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CONGRESS

Middle East and Muslim Worlds
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Panel 2

Between education and employment: trajectories of young Palestinians and Syrians in time of crisis and uncertainty. The cases of Jordan and Lebanon

Conflict, forced migration and political, economic, and health crises have led to precariousness and uncertainty for many young people in the Middle East. This panel addresses trajectories in education and employment for young Palestinians and Syrians who have taken refuge in Jordan and Lebanon at different points in time. In both countries, young Palestinians and Syrians have been directly affected by multiple local and regional crises. However, not all of them have been affected in the same way. Depending on their legal status, social and economic positions, and the local policies in Jordan and Lebanon toward Palestinians and Syrians, young people have different access to education and employment.

The panel aims to understand how young Palestinians and Syrians, who have restricted legal status, access and experience (non) education and (un)employment in a context of uncertainty and precariousness. Key questions that we aim to discuss are: How do different social settings and legal status impact young people's access, experience and trajectories in education and employment? How do young people navigate the uncertain landscape of crisis settings?; How do they maneuver their different socio-economic and legal statuses to develop strategies and cope with uncertainty?

Person in charge: Abou Zaki Hala Caroline (Oxford Brookes University, Centre for Development and Emergency Practice)

Program

Abed (El) Oroub (Lebanese American University, Centre for Lebanese Studies)

"Why education?": the options Palestinian and Syrian refugees consider to eke out a living.

To many refugees, with precarious economic conditions and in limbo legal status, education is not an option. Studying the differential impacts of age, gender and socioeconomic status on the protracted refugee situation of refugees in Jordan helps to unfold the barriers against pursuing education. This paper shall endeavor to study the complex layers affecting the way young refugees strategize their choices to strive in difficult economic realities, social estrangement and legal challenges.

Building on interviews conducted with young refugees from Palestinian and Syrian origins in the governorate of Amman, this paper will analyze the intersectional factors which outdistance communities in protracted refugee situations during their everyday life, failing ultimately to be fully integrated into their host countries.

Abou Zaki Hala Caroline (Oxford Brookes University, Centre for Development and Emergency

Fourth Congress of Middle East and Muslim Studies

Practice)

Reflection on the legal status of young Palestinians and Syrians in Lebanon through their trajectories and experiences in education and employment

Palestinians and Syrians who have taken refuge in Lebanon at different points in time are subject to legal restrictions to access residency, education and the formal labor market. In this paper, I will reflect on the material and symbolic impact of the specific legal statuses of young Palestinians and Syrians in Lebanon on their trajectories and experiences in education and employment. I will also question how this status affects their plans and aspirations. The paper is based on individual interviews and collaborative analysis with young Palestinians and Syrians living in different settings (residential neighborhoods, Palestinian refugee camps, or informal Syrian tented settlements) in three areas of Lebanon-Beirut, the Bekaa and Saida.

Jordan Zoe (Oxford Brookes University, Centre for Development and Emergency Practice)

Young refugees' in urban contexts: Navigating education and employment in Amman, Jordan

In displacement and crisis contexts young people's routes through education and employment are delayed, diverted and disrupted. Within this, however, those urban environments have greater access to education and higher rates of employment than those in rural areas, and access to education and employment has been identified as one of the reasons that forced migrants to move to urban centers. In this paper, I explore how young people in Jordan from different legal, socio-economic and gender positions engage with and use the urban context to access education and employment. In doing so, I nuance the understanding of how young refugees navigate the urban environment of Amman and further illuminate the experience of urban displacement for young refugees.

Kassir Alexandra (Lebanese American University, Centre for Lebanese Studies)

Experiences of education and employment of young Palestinians and Syrians refugees in Lebanon: an intersectional analysis

While barriers to refugees' education and employment are receiving increasing scholarly attention, they are often understood within a single-axis framework. Drawing on individual interviews and a collaborative analysis conducted with young Palestinians and Syrian refugees residing in Lebanon, this study seeks to examine through an intersectional analysis their access and experiences of education and employment. It reveals the multiple and intersecting forms of exclusions they are subject to and demonstrates the importance of attending to the concomitant ways in which legal status, gender and socio-economic status shape young people's trajectories.