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Making Your Own Weather: Self-reliance and Working for Resettlement Among Sudanese Refugee Men in Amman, Jordan

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, refugee response in Jordan has centred on self-reliance, aiming to support individuals in displacement and to contain further movement. However, non-Syrian refugees have been largely overlooked. This article explores the relationship between self-reliance and resettlement for Sudanese refugee men in Amman. Drawing on conceptualizations of work beyond paid labour, I show how refugees have pursued resettlement through relational, emotional, physical, and administrative work. I contribute to understandings of how forced migrants work towards long-term solutions to displacement and add to the limited literature on Sudanese displacement in Jordan.

KEYWORDS
work; refugees; resettlement; Jordan; Sudanese

RÉSUMÉ

Ces dernières années, la réponse aux réfugiés en Jordanie s'est concentrée sur l'autonomie, visant à soutenir les personnes déplacées et à limiter les mouvements futurs. Cependant, les réfugiés non syriens ont été considérablement négligés. Cet article explore la relation entre l'autonomie et la réinstallation chez les hommes réfugiés soudanais à Amman. En m'appuyant sur des conceptualisations du travail allant au-delà du travail rémunéré, je montre comment les réfugiés ont mené à bien leur réinstallation par le biais d'un travail relationnel, émotionnel, physique et administratif. Je contribue à la compréhension de la manière dont les migrants forcés cherchent des solutions à long terme au déplacement et contribue à la littérature limitée sur le déplacement des Soudanais en Jordanie.

INTRODUCTION

People face many troubles, but you must deal with it. You must try to devote yourself to getting better. Don't stay like this. You must do something to help yourself, to be comfortable, to be better, to be happy, to make yourself. … You are your own weather. (Samir, March 2018)

For too many refugees, the three recognized durable solutions to forced displacement—voluntary return, resettlement to a third country, and local integration—are out of reach. Protracted displacement has become the norm in a global context where many conflicts and states of insecurity persist for years, if not decades (United Nations, 2018), and amid increasing securitization of asylum and migration in the West and elsewhere (Zetter & Long, 2012). In Jordan, where local integration is precluded and return unlikely in the near future, resettlement is the primary route to accessing a durable solution and the subject of frequent

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discussion and determined activity among refugees.[1]

As apparent in Samir's words that open this article, refugees themselves are active in seeking to resolve the problems they confront and in pursuing solutions (Bradley et al., 2019; Crisp, 2016; Harrell-Bond, 1986; Hyndman, 2000; Tete, 2012). Recognizing these capacities, "self-reliance"—the "ability of individuals, households or communities to meet their essential needs and enjoy their human rights in a sustainable manner and to live with dignity" (UNHCR, 2017, p. 3)—has become a cornerstone of the response to forced displacement and is embedded in recent global frameworks, including the **Global Compact for Refugees** (Skran & Easton-Calabria, 2020; United Nations, 2018).

UNHCR argues that "self-reliant refugees are more likely to achieve durable solutions" (2005, p. iv). In Jordan, access to education and employment for refugees are flagship policies, intended to enhance the self-reliance of refugees and the host community, reduce movement to Europe and other third countries, and, eventually, promote sustainable return (Anholt & Sinatti, 2020; Morris, 2020; UNHCR, 2017). However, as yet, little attention has been given to the link between self-reliance and third-country resettlement, aside from the expectation that self-reliance reduces the impetus for further movement. In this article, I question this relationship. I draw on conceptualizations of work beyond paid labour to understand the different forms of work in which Sudanese refugee men in Jordan engage to "make progress" towards resettlement. With limited access to humanitarian aid, yet subjected to the same rhetoric of self-reliance, Sudanese men engage in activities such as education, skill development, paid work, and collective support to build their resettlement cases.

Further, the article considers the implications of Sudanese refugee men's long-term invisibility within the humanitarian response in Jordan, an important preoccupation among the men to whom I spoke. In Lebanon, the workings of the international humanitarian system have largely resulted in the invisibilization of non-Syrian, and particularly Sudanese, refugees (Janmyr, 2021); similar dynamics can be observed in the response in Jordan (Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development [ARDD]—Legal Aid, 2015; Baslan, 2015; Baslan & Leghtas, 2018; Davis et al., 2016; Johnston et al., 2019; Mennonite Central Committee [MCC], 2017). This article, therefore, contributes to raising awareness of the specific experiences of this under-researched (Omata, 2019) group (however, see ARDD—Legal Aid, 2015; Baslan et al., 2017; Davis et al., 2016; Johnston et al., 2019; MCC, 2017; Mixed Migration Platform [MMP], 2017a,b; Saligari, 2019), responding to Janmyr's (2021) call to pay attention to specific experiences of displacement and to avoid the catch-all category of "non-Syrian." Similarly, the emotional dimensions of male experiences of forced displacement have thus far received limited attention (Rung et al., 2023; Turner, 2019). My attention to the practices of Sudanese men contributes to understandings of the impact of race and gender on refugees' experiences of displacement and durable solutions. However, this analysis is not the primary objective of this article.

I first briefly present the methodology and then detail the Sudanese men's perspectives on durable solutions. In the third section, I develop a multidimensional understanding of unpaid work as a framework for inter-

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[1] For the purposes of this paper, I focus on the durable solutions regime as implemented through UNHCR. I therefore do not consider the potential solutions for Palestinian refugees in Jordan. However, the experience of hosting Palestinian refugees has played a considerable role in shaping subsequent responses to refugees in Jordan (Lenner, 2020).

preting the men's efforts towards resettlement. Next, I show that these forms of work were present in different domains of the men's lives, and the consequences for their futures and their lives in displacement. Yet, the men's situation remains precarious and fragile. In concluding, I argue that current approaches to self-reliance inadequately capture the intricate relationships between refugees' work and long-term solutions. In contrast to expectations that self-reliance reduces the impetus for further movement, self-reliance has largely not prompted a lower interest in resettlement for Sudanese refugee men in Amman. For a small number of refugees, access to self-reliance programs has supported their efforts to resettle or find a complementary pathway, but for the majority, the limited number of resettlement places available means that this avenue remains out of reach. For those who remain, self-reliance approaches fail refugees both now—when they cannot assure well-being for all in a context of limited rights and manifold exclusions—and in supporting refugees towards their desired futures.

METHODOLOGY

This article stems from doctoral fieldwork conducted in Amman, Jordan, between September 2017 and October 2018 on household-level hosting (accommodation sharing)[2] among refugees living in protracted displacement in Amman. The aim was to understand the interaction between refugees' everyday acts of assistance for one another and the international humanitarian system. In the first phase of the research, I con-

ducted semi-structured interviews with 37 refugees of different nationalities (Iraqi, Somali, Sudanese, and Syrian) to produce a snapshot of types of hosting arrangements. This was followed by a second phase of more in-depth work on one type (group sharing) through multiple semi-structured interviews and observation with nine Sudanese men living in six separate hosting arrangements in spring and autumn 2018.

The prominence of durable solutions and, in particular, resettlement in the men's daily lives was evident, and our conversations frequently turned to strategies and concerns about the future. Here, I draw on these discussions to analyze how these men engaged with their short-term needs and long-term futures. The men typically referred to third-country resettlement through UN-HCR/the International Organization for Migration and complementary pathways (such as educational scholarships in third countries) as "travel" and rarely differentiated between different pathways in obtaining travel. In this article, I use the term **resettled** as an umbrella term for both types of supported movement to a third country. At the time of writing, some of the men have been resettled, while others remain in Jordan. All the men are referred to by pseudonyms, and I have removed identifying information from the quotes shared here. Although I had prepared to conduct interviews in Arabic, interviews and conversations with Sudanese men were conducted in English at the preference of the men, except for one participant. All the quotes that appear in this article were originally communicated in English.

SUDANESE REFUGEE MEN AND DURABLE SOLUTIONS IN JORDAN

Jordan hosts one of the largest refugee populations per capita in the world, with over 727,725 people registered with UNHCR

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[2] I refer to the practice of accommodation sharing among the men as **household-level hosting**, defined as refugees sharing their accommodation with other refugees—people with whom they would not, in non-conflict or non-displacement settings, live—in an interdependent arrangement (Jordan, 2020, 2022). Though accommodation sharing is common among many different groups, it is recognized as being particularly prevalent among Sudanese men in Amman (Baslan et al., 2017).

(2023a, 2023b), including approximately 76,386 non-Syrian and non-Palestinian refugees from 38 countries (down from 56 countries in recent years) (UNHCR, 2023a; UNHCR Jordan, personal communication, June 2023; United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2022). There are 5,003 Sudanese refugees registered with UNHCR in Jordan (UNHCR, 2023a), a slight decrease from previous years.[3] Awareness of the situation of Sudanese refugees in Jordan (alongside other non-Syrian groups) and response to their needs has grown. However, Sudanese refugees in Jordan remain a minority refugee group in a context where the refugee response is stratified based on nationality and primarily oriented towards the numerically dominant Syrian population (Davis et al., 2016). Adam, a Sudanese man in his early thirties, described his life in Amman:

> For me, to be a refugee is difficult. Sometimes I think that my life is stuck now, and it is a mystery. And it's bad, because there is no future, and I don't know what is going to happen after 5 or 10 years. So, for me, safety is the first thing. I need to be in safety, and I need to learn, and I need to work, and I need to create a family. And all of this, it is difficult.

As he explained, the predicament of Sudanese refugees has largely been obscured from humanitarian view. This has resulted in a situation in which the Sudanese men had limited access to humanitarian assistance, restricted options for formal employment,

and few routes for further movement, with knock-on effects on how they maintain themselves in displacement and build plans for the future.

For Sudanese men in Jordan, return is not possible, and local integration is neither feasible nor desirable. Sudanese refugees form a visibly distinct racialized minority, with few opportunities for the open sharing of resources and interaction with the local population that could provide scope for de facto integration (Davis et al., 2016; Harrell-Bond, 1986; Johnston et al., 2019; Kibreab, 1989). In part due to continued racial discrimination, harassment, and exclusion, the men experience a profound marginalization from the wider Jordanian society and see limited options for local integration or a sense of home (Jordan, 2023). This leaves resettlement as the primary ambition. This was poignantly summed up by Ali:

> The kind of life here, there's just a small chance to have your life. You don't feel like you are living as people live. You feel something like your dream is over, it died … but also you have the time to feel hopeful. Time drags for you. That's why you hope. If you get resettlement to the US or the UK, Canada, or Australia, that is the time, that is the countries where you have a chance. You can learn if you want to, you can do all of your dreams.

Ali's words show how his dreams for the future were intimately tied up with his aspirations to be resettled. Resettlement from Jordan is higher than the global average; however, the total number of Sudanese refugees resettled each year remains low, averaging 109 per year (2011–2021) (UNHCR, 2021). This dropped in correlation with Donald Trump's so-called Muslim ban and the global restrictions on travel in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

All of the Sudanese men I worked with, except for one, had been in Jordan for at least five years at the time of our interviews.

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[3]The Jordanian government is non-signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention, and recognition processes are conducted by UNHCR under the auspices of a Memorandum of Understanding. At the time of research (2017–2018), recognition rates for Sudanese refugees were near universal (MCC, 2017). During this time, the number of Sudanese refugees registered with UNHCR rose from 4,036 to 6,270. At this time, the majority of the Sudanese population (70.8%) was male (Johnston et al., 2019; UNHCR, email communication, September 2018). However, there have at times been long delays in the refugee status determination process. In 2019 the government of Jordan effectively requested UNHCR to stop registering non-Syrian refugees (Human Rights Watch, 2020). Therefore, numbers may not fully represent the number of Sudanese nationals in Jordan in need of protection.

The hope for a long-term solution—and more specifically resettlement—had shaped their lives in displacement. They reported feeling abandoned, mistrusted, frustrated, and marginalized. In response, they engaged in activities that they expected would improve their chances to go abroad, as well as their "success" once they did travel, in addition to providing for their current life in Jordan.

SELF-RELIANCE AND WORKING FOR LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS

With the signing of the Jordan Compact in 2016, Jordan has become a model for how policies of self-reliance can be enacted. The Jordan Compact committed Jordan to expanding access to work permits for Syrian refugees, accompanied by financial support and preferential trade agreements between the European Union and the Government of Jordan (Government of Jordan, 2016). There was enthusiastic response to the launch of the compact, but others have highlighted its shortcomings (Barbelet et al., 2018; Gordon, 2021; Lenner & Turner, 2019; Morris, 2020). As with self-reliance generally, its prominence arguably reflects broader neoliberal trends, efforts to contain refugees close to places of origin, and financial and political interests, rather than its success in ensuring those living in protracted displacement can lead dignified and safe lives (Chimni, 2004; Easton-Calabria, 2020; Easton-Calabria & Omata, 2018; Fakhoury & Stel, 2022; Kelberer, 2017; Seeberg, 2020). Concerning durable solutions in particular, the future horizons of such policies are unclear in a context where local integration is legally precluded, and further attention to the "afterlife of such 'solutions'" is required (Fakhoury & Stel, 2022, p. 1025).

It should go without saying that refugees should be able to access quality ed-ucation and decent employment, and to live independently from external humanitarian assistance. However, the emphasis on self-reliance raises fundamental questions as to where the onus for "achieving" a durable solution lies and transforms the relationship between refugees and the state into an economic rather than political relationship (Bardelli, 2018). In practice, self-reliance has proven ill defined, hard to measure, and difficult to enact within the short time frames and scope of humanitarian programs (Crawford et al., 2015; Leeson et al., 2020).

Self-reliance-oriented programming typically focuses on refugees' income generation and livelihoods, alongside support to engage in such activities, such as education and vocational training and support to understand rights and access administrative and legal procedures (Skran & Easton-Calabria, 2020; UNHCR, 2017). However, in this article I look beyond economic labour to understand work as the deliberate actions that take time and effort, using the means and tools available (Sévigny, 2012). I distinguish between **labour**—activities conducted in exchange for compensation (monetary, material, or services), typically outside the domestic sphere—and **work**—practices that sustain and reproduce life (Vogel, 2000). This definition of work extends my attention to include the informal, mundane, and everyday acts in which refugees engage and refers to a wider range of intentions than usually captured by "coping strategies" (Sévigny, 2012). This attention to the everyday follows others who have shown the "considerable effort, labor and investment" practised in everyday life (Appadurai, 2015, p. xiii). A focus on the everyday also enables us to see the extent to which humanitarian and migration policies have become embedded within people's quotidian lives, intimately shaping routines and relationships, alongside the

political potential of the everyday as a site of contestation and creation of these same policies (Bayat, 2013).

Rung and colleagues (2023) refer to the "investment of time and effort that people put into physically moving from one nation-state to another" as "mobility work" (p. 254). They give a non-exhaustive list of examples such as finding safe (or less dangerous) routes, obtaining shelter, and meeting entry requirements (paperwork, health status, education), practices that are interconnected with refugees' "resettlement work … to rebuild their lives, and develop a sense of home and belonging in a new society" (p. 254). Their chapter highlights the everyday and embodied material and affective work that migrants do to move and build their lives. Here, I further build on this approach, identifying three non-economic dimensions of work within the tasks listed: relational and emotional work, physical work, and administrative/informational work.

Relational and Emotional Work

The insufficiencies of narrowly defined economic interpretations of self-reliance, and the need to pay attention to the role of social relationships in supporting refugees, have already been convincingly argued (Betts et al., 2020; Pascucci, 2017; Skran & Easton-Calabria, 2020). Somewhat similarly, social networks are valuable in facilitating secondary movement (Kvittingen et al., 2019), and Jansen (2008) shows the importance of relations with comrades and gatekeepers in becoming eligible for resettlement. Beyond social networks, here I pay attention to the relational work that goes into creating and maintaining these relationships. Locher & Watts (2008, p. 78) define **relational work** as "the work people invest in negotiating their relationships in interaction." This covers the creation, maintenance, and reproduction

of the range of interpersonal relationships, including in new contexts such as displacement (Gowayed, 2019). Relational work also includes emotional work to create, claim, maintain, and order social relations, shaping the individual and the collective (Ahmed, 2014). Emotional work among forced migrants can be seen in the navigation of uncertainty about the future, waiting, and powerlessness (Rung et al., 2023); in the care work of welcome (Gill, 2018; Pascucci, 2018); and in the emergence of collective action and protest against marginalization (Monforte, 2021).

Physical Work

Physical work relates to activities that engage and exert the physical body. It is well established that refugees often engage in hard and difficult labour (Sahin Mencutek & Nashwan, 2020). We can also consider the physical work of protest and of waiting, as discussed later in this paper. Although in this article I mainly pay attention to physical work outside of the house, it should also be recognized that much domestic and childcare work involves intense physical work.

Administrative Work

Much work has analyzed the "mysterious" (Adam) temporalities of resettlement processes experienced by refugees, and the impenetrability of the system (Clark-Kazak & Thomson, 2019; El-Shaarawi, 2015; Gale, 2008; Jansen, 2008; Ozkul & Jarrous, 2021; Sévigny, 2012). I use the concept of administrative or informational work to name efforts to understand these processes. Administrative/informational work in a refugee context can therefore be understood as the effort required to understand and complete the paperwork required to access registration, documentation, and assistance. This includes informational work through which

refugees understand these requirements and disentangle them from rumour and hearsay (Ozkul & Jarrous, 2021), and efforts to materialize and evidence eligibility, as well as to document cases for resettlement (Thomson, 2018).

In the following sections, I trace these forms of work through the men's everyday actions and demonstrate how their relational, emotional, physical, and administrative work operates to meet their needs in displacement and, simultaneously, how they leverage this work for their futures.

WORK FOR LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS

Routes to Solutions

Not all of the men who participated in my research came to Jordan with the express intention of obtaining resettlement, but for some it was a key motivation that informed their decisions. For the majority I spoke to, seeking protection (even if temporary) in Jordan was a third or fourth preference, with other countries including Egypt, Libya, and Chad mentioned. However, onward travel was not the sole factor influencing their decision. The men expressed their priorities as finding a place of safety in which they could continue education and work, decisions also guided by the availability of visas, dangers associated with different routes, and knowledge about the availability of UNHCR's presence and protection. The work of navigating displacement towards future resettlement, therefore, may begin before arrival in the host country and require seeking out information and evaluating different options, and even multiple attempts at following a route to safety, often in immense physical danger. However, in this paper, I primarily focus on work engaged in after arrival in Jordan.

Claiming Recognition and the Right to Resettlement

For Sudanese refugees, status determination and resettlement procedures were further prolonged by the arduous waiting times and frequent cancellations of refugee status determination interviews. Many of the men reported needing to go to the UNHCR offices in Amman regularly (even daily) to, for example, "move my files, to get me outside" (Ibrahim). In part, they perceived this to be due to limited awareness and resources for the Sudanese refugee population in Jordan from UNHCR, international agencies, and the Jordanian government (Davis et al., 2016). In response, the Sudanese refugee population has engaged in considerable work to raise awareness of the situation and needs of Sudanese refugees, claim their status and rights as refugees, and advocate for more resettlement destinations and places to be opened to them. One way this was attempted (and arguably achieved to some extent) was through visible protest, which endured for several weeks in the cold winter months (Baslan, 2015). Several of the men I spoke with had participated in this protest, engaging in physical work through the presence of their bodies and the endurance of the winter conditions and restrictions on providing assistance to those participating, as well as relational and administrative work, to coordinate demands and maintain a presence at the protest site, and the emotional work of arguing for one's basic right to sanctuary and assistance. The protest culminated in the deportation of hundreds of Sudanese nationals, with some men estimating that up to half the Sudanese refugee population in Jordan was deported (other figures suggest the amount was somewhat lower, though still considerable at 500–800 people; Human Rights Watch, 2015).

Similar engagements—albeit with more positive consequences—can be seen in the work to establish community-based organizations, such as Sawiyan, through collaboration between Jordanians, international volunteers, and Sudanese nationals. Sawiyan has become an increasingly influential advocate for non-Syrian refugees, as well as a space for community-based leadership in advocacy, program design and implementation, and research. Their efforts with Sawiyan have helped the men in concrete ways: they have been able to access further resources for pursuing their ambitions, such as English-language programs, and members engage in volunteering and leadership activities that demonstrate and develop skills perceived to be valuable in their applications for resettlement or travel through complementary pathways.[4] Although generally beneficial for those involved, running community organizations is no easy job. Alongside the relational and administrative work of participating in advocacy, organizing meetings and events, sitting on committees, and, especially in Jordan, navigating the bureaucracy of registration and funding, the often-unseen emotional work of caring for new arrivals and working to maintain and enhance cultural and linguistic identities should not be overlooked.

The work of the Sudanese men in Amman is done not only to demonstrate their need and eligibility for resettlement but also to claim, create, and evidence those categories through their work, including demands for international attention and seeking to shape and diversify understandings of vulnerability and eligibility for resettlement. While this is far from a horizontal or participatory process, the notion of work shows that refugees do not only attempt to meet predefined criteria but also work the system to better reflect their understandings of refugeehood and protection.

Skills and Certificates

Ali summed up his time in Amman as waiting; he stated, "This is not anything in my hand that I'm doing, or have chance to do, I'm just waiting for UNHCR to send me to another country." However, other men reflected on how they used their time to "develop" themselves (indeed, Ali also participated in multiple educational courses and activities). I focus here on educational activities and English-language skills as the two most frequently mentioned activities.

Among the men I spoke to (all in their mid-twenties to mid-thirties), accessing education was seen as essential, serving to improve the current conditions of their lives in Jordan and enhance their future prospects. However, given the continued restrictions on work and limited support for continued education, few saw education as a route to long-term stability and security in Jordan. Rather, it was seen as important in itself and as an important component in obtaining resettlement. For example, Adam understood his access to resettlement through both the problems he had faced **and** the certificates he had earned:

I had an interview with the lawyer at UNHCR to renew my paper. In fact, the lawyer told me, "Here on your file you have a lot of things, the problems I know yeah, but also the positive things, your certificates," and something like that. He told me in fact, "Let me tell you now, you got the resettlement."

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[4] The criteria for resettlement are notoriously opaque to refugees (Jansen, 2008; Ozkul & Jarrous, 2021). The **UNHCR Resettlement Handbook** establishes objective criteria that do not include the potential for integration or educational level (UNHCR, 2023b, ch. 3). However, this is not necessarily perceived by refugees who often try to demonstrate both the urgency of their need for resettlement and to present themselves as desirable candidates who will be able to contribute to their new place of residence. For the men I worked with, this is further complicated by their reference to both resettlement and complementary pathways (which in some cases do have specific language, skill, or experience aspects) as "travel."

At the time of writing, Adam had not departed, nor had there been any further news. What I emphasize here is not the actual processes through which resettlement places are allocated, but rather Adam's perception of his certificates, demonstrating his education, training, and volunteering as crucial in obtaining access to resettlement. The men's efforts towards obtaining certificates demonstrating their skills, knowledge, and volunteering are a form of materializing the time they spent in displacement and evidence their "desirability" as a candidate for resettlement.

Education was also seen as valuable in the men's preparations for life after resettlement, playing a key role in becoming a member of the community, and taking responsibility for oneself. Samir said:

> I need better education for myself. If I travel, if I go to another country, I must be educated to deal with the people there, to work, to pay for myself, to help myself. I'll be a good person for myself and the community. I will go there, and I'm not going to be a shame.

Similarly, all of the men I spoke to, except for one, were continuing to learn or improve their English skills. The men reflected on English as important while in Jordan, in that it helped to secure slightly better work and as preparation for future travel. Adam told me:

> I try to learn so that if I get resettlement to another country, it will help me. Like, in English language—if I am not studying English hard here, if I went to another country it would be difficult to contact new people. Especially because in that country, no one can help you, 95% to 98% only speak English.

As well as revealing Adam's preference to move to an English-speaking country, his focus on English as important for the future shows his practical orientation towards resettlement in his everyday activities. He also saw studying English as a precursor to studying at university once resettled, and he also wanted to study additional languages later. While access to education is challenging—it is logistically difficult as well as beyond the financial capacity of many—the group of men I worked with saw it as a priority and supported each other's efforts to study (e.g., by ensuring quiet at home for studying). Several were studying at a higher level. For these men, engaging in education is a deliberate strategy to find employment while in displacement, pass the time, meet new people, and enjoy for their own interest, as well as being a vital investment in a future anticipated to be elsewhere. This echoes work elsewhere about the importance of education in envisioning futures for those in protracted displacement (Brun & Shuayb, 2020; Dryden-Peterson et al., 2019).

Collective Work of Reliance and Resettlement: Refugee–Refugee Hosting

The men's needs and anticipations for their life after resettlement have shaped their everyday lives and the activities they engage in. Here, I focus on the establishment and maintenance of refugee–refugee hosting practices as one example (see also Jordan, 2022).

In Jordan, Sudanese men created group hosting arrangements, sharing accommodation in a way that enabled them to pool housing costs and provide a safety net in the face of uncertain and exploitative work in the informal market. Most men expressed positive sentiments towards group hosting, with Samir describing his arrangement thus: "We care about one another, and we support one another. So that is one of the good things, that we understand one another, and we support one another." However, at times the men expressed ambivalence about participating in such relations or the difficulties in supporting one another or

managing relationships. Such ambivalences reveal that hosting relationships are not merely unavoidable coping mechanisms, but are rather choices to engage in such work.

Elsewhere, hosting has been conceptualized as a financial burden and as a relationship based on hospitality (Caron, 2019). However, I argue that hosting is better understood as a situated and interdependent relationship of care (Jordan, 2020), one that, as with other examples of care, requires sustained emotional, relational, and often physical work (Pascucci, 2018). This includes physical work associated with their paid labour (often in construction) that provides mutual financial support, domestic cooking and cleaning, and caring for those who are ill or injured, as well as attempting to keep each other physically safe by moving and living together; relational work of lending money or paying expenses, navigating changing household compositions and requests, and helping others to find work; sharing information and providing advice; and the emotional work of offering respite and solidarity in the face of the hardship and prolonged uncertainty they confront in their day-to-day lives. This is in addition to the support for education and training outlined above.

The work of hosting beyond the financial dimension is thus highlighted—while hosting is dependent on at least some of the men in each arrangement securing paid labour, the tasks outlined above describe various aspects of living together that evidence further forms of work. Alongside practical strategies for self-reliance, the work of managing uncertainty and maintaining hope also becomes important. I argue the acts of care developed by the men, as in hosting, are vital, contributing to immediate need and resettlement strategies. As with other aspects of the men's self-reliance, hosting does not—cannot—meet all their needs or provide for a long-term future in Jordan. But it does work to maintain the men from arrival to enduring waiting and to developing plans for the future. Often unseen, taking place under the radar and in domestic settings, hosting offers a further site for the exploration of collective forms of self-reliance (Skran & Easton-Calabria, 2020), and the development and maintenance of collective and individual future imaginaries (Drotbohm, 2021). Including a relational perspective on the men's work also emphasizes that the **self** in self-reliance is a misnomer. Returning to Samir, who makes his own weather, later in the conversation he told me, "We must help each other to get better. … I will give a hand. This is what I learnt from life." The men's work is collective and individual; self-reliance requires social connections, and it is these relations that meet needs in displacement and maintain the possibility of resettlement.

CONCLUSION: MARGINALIZATION, SELF-RELIANCE, AND WORKING FOR THE FUTURE

Adam, quoted in the section titled "Sudanese Refugee Men and Durable Solutions in Jordan," described how the uncertainty of his future had rendered his life a "mystery." His following sentence, however, revealed his continued needs and aspirations for the future: safety, education, employment, and a family. Adam identified three dimensions that preoccupied him: an immediate need for safety, concrete medium- to long-term aspirations, and a way to manage and reduce the uncertainty of his life. Further conversations with Adam and the other men—and literature from a range of contexts (Brun, 2015; Zetter & Long, 2012)—show that displacement is not a passive period, but rather one in which refugees are active in negotiation of the difficulties Adam identified.

Rather than a binary between the immediate and a geographically and temporarily distant future, many refugees engage in substantial work that simultaneously maintains their presence and enables them to make progress towards their desired futures. This challenges the current dichotomy between self-reliance and third-country resettlement. A multidimensional understanding of work provides a fuller understanding of how people operate to secure futures in spaces of constrained rights, allowing us to see the deliberate efforts of information gathering and decision-making; the relational, emotional, and physical work of claiming recognition and awareness raising; engaging in skills training, education, and volunteering; and the work of care. We thus see how the men engage in near-constant work, using the resources they have available, to make progress towards travel elsewhere, alongside enacting meaningful engagement in Amman (through education, hosting, and community life). Recognizing the multiple domains of "work" that contribute to their current well-being and future plans is essential to design adequate policy and programming that actually supports refugees' long-term solutions.

At the time of my research, the men recognized the potential for a long stay in Amman, yet none of them predicted that they would be able to create a stable or secure future in Jordan. Self-reliance was imposed and inadequate, and a considerable amount of their work in displacement was oriented towards ensuring their most basic survival in a hostile setting. For the majority of the men, it was not only their legal status or limited economic and material resources that prevented their settling and working towards integration in the city of Amman. Rather, their exclusion was compounded by widespread discrimination based on race

and their identification as African, and a substantial proportion of the men's work went towards contesting their bureaucratic invisibility to the international humanitarian system. This calls for much greater attention to the specific positions and access to rights and resources of those who are displaced and questions the applicability of self-reliance and durable solutions for different refugee populations within the same country. A response shaped around a numerically dominant and internationally visible refugee population may obscure, minimize, or harm other groups. Without stable and adequate legal protections, access to economic and social rights, and a more nuanced understanding of how different groups of refugees interact with the refugee regime and their host societies, self-reliance is temporary and uncertain and cannot be seen as an unmitigated good, nor as a durable solution.

The men's self-reliance was precarious, and they rarely followed a linear pathway of increasing stability. Several shocks—whether individual, such as losing employment or falling ill, or collective, as with the deportation and, more recently, the wide-ranging impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic—disrupted their support mechanisms. As countries around the world engage with the Jordan Compact as a model for refugee response within the framework of the Global Compact on Refugees, it is crucial to interrogate how self-reliance approaches interact with diverse political, social, and economic realities and refugees' strategies in long-term displacement. In a context of increasingly protracted displacement, it is essential to identify and create the conditions needed for refugees to live decent lives, meet basic needs, use their time in ways that are meaningful to them, and build future lives while displaced. Only when these conditions are in place will we be making progress on long-term solutions.

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No conflicts of interest to be declared.

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