range between 5,000 and 25,000, including many Palestinian and Jordanian civilians.⁵⁵

Following the incidents of Black September, the Jordanian government expanded its practice of preferentially recruiting Transjordanians into its bureaucracy, at the expense of Palestinian-Jordanians.⁵⁶ Transjordanians came to dominate the government as well as the upper and lower levels of the military, and Palestinians remained dominant in the private sector. This shift, coupled with then Prime Minister Wasfi Tal's fierce reprisals against militant PLO members, disgruntled Palestinians, and in November 1971 Tal was assassinated by a Palestinian member of the Black September Organization (BSO), named for and birthed out of the Black September carnage.⁵⁷ PLO forces were expelled from Jordan, and in March 1972, King Hussein announced a plan for a "federative relationship" between the East and West Banks, proposing the establishment of a "United Arab Kingdom."⁵⁸

King Hussein's proposal was popularly rejected by Israel and the Arab world, including Palestinians. In October 1974, the Arab League held a summit in Rabat wherein the PLO was formally recognized as "the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people in any Palestinian territory that is liberated."⁵⁹ In spite of the Arab consensus on the matter, King Hussein continued in his attempts to revive talks for a confederation between Jordan and Palestine until the Palestinian Intifada of 1987. The

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Shaul Gabbay, "The Status of Palestinians in Jordan and the Anomaly of Holding a Jordanian Passport," *Journal of Political Sciences & Public Affairs* 2, no. 1 (February 5, 2014): 113–19, <https://doi.org/10.4172/2332-0761.1000113>.

⁵⁷ Changrok Soh, Yoonjeong You, and Youngsoo Yu, "Once Resolved, Stay Resolved? The Refuse Policy of Jordan toward Palestinian Refugees," *Journal of International and Area Studies* 23, no. 1 (June 2016): 1–16.

⁵⁸ Oroub Al Abed, "Palestinian Refugees in Jordan," *Forced Migration Online*, 2004.

⁵⁹ League of Arab States, "Seventh Arab League Summit Conference Resolution on Palestine" (1974), <https://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/63D9A930E2B428DF852572C0006D06B8>.

Intifada proved that, in contrast to Hussein's argument at the Rabat summit, Palestinians in the Occupied Territories could speak for and attempt to liberate themselves. Finally, on July 31, 1988, King Hussein gave an address to the nation announcing Jordan's formal disengagement from the West Bank and the severing of administrative ties between them. The address refers to the Arab League's resolution from the Rabat summit and Hussein acknowledges the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people.⁶⁰ Hussein also reaffirms his and the Jordanian government's dedication to the Palestinian cause and pan-Arabism, but concludes that "Jordan is not Palestine."⁶¹ This assertion stands in sharp contrast to previous efforts to unite Palestinians and Jordanians under one government and one-Jordanian-identity.

Jordan's disengagement from the West Bank held grave implications for West Bank Palestinians, especially considering the instability of the PLO's rule following the Intifada. Palestinian-Jordanians residing in the West Bank were stripped of their Jordanian citizenship, and their Jordanian passports were rendered temporary, valid for two years.⁶² While these passports could still be used as travel documents, citizenship was stripped from them through the deprivation of a Jordanian national number, which is required to receive a Jordanian driver's license, buy and sell property, and open a bank account.⁶³ Additionally, children without a national number are barred from attending Jordanian public schools. King Hussein's 1988 address maintained that Palestinian-Jordanians residing in the East Bank prior to the disengagement would

⁶⁰ King Hussein, "King Hussein Address to the Nation, 31 July 1988" (Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, July 31, 1988), http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/88_july31.html.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Abbas Shiblak, "Residency Status and Civil Rights of Palestinian Refugees in Arab Countries," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 25, no. 3 (1996): 36–45.

⁶³ Shaul Gabbay, "The Status of Palestinians in Jordan and the Anomaly of Holding a Jordanian Passport," *Journal of Political Sciences & Public Affairs* 2, no. 1 (February 5, 2014): 113–19, <https://doi.org/10.4172/2332-0761.1000113>.

maintain Jordanian nationality. However, recent reports have levied allegations that Jordan has revoked thousands of Palestinian-Jordanians' national numbers arbitrarily and without warning since the 1988 disengagement.⁶⁴ Multiple rationales have been cited for this practice, including anxieties over the possibility of an Israeli annexation of the West Bank and implications that Jordan is the de facto "alternative homeland" for Palestinians.

3.3 Gulf War & The Quest for Middle East Peace

As a result of Saddam Hussein's unsuccessful invasion of Kuwait and the onset of the Gulf War, 200,000-300,000 Jordanian passport holders living and working in the Persian Gulf were expelled from the region due to Jordan's support for Iraq.⁶⁵ A significant majority of these "returnees" were of Palestinian origin.⁶⁶ Jordan and UNRWA both scrambled to accommodate the unexpected returnees, and the influx only added to the economic stagnation that the country had been experiencing. At least a tenth of the returnees were crowded into refugee camps, and those and many others struggled to find employment during the economic downturn.⁶⁷ This now third influx of Palestinian refugees revived concerns amongst Transjordanians that Palestinian-Jordanians would eventually gain complete control over the country's economy and political system.

Consequently, the peace talks between Arab states and Israel that characterized the

⁶⁴ "Stateless Again: Palestinian-Origin Jordanians Deprived of Their Nationality," *Human Rights Watch*, February 1, 2010, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2010/02/01/stateless-again/palestinian-origin-jordanians-deprived-their-nationality>.

⁶⁵ Shaul Gabbay, "The Status of Palestinians in Jordan and the Anomaly of Holding a Jordanian Passport," *Journal of Political Sciences & Public Affairs* 2, no. 1 (February 5, 2014): 113–19, <https://doi.org/10.4172/2332-0761.1000113>.

⁶⁶ Ilter Türkmen, "Report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East: 1 July 1990-30 June 1991" (United Nations Relief and Works Agency, September 26, 1991), United Nations Digital Library.

⁶⁷ Shaul Gabbay, "The Status of Palestinians in Jordan and the Anomaly of Holding a Jordanian Passport," *Journal of Political Sciences & Public Affairs* 2, no. 1 (February 5, 2014): 113–19, <https://doi.org/10.4172/2332-0761.1000113>.

mid-1990s were seen by many Transjordanians as an opportunity to “reorganize the internal Jordanian structure.”⁶⁸

Though Israel and the PLO signed in Oslo Accords in September 1993, Arab countries hosting Palestinian refugees were excluded from the negotiations, causing some states to escalate their discrimination against them.⁶⁹ In regards to Jordan, its role in the peace talks culminated in its resulting peace treaty with Israel, the “Wadi Araba Treaty.” The treaty includes little mention of Palestine or Palestinians in favor of the establishment of “neighborly relations” between the two states.⁷⁰ However, despite Article 8 of the treaty vaguely defining the parties’ responsibilities to refugees and displaced persons, paragraph two mentions “the implementation of agreed United Nations programmes” and other economic programs to provide “assistance to their settlement.”⁷¹ Despite its ambiguity, Article 8 is often pointed to as Jordan’s official acceptance of Palestinian refugees as members of its citizenry and responsibility to host them indefinitely. This interpretation angers refugees and Transjordanian nationalists alike as it ostensibly supports Israel’s designation of Jordan as “al-watan al-badil,” or the alternative homeland, for Palestinians, essentially undermining their right of return.

3.4 King Abdullah II’s Unity Campaigns

In a continuation of previous kings’ efforts to unite Transjordanians and Palestinian-Jordanians under a common Jordanian identity, King Abdullah II has

⁶⁸ Shaul Gabbay, “The Status of Palestinians in Jordan and the Anomaly of Holding a Jordanian Passport,” *Journal of Political Sciences & Public Affairs* 2, no. 1 (February 5, 2014): 113–19, <https://doi.org/10.4172/2332-0761.1000113>.

⁶⁹ Riccardo Bocco and Jalal Al Hussein, “The Status of the Palestinian Refugees in the Near East: The Right of Return and UNRWA in Perspective,” *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 28, no. 2–3 (2010): 260–85, <https://doi.org/10.1093/rsq/hdp036>.

⁷⁰ “Treaty of Peace Between The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and The State of Israel,” I-35325 § (1994).

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

launched several unity campaigns during his rule to smooth remaining tensions between the communities. His 2002 “Jordan First” and 2010 “We Are All Jordan” campaigns stand out for both the political conditions that inspired and popular reaction to them. In a letter to then Jordanian Prime Minister Ali Abu Al-Ragheb, King Abdullah wrote that Jordan First would be “a common denominator” amongst all Jordanians “regardless of their origins, orientations, views, talents, faiths, or races.”⁷² Billboards and posters were printed depicting several hands holding a Jordanian flag, and the “Jordan First” slogan was displayed on nearly every street in the country’s major cities. The campaign was an attempt at gaining Palestinian loyalty, though some Palestinian-Jordanians interpreted it as a call for them to “abandon their Palestinian identity” which was already threatened by the “Israeli occupation of their homes.”⁷³

While “Jordan First” represents an attempt to instill Jordanian identity in Palestinian-Jordanians, “We Are All Jordan” was more focused on placating Transjordanians and encouraging acceptance of their Palestinian-Jordanian counterparts. In May 2010, Jordan enacted a new electoral law which added parliamentary seats for under-represented cities, most of which hosted large Palestinian populations.⁷⁴ The new law garnered backlash from Transjordanian nationalists and groups like the National Committee of Military Veterans who felt that increasing Palestinian participation in the political sector would leave Transjordanians at a disadvantage, especially given Palestinian-Jordanians’ economic dominance.

⁷² Sana Abdallah, “Jordan’s King Launches Identity Campaign,” *UPI*, October 31, 2002, sec. Defense News, <https://www.upi.com/Defense-News/2002/10/31/Jordans-king-launches-identity-campaign/32771036095066/>.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Curtis Ryan, “‘We Are All Jordan’ ...But Who Is We?,” *Middle East Report Online*, July 13, 2010, <https://merip.org/2010/07/we-are-all-jordan-but-who-is-we/>.

This concern is not without cause; Jordan has pursued policies of economic liberalization since the late 1980s, and the privatization of previously state-run industries has undoubtedly benefited entrepreneurial Palestinian-Jordanians. In fact, of the 500 largest private companies in Jordan, 60% of them are Palestinian-owned, and banks under Palestinian management account for an astounding 92% of the total market capitalization of all banks in Jordan.⁷⁵ This is remarkable considering that, in general, ethnic minority groups are weaker socio-economically than the majority ethnicity in multi-ethnic societies, rendering Palestinians in Jordan a rare exception. While some estimates do show that Palestinian-Jordanians maintain a slim demographic majority over Transjordanians, it is nevertheless noteworthy that a displaced population has acquired and maintained such economic might outside of its country of origin. Given this fact and several efforts made over the past decades to further integrate Palestinian-Jordanians into the public sector, it is not surprising that a structural change like the 2010 electoral law elicited such backlash and threatened the national unity that King Abdullah seeks.

Also contributing to recurring rising tensions between Palestinian-Jordanians and Transjordanians is the looming threat of the “Jordan option,” or fears that an increasingly hostile Israeli regime will eventually declare that a Palestinian homeland already exists on the East Bank.⁷⁶ Anxiety around and resistance to the idea of “al-watan al-badil”⁷⁷ has permeated Jordanian society and politics for decades. Despite his previous efforts to officially join the East and West Banks in confederation, King Hussein stated emphatically that “Jordan is not Palestine” in his 1988 address announcing his

⁷⁵ Yitzhak Reiter, “The Palestinian-Transjordanian Rift: Economic Might and Political Power in Jordan,” *Middle East Journal* 58, no. 1 (2004): 72–92.

⁷⁶ Marwan Muasher, “Jordanian-Palestinian Relations,” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, Palestinian Nationalism Regional Perspectives, September 8, 2017, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2017/09/08/jordanian-palestinian-relations-pub-73006>.

⁷⁷ “Alternative homeland” in Arabic.

disengagement from the West Bank, and maintaining Palestinians' "haq al-aewda"⁷⁸ has been the official rationale behind many of the aforementioned policies regarding refugee-citizens. Implementation of the "Jordan option" would mean both that the Palestinian right of return will never be recognized and that Jordan will have to fully integrate its Palestinian population as full citizens while continuing to host its other substantial refugee populations, which now includes Iraqis, Syrians, and Yemenis. Seeing as the current Israeli government, with the support of the United States, appears to have no interest in a two-state solution and that Palestinian leadership is too fractured and weak to advance it, frustration with the situation generally is rising in Jordan.⁷⁹

Many factors, both internal and external, have contributed to the recurrence of tensions between Palestinian-Jordanians and Transjordanians in recent memory, but the ones that have incentivized King Abdullah's unity campaigns and speeches are most common and poignant. As the conflict over Palestine continues unabated, uncertainty over the future of Palestinians and their role in Jordanian society begets disillusionment. While this may be the case, King Abdullah seems to understand the importance of maintaining internal cohesion in the face of external threats. In a speech echoing the sentiments behind "We Are All Jordan," he reaffirmed that attempts at undermining domestic cohesion constitute "a red line that we will not allow anyone to cross."⁸⁰

3.5 Impact of the Syrian Refugee Crisis on Jordanian Refugee Policy

⁷⁸ "Right of return" in Arabic.

⁷⁹ Marwan Muasher, "Jordanian-Palestinian Relations," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, Palestinian Nationalism Regional Perspectives, September 8, 2017, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2017/09/08/jordanian-palestinian-relations-pub-73006>.

⁸⁰ Curtis Ryan, "'We Are All Jordan' ...But Who Is We?," *Middle East Report Online*, July 13, 2010, <https://merip.org/2010/07/we-are-all-jordan-but-who-is-we/>.

The U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003, the war and continued occupation that followed, and the rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in the country have resulted in a significant Iraqi refugee population in Jordan. While this influx has not directly affected Jordanian policy toward Palestinians and Palestinian-Jordanians, anxiety over what to make of the “new Palestinians”⁸¹ and their similarly indefinite stay in Jordan has exacerbated existing issues in the country, namely unemployment and water scarcity.⁸² However, an even more disruptive force has been the onset of the Syrian Civil War and the unprecedented displacement that it has caused. There are currently 662,790 UNHCR-registered Syrian refugees in Jordan, although other sources estimate the total number of Syrians in Jordan to be significantly higher, with the Jordanian government notably claiming that the true count exceeds 1.3 million.^{83 84} The Syrian refugee issue in Jordan also bears graver implications for Palestinians, and specifically Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS).

Like Gazans, PRS are “doubly-displaced” refugees; they settled in Syria after fleeing conflict in Palestine, and have now been forced to seek refuge in Jordan as a result of the Syrian Civil War.⁸⁵ Jordan’s policy toward PRS, much like that of Gazans in Jordan, is one of marginalization.⁸⁶ Before Jordan officially closed its borders to PRS in

⁸¹ Curtis Ryan, “‘We Are All Jordan’...But Who Is We?,” *Middle East Report Online*, July 13, 2010, <https://merip.org/2010/07/we-are-all-jordan-but-who-is-we/>.

⁸² Pierre Krähenbühl, “Report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East: 1 January-31 December 2018” (United Nations Relief and Works Agency, August 23, 2019).

⁸³ UNHCR, “Refugee Situations: Syria Regional Refugee Response” (UNHCR, February 4, 2021), <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria/location/36>.

⁸⁴ Gerasimos Tsourapas, “The Syrian Refugee Crisis and Foreign Policy Decision-Making in Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey,” *Journal of Global Security Studies* 4, no. 4 (May 4, 2019): 469, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jogss/ogz016>.

⁸⁵ Changrok Soh, Yoonjeong You, and Youngsoo Yu, “Once Resolved, Stay Resolved? The Refuse Policy of Jordan toward Palestinian Refugees,” *Journal of International and Area Studies* 23, no. 1 (June 2016): 1–16.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

2013, the Kingdom admitted 1,300 Palestinian-Syrians and they were allowed to work with special permissions. However, it is incredibly difficult for Syrian refugees, and, by extension, PRS, to acquire work permits, and even permit holders are only allowed to work in certain sectors. Additionally, unlike other groups of Palestinian refugees, PRS are detained in refugee camps and only allowed to leave either to return to Syria or if they are “bailed out” by a Jordanian sponsor.⁸⁷ However, the “bailout” scheme has since been cancelled, so PRS are largely siloed into the camps. For this reason, camp-dwelling PRS children are largely educated by UNRWA and other non-governmental organizations.

As Jordan has been forced to absorb an unprecedented number of refugees since the onset of the Syrian Civil War, its increasingly restrictive policies toward migrants is not entirely surprising. Jordan also belongs to the group of developing nations with a “rentier” economy, so its dependence on foreign aid, especially that which is allotted for refugee-hosting expenditures, is largely dependent on the number of refugees that it hosts, regardless of their treatment by the state. Jordan’s reputation as a “refugee rentier state” implies that it leverages its significant refugee population in order to extract “rent” from other state and non-state actors for maintaining displaced populations within its territory.⁸⁸ With Jordan’s dependence on “refugee rent” comes the incentive to increase the international visibility of its refugee crisis and exaggerate its severity in order to bolster its need for more international aid.

There are several examples in recent Jordanian policy of this practice, with the most egregious being its inflation of refugee counts and intentional siloing of Syrian

⁸⁷ Changrok Soh, Yoonjeong You, and Youngsoo Yu, “Once Resolved, Stay Resolved? The Refuse Policy of Jordan toward Palestinian Refugees,” *Journal of International and Area Studies* 23, no. 1 (June 2016): 1–16.

⁸⁸ Gerasimos Tsourapas, “The Syrian Refugee Crisis and Foreign Policy Decision-Making in Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey,” *Journal of Global Security Studies* 4, no. 4 (May 4, 2019): 464, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jogss/ogz016>.

refugees. Beginning with the influx of Iraqis into Jordan after 2003, Jordanian government officials heavily exaggerated the number of Iraqi refugees within its territory: while the UNHCR estimated the number to be around fifty thousand, Jordanian officials claimed that the number was between 750,000 and one million.⁸⁹ While there is normally a discrepancy between the number of formally registered refugees and total number of those living within a country, it is implausible that the gap would be this large in this case. This same practice can be seen with the Syrian refugee crisis; as previously mentioned, the Jordanian government, including King Abdullah himself, maintains that the actual count of Syrian refugees residing in Jordan is more than double that of the UNHCR.⁹⁰ By inflating the number of refugees it hosts, Jordan aims to justify its requests for more financial aid from other states and international organizations.

Jordan also has a vested interest in increasing the visibility of its refugee population by publicizing their plight, largely in regards to conditions in their encampments. While Jordan officially closed its borders to Syrian refugees in 2013, Jordanian border officers continued to allow Syrians to enter the country via informal border crossings.⁹¹ Syrians do not require a visa to enter Jordan and thus must register with the UNHCR to be considered refugees in the country, but when entering Jordan at an informal border crossing, the migrants are classified as *prima facie* refugees under the Jordanian Memorandum of Understanding with the UNHCR.⁹² Syrians entering Jordan through these border crossings were sent to the Za'atari refugee camp in northern Jordan,

⁸⁹ Gerasimos Tsourapas, "The Syrian Refugee Crisis and Foreign Policy Decision-Making in Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey," *Journal of Global Security Studies* 4, no. 4 (May 4, 2019): 469, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jogss/ogz016>.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ Gerasimos Tsourapas, "The Syrian Refugee Crisis and Foreign Policy Decision-Making in Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey," *Journal of Global Security Studies* 4, no. 4 (May 4, 2019): 469, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jogss/ogz016>.

⁹² *Ibid.*

which is now considered one of the largest refugee camps in the world.⁹³ In siloing as many registered refugees into Za’atari Camp as possible, Jordan was able to attract international media attention to the plight of Syrian refugees in Jordan and Jordan’s difficulty in hosting them, further strengthening the government’s call for more assistance.⁹⁴

While Jordan’s interaction with the Syrian refugee crisis is not directly related to the conditions faced by Palestinian refugees in Jordan, the case illustrates the ways in which Jordan adjusts its domestic and foreign policy in response to changing regional dynamics. Jordan’s response to the massive influx of Syrian refugees in recent years varies greatly from that of the first Palestinian exodus. As regional strife has intensified Jordan’s obligation to accept more and more refugees in recent decades, Jordan has evolved as a host state from one of unquestioning loyalty to hospitality and pan-Arabism to one that has begun to resist its reputation as an inimitable refugee host without some sort of compensation.

⁹³ UNHCR, “Jordan – Zaatari Refugee Camp” (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), August 16, 2020), <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Zaatari%20Fact%20Sheet%20July%202020.pdf>.

⁹⁴ Gerasimos Tsourapas, “The Syrian Refugee Crisis and Foreign Policy Decision-Making in Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey,” *Journal of Global Security Studies* 4, no. 4 (May 4, 2019): 469, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jogss/ogz016>.

CHAPTER 4: UNRWA’S TRANSITION FROM RELIEF TO DEVELOPMENT

_____ Since its creation in 1950, UNRWA has undergone several structural changes both at the organizational level—across all of its areas of operation—and within Jordan specifically. These changes have been in response to both broad geo-political and regional factors and UNRWA’s interactions with Jordan’s domestic policies. While a significant portion of UNRWA Jordan’s evolution can be attributed to conditions contained solely within Jordan, a larger portion have been the result of issues stemming from the conflict in Palestine generally and have affected UNRWA’s operations in all areas it serves—Jordan, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, Lebanon, and Syria. All of these factors are explored below, with special attention paid to those stemming from Jordan’s internal politics.

4.1 Creation and Mandate

On December 8, 1949, the United Nations General Assembly voted to pass Resolution 302 (IV) on assistance to Palestinian refugees. The resolution states that “without prejudice to the provisions of paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III),” which protects the refugees’ right to eventually return to Palestine, the Assembly “establishes the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East.”⁹⁵

⁹⁵ United Nations General Assembly, “UNGA Resolution 302,” A/RES/302 (IV) § (1949), <https://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/AF5F909791DE7FB0852560E500687282>.

Despite this gesture ensuring prolonged assistance to Palestinian refugees, the resolution maintains that “constructive measures should be undertaken at an early date with a view to the termination of international assistance for relief” and recommends that the Secretary-General and relevant operating agencies “continue the endeavor” to progressively reduce the amount of aid provided until international assistance is no longer necessary.⁹⁶ The temporary nature of the Agency is further established by the resolution’s limiting allocation of funding for relief efforts to just one year; paragraph six holds that “direct relief should be terminated not later than 31 December 1950 unless otherwise determined by the General Assembly at its fifth regular session.”⁹⁷ Following this date, the Agency’s relief projects were intended to be completely replaced by works programs aimed at the socio-economic integration of the refugees into their host countries.

The resolution explicitly provides just two responsibilities for the new Agency: “To carry out in collaboration with local governments the direct relief and works programmes as recommended by the Economic Survey Mission” and to “consult with the interested Near Eastern Governments concerning measures to be taken by them preparatory to the time when international assistance for relief and works projects is no longer available.”⁹⁸ In spite of these far-reaching yet ambiguous duties, the Assembly does not establish a concrete funding scheme for the Agency’s operations, instead urging “all Members of the United Nations and non-members to make voluntary contributions in funds or in kind to ensure that the amount of supplies and funds required is obtained for each period of the programme.”⁹⁹ It is often argued that this precarious funding

⁹⁶ United Nations General Assembly, “UNGA Resolution 302,” A/RES/302 (IV) § (1949), <https://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/AF5F909791DE7FB0852560E500687282>.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ United Nations General Assembly, “UNGA Resolution 302,” A/RES/302 (IV) § (1949), <https://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/AF5F909791DE7FB0852560E500687282>.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

mechanism is linked to the Assembly's insistence that the Agency would be dissolved within a few years.¹⁰⁰

As can be seen in the language and directives of its founding resolution, UNRWA, in the minds of the Western powers that spearheaded its creation, was intended to be a temporary agency aimed at the socio-economic integration of Palestinian refugees into their Arab host countries, despite the credence Resolution 302 gives to the "right of return" enshrined in Resolution 194.¹⁰¹ Despite this belief, the conflict in Palestine has persisted well into the 21st century and UNRWA's mandate has been renewed in three-to-five year intervals since it became operational in May of 1950. In fact, the General Assembly passed Resolution 1315 (XIII) in 1958 allowing for the expansion of UNRWA's operations to provide for the substantial growth in the Palestinian refugee population since the Agency's founding.¹⁰² To this day, UNRWA is the only United Nations agency to have served, for such a long length of time, one category of refugees and its services are renowned for their efficiency under the circumstances that they are provided, especially in the field of education.¹⁰³

UNRWA's prolonged tenure as an agency and relative success in service provision can be contributed in part to the aforementioned circumstances. Its establishment as a temporary agency without any inherent legal authority, enabling statute under the United Nations, secure funding scheme, or clear mandate have forced the Agency's leadership to

¹⁰⁰ Riccardo Bocco, "UNRWA and the Palestinian Refugees: A History within History," *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 28, no. 2–3 (March 26, 2010): 229–52, <https://doi.org/10.1093/rsq/hdq001>.

¹⁰¹ Riccardo Bocco and Jalal Al Hussein, "The Status of the Palestinian Refugees in the Near East: The Right of Return and UNRWA in Perspective," *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 28, no. 2–3 (2010): 260–85, <https://doi.org/10.1093/rsq/hdp036>.

¹⁰² United Nations General Assembly, "UNGA Resolution 1315," A/RES/2452 (XXIII) (A-C) § (1958), <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/un-general-assembly-resolution-1315-december-1958>.

¹⁰³ Riccardo Bocco and Jalal Al Hussein, "The Status of the Palestinian Refugees in the Near East: The Right of Return and UNRWA in Perspective," *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 28, no. 2–3 (2010): 260–85, <https://doi.org/10.1093/rsq/hdp036>.

adapt to changing circumstances, effectively market its mission to secure funding, and form their own interpretations of its mandate to keep with Palestinian refugees' changing needs.¹⁰⁴ These characteristics have allowed for UNRWA's evolution to take place and have contributed to the rise of its education program as the primary mode through which the Agency promotes development among the populations it serves.

4.2 The Rise of the UNRWA Education Program

As has been elucidated in chapters two and three, Palestinian refugees' right of return to Palestine has been a guiding principle in the agendas of international bodies, Arab host states, and the Jordanian government specifically, and UNRWA is no exception. The Agency was founded as a relief and works agency, meaning that immediate relief to displaced Palestinians was intended to eventually be replaced solely by works programs. Indeed, the idea of transferring the strategies of the Tennessee Valley Authority in Great Depression-era America was appealing to UNRWA's Western donors.¹⁰⁵ However, this initial intent was thwarted both by unsupportive host governments and skeptical Palestinians.

First and independent of "right of return" politics, implementing works programs across the five areas of operation would have required considerable expenditure and effort on the part of host countries, as well as an already cash-strapped UNRWA. Given the unemployment issues already facing these areas, seeking out and instituting employment opportunities for a refugee population then considered to be temporary

¹⁰⁴ Jalal Al Hussein, "UNRWA and the Refugees: A Difficult but Lasting Marriage," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 40, no. 1 (2010): 6–26, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/jps.2010.xl.1.006>.

¹⁰⁵ Riccardo Bocco, "UNRWA and the Palestinian Refugees: A History within History," *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 28, no. 2–3 (March 26, 2010): 229–52, <https://doi.org/10.1093/rsq/hdq001>.

proved to be too costly. The very first annual report by UNRWA's director speaks to that effect: in addition to grim observations of employment prospects in Lebanon and Gaza, he states that "Jordan, though willing, will not be able to provide works for any numbers approaching those now within its borders" and laments that the cost of providing work was five times that of relief efforts.¹⁰⁶

Although the logistical complication of works programs played a role in the eventual decline of the effort, the "overriding obstacle" to this type of development was the concern amongst host governments and refugees alike that "development" meant "resettlement" and would thus threaten their repatriation.¹⁰⁷ While the distinction between "socio-economic rehabilitation" and "resettlement" was partially accepted in Jordan, refugee communities were not convinced that the powerful donor countries participating in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process were considering this distinction in their approach to negotiations.¹⁰⁸ UNRWA itself was also the subject of skepticism on the part of Palestinians, with its status as a United Nations agency primarily funded and headed by Western entities that did not always act in Palestinians' best interests.¹⁰⁹

By the end of the 1950s, it was clear to UNRWA that the works program had failed. The Director's report for 1959-1960 remarks that UNRWA itself can not solve the refugee problem, especially not through economic means, and that "major development

¹⁰⁶ Howard Kennedy, "Interim Report of the Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East" (New York: United Nations Relief and Works Agency, 1951).

¹⁰⁷ James G. Lindsay, "Fixing UNRWA: Repairing the UN's Troubled System of Aid to Palestinian Refugees," *Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, no. 91 (January 2009), <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/fixing-unrwa-repairing-uns-troubled-system-aid-palestinian-refugees>.

¹⁰⁸ Riccardo Bocco, "UNRWA and the Palestinian Refugees: A History within History," *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 28, no. 2-3 (March 26, 2010): 229-52, <https://doi.org/10.1093/rsq/hdq001>.

¹⁰⁹ Jalal Al Hussein, "UNRWA and the Refugees: A Difficult but Lasting Marriage," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 40, no. 1 (2010): 6-26, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/jps.2010.xl.1.006>.

projects are unacceptable to refugees and host governments alike.”¹¹⁰ This report specifically marks a shift in the Agency’s priorities as to how it promotes development amongst Palestinian refugees. The Director even writes that he “thinks [the] Agency should concentrate efforts in 1) administering relief and 2) providing general education and 3) teaching vocational skills and awarding university scholarships.”¹¹¹ Finally, the seminal report also refers to the growth in UNRWA’s education program that had already taken place: between 1950 and 1960, the program’s budget had been expanded from \$398,000 to more than \$6 million. It is also noteworthy that the UN General Assembly passed Resolution 1315 during this period, allowing for UNRWA’s expansion—particularly in the field of education.

This new focus on education enjoyed approval from all parties involved. Donor countries—namely the United States—perceived the shift as “a tool to stimulate the resettlement in every way possible,” while refugees saw education as a means to promote their “*individual* rehabilitation,” as opposed to the “*collective* development schemes” that imperiled their right of return.¹¹² The UNRWA Commissioner-General echoed this sentiment in 1971, writing that the educational efforts “form the foundation for individual rehabilitation and contribute to economic and social development in many Arab countries.”¹¹³ By 1970, education had surpassed relief as the UNRWA’s main program¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ John H. Davis, “Annual Report of the Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East 1 July 1959-30 June 1960,” 14 (United Nations Relief and Works Agency, October 17, 1960), UN/SA Collection, United Nations Digital Library.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² Jalal Al Hussein, “UNRWA and the Refugees: A Difficult but Lasting Marriage,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 40, no. 1 (2010): 6–26, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/jps.2010.xl.1.006>.

¹¹³ J.S. Rennie, “Report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East: 1 July 1970-30 June 1971,” Annual (United Nations Relief and Works Agency, September 11, 1971), United Nations Digital Library.

¹¹⁴ James G. Lindsay, “Fixing UNRWA: Repairing the UN’s Troubled System of Aid to Palestinian Refugees,” *Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, no. 91 (January 2009), <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/fixing-unrwa-repairing-uns-troubled-system-aid-palestinian-refugees>.

and its expenditures made up the majority of the Agency's total budget by the end of the 1970s, a trend which continues to this day having reached 60% of total expenditure in 2018.¹¹⁵

The rise of UNRWA's education program in opposition to its proposed works programs speaks to both the political power of "right of return" politics as well as UNRWA's adaptability as an agency and its dedication to development for Palestinian refugees. In response to the Palestinian conviction that their right to repatriation be protected—as well as other political developments described in the following section—UNRWA has continuously acted as a barrier between the volatility of regional and international politics and the most pressing needs of the Palestinian refugees it serves. Despite the initial political opposition to development through works programming, UNRWA managed to adjust its vision and provide development opportunities through another medium: individual rehabilitation from education.

4.3 UNRWA's Operations in Jordan

During the 2018-2019 school cycle, UNRWA administered basic education to over 121,000 students at 169 schools in Jordan, with approximately 88% being run on a double-shift basis.¹¹⁶ In addition to basic education (grades 1-10), UNRWA offers technical and vocational training at two training centers in Jordan, serving a total of 2,800 students and which provide courses to "match with the regional and local labour market needs."¹¹⁷ It is necessary to note that, despite overcrowding and underfunding at the basic

¹¹⁵ Olof Rydbeck, "Report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East: 1 July 1979-30 June 1980," Annual (United Nations Relief and Works Agency, September 18, 1980), A/35/13, United Nations Digital Library.

¹¹⁶ UNRWA Jordan, "Education in Jordan" (United Nations Relief and Works Agency, 2020), <https://www.unrwa.org/activity/education-jordan>.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

education level, students at UNRWA schools in Jordan consistently outperform students enrolled in Jordanian public schools in standardized examinations and their literacy rates are considerably higher than that of the Arab world as a whole.¹¹⁸

Even considering the repeated changes in Jordanian policy toward Palestinian refugees outlined in chapter three, in regards to education and otherwise, there have been several instances of cooperation between Jordanian authorities and UNRWA's education program in the past. In 1970, the Jordanian Ministry of Education collaborated with the UNRWA/UNESCO Institute of Education to adopt part of its in-service teacher training techniques for use in Jordanian public schools, hinting at the superiority of UNRWA's education regime at the time.¹¹⁹ The Agency offered its training materials—developed by the Institute of Education—to the Jordanian government's team and provided them with basic training on UNRWA's teacher-training system at the Institute.

Another instance of cooperation occurred a decade later in 1988 when the Jordanian government extended compulsory education from nine to ten years and began requiring that teachers possess a university degree in order to obtain a teaching license.¹²⁰ The UNRWA Commissioner-General expressed concern to the Jordanian authorities that the Agency would not be able to afford the increase in expenditure that these developments would require. However, in the Commissioner-General's annual report one

¹¹⁸ James G. Lindsay, "Fixing UNRWA: Repairing the UN's Troubled System of Aid to Palestinian Refugees," *Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, no. 91 (January 2009), <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/fixing-unrwa-repairing-uns-troubled-system-aid-palestinian-refugees>.

¹¹⁹ J.S. Rennie, "Report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East: 1 July 1970-30 June 1971," Annual (United Nations Relief and Works Agency, September 11, 1971), United Nations Digital Library.

¹²⁰ Giorgio Giacomelli, "Report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East: 1 July 1988-30 June 1989," Annual, Official Records. Supplement (New York: UN, 1989: United Nations Relief and Works Agency, October 2, 1989), United Nations Digital Library.

year later, he reported that “UNRWA received cooperation from the GoJ and was allowed until 1992/93 to implement the reforms” and that teachers would have until 1997 to upgrade their qualifications.¹²¹ These occurrences represent only two reported instances of cooperation between UNRWA and the Jordanian Ministry of Education, while examples of implicit collaboration between the two are plenty.

Across all of its areas of operation, the UNRWA education program utilizes host governments’ curricula in its schools.¹²² As one of UNRWA’s primary aims is to facilitate Palestinian refugees’ integration into their host countries, it follows that following host governments’ curricula would ease its students’ transition into government schools.¹²³ In Jordan specifically, former UNRWA Commissioner-General Karen AbuZayd admitted in 2008 that UNRWA was seeing its students—those with Jordanian citizenship, that is—withdraw in order to attend Jordanian public schools.¹²⁴ She attributed the trend to the better funding and enhanced resources present in government schools—before the influx of Syrian refugees into Jordan, only 7% of Jordanian public schools were double-shifted and they boasted computer literacy programming and English-language instruction.

While the UNRWA education program’s accomplishments are remarkable on their own, the Agency’s coation with the Jordanian Ministry of Education illustrates its dedication to the individual development of Palestinian refugee youth in Jordan. If one of

¹²¹ Ilter Türkmen, “Report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East: 1 July 1990-30 June 1991” (United Nations Relief and Works Agency, September 26, 1991), United Nations Digital Library.

¹²² Ronald Sultana, “Palestinian Refugee Children and Education: Challenges for UNRWA,” *World Studies in Education* 8, no. 2 (2007): 12.

¹²³ James G. Lindsay, “Fixing UNRWA: Repairing the UN’s Troubled System of Aid to Palestinian Refugees,” *Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, no. 91 (January 2009), <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/fixing-unrwa-repairing-uns-troubled-system-aid-palestinian-refugees>.

¹²⁴ American University of Beirut, “Challenges of Palestinian Refugee Camps - Karen AbuZayd,” Video Recording (Beirut, Lebanon, 2008), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kZFW3kb_8l8&feature=PlayList&p=426A6D9D78D7EC02&index=3.

the Agency's goals is to assist in refugees' integration into Jordanian society, preparing its students to transition into Jordanian public schools by utilizing their curricula and textbooks stands as an effort toward that end.

4.4 Response to Political Developments

The breadth of services that UNRWA provides essentially renders it a quasi-state entity, but due to its status as a “non-territorial administration,” it is consistently forced to achieve its aims through mediation with states and the populations it serves.¹²⁵ It follows that an ongoing struggle for UNRWA is to address the constantly changing needs and expectations of its stakeholders while remaining a nonpolitical institution. That being said, both UNRWA's international character and its ability to manipulate its ambiguous mandate have served the Agency in this endeavor.

Since its creation, top leadership positions in UNRWA have been filled primarily by non-Palestinians, usually of North American or European origin. This fact has led some to attempt to portray the Agency as something of a colonial administration.¹²⁶ However, as can be seen in the case of UNRWA Jordan specifically, the Agency's international character has helped to effectively insulate the essential services it provides from the undue influence of duelling and usually unstable Palestinian factions and the whims of host governments. In Jordan, UNRWA helped the Palestinian population to withstand King Hussein's severance of ties with the West Bank, the volatile political atmosphere resulting from the rise of Hamas and Black September, the economic

¹²⁵ Riccardo Bocco, “UNRWA and the Palestinian Refugees: A History within History,” *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 28, no. 2–3 (March 26, 2010): 229–52, <https://doi.org/10.1093/rsq/hdq001>.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

downturn following the Gulf War, and various instances of rising ethnic tensions and Transjordanian nationalism without any significant disruptions in service provision.

Even as recently as 2018, UNRWA's prowess in adaptation was evidenced when the administration of US President Donald Trump opted to withdraw all funding to the Agency.¹²⁷ Despite this obstacle, the Commissioner-General reported that:

“through the generosity of a number of Member States, coupled with emergency-intervention reductions and internal cost-saving measures that collectively avoided interruptions in the provision of critical assistance, the Agency was able to overcome the funding shortfall to keep services operational throughout the year.”¹²⁸

This instance serves as yet another example of the importance of flexibility, resourcefulness, and swift action to UNRWA's efficacy. It is also noteworthy that the same Commissioner-General report cites that “the UNRWA education system is becoming increasingly efficient, with decreasing student dropout rates despite a larger number of students in each class” despite the circumstances.¹²⁹ Both of the aforementioned factors—UNRWA's international character and flexible response to political developments—are and have been crucial to the Agency's ongoing operations despite being formally “temporary” and its continued ability to provide development to Palestinian refugees through education. While political factors and the infeasibility of

¹²⁷ Peter Beaumont and Oliver Holmes, “US Confirms End to Funding for UN Palestinian Refugees,” *The Guardian*, August 31, 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/aug/31/trump-to-cut-all-us-funding-for-uns-main-palestinian-refugee-programme>.

¹²⁸ Pierre Krähenbühl, “Report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East: 1 January-31 December 2018” (United Nations Relief and Works Agency, August 23, 2019).

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

works programs led to the rise of education as UNRWA's primary program, the Agency's ability to utilize its precarious position to adapt to changing circumstances is what has allowed it to persist throughout the decades.

CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS

5.1 Initial Hypothesis

This thesis initially proposed that UNRWA's transition from relief to development through education provision in Jordan was primarily caused by the length of time Palestinian refugees have resided in Jordan. The premise behind this argument was that the longer the length of time a refugee population spends in a host country, the more likely it is that the population will demand more educational resources from the state. Similarly, as a refugee issue in a host country becomes more protracted, host governments and international organizations alike are more likely to improve and streamline their delivery methods in supplying education to refugee populations through enhanced funding mechanisms and more sophisticated policies.

The data presented in chapters three and four seem to support this hypothesis, while also elucidating the underlying causes of this relationship in the case of Jordan specifically. At the most basic level, the persistence of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the Israeli regime's refusal to allow the repatriation of Palestinian refugees, as well as the significant growth in the refugee population since 1948, have necessitated the renewal of UNRWA's mandate and an expansion in its operational capacity. With a resolution to the Palestinian refugee issue, UNRWA would eventually be dissolved. That being said, other factors have played a role in the rise of education specifically as UNRWA's hallmark program aimed at development.

In Jordan specifically, the “demand side” of the growth in UNRWA’s education program was initially driven by political opposition to the Agency’s early plans to implement works programs in Arab host states. Arab host states and Palestinians alike largely felt that this type of development would effectively lead to their resettlement and jeopardize refugees’ repatriation of Palestine. Several reports by UNRWA Directors refer to this opposition and by 1960, UNRWA Director John Davis explicitly recommends an increased focus on education and vocational training as a means to achieve socio-economic development amongst Palestinian refugees. Also contributing to “right of return” discourse in Jordan is anxiety over the “Jordan option,” or the de facto establishment of a Palestinian homeland in Jordan. While Jordanian leadership appears intent on promoting unity amongst Palestinians and Transjordanians, its dedication to preserving Palestinians’ right to return to Palestine through their designation as “refugee-citizens” has continued long past UNRWA’s decision to scrap its works programs.

By the end of the 1950s, the rampant opposition coupled with the expense and infeasibility of implementing large-scale work programs, particularly in Jordan, resulted in a shift in UNRWA’s priorities on the “supply side.” Instead of pushing employment as a pathway to development, the Agency channeled its expenditures into education and vocational training. The expansion of the education program and UNRWA’s partnership with UNESCO to develop educational materials and teacher-training programs further streamlined UNRWA’s provision of education.¹³⁰ The fact that education now comprises at least 60% of UNRWA’s total budget also testifies to this increase in supply and

¹³⁰ George Dickerson, “Education for the Palestine Refugees: The UNRWA/UNESCO Programme,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 3, no. 3 (Spring 1974): 122, <http://www.jstor.com/stable/2535897>.

UNRWA students' impressive performance on standardized examinations speaks to the enhanced quality of the services provided.

This new strategy of "individual rehabilitation" garnered support from refugee communities, host governments, and Western stakeholders. This fact points to another critical aspect of the UNRWA's education program's permeance—the Agency's status as a formally temporary entity reliant on voluntary donations to continue its operations has required its leadership to remain, for the most part, nonpolitical and coalesce to the desires of its stakeholders. This factor does not necessarily contribute to the "supply and demand" mechanism written into this thesis' initial hypothesis, so it and other findings related to this case will be further explored in the following section.

5.2 Other Findings Related to Jordan

UNRWA's Organizational Characteristics

UNRWA's original mandate clearly established it as a temporary relief and works agency to be voluntarily funded by the international community until its services were no longer needed. However, the continuation of the conflict in Palestine and refusal on the part of Palestinian refugees and host governments alike to abandon refugee status and fully integrate Palestinians into their host societies has necessitated the continual renewal of UNRWA's mandate and expansion of its operations. Despite this and unlike sister agencies like the UNHCR, UNRWA still does not have a dependable funding scheme or permanent status under the United Nations and thus relies on the benevolence of the international community for funding, while also being mandated to serve the best interests of displaced Palestinians. The Trump administration's withdrawal of funding for

UNRWA in 2018 clearly illustrates both the importance of pleasing donor states in order to maintain funding as well as the necessity of marketing the Agency's mission and making appeals to other states in the wake of a funding loss. Were it not for the fact that UNRWA's precarious position in the international arena has forced its leadership to adapt to rapidly changing conditions throughout its entire existence, such obstacles could have resulted in catastrophe at several points in the Agency's history, especially in Jordan.

Following from this point about UNRWA's organizational character is the importance of its international nature. While the Agency fills a state-like, bureaucratic role in the lives of many Palestinians, it is a transnational entity that is not staffed by local Palestinians at its highest levels. Though this arrangement has exposed the Agency to criticism in the past—UNRWA being headed by a primarily foreign leadership while serving a population that has been vulnerable to Western manipulation can undoubtedly be seen as problematic—it has also helped to insulate the Agency's service provision from the volatility of regional politics and domestic strife.

In Jordan specifically, UNRWA's relative stability and political neutrality allowed the Palestinian population to withstand King Hussein's severance of ties with the West Bank, the volatile political atmosphere resulting from the rise of Hamas and Black September, the economic downturn following the Gulf War, and various instances of rising ethnic tensions and Transjordanian nationalism without any significant disruptions in service provision. If UNRWA were to be completely or predominantly staffed at the highest levels by local Palestinians, it is entirely possible that rapid political developments in its areas of operation would have led to existential threats to the Agency's operations and/or funding.

This contention harkens back to previous points about the nature of UNRWA's funding scheme—the constant balancing act that UNRWA's leadership must perform between the demands of international donors, host governments, and Palestinian beneficiaries protects both the financial support the Agency requires to operate and the purity of its mission to aid Palestinians, without being beholden to Palestinian factions that could threaten its stability. As was made clear by the internal instability wrought by the pillage of Black September in Jordan, UNRWA being a relief and works agency rather than one mandated to advocate for a particular political agenda helps it to act as a barrier between its service provision (benefiting Palestinians at a very basic level) and the violence that sometimes results from more political and occasionally violent efforts at Palestinian liberation (which also often result in the immediate need for relief). In this way, UNRWA being a transnational organization rather than one based in just one Arab host country also ensures that service provision can continue despite the internal politics in any one of its five areas of operation.

Jordan's Reputation as a "Refugee Rentier State"

While there are undeniably many factors contributing to Jordan's policy toward Palestinian refugees—namely its historical connection to the West Bank and agreement to several international and multilateral conventions related to human rights—these obligations are practically “soft” and do not imply any concrete incentive for compliance. This being the case, Jordan's relatively generous treatment of Palestinians (especially in the early years of their residence in Jordan) and cooperation with UNRWA is likely connected to Jordan's reliance on foreign aid, which is often tied to its status as the

second largest refugee-hosting state in the world. Especially since the onset of the Syrian refugee crisis, Jordan has garnered a reputation as a “refugee rentier state,” meaning that it has an incentive to bolster its condition as a benevolent state with a developing economy hosting a large population of highly vulnerable refugees in order to receive foreign aid packages to maintain their encampments and avoid economic collapse under the financial burden of such an influx.

Changes in Jordan’s border policy in the early days of the Syrian refugee crisis illustrate this tendency—forcing refugee status onto migrants and herding them into overcrowded encampments increased the visibility of the crisis and strengthened calls for more aid to support them. While these developments affected Syrians and PRS more so than the already established Palestinian population, they also harken back to the Jordanian government’s continued insistence that Palestinian-Jordanians are still refugees, despite many of them having Jordanian citizenship. Maintaining that Palestinians who were born in Jordan and may have never even visited Palestine are still refugees contributes to Jordan’s total refugee count and helps to strengthen the government’s appeals for more aid. While this aid is definitely necessary given the size and scope of the refugee situation in Jordan, it bears implications for the treatment of refugees within its territory regardless. By cooperating with UNRWA in its education program and by taking over the maintenance of Agency-administered refugee camps, Jordan can rely on the Agency to help ease the burden of hosting refugees while also using their status to shore up calls for the international aid that helps to maintain its economy.¹³¹

¹³¹ Riccardo Bocco and Jalal Al Hussein, “The Status of the Palestinian Refugees in the Near East: The Right of Return and UNRWA in Perspective,” *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 28, no. 2–3 (2010): 260–85, <https://doi.org/10.1093/rsq/hdp036>.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

This thesis has sought to answer the question: *Why have UNRWA's organizational priorities shifted from providing relief to providing development through education in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan?* By way of an investigation of various factors influencing international, Jordanian, and UNRWA organizational policy toward Palestinian refugee education, several connections have been made between the three. Although this project has been completed under a time constraint and with a lack of field research or input from those working under the circumstances described in previous chapters, the relationship between the permeance of education as UNRWA's method of providing development and the variables described in the previous chapter is clear, as well as the need for further research on this issue and those related to it.

6.1 Overview of Findings

There are many provisions made for refugees in international law; however, Palestinians are not as well protected by these conventions as are other refugee populations and, regardless, the obligations outlined in these agreements are not legally binding upon host states, even if they are party to them. For this reason, UNRWA's mandate and provision of services serves to partially fill the protection gap left by international law and the refugees' ineligibility for UNHCR protection.

This thesis initially hypothesized that the transition from relief to development through the provision of education to refugees generally is caused by the length of displacement—as refugees become more established in their host countries, they will begin to “demand” more in the way of educational services, and the relevant entities will, in response, “supply” more services as more funding is acquired from the international community and delivery strategies are streamlined. While the case of Jordan and the Palestinian refugees is similar in many ways to other refugee crises—Jordan is a developing nation located next to the refugees’ country of origin, and Palestinians have been forcibly displaced there for a long period of time—the existence of UNRWA as a state-like, transnational entity providing for the needs of the Palestinian refugee population renders this case somewhat unique. However, there is still much to be learned from this case as UNRWA, and in particular its education program, has succeeded in aiding the development of the population it serves due to both its own organizational structure and the unique environment in Jordan.

The “supply and demand” mechanism for development through education does exist in this case, though the unique aspects of the Palestinian refugee issue in Jordan render the causes behind it unique as well. Reintegration, resettlement, and repatriation are widely accepted as the three most sustainable solutions for refugee populations, but the refusal of the Israeli government to allow Palestinians to return to their homes after the Arab-Israeli Wars and opposition on the part of Arab host governments and Palestinian refugees to permanent resettlement also rendered UNRWA’s originally intended development projects infeasible. Maintaining refugee identity and the Palestinian “right of return” forced UNRWA to channel its efforts into education as a

means of development, rather than its planned works projects. Palestinian refugees supported this effort at rehabilitation on the “demand side,” and donor countries aimed at reintegration as well as UNRWA’s efforts at expanding its education program enhanced education provision on the “supply side.”

There are also findings relating to this case specifically. As mentioned, UNRWA’s existence is entirely unique to the Palestinian refugee issue and applies to five areas of operation in the region, not just Jordan. UNRWA is formally temporary, nonpolitical, and internationally staffed. These factors—including the Agency’s lack of a dependable funding source—have forced UNRWA to develop an adaptable character that can balance the demands of all of its stakeholders. Particularly in the case of Jordan, UNRWA’s stability and insulation from the volatility of regional and domestic policies have allowed the Agency and its provision of services to persist.

Finally, Jordan is a somewhat unique host state for its reliance on international aid in hosting its massive refugee population and maintaining its economy. As was argued in the previous chapter, the Jordanian government’s cooperation with UNRWA and relatively kind treatment of Palestinians can be partially attributed to UNRWA shouldering some of the burden of aiding Palestinian refugees while also allowing Jordan to include the refugees—many of them full citizens—in their appeals for foreign aid. In this way, the elusive “right of return” continues to shape the Jordanian agenda, especially as insisting that Palestinian-Jordanians are still refugees is politically and economically expedient.

6.2 Limitations & Opportunities for Future Research

There are certainly many ways in which this thesis and its conclusions can be improved and built upon. This project was completed under a time constraint, so a longer and deeper investigation into this specific research question would surely yield more and more nuanced findings. There are also several minor findings worthy of expansion and further research. For one, while people of Palestinian origin living in Jordan are referred to as “refugees” in this thesis for the sake of brevity, there is much disagreement among scholars and politicians as to whether Palestinian-Jordanians and their descendents are still eligible for the title. In regards to Palestinians who hold Jordanian citizenship in particular, their citizenship rights can be dubbed “resettlement,” under the 1951 Refugee Convention and the UNHCR. However, as Palestinians are not protected by the convention or the UNHCR, their “legal” status is unclear. The relationship between this issue and UNRWA’s operations in Jordan specifically has not been thoroughly explored in scholarship at this time.

Following from the issue of “hereditary” refugee status for Palestinians, the field of refugee and forced migration studies in general would benefit from a more thorough investigation of the definition of a “refugee” in scholarship. The definition included in the 1951 Convention is narrow and thus not strictly applied by the UNHCR, as evidenced by its designation of Venezuelans fleeing economic fallout as refugees. As more groups are becoming displaced due to economic degradation, climate change, famine, and general violence in their countries of origin, the current definition’s requirement of a “well founded fear of persecution” does not reflect the conditions faced by those most often referred to as “refugees.” While these groups are still promised protection by the

UNHCR, fitting the definition written into international law is crucial to displaced populations attaining legal protections in host countries, and thus merits further study.

6.3 In Conclusion

Scholar and expert on UNRWA Riccardo Bocco has observed that UNRWA has often been referred to as the “blue state”—due largely to its provision of state-like services and role in maintaining Palestinian national identity in diaspora.¹³² While the Agency is undoubtedly state-like, it also relies on the authority of actual states in order to function. Education is normally the responsibility of states toward their citizenry, but UNRWA has managed to fill that role for displaced Palestinians transnationally, and despite countless obstacles. In Jordan, UNRWA’s role as a barrier between a volatile political realm and necessary services is critical to the most vulnerable of the Palestinian population in the country, and the Agency’s education program is evidence of that.

¹³² Riccardo Bocco, “UNRWA and the Palestinian Refugees: A History within History,” *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 28, no. 2–3 (March 26, 2010): 229–52, <https://doi.org/10.1093/rsq/hdq001>.

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